



The **Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan** is your chance to help determine how the City will implement the park recommendations of the new General Plan. Come and share your ideas for places to play, relax, gather and socialize throughout Emeryville.

Shape the future of parks and recreation in Emeryville!

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

OVERVIEW

The City of Emeryville Parks and Recreation strategic planning process was informed by a variety of public involvement activities that generated input from Emeryville residents as well as employees of local businesses and visitors. The activities served to generate usable information that affirms Emeryville residents' enthusiasm for their community and a number of tangible concepts for improving the park system.

METHODS

Community input forms the foundation of the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan. Public involvement activities were designed to ensure the participation of a diverse cross-section of the City's population. By providing multiple opportunities and ways for citizens to engage, the results reflect a balance of strong quantitative data and rich qualitative detail.

ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS
FOCUS GROUPS	37
LUNCH INTERCEPT EVENTS	88
QUESTIONNAIRE	131
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP	30
CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP	50
TEEN DESIGN WORKSHOP	10
AD-HOC COMMITTEE	6
TOTAL	352

Over 350 Emeryville residents, employees and visitors have participated in the planning process. These activities took place from July 2009 through June 2010, and included a wide variety of opportunities to participate. The table above breaks down the participation by activity, but does not necessarily reflect the impact of individuals such as the Ad-Hoc Committee members who worked on the project at several key times or those participants who may have participated in more than one activity.



The collected information has been reviewed for common themes. Using these key themes to guide the plan tempers the influence of individuals or interest groups and produces a direction that represents the largest group of Emeryville residents.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT THEMES

Across all of the public involvement activities that Emeryville residents, visitors and employees engaged in, the following themes surfaced:

Need for additional park sites

Desire for more activities within parks

Excitement about Doyle Hollis Park

Importance of comfortable places to relax, play and enjoy a meal outdoors

A need for flexibility so that parks can serve many purposes

Recreation with dogs and gardening are important to residents

Low awareness of what is available, especially amongst visitors and employees

Importance of security and maintenance

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS

FOCUS GROUPS

In September 2009, MIG conducted a series of eight focus groups to identify attitudes and trends and gather key information related to the Emeryville Parks and Recreation Strategic Planning process.

The focus groups were conducted with a variety of Emeryville residents and organizations representing civic, environmental, educational, development and business interests.

Participants—37 people in total—were selected based on input from the Emeryville Planning and Building Department staff based on their respected position in the community and ability to provide project-relevant information to the team.

These groups were focused on identifying Key Opportunities, Issues and Concerns facing the park system. Additionally, participants were encouraged to describe the additional park amenities and recreational facilities that they would like to see incorporated into the future of the park system.

Key Opportunities

- *Connectivity;*
- *Distinctly Emeryville;*
- *Social Gathering Areas: Urban Design and Streetscape;*
- *Engaged Residents;*
- *Improved Administrative Capacity and Oversight; and*
- *Dynamic Planning.*

Issues and Concerns

- *Population and Demographics;*
- *Safety and Security;*
- *Funding; and*
- *Development Standards.*

Desired Additional Park Amenities and Recreational Facilities

Participants noted a variety of park amenities and recreational facilities that would be welcome additions to the existing system, including:

- *Places to picnic, gather, mingle and linger;*
- *Dog parks;*
- *Skate parks;*
- *Additional community gardens;*
- *Rentable facilities;*
- *Rooftop sports facilities;*
- *Additional greenways amenities, such as a par course or shuffleboard;*
- *Parks that create externalities, increase traffic at local businesses (i.e., rentable bocce balls at Aquarius restaurant);*
- *A visible hangout spot for youth;*
- *Additional park facilities in the triangle neighborhood; and*
- *Bandstands and amphitheaters for music and performance.*

LUNCH INTERCEPT EVENTS

Over the course of two lunch hours in September 2009, MIG and City of Emeryville staff completed 88 Intercept Surveys. Intercept surveys are designed to quickly generate usable information about how people use the park system today and what ideas they have for improving the system in the future.

The survey was conducted at multiple locations during

the weekday lunch hour to capture information from Emeryville residents, employees who work in Emeryville and visitors to the city.

Survey results indicate that Emeryville is not a recreational destination and that the park experience people are looking for is a casual place to relax or an enjoyable place to walk and bike.

The majority of survey respondents do not live in Emeryville. Most respondents work in Emeryville, some were there to shop or eat.

Many of those respondents who were visiting Emeryville to shop or eat did not know that Emeryville has parks.

Emeryville residents and people who work in Emeryville reported very similar current activities for parks. The most popular responses were:

- *Picnicking/Eating lunch;*
- *Socializing, relaxing;*
- *Walking or jogging for exercise; and*
- *Dog walking.*

Other park uses reported include:

- *Watching fireworks and the Blue Angels at the Marina;*
- *Taking photos; and*
- *Fishing.*

Suggested additions to improve the park system from all respondents included:

- *Places for socializing, relaxing, picnicking and eating lunch (including tables); and*
- *Places for special events.*

Residents suggested the following improvements:

- *Play areas for younger and older children; and*
- *Swimming/Aquatic fitness.*

Survey respondents provided additional suggestions for improving the park system, including:

- *Developing a Disc Golf Course; and*
- *Increasing the use of native/edible landscaping.*

In addition to answering questions, survey respondents had the opportunity to offer specific feedback on a park system map, and to share additional thoughts with the project team.

