

FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR OPEN SPACE AND PARK EXPANSION IN THE LOWER SAUSAL CREEK WATERSHED



FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR OPEN SPACE AND PARK EXPANSION IN THE LOWER SAUSAL CREEK WATERSHED (FRUITVALE DISTRICT)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sausal Creek flows from the Oakland Hills down to the San Leandro Bay, passing through the Montclair, Oakmore, Glenview, Dimond, School, Reservoir Hills, and Fruitvale Districts. Along the way the creek often alternates between “open channel”—meaning the creek is open to the air—and “culverted”—meaning the creek goes into stormwater pipes underground. In the School, Reservoir Hills, and Fruitvale Districts, the Creek is predominantly culverted and often unknown by the community. This is not unusual for creeks that flow through urban areas, but it does limit the areas where the community can experience the creek.

The Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) is an organization devoted to the restoration, maintenance, and protection of the Sausal Creek Watershed. FOSC is interested in working with watershed residents to create new spaces for the community to learn about and experience Sausal Creek. FOSC has led many efforts to enhance the creek in the upper and middle watersheds, including the Dimond District, and seeks to facilitate similar efforts in the lower watershed—School, Reservoir Hills, and Fruitvale Districts. With the assistance of state government grant funding, FOSC has undertaken a feasibility study to identify opportunities for creek-based awareness, education, and improvement. FOSC contracted with a consultant team made up of FlowWest and the Restoration Design Group to perform this study, which focused on looking at several open channel sections of Sausal Creek, as well as bordering parks along culverted sections, from below Highway 580 down to the Bay, and exploring the following questions:

How can we improve the creek ecosystem?

How can we create more and safer ways for people to experience the creek?

How can we help people learn more about the creek and the history of the land?

How can we inspire people to get engaged in their local watershed?

Building on the DACTIP funded Community Partners Needs Assessment conducted during 2018-2020 with over 300 Fruitvale community members which identified a lack of safe open space, parks, and creek access, the consultant team conducted interviews with different groups of people who are engaged in volunteering and stewardship of Sausal Creek – from City of Oakland staff to local volunteers in the watershed. The interviews focused on five sites along Sausal Creek: Wood Park, Barry Place, Austin Square, Josie de la Cruz Park, and Fruitvale Bridge Park. These discussions produced many ideas for improvements at these sites. We took these ideas and evaluated the feasibility of them—how easy or difficult would it be to build projects based on these ideas? These ideas are summarized in this document as “potential improvement actions” and are described for each of the five sites. Actions include things like creek daylighting (bringing it out of a culvert into a more natural open channel), replacing invasive plants with native ones, educational exhibits and signage, and formal walking corridors between creek sites.

For each of these actions, we describe what it would take to achieve them—how they would be built, how much they would cost, what logistics would be involved, and how easy or difficult it might be. We also describe the potential benefits of the actions. We hope this study answers the questions listed above, and provides a roadmap for turning these ideas into real actions that improve the communities around Sausal Creek.

INTRODUCTION

The Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) mission is to restore, maintain, and protect the Sausal Creek Watershed. FOSC strives to educate future generations, involve the community in local environmental stewardship, and collaborate with agencies and other nonprofits to have a positive impact on the local ecosystem. As part of that mission, FOSC desires to improve the health and community recognition of the Creek in its lower reaches in the Fruitvale District of Oakland, a low resourced district in Oakland. In 2016, FOSC applied for and received a Prop 1 grant (2018), managed by the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Disadvantaged Communities and Tribal Involvement Program (DACTIP) to continue engaging the Fruitvale Community and determine project ideas. This funding allowed FOSC to pursue a feasibility study and this document is the result of that effort.

The purpose of this feasibility study is to identify and evaluate ideas to increase access to and enhance Sausal Creek and adjacent park space at specific sites in the Lower Sausal Creek Watershed (from Highway 580 to the Oakland Estuary, Figure 1). FOSC aims to propose potential ideas, identify costs and other constraints, and subsequently further engage with local stakeholders and the communities around these sites to determine priorities in advancing them. For those ideas reviewed and supported by stakeholders and lower watershed communities, FOSC will act as a facilitator to seek grant funding and coordinate with landowners and the City of Oakland to implement actions. FOSC recognizes that due to many constraints including funding, land ownership, and community desires, a coordinated effort amongst many parties will be required to implement improvements at any of these sites.

BACKGROUND

OVERVIEW OF STUDY AREA

The Lower Sausal Creek Watershed extends from Highway 580 down to the outfall in the Oakland Estuary tidal canal, and encompasses all the land that drains to the creek including storm drains that collect rainwater from surrounding neighborhoods. The Lower Sausal Creek Watershed is located in the highly urbanized flats of East Oakland. This feasibility study focuses on five Lower Sausal Creek sites identified in the Walkable Watershed Concept Plan (WWCP): Wood Park, Barry Place, Austin Square, Josie de la Cruz Park, and Fruitvale Bridge Park (FOSC 2016).

The Lower Sausal Creek Watershed is characterized by a high proportion of impervious surfaces (e.g., asphalt, cement, and buildings) which reduce infiltration of rainfall and increase creek and waterway runoff volumes over shorter periods of time. Relatively small, frequent runoff events are capable of scouring the creek, removing gravel, and reducing the ability of the creek to support aquatic invertebrates. The combination of urbanization, channelization, creek scour, and bank erosion have eliminated most of the floodplains in the lower watershed—constricting larger flows to the channel and further increasing creek scour and eliminating riparian habitat. Flood concerns, urban encroachment, and lack of environmental awareness resulted in the majority of Lower Sausal Creek being confined in underground culverts. Culverted reaches include beneath Wood Park, under E. 27th Street, from Logan Street to Galindo Street, under E. 23rd and E. 22nd Streets, and under Foothill Blvd. The creek enters the last culvert at E. 19th Street and remains underground until the outlet adjacent to the Fruitvale Bridge. Figure 1 shows the Lower Sausal Creek

Figure 1: Modern Sausal Creek Watershed



Watershed, Sausal Creek with open channel and culverted sections depicted, and the feasibility study site locations.

Of the 50,000 Fruitvale residents, 60% are Latinx, while the student population is between 67%-94% Latinx. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the households in the neighborhood are linguistically isolated (no adult is proficient in English), and of those households, 73% are Spanish-speakers. “At the eight schools within 1.2 miles of Lower Sausal Creek, more than 90% of students are considered socio-economically disadvantaged. Residents have lower levels of education, lower rates of workforce participation, and lower incomes than found in the City of Oakland overall” (Unity Council & AECOM, 2014). Visibility of the daylighted sections of Sausal Creek is largely limited, and many of these areas in the lower watershed attract illegal dumping and activities (DACTIP, 2022a), which further impact these already disadvantaged communities. The Fruitvale District has limited and compromised open space and parks; the Fruitvale Bridge Park and Barry Place, a city-owned open space, have been identified as dumping hotspots by the City of Oakland. The Fruitvale is also in the top 20% of California communities for the number of impaired water bodies, environmental cleanups, hazardous waste sites, and groundwater contaminants, particularly in the waterfront zone.

Serving as a cultural center of the Bay Area’s Latinx community since the 1960s, the Fruitvale District boasts Latinx-oriented goods and services, authentic Mexican and Central American cuisine, and is the site of widely attended cultural events such as Día de Los Muertos, which draws as many as 100,000 people per year. It hosts health centers (La Clínica de la Raza and Native American Health Center), schools (15 elementary and middle schools and two high schools), and other nonprofit human service and community development organizations, including the nonprofit anchor in the community, The Unity Council. The Unity Council offers educational, financial, and housing services. In 2004, The Unity Council (Social Equity Development Corporation) opened the Fruitvale Transit Village. The “Fruitvale Village” is a nationally recognized mixed-use, transit-oriented development.

SUMMARY OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AND FOSC ASSESSMENTS OF LOWER WATERSHED

FOSC has been investing in community planning for watershed health and access through the WWCP, the Community Assessment, and by engaging with lower watershed community members and organizations for over a decade. FOSC collaborators in these efforts over the years include, but are not limited to: civic agency leaders, the Unity Council, Brothers on the Rise, the Segorea Te' Land Trust, and local schools (DACTIP 2022b). Community engagement has included restoration workdays, community tours, and the environmental education program targeting Fruitvale schools. The WWCP document identified lower watershed green infrastructure improvements and park expansions and connections. Through listening sessions, interviews, and surveys, the Community Assessment explored community identified, water-related needs and priorities in the Fruitvale District. Additionally, two upcoming redevelopment projects are planned in the lower watershed: a City of Oakland capital improvement project and a private development project. These documents and events, summarized below are the findings from reviewing these documents relevant to the five Lower Sausal Creek watershed locations identified for this study.

FRIENDS OF SAUSAL CREEK COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

FUNDING BACKGROUND

In 2014, California voters approved the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act (Proposition 1), authorizing \$510 million to the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program, administered by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). Ten percent of this funding (\$51 million) was allocated across the 12 IRWM Funding Areas to the Disadvantaged Community Involvement (DACI) Program, which

was designed to ensure the involvement of disadvantaged communities.

In 2016, the DWR granted \$6.5 million to the San Francisco Bay Area Funding Area, who expanded DACI to Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program (DACTIP) to explicitly include Tribes. One of the overarching, intended outcomes of DACTIP is to “identify, understand, and assess water-related issues and challenges and assets in the Bay Area from the perspective of Disadvantaged Communities and Tribes, including the impacts of these challenges and community preferences on how these issues should be addressed” (DACTIP, 2022a).

FOSC COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

FOSC applied for and received a grant from this funding source to engage with members of the Fruitvale District of Oakland “to investigate, understand, and describe water needs from the community’s perspective” and to partner with the community to come up with a range of potential projects and funding sources. The goals were to:

- expand community awareness of the relationship of the health of the creek and its watershed,
- to enhance public access and enjoyment of the creek for the natural and cultural benefits it can provide,
- to catalyze projects that enhance water quality, habitat values in the creek corridor, or
- address other needs identified through assessment and project activities (DACTIP, 2022b).

FOSC conducted two rounds of data collection: one from November 2018 to May 2019 and the second from June 2019 to February 2020. These included student surveys, surveys from health providers, convenience surveys, listening sessions, and community leader interviews. These sessions were held at the Fruitvale-San Antonio Senior Center, the Cesar Chavez Library, the Carmen Flores Parks and Recreation Center. FOSC conducted interviews with community organizations, including The Unity Council, the Native American Health Center, Holy Names College, and Peralta Hacienda. FOSC surveyed middle

school students, and used a convenience survey to engage community members at the 2018 & 2019 Día de los Muertos events. In total, almost 300 community members participated in the needs assessment. The key water-related problems and priorities identified by this assessment included illegal dumping and trash in the streets, storm drains, and waterways, concern with drinking water, and the lack of safe park and green space (DACTIP, 2022b).

SAUSAL CREEK WALKABLE WATERSHED CONCEPT PLAN (2016)

In 2016, FOSC embarked on efforts to improve the health and awareness of Sausal Creek in the Fruitvale and surrounding neighborhoods. With grant support, FOSC hosted community discussions to gather ideas and develop a concept plan to improve watershed and neighborhood health. This work culminated in the Sausal Creek WWCP. The WWCP was developed by FOSC with assistance from the National Park Service and a consulting firm, Skeo, to provide a roadmap to identify green infrastructure opportunities and improve both the creek and neighborhood walking routes. Components included enhancement of key sites within the watershed, promoting creek stewardship and education, and improving neighborhood connections to Sausal Creek and other open spaces—including connecting the upper and lower watershed communities. The plan defined short-term and long-term actions for the Lower Watershed, including at Wood Park, Barry Place, and Josie de la Cruz Park. Many of the defined actions have been brought into this feasibility study. The plan also identified the following recommended programs and activities (FOSC 2016), many of which are being pursued or are still relevant today:

Neighborhood Investments: Improve pedestrian and biking safety, reduce trash and illegal dumping, create more creek access/signs/ playgrounds/benches/viewpoints.

Stewardship: Expand and build on Adopt a Spot, Adopt a Storm Drain, and Adopt a Tree programs to enlist creek

stewards to promote positive uses of sites and reduce illegal dumping and crime.

Walking Tours: Integrate education signs and art into trails (animal footprints, fish on sidewalks, water painted at creek crossings, art on bush shelters/trash cans), lead activities such as treasure hunts, storytelling, facilitate community creek walks, and publicize the availability of self-guided tours.

Capacity Building: Build partnerships with community organizations and co-host projects and education activities such as field trips, walking tours, and stormwater projects. Convene partners to share strategies for engaging communities according to needs (e.g., restoring the watershed, providing job training, and seeking funds for community projects).

FRUITVALE ALIVE PROJECT

The Fruitvale Alive Project is a California Active Transportation Program (ATP) funded project to install sidewalk level protected bike lanes to connect the Fruitvale Ave Bridge with Fruitvale BART Station and East 12th Street (City of Oakland 2022). In addition to filling this gap in the City's protected bike lane and pedestrian infrastructure, this project will also create a new connection along the Bay Trail. The project, slated to begin construction in late 2022/early 2023, will include the following components:

1. Widen the sidewalks by five to seven feet on each side of Fruitvale Avenue
2. Install a sidewalk-level protected bike lane on the corridor connecting the Fruitvale Avenue Bridge to E. 12th Street and the Fruitvale BART Station
3. Create a new connection to a new segment of the SF Bay Trail through Jingtletown
4. Close two "slip lanes" at the south side of intersection of Fruitvale and E. 12th Street (locations where cars make fast turns) and convert them into pedestrian and bicycle space
5. Install pedestrian bulb-outs where feasible to reduce the

- crossing distance for people walking
6. Install new landscaping and greenery to beautify the corridor and improve air quality
 7. Install new pedestrian-oriented sidewalk lighting along the corridor

These components are complementary with the goals of the Community Assessment, the Walkable Watershed Concept Plan, and this feasibility study.

DUKE REALTY RE-DEVELOPMENT OF 3600 ALAMEDA AVE – FORMER OWENS-ILLINOIS GLASS FACTORY

In December 2021, Duke Realty purchased the former Owens-Illinois Glass Factory, a 23.9-acre parcel located at 3600 Alameda Ave, at the corner of Alameda and Fruitvale Avenues. The former factory is located on the Oakland side of the Fruitvale Bridge, adjacent to the outlet of Sausal Creek along the Oakland Estuary tidal canal. Duke Realty plans to build a large industrial building to revitalize the site as a business hub. The re-development project goals that align with FOSC's include: "partnership with the City of Oakland, staff and local community," "addressing significant environmental issues," and "improve traffic, bike and pedestrian circulation." Part of Duke Realty's plan is to update the section of the Bay Trail that runs along Alameda Avenue, on the tidal canal side of the glass factory. This will include shifting part of Alameda Avenue onto their private property (but allowing public access) and creating a green strip that will separate auto traffic from the Bay Trail. The project plans to add seating, signage, coastal landscaping, and safety railing. The redevelopment project is planning to revegetate a portion of the Fruitvale Bridge Park (one of the sites evaluated in this feasibility study) with native, drought-tolerant plants. The EIR public review period for this project will end in September 2022, with project approval planned for November 2022. Demolition and construction are expected to start in December 2022 and September 2023, respectively (Galvez & Bernstein, 2022).

SITE RECONNAISSANCE

On February 16th, 2022, FlowWest staff met with Anna Marie Schmidt (FOSC Executive Director) and Barry Stenger (FOSC Board of Director Vice President) as well as subcontractor Restoration Design Group (RDG) staff, to take a tour of the prospective project sites in the Lower Watershed (from upstream to downstream): Wood Park, Barry Place, Austin Square, and Josie de la Cruz Park. On March 9th, 2022, FlowWest returned for additional reconnaissance to further characterize each site and develop initial design concepts. In this second site visit, FlowWest also toured Fruitvale Bridge Park.

During these visits FlowWest, RDG, and FOSC assessed current conditions, took photographs, and discussed/visualized existing Fruitvale resident ideas and new project ideas.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

After performing site reconnaissance and review of existing documents, FlowWest (with guidance from FOSC) organized a series of videoconferences with small, focused groups of stakeholders. The goal of these focus groups/interviews was to gain a better understanding of priorities, needs, hopes, and site-specific ideas that would build upon the existing assessments (Community Assessment) and previous community engagement. FlowWest conducted a total of seven interviews/focus groups with stakeholder groups identified in the Lower Sausal Creek Watershed:

1. FOSC Board Members (March 30th, 2022)
2. Barry Place community stewardship group (March 31st, 2022)
3. City of Oakland, Watershed and Stormwater Division City liaison to FOSC (April 5th, 2022)
4. Wood Park community stewardship group (April 6th, 2022)
5. Current and former FOSC staff (April 8th and April 19th,

- 2022)
6. Josie de la Cruz Park – Carmen Flores Recreation Center Director (April 12th, 2022)
 7. Fruitvale Bridge Park stewardship group (April 29th, 2022)

During each interview, we asked the following general series of questions:

1. What do you see as opportunities and what are your priorities for this site?
2. What have you heard from the community regarding this site?
3. What educational features would you like to see here?
4. How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship?
5. What else do you want to see more of in the lower watershed?

