

SECTION 3 – Existing Recreation Resources

3.1 Introduction

Currently, the City of Albany is the primary provider of parks and recreational facilities in the City. Other agencies such as Albany School District and Albany YMCA are also major providers of sport facilities in the area. For a more detailed inventory of park, recreation and open space areas, please refer to Appendix B.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Areas

The Albany park system consists of active and passive recreational areas. There are 2 mini parks, 2 neighborhood parks, 1 community park, 4 linear parks and several special use sites in the park system. In total, the City owns 13 park, recreation and open space areas representing more than 40 acres of land. The City also owns and operates several specialized recreational facilities such as the Albany Community Center, Albany Senior Center, the Childcare Center and the Bill Lewis Teen Center.

Other recreational sites in the planning area owned by public agencies include Eastshore State Park. This site is owned by the State of California and is managed by the East Bay Regional Park District.

3.2 Park Land Definitions

The most effective and efficient park system to manage is one made up of different types of parks, each designed to provide a specific type of recreation experience or opportunity. When classified and used properly, they are easier to maintain, create less conflicts between user groups and have less impact on adjoining neighbors. In order to assess the park system in Albany and to address specific parkland needs, the parks have been classified as follows.

Mini-Parks

Mini-parks, tot lots and children's playgrounds are all small, single purpose play lots designed primarily for small children usage. Due to their size, the facilities are usually limited to a small open grass area, a children's playground and a small picnic area.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are a combination playground and park, designed primarily for non-supervised, non-organized recreation activities. They are generally small in size (about 5 acres) and serve an area of approximately one-half mile radius. Typically, facilities found in a neighborhood park include a children's playground, picnic areas, trails, open grass areas for passive use, outdoor basketball courts and multi-use sport fields for soccer, and Little League baseball. Optimum size is between 3 and 7 acres.

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<i>Community Parks</i>	<i>A community park is planned primarily to provide active and structured recreation opportunities. In general, community park facilities are designed for organized activities and sports, although individual and family activities are also encouraged. Community parks serve a much larger area and offer more facilities. As a result, they require more in terms of support facilities such as parking, restrooms, and covered play areas. Community parks usually have sport fields or similar facilities as the central focus of the park. Their service area is roughly a 1-2 mile radius. Optimum size is between 10 and 20 acres.</i>
<i>Regional Parks</i>	<i>Regional parks are recreational areas serving the city and beyond. They are usually large in size and often include one specific use or feature that makes them unique. Typically, use focuses on passive types of recreational activities. Those located within urban areas sometimes offer a wider range of facilities and activities.</i>
<i>Special Use Areas</i>	<i>Special use areas are miscellaneous public recreation areas or land occupied by a specialized facility. Some of the uses falling into this classification include special purpose areas, waterfront parks, community gardens, single purpose sites used for field sports or sites occupied by buildings.</i>
<i>Linear Parks</i>	<i>Linear parks are developed landscaped areas and other lands that follow linear corridors such as abandoned railroad right-of-ways, canals, powerlines and other elongated features. This type of park usually contains trails, landscaped areas, viewpoints and seating areas.</i>
<i>Natural Open Space Areas</i>	<i>Natural open space is defined as undeveloped land primarily left in its natural environment with recreation uses as a secondary objective. It is usually owned or managed by a governmental agency and may or may not have public access. This type of land often includes wetlands, steep hillsides or other similar spaces. In some cases, environmentally sensitive areas are considered as open space and can include wildlife habitats, stream and creek corridors, or unique and/or endangered plant species.</i>
<i>Undesignated/ Undeveloped Land</i>	<i>This is undeveloped land and has not been designated for a specific park use at this time.</i>
<i>School Recreation Land</i>	<i>School recreation land is land devoted to recreation.</i>
<i>Private Parks</i>	<i>These include privately owned sites but contribute to the recreational opportunities in the area. This would include golf courses, theme parks, sports fields and complexes.</i>

3.3 Park Land Inventory

Listed below is a summary of the park, recreation and open space areas located within the Albany area. This includes land owned by the City of Albany, East Bay Regional Park District, Trust for Public Lands, Albany School District and private organizations.