Surveys were completed at the following locations:

Bay Place

Emeryville Promenade (65th and Hollis)

Emeryville Public Market

QUESTIONNAIRE

A planning process questionnaire was available online at the City website and in a paper form distributed through community facilities. The access to this questionnaire was not controlled or randomly distributed. The questionnaire was open to any resident, employee or visitor of Emeryville to complete and was designed to identify current and desired activities that should be supported by the parks and recreation system. Over the course of two months, 131 responses were collected.

The questionnaire findings were distilled into a series of key themes identified below. The many write-in responses were categorized and are listed as well.

The questionnaire findings indicate that people who live and work in Emeryville:

- *Place a high value on parks and recreation;*
- *Perceive a need for additional park sites;*
- *Are currently utilizing parks for general enjoyment of the outdoors;*
- *Participate heavily in trail-related activities (jogging, walking, etc.) and are very interested in the Emeryville Greenway; and*
- *View Marina Park as integral to the future of the Emeryville park system.*

Additional park site and facility concepts identified in the questionnaire include:

- *Skateboard or BMX park;*
- *Tennis courts;*
- *Additional community gardens;*
- *Game tables and courts;*
- *Off-leash dog areas; and*
- *Trails/greenway.*

Additional programming and facility space concepts include developing flexible spaces for:

- *Outdoor Tai Chi and Yoga;*
- *Special events, such as music or theater; and*
- *Indoor and outdoor spaces to hold a party or gathering.*

Most popular additional class suggestions included:

- *Yoga;*
- *Tai Chi;*
- *Pilates;*
- *Participatory arts (painting, photography, drawing, etc.);*
- *Lifelong learning and retraining;*
- *Historical/nature walks;*
- *Technology education;*
- *Health education; and*
- *Connecting neighbors through social activities or volunteering.*

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

One community workshop was held in November 2009 at Ralph Hawley Middle School. The three-hour, Saturday morning workshop was attended by 30 community members who had an opportunity to learn about the planning process and provide general and specific input about the current park system and ways to improve it. Community workshop meeting announcements were sent to every Emeryville household.

Working in small groups, workshop participants discussed potential park system improvements and desired additions to the park system. Using a City of Emeryville Park System map as a reference, participants were encouraged to make suggestions related to both the existing and potential future park system. System-wide, future existing park suggestions include:

System-Wide Suggestions

- Provide additional green space in south Emeryville and the Triangle neighborhood;
- Maintain and enhance existing facilities and amenities;
- Develop social gathering areas, such as farmers' market and performance locations;
- Develop additional facilities such as themed mini parks, dog parks, skate parks and community gardens; and
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian connections.

Ideas for Future Parks

During the interactive exercise, workshop participants generated a series of ideas specific to proposed site locations. These ideas included:

- A variety of activities that are not currently supported in the Emeryville park system; and
- Expansion or formalization of additional activities such as gardening and recreation with dogs.



Children's Design Workshop

“Grown-ups play, too!”
–workshop participant



Teen Design Workshop

CHILDREN’S WORKSHOP

Three children’s workshops were held in March 2010. The workshops were conducted in collaboration with the Anna Yates ‘Adventure Works’ and ‘Kids In Motion’ after-school programs at the Emeryville Recreation Center. Approximately 50 K-6 students participated in each one-hour workshop. During the workshop, each group read a picture book about green space in cities and then talked about which parks in Emeryville they used/liked and why, and what kinds of things they thought were missing from parks in Emeryville.

Common park features that participants wanted for the park system included:

- *Multi-age spaces (for babies, kids, teens and adults);*
- *Spaces for dogs;*
- *Water features;*
- *Sand play areas;*
- *Zip lines and other “adventure” spaces;*
- *Swings and slides (traditional and water);*
- *Places to bike and skateboard; and*
- *More flower gardens.*

Some of the older kids brought up safety and the fact that their parents wouldn’t let them go to parks alone, so they don’t get to go as often as they would like.

Most of the kids knew and liked Doyle Hollis Park and the older kids knew the basketball courts on Stanford, but they were less familiar with other parks in the city, especially the Marina and waterfront areas.

They also liked vegetable gardens a lot but have a garden at their school so they didn’t see a particular need for more.

TEEN DESIGN WORKSHOP

A two-part Teen Design Workshop was held in May with ten teens in after school programming offered by Community Services. During the first one-hour session, students discussed park programming concepts and the kinds of things they like to do in parks. The students were then given a chance to design a potential park site. At the follow-up session, the youth presented their preliminary concepts to each other for review and discussion.

Teens identified a variety of potential features to include in their parks. The features that participants were most interested to include in future parks were:

- *Interactive Features;*
- *Sports Facilities; and*
- *Water Play features.*

Participants were least interested in the addition of Nature Play features.

PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN

AD-HOC COMMITTEE

The Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan Ad-Hoc Committee—comprised of City Council members, Planning Commissioners, and a School Board member—met four times during the planning process to review plan concepts and provide strategic direction and input on the planning activities. The Committee participated in the process at key points, reviewing interim planning reports and providing guidance on community input activities. Each committee meeting addressed the key points of the current stage of the planning effort and set direction for the next steps. Early in the process, the committee identified a number of key issues for the project to address, including:

- *Safety at park sites and how design can improve security;*
- *Providing realistic funding options; and*
- *Creating a flexible plan that guides development and serves staff needs.*

As the project developed, the committee considered the results of the public input and helped develop the activities approach for assessing needs and opportunities within the existing and proposed park system. The final stages of the process involved critical review of the needs analysis, site program and specific recommendations developed by the project team.