Additionally, stakeholders were given an open forum to discuss any other matters that came to mind. Answers to questions and comments were documented and summarized in meeting notes, provided as Appendix A. Findings from the interviews were integrated into the potential improvement actions for each site.

FRUITVALE PLAN UPDATE MEETING

After the Fruitvale Bridge Park group interview, which included Councilmember Noel Gallo, FlowWest was invited to attend/present at the “Fruitvale Plan Update,” hosted by the councilmember. FOSC provided a brief update and FlowWest participated in the call. The meeting included: 1) a presentation by Duke Realty, who had purchased the old Owens-Illinois Glass Factory property for new development; and, 2) a presentation by the City of Oakland Department of Transportation about the Fruitvale Alive Plan. This meeting helped inform the context of planned projects surrounding the feasibility study area.

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS AND ROAD MAP FOR LOWER SAUSAL CREEK SITES

For this study, FlowWest and RDG staff analyzed project ideas for a total of five sites, two of which were identified in the proposal for the feasibility study: Josie de la Cruz and Barry Place; and three others that were recommended based on preliminary evaluation of potential sites: Wood Park, Austin Square, and Fruitvale Bridge Park (see Figure 1). For each of the sites, the following overarching goals were considered to guide the development of potential improvement actions.

- Improve education, awareness, and appreciation of Sausal Creek—watershed ecology & creek history/development, cultural and Lisjan Ohlone history and current activities, natural history, and native flora/fauna—within the surrounding communities
- Connect lower watershed communities and upper watershed communities and points of interest
- Improve access to, amenities, awareness, and usage of existing green spaces along Lower Sausal Creek
- Create new or expanded park and green space sites for the community
- Improve community stewardship of the Sausal Creek watershed

The following sections describe each site in more detail and recommend potential improvements for each. Within the discussions per site we present a site description; summary of the current use of the site by the community and highlight any existing community interest for changes; a summary of site-specific goals, opportunities, and constraints; a map and description of potential improvement actions; and finally, a table summarizing the feasibility of the improvements in terms of cost, permitting, and level of effort to accomplish—level of

effort (low, medium, or high) relative to the actions proposed in this report. This section concludes with a discussion of funding mechanisms for the potential improvement actions.

WOOD PARK

Wood Park is a central community gathering space located between the Reservoir Hills, Sausal Creek, and School neighborhoods of Oakland, CA. It is a sizable, publicly-owned space that has a well-organized community group that stewards the site.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Wood Park encompasses approximately 6-acres and is located directly southwest of Highway 580 and generally follows the western side of Sausal Creek's historical valley (see Figure 2). It was created in the 1970 after decades of recurring landslides that destroyed homes along the east side of McKillop Road. Attempts to study and arrest the landslides failed to succeed and the space was turned into the park that exists today. The most recent slides were in 2006. It is unclear to what extent the instability of the area will affect potential future uses including creek daylighting, and such analysis was beyond the scope of this study.

Sausal Creek exists as an open channel in the upstream portion of the park (see Figure 3) but is largely inaccessible except for unofficial trail(s) that extend from the main open area of the park upstream. This area is forested with eucalyptus and other trees and borders private properties. The Creek enters a culvert just upstream of the main body of the park and remains underground throughout the rest of the park. A concrete swale runs above the alignment of the culverted creek (Figure 4) that conveys overland flow from the park to the Creek, while a second concrete swale parallels the first to the west and joins it near the southern border of the park.

Although the park is largely owned by the City of Oakland, ACFCWCD owns portions of the park and maintains the

culverted portion of the Creek. Official parcel maps provided by the City and Alameda County do not identify the owner of the area bounded in black in Figure 2 but this is presumed to be owned in fee title or encumbered under an easement by ACFCWCD. This strip of land running along the eastern edge of the park generally follows the Sausal Creek culvert alignment. A pump station operated by ACFCWCD is located toward the east of the park, directly above the culverted Creek. It is believed that this pump acts as an overflow device to bring stormwater out of the culvert to the surface when its capacity is exceeded.

The central part of the park is generally used by the community for activities such as outdoor exercise, picnicking, and dog walking. The southern part of the park, running along the

Figure 2: Wood Park site description



ACFCWCD easement, has been largely unmaintained and is impacted by non-native or undesirable vegetation species including English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, and poison oak. None of the park entrances are ADA accessible as the generally steep terrain near E. 29th Street and Sheffield Avenue requires stairs or steep trail entrances. The entrance at School Street is notably flatter but leads to a steep trail connecting to the center of the park.

COMMUNITY USES AND SUPPORT

A self-formed group of local volunteers (Adopt-a-Spot) has been stewarding the park since at least 2004 and their aim is to maintain an environmentally-significant urban park that is valued and utilized by the community. FOSC has provided technical assistance, promotion, and work teams over the years as they conducted invasive species removal and planting activities. Based on our interviews, they also wish to build

Figure 3: Open section of creek at upstream end of park, facing upstream



local support for Sausal Creek environmental stewardship, environmental sustainability, and natural and cultural history. During our interview with the volunteers, they expressed significant interest in potential daylighting of Sausal Creek in the park.

GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONSTRAINTS

Based on stakeholder input, previous assessments, and background research we developed a list of Wood Park improvement goals, opportunities, and constraints. They are outlined below.

Goals:

- Increase awareness and stewardship of Sausal Creek
- Improve the local ecosystem
- Increase public use of the park, including use by local seniors

Figure 4: Concrete swale running above the culverted section of Sausal Creek within Wood Park



Opportunities:

- Relatively large, public park
- Active local stewardship group
- Mature native vegetation
- Sausal Creek flows above ground upstream and downstream of the park

Constraints:

- Need to coordinate actions in the park, particularly those involving the Creek, with ACFCWCD
- City funding to maintain new park features
- Lack of irrigation infrastructure
- Lack of public restrooms and trash service
- Steep grades limit potential ADA access
- Uncertainty of soil stability and potential mitigation measure installed in the past to arrest slides

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

This section summarizes Wood Park conceptual ideas that were developed based on synthesis of the Walkable Watershed Concept Plan, stakeholder interviews, and a design meeting conducted by the consultant team. The full range of potential actions to improve Wood Park are illustrated in Figure 5 and summarized in the sections that follow. Assumptions, permitting considerations, rough costs, and potential funding mechanisms to assist in planning for the potential actions are presented in Table 1.

MARKER 1: PARK ENTRANCE IMPROVEMENTS



This action includes improvements to the three Wood Park entrances, with the main entrance to the park at School Street (denoted with an asterisk on Figure 5). Improvements could include informational signage and architectural elements to describe Sausal Creek and acknowledge Indigenous Peoples' history and current presence; and, pay tribute to the land, community, and park history. Map boxes and QR codes could also be installed to provide informational materials. The entrance at School Street is currently an unmarked opening in a chain-link fence at the end of the School Street cul-de-sac



Figure 5: Wood Park Potential Improvement Actions



Improvement Actions

-  Symbolic Creek
-  Running Path
-  Trail

-  Creek Daylighting
- Sausal Creek Flow Network
-  Open Creek

-  Underground culvert or storm drain
-  Park Extent



1. Park Entrance Improvements
2. Irrigation and Restrooms
3. Running Path
4. Symbolic Creek
5. Trail
6. Native Plant Garden
7. Play Structure
8. Artistic Installations
9. Creek Trail / Connection to Barry Place
10. Overlook
11. Daylight Sausal Creek

(Figure 6) which limits awareness of and accessibility to the park. This entrance could be replaced with a more inviting and aesthetically pleasing “grand entrance” to better signal the park location and attract greater use. The School Street entrance is likely the only entrance that could potentially provide ADA access to the park in terms of existing grade; there is also potentially room for blue curb parking to be established at the School Street entrance. ADA access at the entrances on the west side of the park could require significant grading to create switchbacks at ADA-compliant slopes. ADA accessibility should be evaluated during advancement of this concept.

MARKER 2: IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESTROOM FACILITIES

Wood Park community stewardship members expressed an interest in new plumbing installations in the park to facilitate their ongoing vegetation management and increased

Figure 6: School St. entrance. Chainlink fence and lack of signage do not signal park entrance (Google Street View, 2019)



park usage. They currently engage in weed removal and maintenance and planting of native and landscape vegetation. A limiting factor is the lack of irrigation facilities and they currently use a neighbor hose to irrigate new plantings. They expressed a strong need to have spigots for watering in the park. In addition, the park lacks restroom facilities and their addition would likely expand park usage.

MARKER 3: RUNNING PATH

Marker 3 indicates installation of an official running and walking path for outdoor exercise. The path could connect to other existing paths within the park. For the purposes of getting a general cost estimate for this action, we assumed an 800-ft long path with a 6-ft width surfaced with GraniteCrete, an ADA-compliant, low maintenance product typically used by the City of Oakland for unpaved trails. This could be installed in the large, flat grassy area in the middle of the park (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Open, central area of park with existing asphalt path. A loop running trail could encircle this area (Google Photos, 2014)



MARKER 4: SYMBOLIC CREEK

Replacing the existing concrete swale that runs along the Sausal Creek culvert alignment with a natural-looking symbolic creek bed would provide better awareness of the Creek location and offer opportunities for education (Figure 8). During storm events, as the swale currently does, the symbolic creek would convey overland storm flows along the Sausal Creek alignment and to the Creek itself. A natural creek bed would provide a much more meaningful representation of the Creek than the concrete swale. Flow in the symbolic creek could occur seasonally from winter rains, and/or it could be supplied by pumping water from culverted Sausal Creek. This feature, coupled with informational signage, could improve awareness of the existence of Sausal Creek to the local community. Park aesthetics could be enhanced by creating a pleasant trickling water sound when the symbolic creek is flowing.

Figure 8: Proposed location for symbolic creek and path: downstream end of park, above culvert



The creek could also provide seasonal habitat benefits to the local bird population. This feature could be approximately 350 feet long and five feet wide, with an assumed two-foot depth of excavation. The surface of the symbolic creek could be covered with creek cobbles.

MARKER 5: TRAIL ALONG SYMBOLIC CREEK

Currently the southern portion of the park over the Sausal Creek culvert is largely unused due to overgrown vegetation and no trail access (Figure 8). This concept could incorporate a new trail into the park to parallel the symbolic creek and provide access to the southern end of the park. It could incorporate resting benches and connect existing walking paths in Wood Park to the location where Sausal Creek comes above ground. We assumed a 360-ft long path with a 2-ft width, graded/cut into the hillside west of the symbolic creek. Where required to retain the trail, it would be supported by timber headers on the downslope side secured by rebar pins into the ground.

MARKER 6: NATIVE PLANT GARDEN AND INVASIVE VEGETATION REMOVAL & MAINTENANCE

A native plant garden could be installed to augment other native plantings in Wood Park, accompanied by educational/interpretive signage to enhance habitat and educational opportunities. In addition to Sausal Creek watershed-specific native plants, species significant to the Lisjan Ohlone people could also be included in the planting palette, and the historical and present-day cultural significance of these could be described on interpretive signs. Map boxes and QR codes could be used to provide park goers with more information on native plants and their historical and cultural contexts in the community. For the purposes of cost estimating, we assume that the FOSC would continue to donate plants from their nursery for this activity.

In order to help native plants flourish, controlling invasive species is critical. This action proposes removing invasive vegetation throughout the site, primarily focused on the south side of the park. Species to be removed include, but are not

limited to English ivy, Scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry, Pampas grass, and black acacia. Stakeholders also expressed the desire to remove poison oak from the area. Regarding eucalyptus, stakeholders expressed the desire for either full removal or trimming—depending on the desires of neighboring community members and property owners. Invasive vegetation could be replaced with vegetation native to the Sausal Creek watershed.

For the purposes of cost estimating, we assumed an invasive species removal area with native plant species revegetation of 1-3 acres. Plants used for revegetation could be donated by the FOSC and regular maintenance to prevent invasives from returning could be volunteer and coordinated by the community stewardship group with technical and promotional support from FOSC.

MARKER 7: PLAY STRUCTURES OR “NATURAL PLAYSCAPES”

Wood Park currently does not have any facilities for children. This action proposes to create play structures, a “tot-lot”, or some sort of “natural playscape” at the park to attract a wider demographic. These play structures could double as artistic elements with representative shapes for climbing. In 2012, the City of Oakland Public Works Agency put out an RFP for an “As Needed Landscape Architectural Firm to provide full design services for the William Wood Park Improvement Project”, with the general concept of a “hillside ‘natural playscapes’ area and elements; small picnic area; and small planting bed area”. They included a sketch plan and “playscape vision statement” that was produced by the Wood Park community stewardship group (see Appendix B).

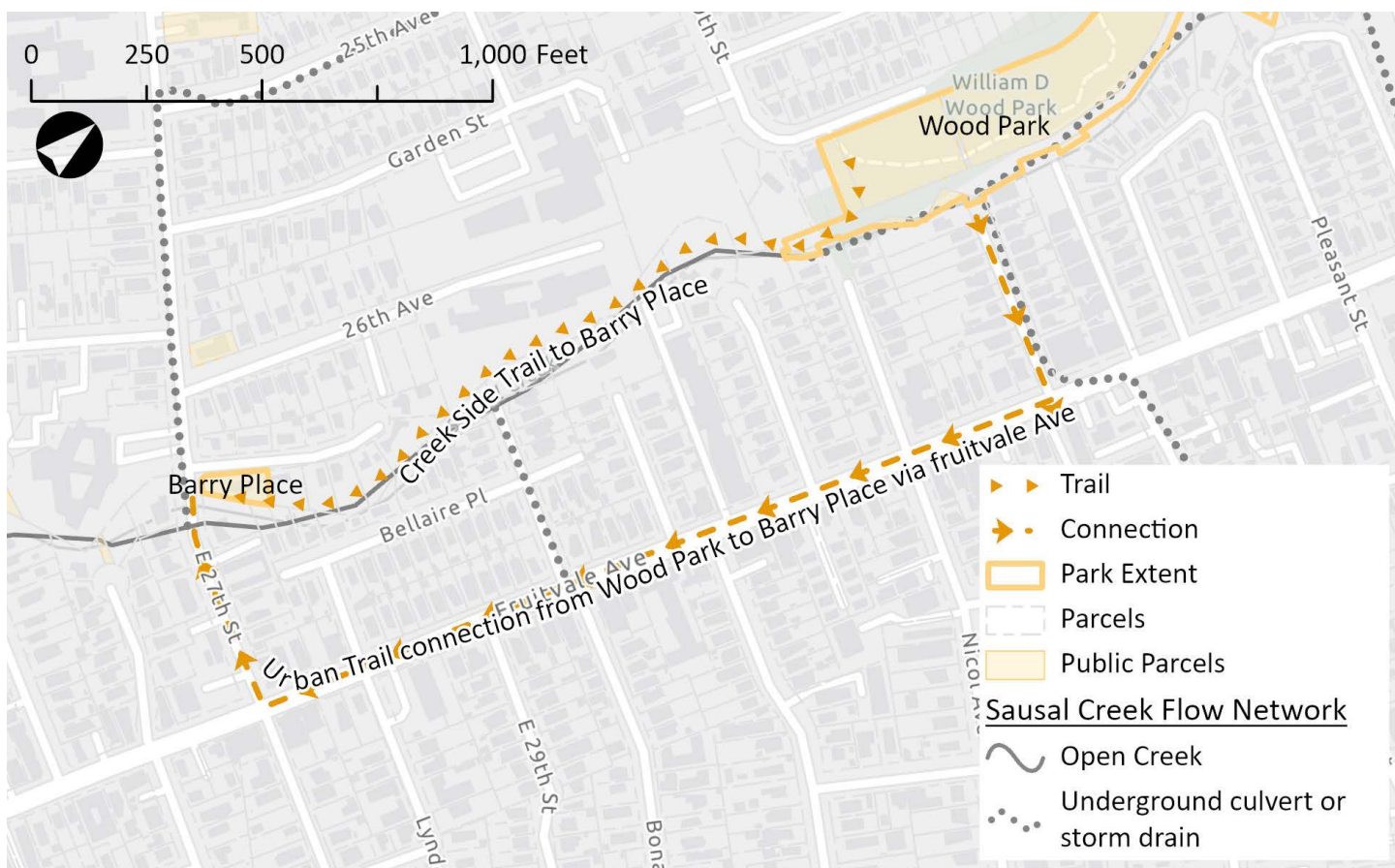
MARKER 8: ARTISTIC INSTALLATIONS

Community members expressed interest in creating murals or other artistic features in Wood Park that recognize Sausal Creek, as well as the cultural heritage of the surrounding communities and Lisjan Ohlone. This could either be added to the walls of the pump station, as suggested by the Wood Park community, or could be a stand-alone newly erected installation.

MARKER 9: CREEK TRAIL AND CONNECTION TO BARRY PLACE

To enhance connectivity between park sites along Sausal Creek, a trail or walking network connecting Wood Park to Barry Place could be created. This could be accomplished in two ways—by creating a creek-side trail along Sausal Creek or installing emblems or signs that direct pedestrians along an urban trail on existing streets (School St., Fruitvale Ave., and E. 27th St. – Figure 9). The connection along Fruitvale Avenue was also proposed in the Walkable Watersheds Concept Plan (FOSC 2016). The creek-side trail is an addition that could provide an immersive creek walk experience but could also require potentially challenging property owner coordination,

Figure 9: Wood Park proposed trail and connection to Barry Place



land acquisition, or easements as well as issues regarding concrete-lined part of the creek and steep terrain. Due to uncertainty in the ability to obtain agreements with private landowners, a cost for the creekside trail is not possible to develop at this time. For the urban trail option, the signage or sidewalk emblems could be installed every 1/8-1/4 mile, with 3 to 4 installations over the half-mile walk.

