

1 **4.10 RECREATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS**

2 For purposes of this discussion “public access” refers to facilities such as trails, that provide
3 non-motorized access to and through recreation facilities, as well as associated amenities, such
4 as benches and rest areas.

5 Redevelopment would result in substantial benefits regarding recreation and public access, as
6 well as several less than significant impacts to recreational resources. Mitigation is not
7 warranted, and none is recommended.

8 **4.10.1 Study Area**

9 The study area for recreation and public access is the approximately 1,800-acre redevelopment
10 project area, plus adjacent parklands or nearby trails to which redevelopment elements may
11 connect.

12 **4.10.2 Regulatory Setting**

13 **Federal**

14 There are no relevant federal laws, regulations, or policies regarding recreation and public
15 access.

16 **State**

17 That portion of the project area within 100 feet of the Bay shoreline is subject to the policies of
18 the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). The McAteer-Petris Act directs
19 BCDC to exert its land use authority (among other authorities) within its jurisdiction, and BCDC
20 does so in part through preparation and implementation of the *San Francisco Bay Plan* (the
21 “Bay Plan”) (BCDC 1968, as amended through 2001). The Bay Plan addresses recreation and
22 public access, among other issues.

23 **Recreation.** The Bay Plan contains specific findings and policies concerning recreation on and
24 around the Bay (see Section 4.1: Consistency with Plans and Policies, for discussion of these
25 policies). The Bay Plan recognizes the Bay and its shoreline as a valuable recreational
26 resource, and finds that recreational uses of the Bay and shoreline should be planned as far into
27 the future as possible. Bay Plan policies for recreation focus on active recreational facilities,
28 such as fishing piers and marinas. The Bay Plan states that concentrations of waterfront
29 recreational facilities should generally be located as close to major population centers as
30 feasible, and should not preempt sites needed for ports, waterfront industry, or airports; rather,
31 efforts should be made to integrate recreation into such facilities, to the extent they might be
32 compatible. In addition, the Bay Plan encourages waterfront recreation facilities to the extent
33 they do not have significant adverse effects on water quality and circulation, would not destroy
34 valuable marshes or mudflats, and would not harm identified valuable fish and wildlife
35 resources.

1 **Public Access.** The Bay Plan also contains specific findings and policies concerning public
2 access to the Bay (see Section 4.1: Consistency with Plans and Policies, for discussion of
3 these policies). The Bay Plan states that in addition to waterfront recreational features such as
4 parks, beaches, marinas, and piers, that each new project in or along the Bay should provide
5 maximum feasible public access consistent with that project, the natural environment, and the
6 public's safety and convenience. This access should be provided by walkways or trails, and
7 should connect to the nearest public thoroughfare.

8 **Local**

9 **Recreation.** The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) manages regional parks for
10 Alameda and Contra Costa counties. While EBRPD's Master Plan (1996) does not identify
11 lands within the study area as under current or planned management of EBRPD, the EBRPD
12 has expressed interest in acquiring through Public Benefit Conveyance approximately 15 acres
13 at the tip of the Gateway peninsula from the Army to manage as a park.

14 The *Open Space Conservation and Recreation* Element of the Oakland General Plan (the
15 OSCAR, City of Oakland 1996) inventories existing open space, conservation, and recreation
16 resources of the City; proposes standards; puts forth goals, objectives, and policies; and
17 recommends actions. Themes of the OSCAR include increasing and protecting these
18 resources, and bringing them into neighborhoods where they currently do not exist.

19 **Public Access.** The need for public access to and along the Bay shoreline is well established.
20 In 1989, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) adopted the Bay Trail Plan, which
21 includes a proposed alignment; a set of policies to guide the future selection, design, and
22 implementation of routes; and strategies for implementation and financing. Since its inception,
23 the Bay Trail Plan has been widely supported in the Bay Area: for example, most jurisdictions
24 along the Bay Trail alignment have passed resolutions in support of the Bay Trail, and have
25 incorporated the trail into their general plans. In addition, other state and regional planning
26 agencies such as BCDC and EBRPD, have incorporated public access, including the Bay Trail,
27 into their planning documents, and collaborate with local jurisdictions to ensure public access to
28 the Bay and along its shoreline.

29 The OSCAR (City of Oakland 1996) includes recommendations for public access to and along
30 the waterfront, but a comprehensive system of trails does not exist. The *Estuary Policy Plan*
31 (City and Port of Oakland, 1999), an element of the Oakland General Plan, describes Oakland's
32 vision for public access along the Estuary shoreline, from Adeline Street to 66th Avenue.