Table 3.1
Summary of Parks, Recreation and Open Space Areas (All Agencies)
Albany Planning Area

Park, Recreation and Open Space Areas	Total Park Land (Acres)	Number of Sites
City of Albany		
Mini-Parks	0.34	2
Neighborhood Parks	4.93	2
Community Parks	6.75	1
Regional Parks	0.00	0
Special Use Areas	1.29	2
Linear Parks	9.32	4
Natural Open Space/Greenways	17.86	2
Undeveloped Parkland	0.00	0
Total City Areas	40.49	13
State of California		
Regional Parks	160.00	1
Total District	160.00	1
Trust for Public Lands		
Open Space Areas	367.00	1
Total District	367.00	1
Albany School District		
School Recreation Land	20.92	7
Total State	20.92	7
Private		
School – Mini Parks	0.44	1
School – Neighborhood Park	1.70	1
School – Special Use	19.91	3
School - Undeveloped	8.65	1
Private Open Space	10.01	1
Private Schools	13.81	1
Total State	54.52	8
TOTAL	642.93	30

Based on the inventory above, the current ratio of park land to population can be derived. The current ratio is the existing amount of park land divided by the existing population. It is expressed in terms of acres per 1,000 population.

By identifying the current ratios, one can quickly compare current inventories with other communities and determine whether Albany is above or below average. Listed below is the current ratio for each of the parkland categories in Albany.

Table 3.2
Summary of Current Ratios (All Agencies)
Albany Planning Area

Park Land Type	Current Ratio (Acres per 1,000 People)
Mini-Parks ¹	0.05 Acres/1,000 People
Neighborhood Parks ¹	0.39 Acres/1,000 People
Community Parks	0.40 Acres/1,000 People
Regional Parks ¹	9.52 Acres/1,000 People
Special Use Areas ¹	1.26 Acres/1,000 People
Linear Parks	0.55 Acres/1,000 People
Open Space Areas ¹⁽²⁾	1.66 Acres/1,000 People
TOTAL	13.83 Acres/1,000 Pop.

¹ Includes land owned by other agencies

² Excludes land owned by Trust for Public Lands

On the following page is a map of the existing parks and open space areas in the Albany area.

[Existing Park, Recreation and Open Space Areas Map]

**3.4 City of Albany
Park Recreation
and Open Space
Areas**

The table below summarizes the park, recreation and open space areas owned and maintained by the City of Albany.

Table 3.3
Summary of City Parks and Recreational Areas By Type
Albany Planning Area

Park Areas	Total Acres	Percent Developed	Condition
Mini Parks			
Dartmouth Tot Lot	0.07		Poor
San Gabriel Mini-Park	0.27		Poor
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>0.34</i>		
Neighborhood Parks			
Ocean View Park	3.61		Fair
Terrace Park	1.32		Fair
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>4.93</i>		
Community Parks			
Memorial Park	6.75		Fair
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>6.75</i>		
Regional Parks			
None	0		
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>0</i>		
Special Use Areas			
Albany Comm. Center	1.04		Good
Albany Senior Center	0.25		Good
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1.29</i>		
Linear Parks			
Catherine's Walk	0.02		Poor
Manor Walk	0.11		Poor
Ohlone Greenway	8.89		Fair
Waterfront Trail	0.30		Fair
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>9.32</i>		
Open Space Areas			
Albany Hill	12.75		Poor
Creekside Park	5.11		Fair
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>17.86</i>		
Undeveloped Lands			
None	0		
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>0</i>		
TOTAL	40.49		

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Table 3.4
Summary of Existing City Pathways/Trails (in linear feet)
Albany Planning Area

Area	Linear Feet	Surface
Multi-Use Paths		
Bay Trail	(est.) 7,150	Asphalt
Ohlone Greenway Path	(est.) 6,100	Asphalt
Park Trails		
Ocean View Park Path	NA	Asphalt
Terrace Park Path	NA	Asphalt
TOTAL	13,250	

Table 3.5
Summary of City Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Areas
Albany Planning Area