MARKER 10: OVERLOOK

At the downstream end of Wood Park, Sausal Creek emerges from its culvert into an open channel, but it is not visible to park visitors because of lack of a formal trail and a fence that blocks the creek from view. An overlook at the south end of Wood Park connected to the existing trail system would enhance awareness of the Creek and provide greater usage of the park spaces (Figure 10). The overlook could include informational signs and point out visible features of interest. It may also provide resting benches and information about the Sausal Creek watershed—including overlook location and other points of interest.

For the purposes of cost estimating, we assumed an area of 400 square feet (~20x20 feet), surfaced with the same GraniteCrete Surface or similar ADA-compliant surfacing as the running path, a new 20-ft long 3 rail fence (to replace the existing chain-link fence), one 10-ft half back ADA bench, one 8-ft full back ADA bench, one repurposed Eucalyptus log bench, and one interpretive sign.

MARKER 11: DAYLIGHTING SAUSAL CREEK

One of the long-term goals highlighted by all stakeholders is to restore Sausal Creek surface flows by daylighting through Wood Park. The daylighting design could take on different forms—including diverting a proportion of flow to eliminate flooding concerns, partial use of the existing concrete infrastructure, or full daylighting and restoration. A flow splitting or diversion structure could be installed at the upstream end to divert flows into the open channel. Partial use of the existing concrete infrastructure could entail removal of the entire box culvert, except the eastern wall, leaving that in place to protect

the private properties along the eastern edge of the creek, as is the current layout just upstream of the culvert (see Figure 3). The creek bed could be naturalized, and the west bank could be graded and planted with native riparian plants. This option could reduce overall excavation, demolition, and cost. Daylighting could restore approximately 1,040 feet of open Sausal Creek channel within the park and create a continuously open reach stretching from Highway 580 to East 27th Street (at Barry Place).

We estimated based on ACFCWCD engineering drawings of the culverted reach (drawn in 1970, revised in 1977) that the average depth of the culvert bottom below the ground surface is approximately 13 feet. For the purposes of cost estimating, we assumed that to daylight the Creek could require a cross sectional excavation of approximately 850 sq ft of soil and other material over the 1,040-foot length of creek. This

Figure 10: Proposed location for overlook, at downstream end of culvert/swale (creek daylights just past fence in center of photo)

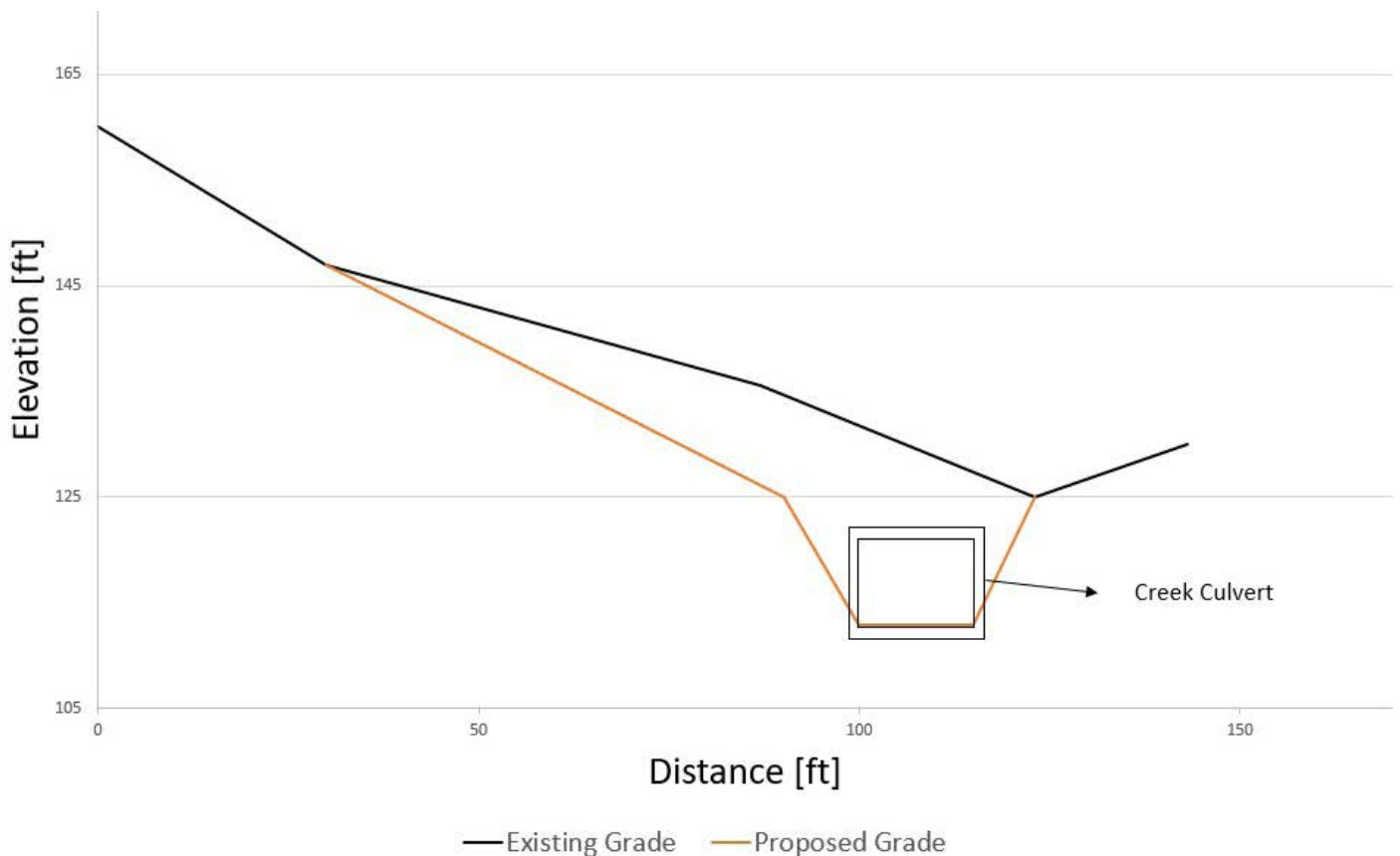


equates to approximately 35,000 cubic yards of material to be removed and disposed of or reused. A conceptual cross section of the proposed and existing grades is shown in Figure 11. Depending on the daylighting approach, an additional embankment may be necessary on the eastern (i.e., towards Fruitvale Ave. and towards the right in Figure 11) side of the Creek to prevent flooding in the neighborhood between Fruitvale Ave. and the Creek.

ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The potential improvement actions described in the previous section vary in terms of complexity, level of effort, and cost. Table 1 summarizes and compares these actions in the hope

Figure 11: Conceptual cross section (looking upstream or northwards) of proposed daylighting of Sausal Creek (adapted from ACFCWCD as-built engineering drawings)



of assisting FOSC in engaging with stakeholders (Wood Park neighbors, Fruitvale District residents, City of Oakland, etc.) in prioritizing and planning for improvements at Wood Park to benefit the community and improve habitat. Advancing the potential improvement actions will require engagement and coordination with a variety of stakeholders, including:

- Local Community Members
- City of Oakland
- ACFCWCD
- City Council

Table 1: Wood Park Potential Improvement Actions Summary

| Action | Assumptions | Permitting Needs | Level of Effort to Accomplish | Cost |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Park Entrance | 3 locations; 1 ADA-compliant entrance at School Street | Oakland Building Permit | Low | \$ 110,000 |
| 2. Irrigation Infrastructure | Includes set-up of new meter, piping, and spigots | Oakland Building Permits; CEQA exemption | Medium | \$40,000 |
| 2. Restroom Facility | 2-stall plumbed facility | Oakland Building permit | Medium | \$350,000 |
| 3. Running Path | Includes grading, materials, and installation | Oakland Building permit | Low | \$120,000 |
| 4. Symbolic Creek | | Local and State/Federal Permits; Water right coordination; City of Oakland Creek Protection Permit | Low (without pump) Medium (with pump) | \$25,000 (without pump) \$100,000 (with pump) |
| 5. Trail along Symbolic Creek | Includes grading, materials, and installation | | Low | \$13,000 |

Table 1: Wood Park Potential Improvement Actions Summary (cont.)

| Action | Assumptions | Permitting Needs | Level of Effort to Accomplish | Cost |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 6. Native Plant Garden | Includes design, plants, 3 interpretive signs | Probably none needed, but could help to have it included in a building permit | Low | \$50,000 - \$100,000* |
| 6. Invasive Tree & Vegetation Removal and Maintenance | Includes 3 years of maintenance | May need to notify CDFW | Medium | \$25,000-\$75,000* |
| 7. Play Structures | | Building permit; may need to go before parks commission or design commission | Medium | \$50,000-\$100,000 |
| 8. Artistic Installations | | No permits, potentially commission approvals | Medium | \$20,000-\$50,000 |
| 9. Creek Trail Connection to Barry Place | | Building permit, potentially grading permit or waiver | High | TBD due to private land access |
| 9. Urban Trail Connection to Barry Place via Fruitvale Ave | Includes sidewalk art and markers | N/A | Low | \$50,000 |
| 10. Overlook | | Potentially just building permit, but would want to check in with CDFW and Regional Board | Medium | \$40,000-75,000 |
| 11. Daylight Sausal Creek | Includes design, permitting, and construction | All local, state, and federal permits | High | \$10,000,000-\$12,000,000 |

* Cost assumes contractor. Use of CCC or volunteer labor could reduce costs

BARRY PLACE

Barry Place presents an opportunity for the public to engage with an open channel section of Sausal Creek, and it has a history of dedicated community members engaged in protecting and improving the creek area. This is an identified illegal dumping hotspot in Oakland and volunteers are often plagued by mounds of trash, appliances, mattresses, and other debris dumped in the creek, in front of fencing, and inside the parcel. Nonetheless, these community members coordinate invasive species removal, trash removal, native plantings, and other improvements at the site. In addition to working with the private facility and the City on cleaning up illegal dumping and encampment debris on the site and creek banks on the other

Figure 12: Barry Place site description



side of E. 27th, they have also worked with FOSC to enhance habitat in the creek corridor and received donations of native plants from FOSC. The WWCP identified this site as a location to add educational signage to describe information about stormwater impacts and aquatic habitat, and noted the potential to engage local private property owners in projects to passively treat stormwater through rain gardens or other methods.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Barry Place site is located at the intersection of E. 27th Street and Barry Place. It is a small parcel owned by the City of Oakland. Upstream of the site Sausal Creek is an open channel for approximately 1,500 feet and the banks are privately owned. At the downstream end of the Barry Place site, the creek goes under E. 27th Street through a culvert (see Figure 13). Downstream of the E. 27th Street culvert the creek is an open channel for approximately 1,100 feet before going into a culvert under Logan Street. Immediately upstream of

Figure 13: View looking downstream in Sausal Creek to 27th Street culvert



the site a concrete grade control structure with a large drop creates a waterfall (see Figure 14). In the early 2000's, invasive vegetation species were removed and native species were planted, but the local community group described maintenance of invasives including cape ivy and Himalayan blackberry as an ongoing challenge. Existing vegetation is shown in Figure 15. An informal trail was built by a local Boy Scout troop, with steps and a rope railing leading down the steep slope to the creek (see Figure 16).

COMMUNITY USES AND SUPPORT

Two community members currently coordinate trash clean-up, invasive species removal, native plantings and educate others about the site. One of the members became the Adopt-a-Site lead in 2000 and FOSC has supported recruitment of small workday crews several times a year. These community members are interested in having this site established as a city park, to enable more support for protecting the watershed, to

Figure 14: Upstream view from trail-accessible part of Sausal Creek from Barry Place



Figure 15: Existing vegetation and informal trail; steps with rope railing seen in back of photo

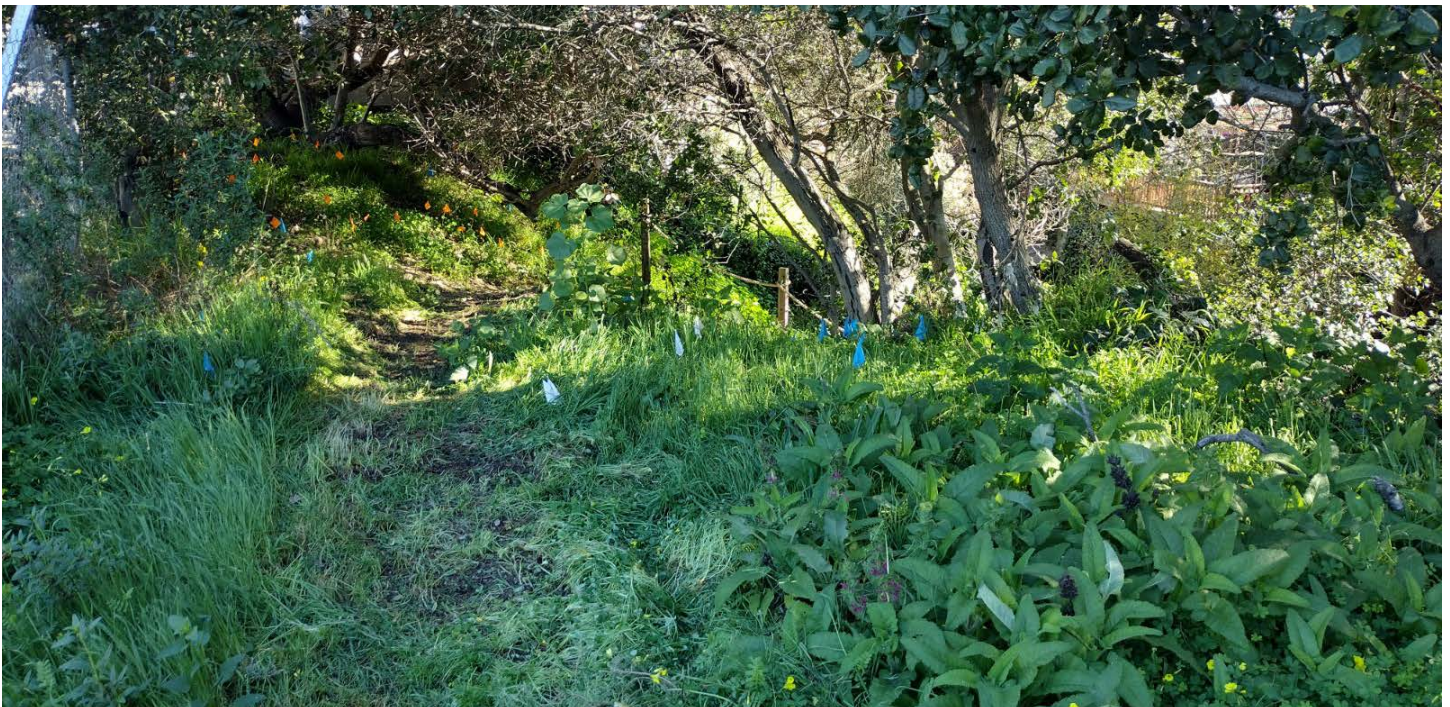
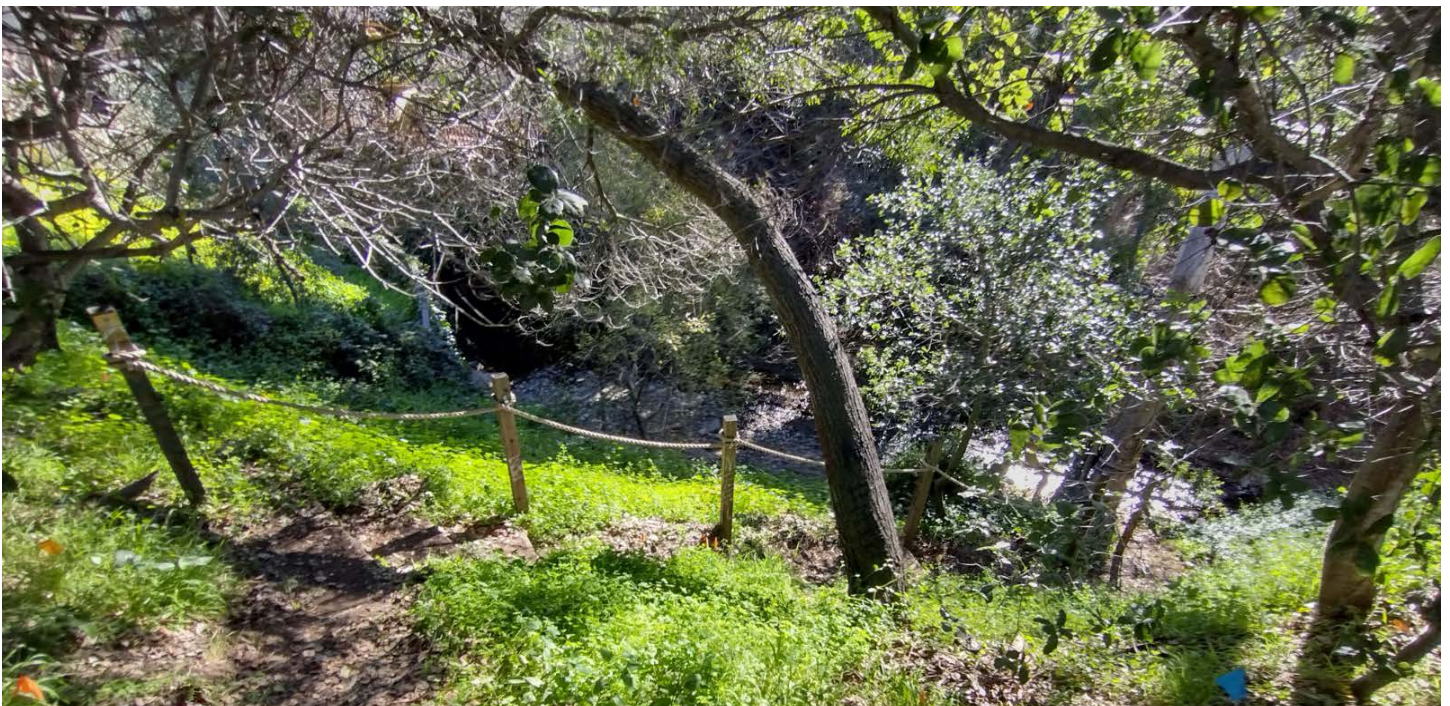


Figure 16: Steps with rope railing leading down to Sausal Creek



enhance accessibility, and to aid in creating more educational features. FOSC staff also noted that enhanced ADA accessibility should be a priority for the site, and many of the current volunteers are seniors and have limited mobility. There is also interest in a connecting trail between Wood Park and Barry Place, and the property owner upstream of the site is open to the idea of an easement on their property for the trail.

GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Increase awareness and stewardship of Sausal Creek
- Improve the local ecosystem
- Allow creek access, with appropriate safety considerations
- Reduce litter and illegal dumping
- Improve ADA access
- Manage invasive species; remove eucalyptus

Opportunities:

- Open section of Sausal Creek owned by the City of Oakland
- Active, dedicated volunteer group

Constraints:

- Property is fenced off and locked
- Large eucalyptus trees and other invasives

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

The following section summarizes potential improvements for Barry Place, developed through the methods previously described. An overarching goal for this site is to establish it as a City of Oakland park. The potential actions to improve Barry Place are illustrated in Figure 17 and summarized in the sections that follow. Assumptions, permitting considerations, and rough costs to assist in planning for the potential actions are presented in Table 2.

Figure 17: Barry Place Potential Improvement Actions



1. Eucalyptus Removal
2. Invasives Control/ Native Plantings/ Rain Gardens
3. ADA Compliant Overlook
4. Creekside Trail to Wood Park
5. Establish Safe Public Access

MARKER 1: LARGE EUCALYPTUS TREE REMOVAL

The community group expressed a desire to have the large eucalyptus tree in the southwest corner of the site in the parcel removed, because of the amount of debris and shade it casts. The eucalyptus also makes it difficult for native plants to establish.

MARKER 2: INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES REMOVAL, NATIVE PLANTINGS, AND RAIN GARDEN

Removal of all non-native vegetation on-site and revegetation with natives would benefit the site. Additionally native species could be planted to form a seasonal rain garden near the street sides of the parcel to capture stormwater and improve water quality entering the creek downslope.

MARKER 3: ADA-COMPLIANT GATHERING AREA WITH OVERLOOK

As shown in Figure 18 and Figure 19, the corner of the site that borders Barry Place and E. 27th Street has the potential to be developed into a park entrance, gathering area, and creek overlook. If the large eucalyptus in this area is removed, this area could be graded and surfaced with an ADA-compliant, permeable, and natural-looking trail material (such as GraniteCrete, which is used in other City of Oakland parks). This would enable the installation of ADA-compliant seating and gathering areas. A railed overlook down to the creek could be installed along with educational signage. This area could be bordered along the sidewalk areas by planted swales/rain gardens. There is significant community support for this action, and a conceptual sketch of the overlook was provided by one of the volunteers helping to care for the site and is shown in Figure 20.

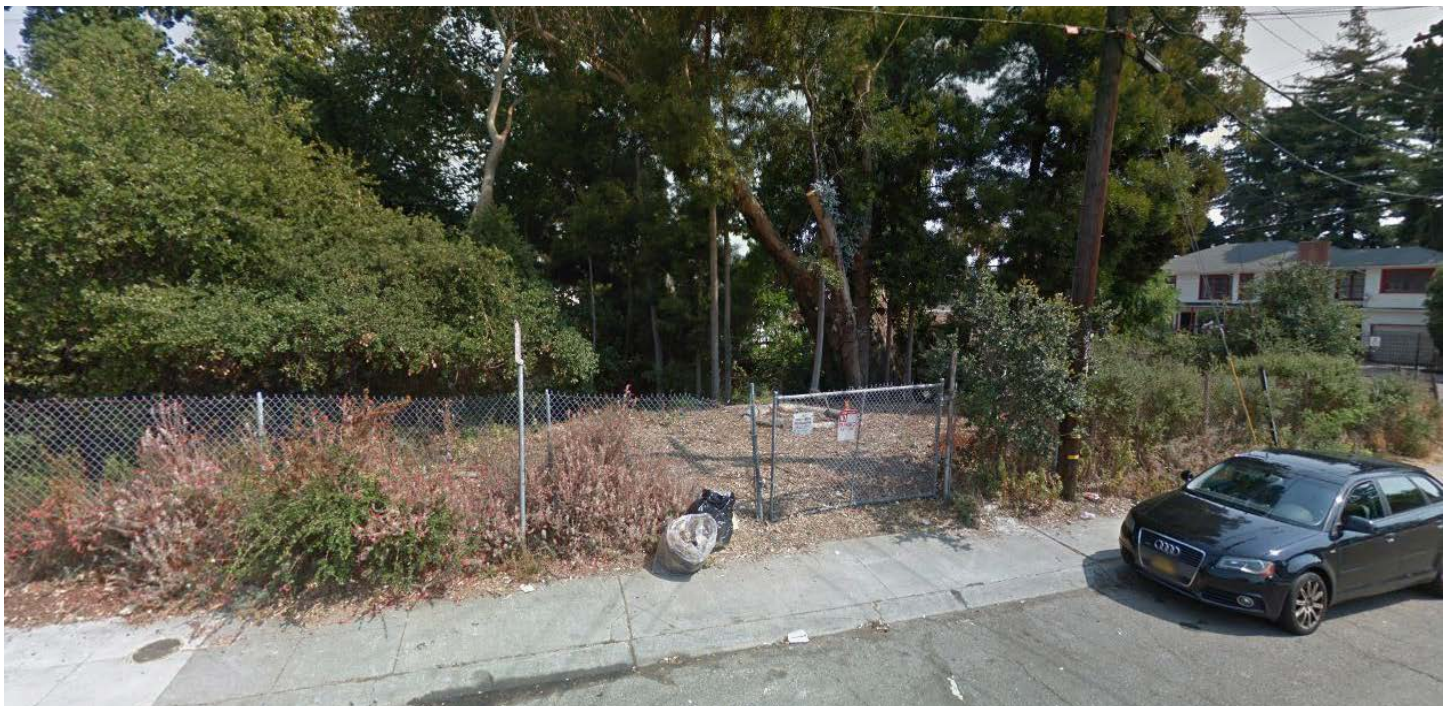
MARKER 4: CREEKSIDE TRAIL TO WOOD PARK AND/OR REBUILD TRAIL FROM OVERLOOK TO CREEK

The WWCP highlighted the desire to create urban trail connections between areas where the community can publicly access the creek area. A proposed alignment for a trail that

Figure 18: East corner of Barry Place and E 27th Street, looking into area that could be a public park entrance (Google Street View, 2018)



Figure 19: View from Barry Place (street) looking southeast into parcel (Google Street View, 2018)



connects from Wood Park site out to the sidewalk is shown in Figure 17. Ultimately, the goal is for this trail to connect to Wood Park, but this would require extensive coordination with private landowners. A trail constraint within the Barry Place site is the limited width between the concrete retaining wall and creek drop structure shown in Figure 14.

MARKER 5: ESTABLISH SAFE PUBLIC ACCESS

This action would involve removing the existing fencing along the corner of the site (see Figure 18) and installing bollards to prevent vehicular access to the site.

Figure 20: Conceptual sketch of overlook feature provided by local volunteer

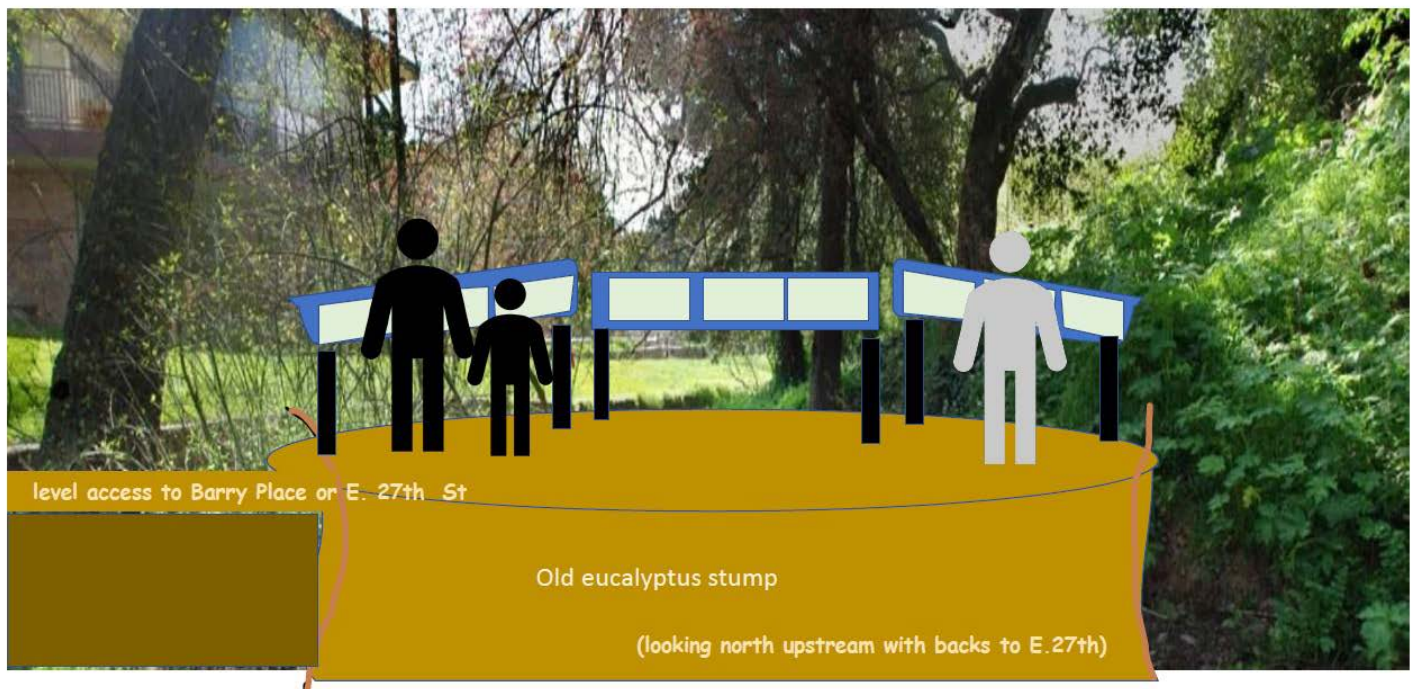


Table 2: Barry Place Potential Improvement Actions Summary

| Action | Assumptions | Permitting Needs | Level of Effort to Accomplish | Cost |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Large Eucalyptus Tree Removal | Stump is left in place and treated/maintained to prevent regrowth | Oakland Tree Removal Permit (exemption may apply). May need to notify CDFW. | Low | \$ 25,000 |
| 2. Invasive Plant Species Removal, Native Plantings, and Rain Garden | Action occurs over 5000 SF of site; includes removal of smaller trees as well; does not include irrigation costs | Oakland Tree Removal Permit (exemption may apply). May need to notify CDFW. | Low | \$50,000* |
| 3. ADA-compliant Gathering Area with Overlook | 1000 SF area surfaced with Granitecrete for ADA compliance; concrete, ADA-compliant bench with foundation; concrete, 40 feet split-railing at overlook for safety; one interpretive sign; 1 waste disposal container | Oakland Building Permit | Medium | \$60,000 |
| 4. Creekside Trail to Barry Place | Includes grading, materials, and installation | Local and State/ Federal Permits; Water right coordination | Low | \$15,000 |
| 5. Establish Safe Public Access | Fence removal and bollard installation | Oakland Building Permit (may be exempt). | Low | \$5,000 |
| * Cost assumes contractor. Use of CCC or volunteer labor could reduce costs | | | | |

AUSTIN SQUARE (ZONE 12, LINE E FLOOD CONTROL PROPERTY)

The Austin Square site has been selected because it is along an open section of Sausal Creek and has remnant plant and features that lend itself to potential community involvement, enjoyment, education, and stewardship. The site is also highlighted in the WWCP as a connection point for an urban trail that could connect several parks within the Sausal Creek watershed.

Figure 21: Austin Square site description



SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located along East 22nd Street, just northwest of the intersection with Austin Street (Figure 21). The parcel is owned by ACFCWCD. Invasive plant species dominate the site, including ivy and a few large eucalyptus as shown in Figures 22, 23, and 24.

COMMUNITY USES AND SUPPORT

The site is fenced-off, maintained by ACFCWCD, and is not accessible to the public. Illegal dumping is known to occur on the site. If ownership of the site could be transferred to City of Oakland, or an access agreement made between ACFCWCD and the City of Oakland, there is the potential for ecosystem and recreational enhancements.

Figure 22: View from E 22nd Street into Austin Square parcel, looking into area that could be a public park entrance (Google Street View, 2021)

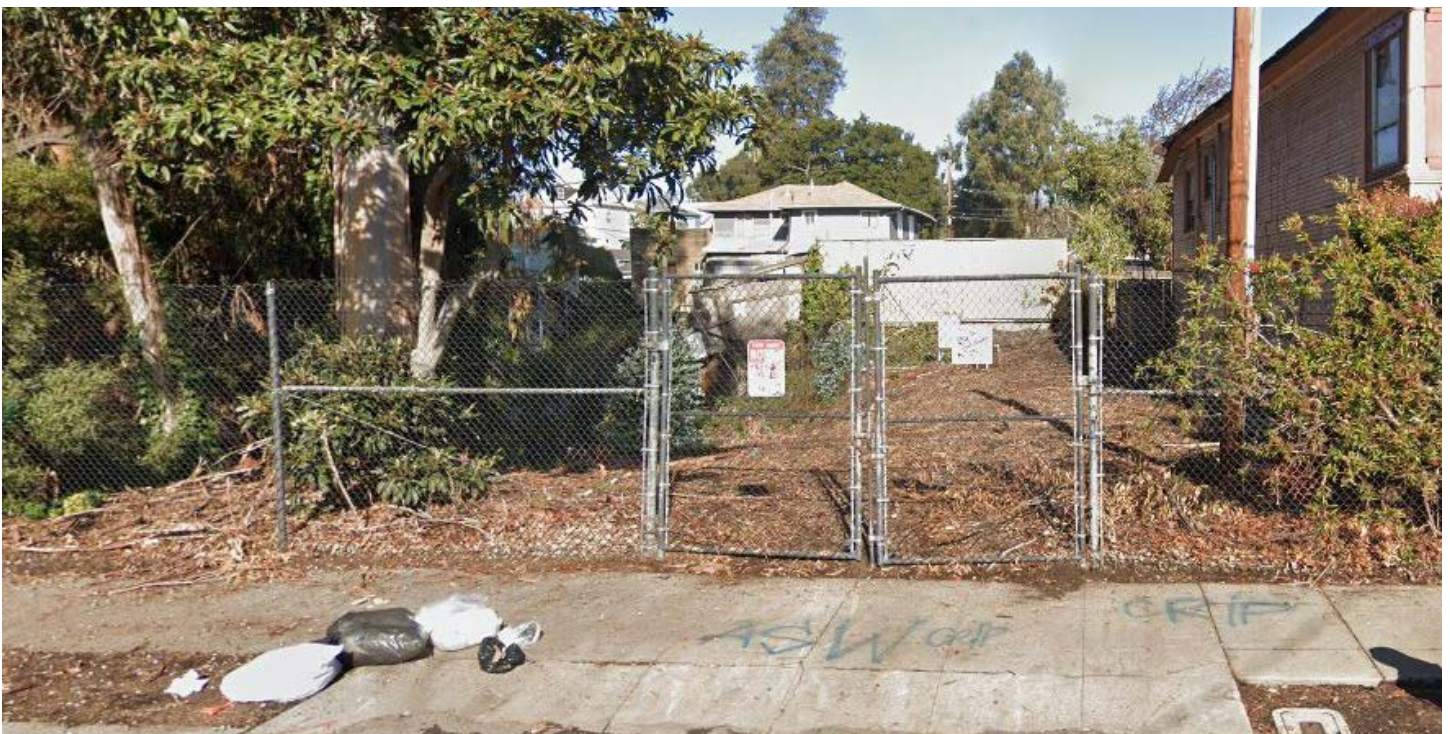


Figure 23: Austin Square site looking upstream



Figure 24: Austin Square site looking downstream



GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Increasing awareness, stewardship, and access to Sausal Creek
- Improve the local ecosystem
- Reduce litter and illegal dumping
- Remove invasive plants, including eucalyptus