33 **4.10.3 Regional Setting**

34 The region for consideration is the City of Oakland.

35 **Recreation.** According to the OSCAR, Oakland encompasses approximately 2,943 acres of
36 parkland, or a citywide average of about 8.25 acres per 1,000 residents. The OSCAR

1 establishes a citywide goal of 10.0 acres per 1,000 residents for total parkland. Oakland has
 2 more than 130 parks and athletic field complexes. Table 4.10-1 presents a summary of park
 3 acreages by type. More than 50 percent of park acreage within the region is dedicated to
 4 resource conservation, and is generally undeveloped open space. A substantial amount of park
 5 acreage within the region is dedicated to special uses, such as golf courses, the zoo, and
 6 botanical parks. Less than one-quarter of city park acreage is classified region-serving,
 7 community, neighborhood, and mini-parks that can serve a diverse local audience. The citywide
 8 average for this type of more traditional park is 1.33 acres per 1,000 residents. The OSCAR
 9 establishes a goal of 4.0 acres per 1,000 residents for this type of park. Therefore, the region as
 10 a whole achieves only about 33 percent of the established goal.

11 The West Oakland area of the
 12 region includes one community
 13 park, six neighborhood parks,
 14 five active mini-parks, and two
 15 athletic fields. Two of the parks
 16 include recreation centers. Total
 17 park acreage (including school
 18 yards and athletic fields) is 56.7
 19 acres, or 2.43 acres per 1,000
 20 residents. Although this is only
 21 60 percent of the OSCAR service
 22 goal, this park acreage is the
 23 highest per resident of any non-
 24 hillside neighborhood. West
 25 Oakland is the only area in the
 26 City with two public swimming
 27 pools, and it contains the highest
 28 concentration of athletic fields
 29 and mini-parks in the City (City of
 30 Oakland 1996).

Table 4.10-1
Summary of Oakland Parks

Park Type	Number ^a	Acreage	% of Total Acreage ^b
Region-serving	5	332.0	11.3
Community	9	101.1	3.4
Neighborhood	44	126.0	4.3
Active Mini-park	16	5.8	0.2
Passive Mini-park	5	2.2	0.1
Linear	12	33.0	1.1
Special Use	24	651.1	22.1
Resource Conservation	19	1,622.8	55.2
Athletic Field	14	68.6	2.3
Total	148	2,942.6	100.0

Source: City of Oakland 1996.

Notes:

- ^a Actual number of parks is less—several are classified in multiple categories.
- ^b 906.2 acres are within EBRPD facilities located within Oakland city limits.

31 **Public Access.** Within Oakland, there is no continuous public access system between public
 32 areas, or to and along the waterfront. Some public access projects, such as bicycle routes, are
 33 developed within public rights-of-way. However, public access facilities on private property are
 34 generally developed as mitigation for projects proposed on that property. Such features on
 35 private land are implemented only where allowed by law and the owners are provided
 36 economically viable use of their property; alternatively, these features may be constructed on
 37 private land where the property owner voluntarily agrees.

38 Within the City of Oakland, multi-use (bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly) public access facilities,
 39 primarily trails and associated rest areas, are well established within regional hillside parks

1 managed by EBRPD, at Lake Merritt in downtown Oakland, in the Jack London Square area
2 along the Estuary, and along the shoreline of San Leandro Bay.

3 **4.10.4 Local Setting**

4 Figure 4.10-1 identifies existing and planned recreation and public access facilities within or
5 adjacent to the study area. In general, substantial recreation facilities exist and are under
6 construction in the study area and the immediately adjacent West Oakland neighborhood.
7 Existing public access through the study area has recently been improved, but remains only fair.
8 Construction of currently planned trails would greatly improve public access through the study
9 area.

10 **Recreation.** Several parks or other recreation facilities are or were recently located within or
11 adjacent to the study area. Port View Park is approximately 4.5 acres located along the Middle
12 Harbor shoreline at the end of 7th Street within the Maritime sub-district. This Port-managed
13 park includes a waterfront promenade, a fishing pier, picnic facilities, a children's play area, an
14 observation tower including historic interpretive displays, a snack bar, and a maritime museum.
15 The park is used primarily by fishermen and families.

16 Radio Beach is a narrow, isolated shoreline located on the north side of the Bay Bridge
17 touchdown, and north of the Oakland Army Base sub-district. This Port-managed beach is
18 difficult to access, and is frequented primarily by fishermen, or naturalists observing wildlife in
19 extensive mudflats that are exposed during low tide. The Eastshore State Park is immediately
20 northeast of Radio Beach, and continues along the Oakland and Emeryville shorelines to the
21 Emeryville Marina.

22 While no recreation facilities are located within the 16th/Wood sub-district, Raimondi Field, the
23 largest and oldest park in West Oakland, is located directly across Wood Street from the sub-
24 district, between 20th and 18th streets, and between Wood and Campbell streets (City of
25 Oakland 1996). Raimondi Field is a city-managed park.