Park Area Services Matrix	Indoor Facilities	Baseball Fields	Softball Fields	Soccer Fields	Open Play Areas	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Basketball Courts	Playground Areas	Shelter Buildings	Picnic Areas	Restrooms	Parking Areas	Pathway/Trails	Natural Areas	Site Amenities	Other
Mini-Parks																	
Dartmouth Tot Lot																	
San Gabriel Mini-Park																	
Neighborhood Parks																	
Terrace Park						2											Rec. Building
Ocean View Park		1A		1A		2											
Community Parks																	
Memorial Park		1A		1A		4											
Regional Parks																	
None																	
Special Use Areas																	
Albany Comm. Center																	
Albany Senior Center																	
Linear Park																	
Catherine's Walk Park																	
Manor Walk																	
Ohlone Greenway																	
Waterfront Trail																	
Open Space Areas																	
Albany Hill Park																	
Creekside Park																	

3.5 Facility Definitions

The most functional facility types are adequately developed ones designed to serve a particular function. However, for various reasons (e.g., facility shortages, poor condition), sport facilities are often used for activities or sports they were not designed for. In order to assess the condition of existing facilities and to address additional needs, the facilities have been divided into the following categories.

<i>Baseball Fields</i>	<p>Regulation field dimensions: 320'+ outfields, 90 baselines, grass infield; permanent backstop and support facilities</p> <p>Youth field dimensions: 200'+ outfields, 60 baselines, dugouts. Grass infield not required; permanent backstop and support facilities</p>
<i>Softball Fields</i>	<p>Field dimensions (Slow-pitch): 250' minimum-women 275' minimum-men outfields, 60 baselines, (fast pitch) 225'; skinned infield; permanent backstop and support facilities</p> <p>Youth field dimensions: 200'+ outfields, 60 baselines, dugouts. Grass infield not required; permanent backstop and support facilities</p>
<i>Multi-Use Backstops</i>	<p>Field dimensions: 150'+ outfields, all grass field and backstop only</p>
<i>Soccer Fields</i>	<p>Regulation field dimensions: 195' x 225' by 330' x 360', grass or all weather surfacing; permanent or portable goals</p> <p>Youth field dimensions: Varies according to age U14 (60 yds. x 110 yds.) - U6 (20 yds. x 30 yds.); permanent or portable goals</p>
<i>Football Fields</i>	<p>Field dimensions: 160' x 360'; permanent goals</p>
<i>Tennis Courts</i>	<p>Appropriate dimensions, fenced and surfaced with a color coat</p>
<i>Gymnasium Space</i>	<p>Appropriate dimension for the sport and have adequate dimensions outside the court for safe play. Playing surface should be of resilient flooring.</p>
<i>Swimming Pools</i>	<p>Appropriate dimension for intended use (recreation or competitive)</p>
<i>Outdoor Basketball Court</i>	<p>42'-50' x 74'-94' plus appropriate perimeter distance</p>
<i>Volleyball Court (Sand)</i>	<p>30' x 60' plus appropriate perimeter distance</p>

3.6 Facility Inventory

Below is a list of recreational facilities categorized by type. This includes regulation baseball fields, youth baseball/softball fields, multi-use backstops, regulation softball fields, regulation soccer fields, youth soccer fields, football fields, tennis courts, gymnasium space and swimming pools. It should also be noted that the quality and condition of the facilities varies significantly between organizations. In many instances, the playing fields are uneven or lack adequate upkeep and maintenance.

Table 3.6
Summary of Facilities (All Agencies)
Albany Planning Area

Facility	Total Number of Facilities	Youth Size	Adult Size
Ball Fields	6	4	2
Soccer Fields	4	0	4
Football Fields	1	0	1
Tennis Courts	8	-	-
Outdoor BB Courts	7	-	-
Sand Volleyball Courts	0	-	-
Gymnasiums	6	3	3
Pool Space	3,150 SF	-	-
Pathways/Trails	13,250 LF	-	-

Table 3.7
Summary of Current Ratios (All Agencies)
City of Albany

Facility Type	Current Ratio (Facilities per 1,000 People)
Ball Fields	1 field per 2,800 people
Soccer Field	1 field per 4,200 people
Football Fields	1 Field per 16,800 People
Tennis Courts	1 Field per 2,100 People
Outdoor Basketball Courts	1 Field per 2,400 People
Volleyball Courts	None
Gymnasiums	1 Court per 2,400 People
Pool Space	187.5 Square Feet per 1,000 People
Pathways/Trails	0.15 Miles per 1000 People