Opportunities:

- Open section of creek
- Establish as City of Oakland park
- Trail connection from Barry Place and to Josie de la Cruz

Constraints:

- Property ownership

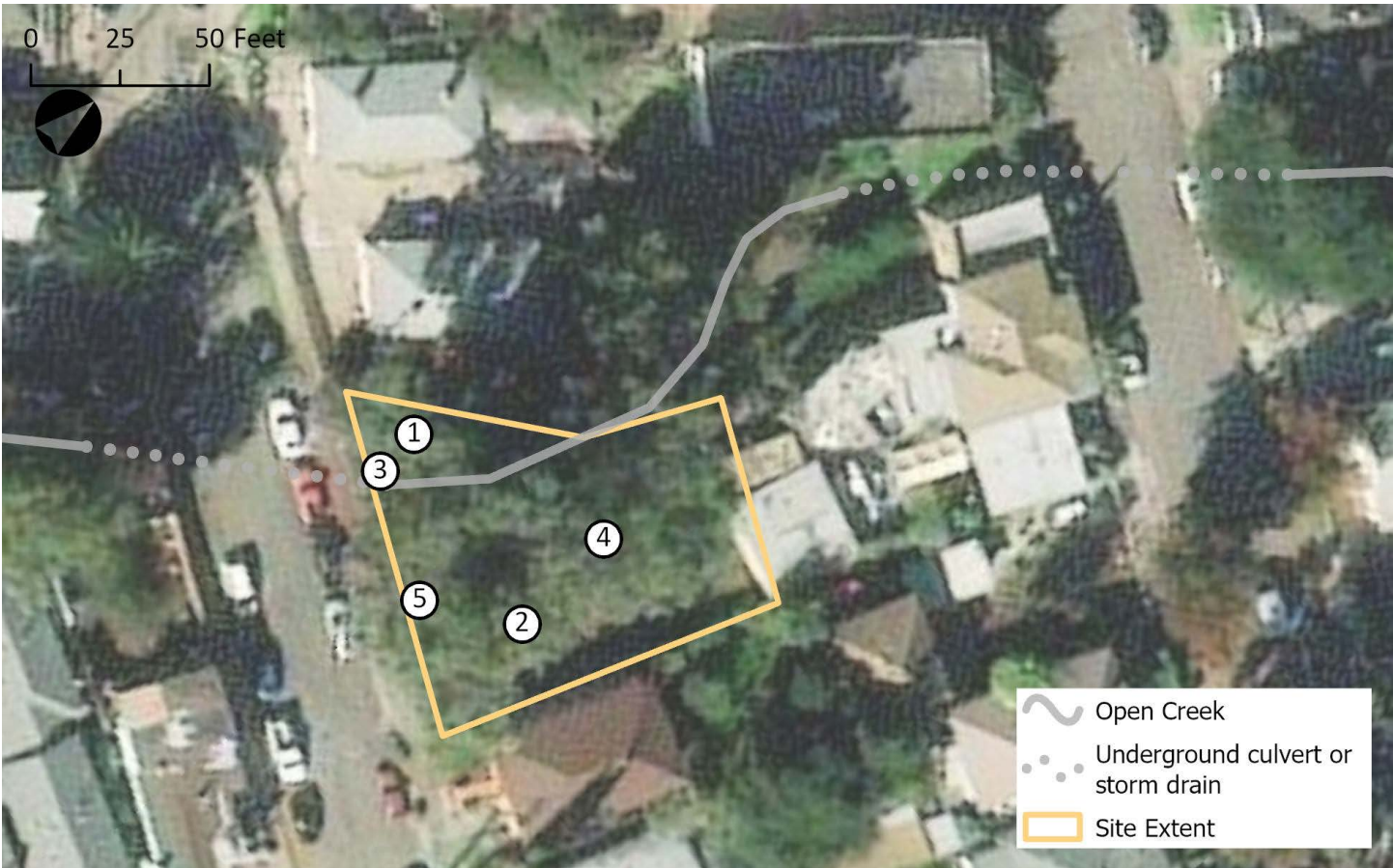
POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

The following section summarizes potential improvements for Austin Square, developed through the methods previously described. These are contingent on property access constraints being resolved. The potential actions to improve Austin Square are illustrated in Figure 25 and summarized in the sections that follow. Assumptions, permitting considerations, and rough costs to assist in planning for the potential actions are presented in Table 3. The following actions could be taken to improve the site and create a space for engagement with and care for Sausal Creek.

MARKER 1: EUCALYPTUS TREE REMOVAL

Remove the large eucalyptus trees in the southwest corner of the site parcel removed, because of the amount of debris and shade they cast. The eucalyptus also makes it difficult for native plants to establish. Some or all of the stumps could be left in place to avoid destabilizing the creek bank and treated/maintained to prevent regrowth.

Figure 25: Austin Square Potential Improvement Actions



1. Eucalyptus Removal
2. Invasives Control/Native Plantings/Rain Gardens
3. Overlook/Signage/Bench
4. Benches/Resting Area (Convert to Parklet)
5. Establish Safe Public Access

MARKER 2: INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES REMOVAL, NATIVE PLANTINGS/RAIN GARDEN

Removal of all non-native vegetation on-site and revegetation with natives would benefit the site. Additionally native species could be planted to form a seasonal rain garden near the street sides of the parcel to capture stormwater and improve water quality entering the creek downslope.

MARKER 3: OVERLOOK, INTERPRETIVE/AESTHETIC SIGN, AND/OR BENCH

The sidewalk area along E. 22nd Street has the potential to be developed into a creek overlook. If the large eucalyptus is removed, the view of the creek from the sidewalk above the culvert could be improved. Removal of the fence and the addition of a railed overlook down to the creek could be installed along with educational signage. Add a bench for sitting and viewing/resting. This area could be bordered along the sidewalk areas by planted swales/rain gardens. Install an educational/interpretive sign to acknowledge the cultural significance of the native plants for the Lisjan Ohlone people, identify and contextualize the culverted section of Sausal Creek in the park, and describe the importance of watershed health. As with other proposed interpretive signs, a QR code could be used to direct park goers to the FOSC website for more information on the plants, the creek, and other parks or creek access points, establishing Josie de la Cruz Park as part of the Walkable Watershed. The signage could also be done artistically and could be accompanied by a sidewalk emblem.

MARKER 4: ADD BENCHES/RESTING AREA (CONVERT TO PARKLET)

As shown in Figures 22 and Figure 23, Austin Square allows for convenient creek access. Currently, due to ACFCWCD ownership, access is not allowed. If ownership were transferred to the City of Oakland, and made into a public park, it could allow for local residents to gather and enjoy the creek in a part of the Fruitvale that currently is void of natural spaces. This area could be graded and surfaced with an ADA-compliant, permeable, and natural-looking trail material (such as

GraniteCrete, which is used in other City of Oakland parks). This would enable the installation of ADA-compliant seating and gathering areas. Benches, picnic tables, and/or interpretive signage could be added to this area.

MARKER 5: ESTABLISH SAFE PUBLIC ACCESS

This action would involve removing the existing fencing along the edge of the site (see Figure 22) and installing bollards to prevent vehicular access to the site.

Table 3: Austin Square Potential Improvement Actions Summary

| Action | Assumptions | Permitting Needs | Level of Effort to Accomplish | Cost |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Large Eucalyptus Tree Removal | Stump is left in place and treated/maintained to prevent regrowth | Oakland Tree Removal Permit (exemption may apply). May need to notify CDFW. | Low | \$ 25,000 |
| 2. Invasive Plant Species Removal, Native Plantings, and Rain Garden | Action occurs over 5000 SF of site; includes removal of smaller trees as well; does not include irrigation costs | Oakland Tree Removal Permit (exemption may apply). May need to notify CDFW. | Low | \$50,000* |
| 3. ADA-compliant Gathering Area with Overlook | 1000 SF area surfaced with Granitecrete for ADA compliance; concrete, ADA-compliant bench with foundation; concrete, 40 feet split-railing at overlook for safety; one interpretive sign; 1 waste disposal container | Oakland Building Permit | Medium | \$60,000 |
| 4. Creekside Trail to Barry Place | Includes grading, materials, and installation | Local and State/ Federal Permits; Water right coordination | Low | \$15,000 |
| 5. Establish Safe Public Access | Fence removal and bollard installation | Oakland Building Permit (may be exempt). | Low | \$5,000 |

* Cost assumes contractor. Use of CCC or volunteer labor could reduce costs

JOSIE DE LA CRUZ PARK

Josie de la Cruz Park is an important public resource for the Fruitvale community. Park amenities include a community garden, playground, soccer field, and basketball court. The Carmen Flores Recreation Center is also located at the park and provides an array of educational and recreational programming.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Josie de la Cruz Park is located along a culverted section of Sausal Creek between E. 16th Street and E. 17th Street (Figure 26). The western edge of the park borders culverted Sausal

Figure 26: Josie de la Cruz site description



Creek, and in this area are the community garden and an open, grassy area. A swale runs above the alignment of Sausal Creek (Figure 27). Sausal Creek flows underground approximately 700 ft upstream of the park, near E 19th Street. Downstream of where this culvert begins, just upstream of the park, in the vicinity of the Urban Promise and Achieve Academies, near E 17th Street, along the alignment of the culverted creek, there is a vegetated depression that has been incorrectly characterized as an open channel section of Sausal Creek (Figure 28). ACFCWCD data shows that this area is culverted, though it appears from both aerial photography and from nearby viewpoints, such as in Figure 28, to be an open part of the creek.

COMMUNITY USES AND SUPPORT

The park is well-used by the community, including six nearby schools, with student bodies ranging from elementary to high school. Over the years, FOSC has brought students to the park to engage in restoration work, including native planting and watershed ecology. Park improvements related to the local watershed present a significant opportunity to improve engagement of youth in learning about Sausal Creek. The Carmen Flores Recreation Center maintains the community garden, along with a high school class and a community member. The high school class works in coordination with La Clínica de la Raza, a community health care provider based in the Fruitvale District.

The WWCP identified this site as having potential for stormwater capture and passive treatment through native plantings and a rain garden. An interview with the Carmen Flores Recreation Center Director also highlighted the desire for new native plantings, including trees, in the western portion of the park near the swale and community garden, but they noted that the grassy area is currently used and should remain. There is also interest in educational signage to describe the history of the park and watershed.

Figure 27: Josie de la Cruz community garden (left), private property (right), and grassy area with swale (background/left)



Figure 28: Open channel upstream of Josie de la Cruz Park (photo taken through fence, near western entrance to park off E 17th Street)



GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Increasing awareness and stewardship of Sausal Creek
- Increase native plants
- Capture and treat stormwater

Opportunities:

- Park is actively used by surrounding schools and community groups
- Community center as a gathering point and information sharing

Constraints:

- Available green space

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

This section summarizes potential actions to improve Josie de la Cruz Park that were developed based on synthesis of the WWCP, stakeholder interviews, and a design meeting conducted by the consultant team. Potential actions to improve the park are illustrated in Figure 29 and summarized in the sections that follow. Assumptions, permitting considerations, rough costs, and the estimated level of effort to implement the actions are presented in Table 4.

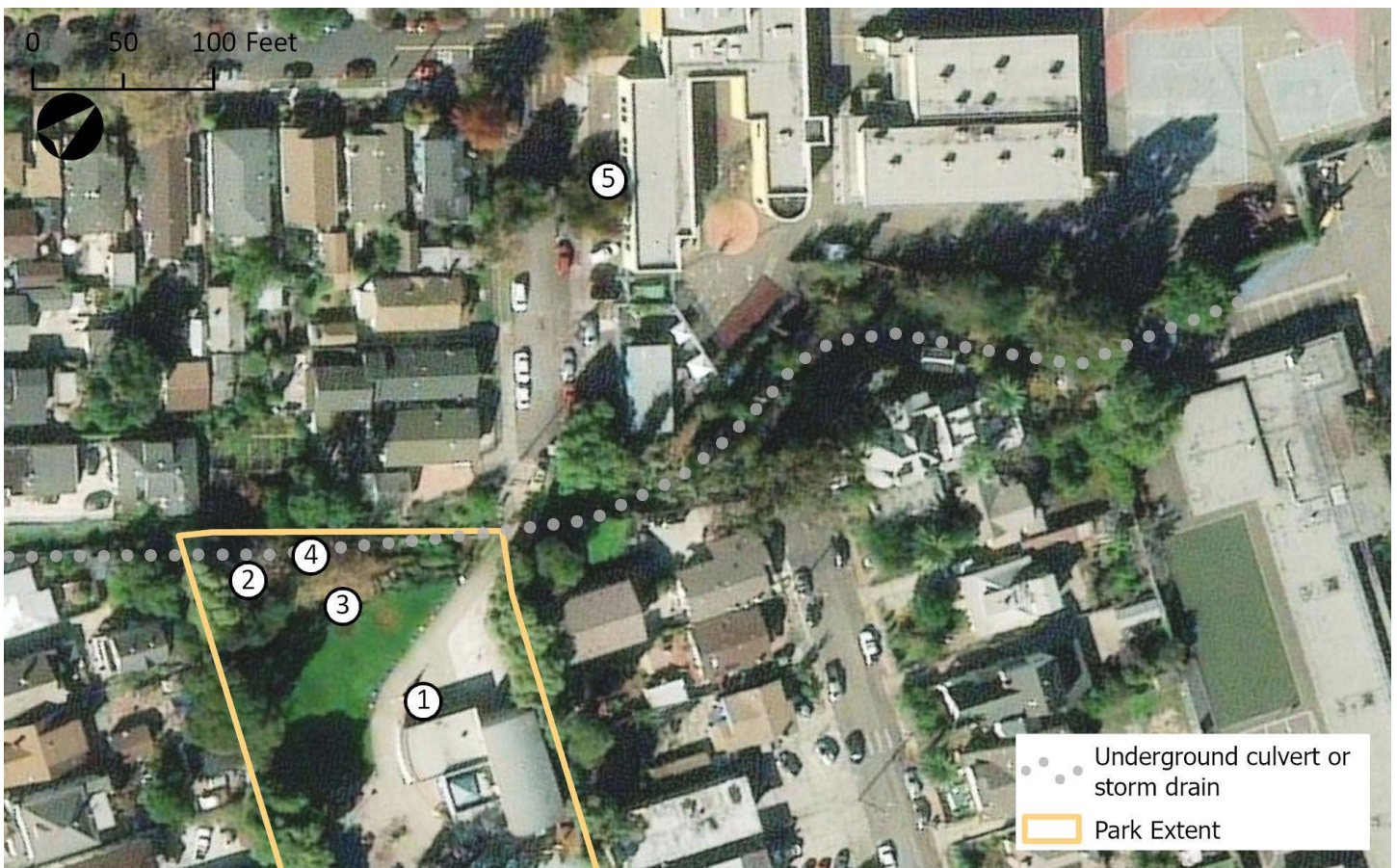
MARKER 1: INSTALL RAIN BARRELS

Installing rain barrels/tanks to capture runoff from the roof Carmen Flores Rec Center. This water can be used to irrigate the existing garden or newly planted trees and native plants. Partner with local artists to decorate barrels/tanks.

MARKER 2: THINNING/REMOVAL OF TREES AND PLANTING OF NATIVES

Thinning or removal of the trees at the very corner of the park in the area around the grassy swale (Figure 30) could allow more sunlight to reach the ground and give new native trees/plants a better chance of flourishing. The community garden could be

Figure 29: Josie De La Cruz Park Potential Improvement Actions



1. Install Rain Barrels
2. Thinning/Removal of Trees and Planting Natives
3. Interpretive Signage
4. Symbolic Creek with Native Plants
5. Install Rain Gardens

extended through this area or a separate native plant garden created.

MARKER 3: INTERPRETATIVE SIGNAGE

Install an educational/interpretive signs to communicate the natural and cultural significance of the native plants, identify and contextualize the culverted section of Sausal Creek in the park, and describe the importance of watershed health. As with other proposed interpretive signs, a QR code could be used to direct park goers to the FOSC website for more information on the plants, the creek, and other parks or creek access points, establishing Josie de la Cruz Park as part of the Walkable Watershed.

MARKER 4: SYMBOLIC CREEK WITH NATIVE PLANTS

Reimagining the western edge of Josie de la Cruz Park by constructing a creek-like depression, or symbolic creek, in the

Figure 30: Southwestern most corner of Josie De La Cruz Park: grassy area (left and off photo), swale (center/right), private property (right)



existing grassy swale (above the actual, culverted creek) could provide more appreciation for the creek and offer opportunities for education. Coupled with interpretive signage, this feature could improve awareness of the existence of Sausal Creek to the local community. This feature could be approximately 70 feet long and five feet wide, with an assumed two-foot depth of excavation. The surface of the symbolic creek could be covered with creek cobbles and planted with native riparian species. Plants could be irrigated with municipal water or water collected from the rain barrels.