26 Several recreation facilities exist within the OARB sub-district east of Maritime Street. These
27 facilities include a ball field, tennis courts, a playground, and a bowling alley (Corps 1999).

28 In addition to these existing facilities, several parks or other recreation facilities are either under
29 construction or planned for the study area. As an element of its Vision 2000 Maritime
30 Development Program, and in part as mitigation for demolition of Middle Harbor Park, the Port
31 of Oakland is currently constructing new Middle Harbor Shoreline Park within the Maritime sub-
32 district. When complete, this 30-plus acre region-serving park will stretch along the Middle
33 Harbor shoreline from the Union Point mole to existing Port View Park. The entire Middle Harbor
34 shoreline would then be dedicated to waterfront recreation and conservation. Middle Harbor
35 Shoreline Park will include the following major features:

36

- 1 Insert (color graphic)
- 2 Figure 4.10-1 Recreation and Public Access Facilities
- 3

1 placeholder for backside of color graphic

2

- 1 • continuous non-motorized waterfront access along the entire Middle Harbor shoreline (tie-in
2 to Port View Park trails);
- 3 • vehicular access to and parking for handicapped park users at the Western Pacific railroad
4 mole;
- 5 • a beach with an events amphitheater;
- 6 • interpretive opportunities for cultural resources, wildlife, and maritime operations;
- 7 • a natural habitat area;
- 8 • a docking area for the water taxi, and a research vessel; and
- 9 • a fishing overlook, an Estuary path, and rest areas on the Inner Harbor (Port of Oakland
10 1999 and 2001).

11 As stated above, EBRPD has expressed interest in acquiring or leasing approximately 15 acres
12 at the tip of the Gateway peninsula immediately south of the bridge touchdown to manage as a
13 park.¹ The California Department of Transportation has also expressed interest in participating
14 in development of such a park, which has been generally termed the Gateway Park, because it
15 would serve as the visual gateway to Oakland for those entering the city from the Bay Bridge
16 (Bay Trail Project 1999). As a special condition of granting a permit to Caltrans to replace the
17 East Span of the Bay Bridge (Permit No. 8-01), BCDC required Caltrans make available 4.2
18 acres of the Gateway peninsula for incorporation to EBRPD's proposed Gateway Park, to the
19 extent legally allowed. In addition, the permit requires Caltrans to provide the following
20 amenities in the gateway area: a parking lot, a pathway connecting the parking lot to the
21 bicycle/pedestrian path on the new span, a crosswalk across a Caltrans maintenance road,
22 landscaping, and signage.

23 **Public Access.** Public access through the study area, particularly to the waterfront, has
24 recently been improved, but remains only fair. The major impediment to public access through
25 the study area is the elevated I-880 freeway that generally acts as a north-south barrier between
26 the Maritime and OARB sub-districts, and the remainder of the city. In addition, several other
27 facilities in or near the study area negatively affect public access:

- 28 • The Union Pacific (UP) railroad overhead of 7th Street is an old, narrow, and dark structure
29 located between the new I-880 freeway and Middle Harbor Road, which inhibits public
30 access along 7th Street between downtown and the Harbor area;
- 31 • The geometry of Middle Harbor Road immediately south of its intersection with 3rd Street
32 (Middle Harbor Road becomes Adeline Street at this intersection) is elevated, curved, and
33 has limited sight distance, which inhibits public access between the Jack London and
34 Harbor area.

¹ The EBRPD applied for a Public Benefit Conveyance to obtain this OARB property through the Department of the Interior National Park Service's Federal Land to Park Program.

- 1 • The McArthur maze, an enormous interchange at the confluence of several regional
2 freeways inhibits near-shore public access between Oakland and Emeryville.

3 While the elevated I-880 freeway is a substantial barrier between the 16th/Wood sub-district and
4 the OARB and Maritime sub-districts, its reconstruction after the Loma Prieta earthquake
5 resulted in the following improvement to public access:

- 6 • The north side of the 7th Street under-crossing of I-880 includes a pedestrian sidewalk,
7 crosswalks, and pedestrian signals. At 7th/Wood streets, a crosswalk combined with
8 pedestrian signals provide for safe passage to the south side of 7th Street. The 7th Street
9 under-crossing of I-880 also has 8-foot-wide shoulders in both directions, improving bicycle
10 access. However, those traveling west along 7th Street must still maneuver the UP railroad
11 overhead of 7th Street, a narrow, dark, and intimidating structure with a sidewalk elevated
12 above traffic level, and very narrow roadway shoulders.
- 13 • The reconstructed West Grand Avenue Viaduct includes a sidewalk along its southern side,
14 with pedestrian signals and a crosswalk at the new frontage road intersection that provides
15 non-motorized access.