MARKER 5: INSTALL RAIN GARDENS ALONG E. 17TH STREET

Achieve Academy is adjacent to the northwest entrance to the park, along E. 17th Street. In the drop-off zone at Achieve Academy, along E. 17th Street, between the sidewalk and classroom building closest to the park (Figure 31), is a

Figure 31: Potential location for rain garden along concrete strip between sidewalk and Achieve Academy building (Josie de la Cruz Park off photo to the right in the background) (Google Street View, 2021)



degraded strip of old concrete. This space is an ideal area for a rain garden that could both capture/treat stormwater runoff from the Achieve Academy building(s) and provide additional green space. Rain garden(s) could discharge the treated water directly to existing storm drains along E. 17th Street, which discharge to Sausal Creek.

Table 4: Josie de la Cruz Park Potential Improvement Actions Summary

| Action | Assumptions | Permitting Needs | Level of Effort to Accomplish | Cost |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Install Rain Barrels | 2 rain barrels and supplies for painting | Not Applicable | Low | \$ 25,000 |
| 2. Thinning/ Removal of Trees and Planting of Natives | Action occurs over 400 SF of site; includes removal of 5 trees; does not include irrigation | Oakland Tree Removal Permit (exemption may apply). May need to notify CDFW. | Low | \$50,000* |
| 3. Interpretative Signage | 1 interpretive sign | Oakland Building Permit (may be exempt) | Low | \$15,000- \$65,000 |
| 4. Symbolic Creek with Native Plants | 70 feet long, 5 feet wide, 2 feet depth; Includes grading, materials, and installation | Local and State/ Federal Permits; Water right coordination; City of Oakland Creek Protection Permit | Low | \$30,000 |
| 5. Install Rain Gardens along E. 17th Street | Concrete removal, grading, planting | Oakland Building Permit; Potential coordination with Regional Board | Medium | \$5,000 |
| * Cost assumes contractor. Use of CCC or volunteer labor could reduce costs | | | | |

FRUITVALE BRIDGE PARK

Fruitvale Bridge Park is along the downstream end of Sausal Creek, where the culverted creek flows into the Oakland estuary (Figure 32). Properties adjacent to the mouth of the creek are set to be redeveloped in the near future, which provide an opportunity to coordinate with new stakeholders in the area to improve the creek terminus and the park.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Fruitvale Bridge Park includes a City-owned, small, wedge-shaped parcel located on the eastern corner of the intersection of Fruitvale and Alameda Avenues (Figure 33), just upstream of

Figure 32: Fruitvale Bridge Park site description



the outfall of Sausal Creek to the Oakland Estuary tidal canal. According to longtime park advocate, this barren strip of land was covered in trees and bushes until PG&E replaced the underground gas pipeline in 2019. After that project, the site was left in its current denuded state and is not maintained.

In addition to the parcel described above, the park includes the area across Alameda Avenue along the Bay Trail east of the Fruitvale Bridge where Sausal Creek outfalls to the canal (Figure 34). Up until 2016, there was also pier that was the main attraction of Fruitvale Bridge Park (Figure 35). The pier was removed due to structural decay. Up until very recently, there were benches and trash cans along the Bay Trail, but those have been removed.

COMMUNITY USES AND SUPPORT

Fruitvale Bridge Park had been cared for by local community members and became an Adopt-a-Spot in 2010. An illegal dumping hotspot in Oakland for years, dedicated FOOSC volunteers regularly removed trash, worked with the City on illegal dumping pickups and installed and maintained native plants. This site has served as a FOOSC key field trip site for students in the Fruitvale until the RV encampment made access to the trail difficult. In recent years, volunteers became overwhelmed due to the growth of a large homeless encampment/RV park and increased illegal dumping of large waste items (shopping carts, mattresses, furniture, etc.) and hazardous waste.

Before its removal, the pier was used for sitting, fishing, and enjoying the view of the canal, including watching osprey, pelicans, and peregrine falcons (which live in the bridge tower).

The Bay Trail and bike-lane connections up Fruitvale Ave toward Fruitvale Station make this an important junction for walking and biking at this lowest part of the watershed.

FRUITVALE ALIVE PROJECT

As described above (Fruitvale Alive Project), the Fruitvale

Alive Project is slated to go to construction in late 2022/early 2023. The improved sidewalk-level bike lanes, high-visibility crosswalks, new sidewalk lighting, connection to a planned new segment of the Bay Trail (west of bridge), and additional road infrastructure improvements intended to increase pedestrian/cyclist safety aligns this project with the goals of both the WWCP and this feasibility study. This project provides an opportunity to leverage the City resources to add creek related interpretative panels, art, or sidewalk emblems to incorporate it into the walkable watershed.

RE-DEVELOPMENT OF OWENS-ILLINOIS GLASS FACTORY

As described above (Duke Realty Re-Development of 3600 Alameda Ave – Former Owens-Illinois Glass Factory), the large industrial lot immediately adjacent to the wedge-shaped, barren parcel is slated for a total tear down (December 2022) and rebuild (beginning September 2023). Part of Duke Realty’s plan

Figure 33: Wedge-shaped, empty parcel on eastern corner of Fruitvale and Alameda Avenues (Google Street View, 2021)



includes updating the section of the Bay Trail that runs along Alameda Ave, and they are working with the City—as the owner of the parcel—to explore landscaping the wedge-shaped parcel with native, drought tolerant plants. This project provides an opportunity to leverage stakeholders and Duke Realty to add creek related signs, art, or sidewalk emblems to incorporate it into the walkable watershed.

GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Increasing awareness and stewardship of Sausal Creek
- Improve the local ecosystem
- Reduce litter and illegal dumping
- Improve aesthetics and increase use of public space

Opportunities:

- Publicly owned parcel

Figure 34: Park area across Alameda Ave, along the Bay Trail, east of the Fruitvale Bridge, where Sausal Creek outfalls to the canal (Fruitvale Bridge Park sign in lower right) (Google Street View, 2020)



- Fruitvale Alive Bike and pedestrian corridor and Bay Trail connection
- Re-development of Owens-Illinois Glass Factory into mixed industrial with low-income housing
- Visible outfall of Sausal Creek
- Oakland Estuary tidal canal viewing, bird watching

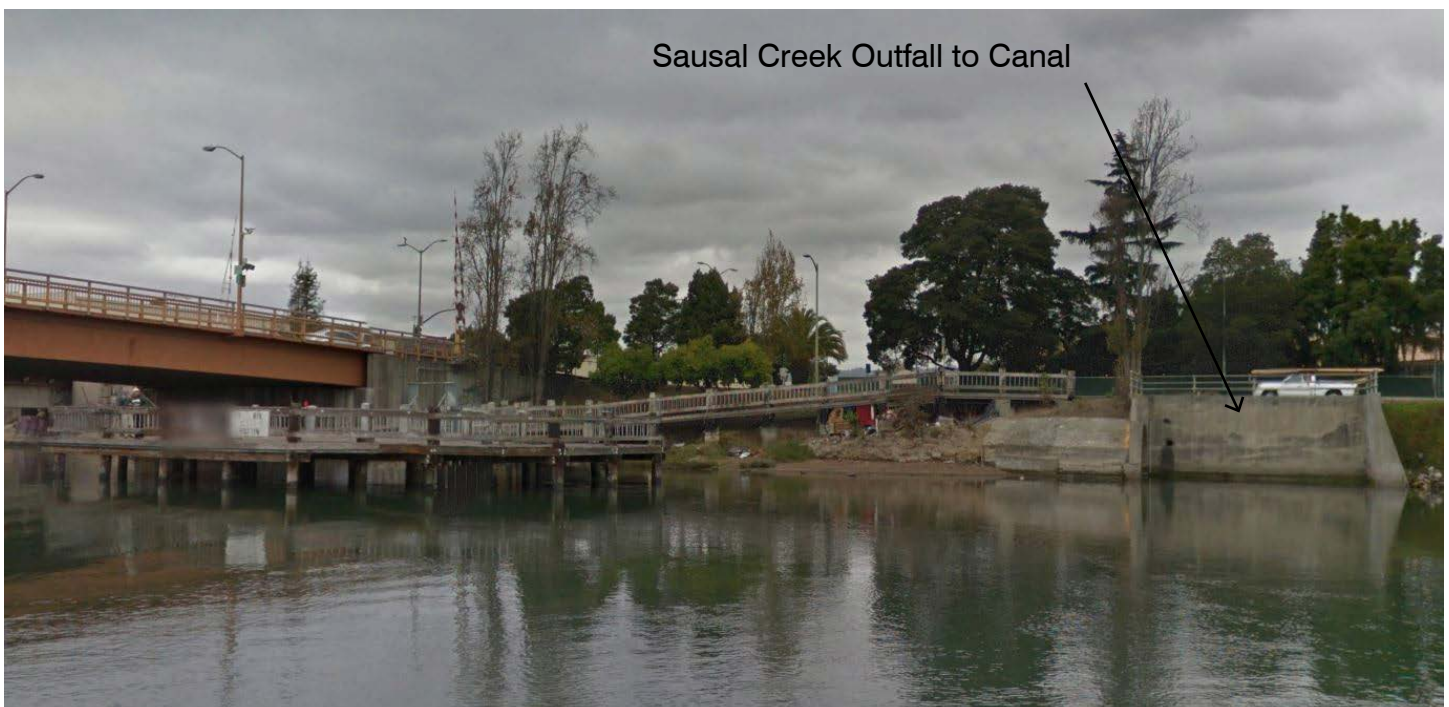
Constraints:

- Regular location for unhoused encampments and large item dumping
- Lack of benches, trash cans, restrooms, and other public infrastructure

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

This section summarizes Fruitvale Bridge Park conceptual ideas that were developed based on synthesis of the WWCP, stakeholder interviews, and a design meeting conducted by

Figure 35: Fruitvale Bridge Park pier and Sausal Creek outfall from canal (Google Street View, 2014)



the consultant team. The full range of potential actions to improve Fruitvale Bridge Park are illustrated in Figure 36 and summarized in the sections that follow. Assumptions, permitting considerations, rough costs, and potential funding mechanisms to assist in planning for the potential actions are presented in Table 5.

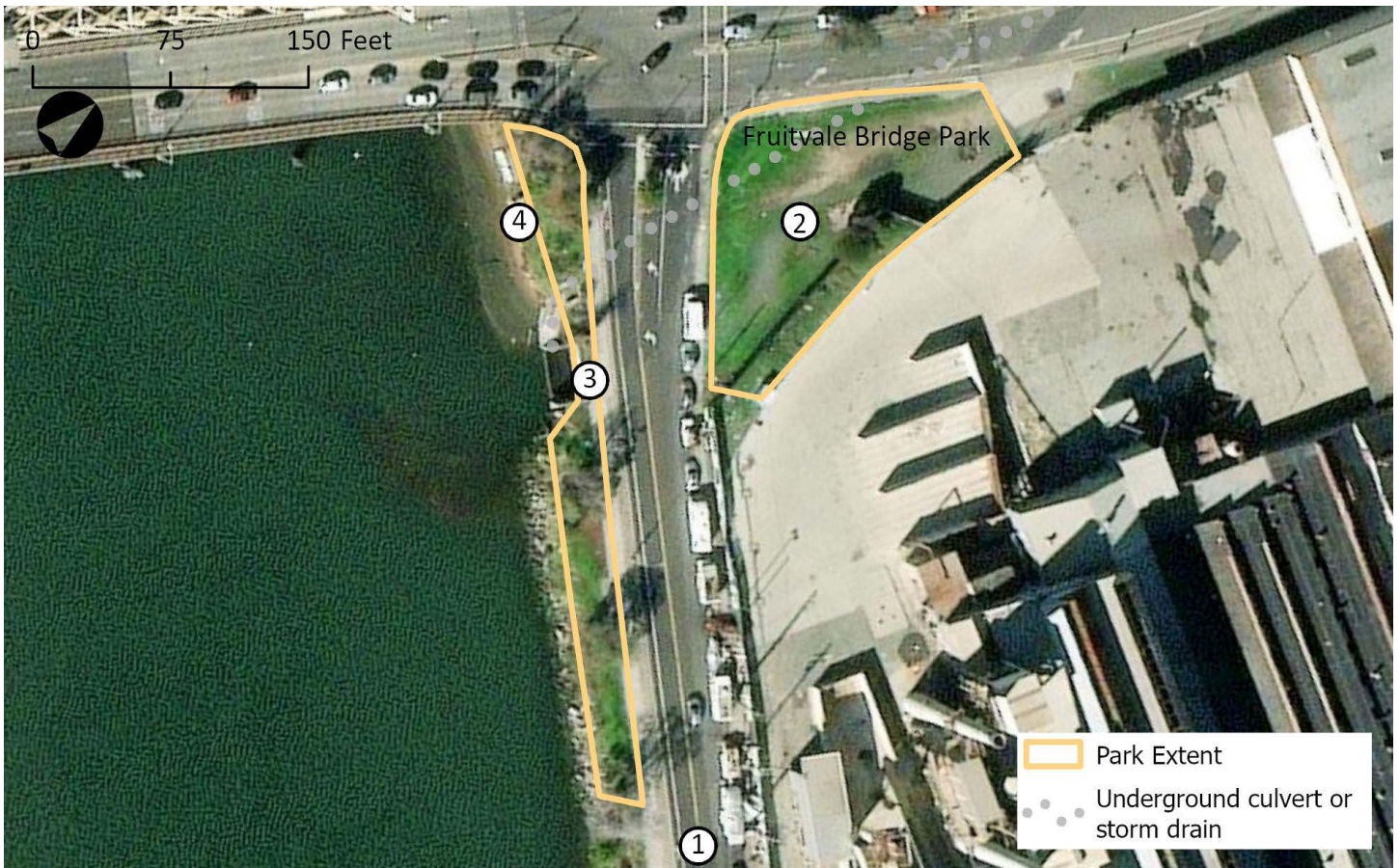
MARKER 1: LEVERAGE EXISTING DUKE REALTY BAY TRAIL UPDATE PLANS

This section of the Bay Trail, along Alameda Ave, east of the Fruitvale Bridge and adjacent to the Duke Realty re-development of the Owens-Illinois Glass Factory is slated for a full update. This will include shifting part of Alameda Ave onto their private property (but allowing public access), and creating a green strip that will separate auto traffic from the Bay Trail. They plan to add bench seating, site signage, beneficial coast planting, and safety railing. This presents an opportunity to include educational/interpretative signage to describe the Sausal Creek Watershed, acknowledge the Lisjan Ohlone and the cultural significance of the native plants, and highlight the Sausal Creek outfall location. As with other proposed interpretive signs, a QR code could be used to direct park goers to the FOSC website for more information on the plants, the creek, and other parks or creek access points, establishing Fruitvale Bridge Park as part of the Walkable Watershed. A Sausal Creek or culturally/historically themed art piece or mural, including acknowledgement of the Lisjan Ohlone on the land, could be installed along Alameda Avenue. Providing a water-bottle filling station for pedestrians/cyclists could be a great improvement for the Bay Trail. Green infrastructure projects, such as bioswales and permeable pavement, could also be incorporated.

MARKER 2: LEVERAGE EXISTING DUKE REALTY LANDSCAPING PLANS OF CORNER PARCEL

According to Duke Realty, they are coordinating with the City of Oakland and expressed interest in also coordinating with FOSC volunteers on a plan for the wedge-shaped parcel to be landscaped with native, drought tolerant plants. Similar

Figure 36: Fruitvale Bridge Park Potential Improvement Actions



1. Leverage Duke Realty Plans for Bay Trail Updates
2. Leverage Duke Realty Plans for Corner Parcel Landscaping
3. Interpretive Signage
4. Permanent/Mobile Nature Center

to the description above for the Bay Trail update, this could present an opportunity to leverage Duke Realty—or work with the City to require Duke Realty—to include educational/ interpretive signage, benches or picnic tables, some sort of Sausal Creek or culturally/historically themed art/mural, and/or a water-bottle filling station. Green infrastructure projects, such as bioswales and permeable pavement, could also be incorporated.

MARKER 3: INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE AT SAUSAL CREEK OUTFALL

The only existing reference to Sausal Creek and its outfall to the Oakland Estuary tidal canal is limited to the text “Sausal Creek Joins San Francisco Bay”, inscribed into the concrete sidewalk (Bay Trail) above the outfall. This callout is very easy to miss, and could be improved by adding an educational/ interpretive sign in this location. Because this location is at a crossroads of the Bay Trail, the Fruitvale Bridge, and Fruitvale Ave, it has the potential for increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic and adding signage could draw in more people to learn about Sausal Creek. As with other proposed interpretive signs, a QR code could be used to direct park goers to the FOSC website for more information on the plants, the creek, and other parks or creek access points, establishing Fruitvale Bridge Park as part of the Walkable Watershed.

MARKER 4: PERMANENT/MOBILE NATURE CENTER AT FORMER PIER SITE

One of the long-term goals presented in the WWCP is to build a permanent (or mobile) nature center at the former Fruitvale Bridge Park pier location, or next to it. This nature center could provide hands-on access to animals and plants in the creek and estuary. This nature center could include a number of educational elements beyond signage, including live plants, taxidermy (or bones, feathers, etc.), binoculars for birding, and much more.

Table 5: Fruitvale Bridge Park Potential Improvement Actions Summary

| Action | Assumptions | Permitting Needs | Level of Effort to Accomplish | Cost |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Leverage Existing Duke Realty Bay Trail Update Plans | Duke Realty already plans to improve the Bay Trail and include signage/benches/landscaping; push them to incorporate Sausal Creek, cultural, and/or historical information | Assume no permits beyond what Duke Realty already will need | Low | \$ 15,000 for interpretive sign |
| 2. Leverage Existing Duke Realty Landscaping Plans of Corner Parcel | Duke Realty already plans to landscape this area, push them to incorporate signage, benches, art, green infrastructure (make into a park) | City of Oakland Building Permit | Low – Medium | \$15,000-\$100,000 |
| 3. Interpretative Signage | 1 interpretive sign (possibly made more artistic) at Creek outfall (separate from Duke Realty plans) | City of Oakland Building Permit | Low – Medium | \$15,000-\$50,000 |
| 4. Permanent/ Mobile Nature Center at Former Pier Site | 400 square feet; Includes grading, piers, materials, and installation | CEQA, RWQCB, USACE, BCDC, City of Oakland, Alameda County | High | \$5-10 million |

FUNDING MECHANISMS

The projects proposed in this feasibility study do not have funding identified to complete their further approval, development, design, and construction. Projects on City property will need appropriation of funding from relevant department(s) for maintenance while other sites may require cooperation from entities such as Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (ACFCWCD) or FOSC itself for maintenance. However, the Proposition 1, Round 2 Implementation, DWR administered Integrated Regional water Management (IRWM) grant is a next step and bears serious review with City contacts as FOSC is already an identified DACTIP eligible partner.

PROPOSITION 1, ROUND 2 IMPLEMENTATION IRWM GRANT

Friends of Sausal Creek has already gained traction with IRWM through the Prop 1 DACTIP grant that funded this feasibility study. Once a project—or a few projects—is/are selected as priorities for development, FOSC could work with the City of Oakland to go after this Round 2 grant. Presenting this report, along with the ongoing “Friends of Sausal Creek Community Assessment”, would support FOSC and the City in acquiring this grant.

CITY OF OAKLAND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Projects and their maintenance could be grant funded, but may need matching funds from the City of Oakland Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for completion. FOSC had submitted two applications through CIP in 2020 for Josie de la Cruz Park and Barry Place, which had a low rank and were not accepted, respectively. If a project is fully funded by a grant, the City could contribute “in kind” support through staff time and/or could issue a letter of support. For CIP funding, the process filters through potential projects by scoring them using the

City's Prioritization Factors and Weighting System, which can be found at: Oakland's Capital Improvement Program.

The next CIP cycle will commence in 2022, with the public portal for project request submission expected to reopen in late summer/early fall of 2022 to accept project requests for the two-year budget that will begin on July 1, 2023. The process is transparent and allows residents to comment (Oakland's Capital Improvement Program 2021).

Seed funding to advance these projects could also be provided by existing City of Oakland ballot measures that support parks and creek rehabilitation:

MEASURE Q: THE "2020 OAKLAND PARKS AND RECREATION PRESERVATION, LITTER REDUCTION, AND HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT ACT"

Oakland voters passed Measure Q in March 2020, which collects parcel tax funding to support the following City of Oakland services:

- 64% for parks, landscape maintenance, and recreational services. This includes costs associated with maintaining, protecting, and improving parks, open space, and recreational facilities and services throughout Oakland.
- 30% for services to address homelessness. This includes costs associated with alleviating homelessness or its impacts within Oakland.
- 5% for services to address water quality and related litter reduction. This includes costs associated with meeting the City's water quality objectives.

With respect to funding for parks, landscape maintenance, recreational services, and services to address water quality and related litter reduction, the City Council has assigned oversight function to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC). This commission is responsible for advising the Mayor, Council, City Administrator, and the Oakland Parks and

Recreation Department on all matters relating to the general policy and operation of the parks and recreation system (PRAC, City of Oakland). FOSC could pursue establishing a relationship with members of PRAC.

FUNDING FOR PARK MAINTENANCE

One of the concerns expressed by both FOSC staff and board members during the feasibility study was funding to support park maintenance after construction or any improvements. The feasibility of projects needs to consider ongoing monitoring and maintenance. The City of Oakland has existing maintenance responsibilities on City properties and potential funding mechanisms for additional maintenance could be pursued through coordination with the City. One example of a funding mechanism is the revenue from the current Landscaping and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD), which supports park maintenance, street lighting and roadway landscaping (City of Oakland, 2022). During the planning phases of a potential project, presenting cost/time estimates for expected park maintenance needs could help with securing the necessary funds from the LLAD revenue. Proactively setting these expectations early on could prove more successful than pursuing maintenance funding after project development.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Other considerations for advancing funding for the proposed improved actions outlined in the feasibility study:

- Consider seeking funding for maintenance activities for multiple project sites to streamline the request and maximize benefits—the more community members a funding request will impact, the more support it could receive
- Seek alignments with Oakland 2030 Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP) and the City’s 2045 General Plan. The Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation (OSCAR) element will provide policies, programs, and actions to guide parks development, programming, and

capital investment in the community through 2045. Both plans target disadvantaged communities

- Engage with and seek support (e.g., letters of support for projects) from local City Councilmembers (District 5 and others), Oakland Mayor, and other political players
- Consider project benefits and possible funding for public health (mental, cognitive, and physical health) and safety, environmental education, and environmental justice

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This feasibility study investigated opportunities for improvements at five sites in the Sausal Creek Lower Watershed that advance the mission of FOSC and serve the disadvantaged, Fruitvale community. These improvements were developed with input from local community members and stakeholders, FOSC Board and staff, and the consultant team. Numerous opportunities exist at each of the five sites with varying degrees of difficulty, cost, and timeline to implement. The feasibility study identified potential funding sources to implement these improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

This feasibility study moves forward the level of engagement in the lower watershed for FOSC. We recommend the following activities to begin the process of advancing the actions proposed:

- **City of Oakland coordination:** All proposed actions will require involvement of the City – likely Parks and Recreation, Watershed and Stormwater, and contracts staff. We recommend FOSC identify key contacts—such as members of PRAC—and meet with City staff to review and discuss this feasibility study and initiate regular meetings to create and maintain momentum. Discussions with City staff will likely elicit which sites or actions are most possible in the near term and what level of funding or engagement the City can provide. FOSC met City staff in 2020 regarding project ideas and funding and were directed to engage in the next CIP process, which begins summer/fall 2022.
- **ACFCWCD coordination:** Establish a new contact at ACFCWCD for future coordination and to discuss

feasibility study actions involving ACFCWCD property. Neither FOSC nor the City currently has a designated contact at ACFCWCD to discuss creek stewardship due to significant staff retirement/turnover. FOSC should establish a contact and initiate discussions about ACFCWCD's willingness to participate in implementation of actions in the feasibility study.

- **Duke Realty coordination:** Continue to establish/maintain a relationship with Duke Realty project management—Anna Marie has already begun to keep in touch with Jason Bernstein. Because this project is already in motion, lobbying Duke Realty to integrate components listed in Table 5 (and described above the table) into their plans is an opportunity with a definitive expiration.
- **Track and target specific grant/funding programs:** FOSC should identify and track cycles for relevant grant programs that could fund actions in the feasibility study and engage with the City on its CIP cycles. In particular, the City's CIP cycle starts in summer/fall 2022 and FOSC should work to get projects in this study included on the CIP list where possible.
- **Determine leadership roles:** FOSC should determine which actions are best advanced by FOSC versus those that require City leadership. For example, advancements at Austin Square cannot advance without agreements between ACFCWCD and the City based on a mutual willingness to either transfer the property into City ownership or create a public access agreement.
- **Develop strategic plan(s) for the feasibility study and or individual sites:** FOSC should develop work plans identifying targeted actions and timelines to implement based on relevant timescales such as one-year or five-year. These work plans could identify goals for implementation, timelines, coordination plans with stakeholders, and community outreach events.

APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

GENERAL NOTES/IDEAS FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY

CITY OF OAKLAND

Everyone likes the idea of interpretative signage. The attendee likes the idea of having signs similar to what was installed at Lake Merritt. Signs could include the following:

- Native history
- History of the watershed/creek and its development
- Maps of the watershed (including “you are here”)
- Descriptions of native plants and how the native people used them
- Directions to other signs
- Descriptions of the watershed (where does the water come from and go)
- Other places one can visit in the watershed

City of Oakland priority sites align with FOSC priorities: Wood Park, Barry Place, Josie de la Cruz Park, and the Sausal Creek outfall. Ecological and community benefits are at top of mind, including water quality, incorporating Low Impact Development (LID), trash pickup, educational components (interpretative/ educational signage). Installing restrooms could be a possibility, but would probably need to frame it from a water quality and restoration point of view. The attendee mentioned that he might float the idea of additional maintenance with the Parks department. The City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) reviews all things that Oakland does in parks, so it would be prudent to bounce ideas off of them.

Regarding partnering/working with the local tribe or tribal representative, there have been informal agreements in the past, but moving forward, perhaps there could be a more formal agreement. Informal agreements (with tribe or any residents/groups) have been via “adopt a spot”, for which the City provides people with tools and helps with certain parts of the work.

FOSC BOARD

There seems to be a lack of awareness that the creek even exists. For those that are aware, there is a mixture of appreciation of the creek as a resource, but also a fair amount of fear of crime. People are afraid that opening up access to the creek may attract the unhoused to start living near the creek, and the unhoused are often associated with crime/danger. Some folks may see benefits of living near the creek but don't consider it a resource. Transforming people's attitude of fear to looking at the creek as a resource, as well as increasing awareness that the creek exists are both key needs. The FOSC Board wishes to change people's thinking to get them to imagine a different urban watershed, and think of the creek as something other than a place to dump trash.

Everyone agrees that trash throughout the lower watershed is a huge problem. Also, no matter where a project may occur, upkeep and maintenance are some of the main uncertainties and concerns. The pilot project needs to be a total success to capture the community interest and support the long-term plans for the watershed, creating momentum in that direction.

Folks who live along the creek have questions regarding if they should remove invasives, how to stabilize the creek, and planting natives. FOSC should provide guidance/resources for these creekside homeowners, such as dedicated community talks, native plants tours, and a certain percentage of plants from the FOSC nursery set aside for free for folks on the lower watershed.

CURRENT/FORMER FOSC STAFF

In general, there's a sentiment that fences off areas are perfect hiding places for people (unhoused, trash dumping, etc). If areas were beautified, it would dissuade people from dumping there. Dumping tends to attract more dumping. More trash cans or places for people to drop off their large trash may be helpful. People also do want more green spaces in Oakland. Maintaining invasive vegetation like ivy is important to keep rats and other pests from overrunning green spaces, and potentially scaring people away from them.

Education about where municipal water comes from is important, as some community members believe that drinking water comes from the creek, leading them to buying bottled water because they see the trash/pollution in Sausal Creek. There should also be more education about where Sausal Creek is. Diamond Canyon used to have a negative reputation, but has since changed and people used this area for recreation and creek access. Leverage existing

(or create new) events such as the King Tides event, BioBlitz events, and garden day cleanup events, expanding them to be more inclusive of the watershed.

Building pocket parks could be a good way for people to get creek access. Some sort of representative creek (whether a pumped/faux creek or just a planted corridor) above the undergrounded portion of the creek would be nice. A trail all the way along the creek, in whatever way possible would be great, and could include more pedestrian walkways, bike lanes, and signage directing people from one access point to the next all the way to the outfall. Native plant gardens need more consistent irrigation (and shouldn't necessarily be from tap water because of chlorine). Bathroom access in any open space is important. Native planting and invasive removal is great but needs to be properly coordinated. ADA accessibility is also important, as many volunteers are seniors. Fencing doesn't necessarily have to be removed, but making a more inviting fence would encourage people to use green spaces. Adding water fountains or water bottle filling stations could get cyclists stopping at parks to refill their bottles. Some people may even like the idea of a bikeable watershed over a walkable watershed, as biking feels safer to some. Work with the Segorea Te Land Trust to create an interactive exhibit in the lower watershed, like the one that is up in the hills, except this one could be a forest/wetland type of exhibit. Lastly, there is an Oakland Undivided initiative to have Citywide WiFi, which perhaps could include WiFi in parks.

BARRY PLACE VOLUNTEER GROUP

FOSC could also hold regular sessions with creekside property owners to educate them about tending to their properties responsibly, help maintain creekside areas, and provide plants. More Eagle Scout projects, or City run programs could help get local kids to help work on and learn about the creek. Business employee groups could also have creek stewardship events. The Student Conservation Association, who does work up on the Sierras, could help with trail building in the watershed, giving them an opportunity to do work in an urban area.

In general, community members do want more parks and recreational spaces; however, there may be a sentiment that the creek, and protecting the creek, may make creating parks more difficult. There is a disconnect between recreational space and watershed connection, and people value having space for their kids to play/run around in, as opposed to a place to sit peacefully near the creek. One attendee has been working with City Councilperson Noel Gallo to clear encampments.

FUNDING NOTES/IDEAS FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY

CITY OF OAKLAND

Funding is another important issue, with regards to any sort of capital improvements as well as ongoing maintenance. Projects could be grant funded, but may need City of Oakland Capital Improvements Program (CIP) funding for completion. If a project is fully funded by a grant, the City could contribute “in kind” support through staff time and/or could issue a letter of support. For CIP funding, the process filters through potential projects by scoring them using the City’s Prioritization Factors and Weighting System:

- Equity (Invest in underserved communities) - 16 pts
- Health and Safety (Improve safety and encourage healthy living) - 16 pts
- Existing Conditions (Renovate or replace broken, hazardous, outdated city properties) - 13 pts
- Economy (Benefit small businesses & create job opportunities for Oaklanders) - 13 pts
- Environment (Preserve the environment and address climate change) - 11 pts
- Required work (Address areas where city may be held financially & legally responsible) - 10 pts
- Improvement (Build new and upgrade city facilities, streets, sidewalks, and public spaces) - 8 pts
- Collaboration (Combine projects to save time & money and partner with community) - 8 pts
- Project readiness (Ensure projects are ready to go without delay) - 5 pts

The next CIP cycle will commence in 2022, with the public portal for project request submission expected to reopen in late summer/early fall of 2022 to accept project requests for the two-year budget that will begin on July 1, 2023. The process is transparent and allows residents to comment. According to the City of Oakland attendee, when it comes to creating signage, most money is spent on getting graphic designers and the need to translate in several languages.

The attendee had a few thoughts regarding the feasibility of making one of these projects come to fruition. Framing the project as a water quality and restoration project may help. Measure Q funding could be used to support park

maintenance and trash can installation/maintenance. He also mentioned funding from Measure DD, which was used as “seed money” for the RDG Glen Echo Creek project. He said that some Measure DD funding goes to art, but couldn’t provide more detail and said to look at the CIP project page.

FORMER/CURRENT FOSC STAFF

Sometimes it’s easier to get a line item toward park maintenance if it is aimed at more places. The more constituencies it covers, the easier it will be to pass. Look into ECAP 2030: City of Oakland published a plan for achieving climate equity. Build alliance with Dan Kalb (District 1 City Council Member) and Sheng Thao (District 4 City Council Member), who are both big climate activists. Council Member Thao is also running for mayor. Orient need for funding towards public health and safety, to reduce crime by adding lighting along pathways. Look into statistics about disadvantaged communities from the EPA’s Environmental Justice screening (EJScreen) and/or CalEnviroScreen. Work backwards when thinking about securing funding: who do we have a shot at getting money from and how do we use their language to get that funding?

SUMMARY OF NOTES BY SITE

WOOD PARK

CITY OF OAKLAND INTERVIEW

The attendee does not think that pumping creek water into a faux creek would be the best use of funds, but otherwise likes the idea of improving Wood Park.

FOSC BOARD

FOSC Board members agreed that Wood Park would be a great location for a pilot project. They agree that daylighting the creek is not really feasible here (or if it were, it would be very long term) and embracing the symbolic creek is the way to go. Creating/fostering a cultural/urban creek experience with art and education is the best path forward for Lower Sausal Creek. Wood Park would be a good place to share native heritage, plant native plants, and provide education on native uses and stories that describe their history here as well as describing how the creek was a resource for their livelihood. There is also support for a pumped creek, similar to what currently exists at Temescal Creek Park near the DMV on Claremont Ave, or at Peralta Hacienda Park, where the artificial creek was created by diverting a portion of water from the main creek culverted below.

(Janet M. Sowers, William Lettis & Associates, Inc. 1993) Additionally, there could be watershed maps, new trails, and new entry way signs at McKillop and School Street. There could be a series of signs that encourage people to walk and explore, going from one sign to the next. Signs could have a QR code that brings them to the FOSC website, or anywhere with additional information, maps, directions to the next sign, etc. The main constraints/uncertainties are parking (if this park becomes more widely used) and upkeep of facilities (bathroom, trash, etc). The FOSC Board proposed the idea of changing the name of Wood Park to acknowledge Native American land.