16 In the Maritime sub-district, a short Bay Trail spur exists along 7th Street, from approximately the
17 Trapac Marine terminal gate to Port View Park. However, this trail spur does not currently
18 connect to others. As part of the Vision 2000 Maritime Development Program, the Port of
19 Oakland realigned and improved 7th Street from the UP railroad overhead to the Trapac Marine
20 terminal gate, and constructed an extension of Middle Harbor Road connecting the realigned 7th
21 Street with existing Middle Harbor Road. Public access multi-use (pedestrian/bicycle) Class I
22 trail segments are currently being constructed along realigned 7th Street and Middle Harbor
23 Road. These new trails connect to the existing Bay Trail spur to Port View Park, and will also
24 connect to a shoreline spur connecting Port View Park to the Union Pacific mole at Inner
25 Harbor. These improvements partially implement recommendations of the OSCAR for public
26 access through the study area.

27 In addition to the existing trail spur and public access facilities under construction, there are
28 several public access facilities proposed (both funded and unfunded) for the study area:

- 29 • The EBRPD Master Plan identifies a planned trail—Segment 1E: Martin Luther King Jr.
30 Regional Shoreline to Eastshore State Park—through the study area (EBRPD 1998).
- 31 • The planned Maritime-Shellmound Bikeway would connect the planned bicycle facility on
32 the eastern span of the Bay Bridge to the Gateway Park. The proposed alignment within the
33 study area is Burma Road or Engineer Road to Maritime Street.
- 34 • The planned alignment of the Bay Trail spine through the project area is the eastern side of
35 Maritime Street, between 7th Street and West Grand Avenue (EBRPD 1999).
- 36 • Other spur trails are planned along West Grand Avenue, 7th Street, and Middle Harbor
37 Road, between Middle Harbor Road and 3rd Street (Bay Trail Project 1999).

- As a special condition of granting a permit to Caltrans to build the I880 freeway on its current location, (Permit No. 11-93, as amended), BCDC required Caltrans to construct and maintain an at-grade pathway between the southern terminus of Shellmound Street in Emeryville, Mandela parkway in Oakland, and the Bay Bridge.

These planned improvements in combination with existing facilities and those under construction would provide public access through and within the study area to the Bay Bridge, Gateway Park, Middle Harbor Shoreline/Port View Park, downtown Oakland, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline.

4.10.5 Impact Analysis Methodology

Evaluation of the impacts of redevelopment to recreational resources is straightforward and limited to the criteria below.

Significance Criteria

Redevelopment would have a significant impact on the environment if it would:

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

4.10.6 Impacts

Benefits

Project area redevelopment would include the new 15-acre waterfront Gateway Park at the Gateway peninsula². In addition, as part of redevelopment, a 100-foot-wide strip of land along the Gateway development area shoreline, approximately 10 acres, would be classified Parks & Urban Open Space. While details of the ultimate use of this land are not definite, it is designated a public area. In the 16th/Wood sub-district, a 1-acre park is anticipated as part of redevelopment. Redevelopment of the project area would not impair the ability of Caltrans to fulfill its commitment to construct a bicycle-pedestrian trail along Burma Road from Maritime Street to the Gateway Park peninsula and from Burma Road to Emeryville. Finally, realigned Maritime Street would be designed to include a Bay Trail spine connecting the existing Bay Trail on 7th Street to the proposed trail along Burma Road, and also to West Grand Avenue. These facilities would represent a substantial benefit to the Oakland community and beyond relative to recreation.

² EBRPD continues to explore opportunities for acquisition of additional parklands at and near the Bay Bridge touchdown (Gateway) peninsula. Such lands include Radio Beach and the lands between that beach and the proposed Gateway Park and other smaller, adjacent parcels. EBRPD envisions a continuous shoreline recreational and habitat preservation area extending from the existing Eastshore Park, across the Gateway peninsula, to the Gateway development area.

1 Construction of the Gateway Park may require shoreline stabilization that would require Bay fill.
2 Construction activities, recreational uses and potential Bay fill could affect biological resources
3 and surface water quality; these potential physical impacts and measures to mitigate them to a
4 level that is less than significant are discussed, respectively, in Sections 4.15: Surface Water,
5 and 4.12: Biological Resources. In addition, the consistency of this potential fill with policies of
6 the Bay Plan is addressed in Section 4.1: Consistency with Plans and Policies.



8 **4.10.7 Mitigation**

9 Redevelopment would not result in significant impacts to recreation or public access, and
10 mitigation for such impacts is not warranted.

11 Impacts to other environmental factors potentially resulting from park development, as well as
12 measures to mitigate significant impacts are addressed in relevant sections of this chapter.