CURRENT/FORMER FOSC STAFF

A faux creek and interpretive signage on top of the culvert through Wood Park would be nice. If not a faux creek, then a trail that leads to the open part of Sausal Creek at the downstream end would be great. Open it up and fix the fence to make the creek more viewable, and even create a way for people/students to collect water samples for analysis (previously students lowered something down through the hole in the fence).

WOOD PARK VOLUNTEER GROUP

Some of the long-term goals for Wood Park include a play structure, daylighting of the creek, and connecting the park to other existing paths, both upstream and downstream. Short term goals include adding multiple spigots for watering plants, planting more natives, and getting rid of invasives, including ivy, eucalyptus, fennel, and broom. If not removing eucalyptus, then at least some sort of limbing/maintenance.

There is some concern of creating an overlook at the downstream end of the culvert because of the proximity to private property and how overgrown that area is. There was interest, however, in building a trail aligned with the current (culverted) creek, or next to some sort of symbolic creek. If there were to be a faux creek proposed, the flood control district would definitely need to be involved.

People agree that better signage at the entrances to the park would be beneficial, adding one at the School Street entrance and another at the McKillop entrance. Adding a sign on Fruitvale Ave directing people toward the park would also be a good idea. Another idea was to create a circular path through the grassed area with interpretive signage. An ADA accessible path would allow seniors from the nearby senior home to use the park. Making the School Street entrance ADA compliant would also be necessary. Taking out

the chain link fence would make this entrance more welcoming and the park's existence more obvious, as many people in the neighborhood aren't even aware that there is a park. As the School St entrance is on a ACFCD parcel, they would have to be part of the process (the District is willing-Henry Faulkner was a contact). Neighbors of Wood Park may want to help with grant writing. Additionally, because the area adjacent to the School St entrance is actually over the culverted Sausal Creek, it may be a good place for educational materials, in addition to the more obvious and welcoming entrance.

Some ideas for educational materials include pointing the apple tree that is one of the original apple trees of "the Fruitvale" which is at/near Wood Park, additional history of the Fruitvale District, history of the McKillop slide, and natural history (including animal/plant species). They also presented the idea of having art pieces, including a mural/mosaic or any other sort of educational signage on the pump station.

The Wood Park volunteers used to conduct monthly cleanups (3-4 hours each), so there may be the potential to start this community stewardship up again. Schools/students have also often volunteered.

BARRY PLACE

FOSC BOARD

People who have recently moved in near Barry Place are surprised to know that there is a creek nearby, and express interest in it. This interest could be leveraged to get volunteers for stewardship of some sort.

CURRENT/FORMER FOSC STAFF

Making Barry Place ADA accessible would be helpful, as many volunteers are seniors and may have limited mobility.

BARRY PLACE VOLUNTEER GROUP

One attendee was the original person responsible for getting Barry Place where it is today, starting in 2000, primarily with trash pickup. This was followed by eradication of invasives and planting of natives (supplied by FOSC nursery). This had been a constant struggle, especially battling against aggressive cape ivy and Himalayan blackberry. Eventually, a Boy Scout approached him to propose an Eagle Scout project, which became the stairway down to the creek, with the rope railing that is currently there. FOSC oversaw this project.

They want the eucalyptus tree(s) removed, because of how much debris they shed and all the shade they cast, making it hard for native plants to establish. They also would like to see Barry Place made into a more official creek access/ overlook point, as a City park. The idea would be to build a platform with signage in the location where the big eucalyptus currently stands, or even a parklet with a picnic table for a little extra. John would really like people to be able to get down to the creek, but Barry thinks there would need to be some sort of seasonally opened gate for safety, as the creek flows during a storm could be dangerous. Instructional/interpretative materials could include information about invasives/natives. If the fence were removed, it would be beneficial to add bollards to keep people from backing up a truck to dump trash. There also seems to be someone who is using the site to store recyclables.

They would like to see a creekside trail built between Barry Place and Wood Park. In their research, they found that the Broughtons, who own the parcel just upstream of Barry Place, have entertained the idea of an easement for a trail. This would be along the west side of the creek. They don't, however, know about the other property owners. Instead, maybe part of the sidewalk here could be painted to park the continuation of the creek trail, off the creek.

When asked about the interest of the neighborhood in seeing this site formalized as a City park, they mentioned the property owner downstream of 27th Street on the right bank, the Gladmen Mental Health Rehab, who were initially interested in stewardship, but after a proposal was wrote up, they heard nothing back.

JOSIE DE LA CRUZ PARK

CITY OF OAKLAND

The attendee didn't specifically know about the potential creek restoration opportunity at Urban Promise Academy (cited from the 2017 Walkable Watershed Concept Plan), but agreed that it might be a good opportunity to connect the school or Josie de la Cruz Park to part of the open channel. He pointed out, however, that there may be a jurisdiction issue with ACFCWCD and gate access issues.

CARMEN FLORES RECREATION CENTER DIRECTOR

They said seeing water in some way would be great, and likes the idea of a faux creek. Priorities would include cleaning up of the creek upstream of culvert as well as having a garden or trees planted, including natives or a vegetable garden. The current garden is maintained by the Rec Center, along with high

school classes and a community member. The high school class works with La Clinica. Educational features could be added, describing the history of the park, history of the creek, geography of the creek (where does it come from/go?). They would like to see some of the features that were put in Dimond Park.

People use the grassy area, so preserving that is important. Kids from the nearby schools use the park and the rec center. Regarding the little swale area above the culverted creek, the neighbor has sort of taken over that area, though we're unsure of where the actual property lines are. Paul asked if he could find that out, as it would be much easier to do any project if the land is City property (as opposed to private land with Flood Control easement). The attendee also mentioned that his supervisor, who was around during the construction of the Rec Center, may have more input.

FRUITVALE BRIDGE PARK

CITY OF OAKLAND

The Fruitvale Alive Project that is slated to go to construction this summer (2022), will extend the Bay Trail in some way in the vicinity of Fruitvale Bridge. The attendee said he would have to review the project plans to see exactly what will be happening, and that he sent the project managers info to Anna Marie.

FOSC BOARD

If the old Owens-Illinois Glass Factory has indeed been purchased and is slated for development, any required mitigation could fund some sort of rebuild of the Fruitvale Bridge Park.

CURRENT/FORMER FOSC STAFF

Create an art wall (mosaic) by the Fruitvale Bridge and/or plant native plants.

FRUITVALE BRIDGE PARK VOLUNTEER GROUP

We've received a written response from a longtime community member. She picked up trash at Fruitvale Bridge Park from 2011 to 2020. Over the years she and another community member regularly picked up trash, did light gardening, and tried to move campers out of the park. She lost a lot of hope (last straw) when the City of Oakland, Parks and Rec Dept. sent a group of young high school aged summer interns to completely weed-whack all of the landscaping that she installed, leaving only the Arundo and bare dirt.

This community member's priority is to stabilize the tidal canal bank so that a park can be built. Her ideas include reinstalling benches, garbage cans, and the pier that was removed due to decay. The area here is good for sitting, fishing, and enjoying the view of the canal (watching osprey, pelicans, and peregrine falcons). She would still be interested in small trash pickup, but it had become too much with people's dumping of large items (shopping carts, clothing, mattresses, furniture, boxes of personal items, buckets of human waste, and drug paraphernalia) and felt overwhelmed by the encampment, feeling it was too dangerous.

According to the written response, the Owens-Illinois Glass Factory was sold to a developer who constructs warehouse sites for lease or sale to major retailers like Dick's Sporting Good, Amazon, etc. She is hoping that the BCDS (Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission) has to get involved so that the bank can be properly shored up before the sidewalk and street slide into the canal. She believes that if Amazon, or some other retailer, starts moving heavy truck loads in and out on Alameda Ave, the street won't be able to handle it, and will erode into the canal.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

The Fruitvale Alive Project will include the following components:

1. Widen the sidewalks by 5 to 7 feet on each side of Fruitvale Avenue
2. Install a sidewalk-level protected bike lane on the corridor connecting the Fruitvale Avenue Bridge to E12th Street and the Fruitvale BART Station
3. Create a new connection to a new segment of the SF Bay Trail through Jingtown
4. Close two "slip lanes" at the south side of intersection of Fruitvale and E12th (locations where cars make fast turns) and convert them into pedestrian and bicycle space
5. Install pedestrian bulb-outs where feasible to reduce the crossing distance for people walking
6. Install new landscaping and greenery to beautify the corridor and improve air quality
7. Install new pedestrian-oriented sidewalk lighting along the corridor

These components are very much in-line with the goals of the walkable watershed. The widened sidewalks, protected bike line, landscaping/greenery, and pedestrian-oriented sidewalk lighting makes this most downstream portion

of Sausal Creek much more walkable. The addition of signage about the underground creek (and its history in this area, which is believed to have been a willow grove [Aquatic Outreach Institute, Friends of Sausal Creek 1998]) and/or some sort of artwork (fish, other creek related plants/animals, native people, etc) would establish this area as part of the walkable watershed.

NOEL GALLO MEETING (5/11/2022)

There were up to 23 Zoom participants and a handful of people in person (hard to tell). Charlie Ream from the Oakland DOT presented the Fruitvale Alive Project, and uploaded the updated slideshow to the website (downloaded to Background folder). Duke Realty representatives presented and took questions about their development plans for the Owens-Illinois Glass Factory. In addition to the industrial facility, which could be a warehouse and/or office space that will be rented to some sort of corporate tenant or tenants, they also plan to include 35 units of affordable housing. Part of their budget will be to improve the Bay Trail along this section of Alameda Ave, which will include shifting part of the street onto their private property (but allowing access), and creating a green strip that will separate auto traffic from the Bay Trail. People had concerns about Duke Realty's relationship with Amazon as one of their major clients, but they don't believe that Amazon will be a potential tenant for this site. Another concern people had was truck traffic (noise/pollution), but for our purposes, the proposed access route was not near Fruitvale Bridge Park.

INTERVIEW NOTES

INTERVIEW #1: FOSC BOARD MEMBERS: HELD 3/30/22

Preface: We've reviewed the background documents outlined in the RFQ and those provided by FOSC related to the lower Sausal Creek watershed (below Highway 580).

Question 1: Updates on needs/priorities/vision for sites along lower Sausal Creek watershed (below Highway 580)?

- Seems to be a lack of awareness that the creek even exists. A mixture of appreciation as a resource, but also a fair amount of fear of crime (folks living along side of it) related to opening it up to access. See the benefit of living near the creek, but don't see it as a resource for the community. How do we transform the fear to looking at the creek as a resource?
- Huge trash problem. Not sure how to solve that

- Regarding daylighting, it's okay to not daylight where not feasible or desired by the community. Sounds like the group agrees that the possibility of daylighting in Wood Park not feasible for this study
- Thinking we really have to embrace the symbolic creek, a cultural experience (art, education, urban experience) in the lower end of Sausal creek
- Sogorea Te will be attending and giving a presentation during next member meeting
- Wood park in particular seems like a good place to share native heritage, plant natives, provide education on native uses and stories they wish to share
- Sounds like there is some support for the pumped creek idea (Peralta creek by Hacienda east of Coolidge, at the DMV). Either Josie de la Cruz Park or wood park

Question 2: What site and what project at that site can/should be the “pilot project”.

- Sounds like folks like Wood Park as a showcase, most opportunity
- Pumped creek, Ohlone education/history, maps, native plants
- Parking might be an issue
- Uncertainty about upkeep for another park. Need to lock in who will take care of the upkeep

Question 3: Additional ideas/input you've heard from the community?

- Fruitvale Bridge Park: Property has been purchased (according to written response). Might be an opportunity to daylight the lower section or create some other representative features.

Question 4: What educational features would you like to see here?

- Native American recognition of the history, talk about the creek as a resource for their livelihood
- Series of signs that encourage people to walk and explore
- They like the interactive online ideas (QR code, citizen science)
- Watershed, where are you, places you can visit in the watershed
- Where does the water come from, how clean is it, where does it go?
- History of the creek and how it became developed
- Look at what the students want to hear
- FOSC website

Question 5: How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship?

- Barry place - people who just moved in are surprised to know there is a creek, and they are interested in it. Might be able to get volunteers
- There are folks along the creek that have questions regarding if they should remove invasives, how to stabilize the creek, planting natives. Would be good to have a resource for them. Interesting idea for FOSC to provide that guidance. They like the idea of a dedicated community talk. One member has a database of all folks along the creek. Bringing back the native's tour. Possibility of setting aside a certain percentage of plants aside for free to folks on the lower watershed. Outreach activity

Question 6: What do you want to see more of in the watershed (environmental/ ecological/ historical educational signs or interactive features, viewpoints, trash cans, benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, restrooms, trails, faux-creeks, pet waste bags, trees/plants, art, etc.)?

- Increased awareness of creek being there is a necessary first step. Getting community aware and interested
- Changing people's thinking and getting them to imagine a different urban watershed
- Shift thinking to see creek as a resource rather than a place to dump trash
- Change name of wood park to acknowledge Native American land

Question 7: What successful ingredients should a Feasibility Study have? What should it not have?

- Pilot project needs to be successful to capture the community interest and support the long-term plans, get momentum
- Maintenance is a big deal

INTERVIEW #2: BARRY PLACE COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP GROUP: HELD 3/31/22

Introduction

- One attendee says he's responsible for getting Barry Place to where it is today (constituent of FOSC). Long ago he had noted that this site was left out of residential development and found that it was a city owned site
- They made a video on Barry Place!
- In addition to the waterfall (concrete drop structure) at the upstream end

- of Barry Place, there's a second one downstream of 27th St
- Started maintaining Barry Place around 2000, primarily in the form of trash pickup. Low-income neighborhood, people dispose of their trash where they can. Then started eradicating invasives and planting natives (supplied by FOSC nursery), which has been a constant struggle. Main invasives: cape ivy (John believes it shouldn't be sold, because how aggressive it is) and Himalayan blackberry
 - Boy Scout came to ask about an Eagle Scout project, and they thought a good project would be to build the stairway down to the creek at Barry Place, which was built along with a rope railing. This project was just overseen by FOSC

Question 1: Priorities for Barry Place? Overlook? Benches/tables? Eucalyptus removal?

- One attendee wants the eucalyptus gone. Eucalyptus sheds a lot of debris and makes the site very shaded, making it harder to establish native plants
- Make Barry Place an access/overlook point, with information about the creek (past, current, future). Where the big eucalyptus currently is, make a platform/overlook with signage. "Parklet with a picnic table or more would be nice, but just an overlook with a sign would be a great start."
- One attendee really likes the ability for people to get down to the creek, feel the water
- The other attendee thinks some sort of seasonally opened gate for safety to access down the creek would be prudent
- Offered to draw up a vision for this overlook spot
- Long term vision: taken over by the City and made into a park, add improvements: picnic tables

Question 2: Ideas/input you've heard from the community?

- Folks don't even realize there's a creek here
- Opportunity to educate and bring awareness (local, regional, global)

Question 3: What educational features would you like to see here?

- Instructional/interpretative materials about invasives/natives (how bad is ivy??)
- Regular sessions with FOSC staff member and creekside property owners to educate them about tending responsibly
- Plant exchange/giving program
- Stewardship

- Creek ordinance (local ordinance) that protects creeks. Local, creekside residents may have written it, but even though they've been so involved, they're backyard is covered with ivy

Question 4: How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship?

- Eagle scout projects could be leveraged to perform stewardship. Kids paid by the city to do work and learn about the creek. Business employee groups could also come help
- Student conservation association (for trail building). They already do work up in the Sierras, and this would be an opportunity to do work in an urban area

Question 5: What do you want to see more of in the watershed (environmental/ ecological/ historical educational signs or interactive features, viewpoints, trash cans, benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, restrooms, trails, faux-creeks, pet waste bags, trees/plants, art, etc.)?

- Creekside trail between Barry Place and Wood Park. Attendees looked at the entire reach to see if it's possible. Trail on west side of creek through a property just upstream of Barry Place. These property owners have entertained the idea of an easement for the trail, other property owners maybe not. Maybe part of the sidewalk on the street could be painted to mark the continuation of the creek trail, off creek.

Question 6: Do local residents want to see the site formalized as a City park?

- Property owner downstream of 27th on the right bank (Gladmen Mental Health Rehab), was initially interested in stewardship, but after a proposal was wrote up, he heard nothing back.
- People do want more parks and recreational spaces. The creek, and protecting the creek, may make making parks more difficult. Disconnect between recreational space and watershed protection. People want a place for their kids to play/run around, not a place to sit peacefully near the creek.

Question 7: Should there be access restrictions?

- Mixed feelings on this, but sounds like seasonal restrictions would be a good idea. Can have overlook and creek side access
- If Barry Place was made nice, it would stay nice. Once it seems neglected (which the current fence signals), it will remain neglected
- Add bollards to keep people from backing up a truck to dump trash

- Seems like someone is using the site to store recyclables
- One attendee has been working with Nel Gallo, city Councilperson, to clear encampments. Currently working with him

INTERVIEW #3: CITY OF OAKLAND: HELD 4/5/2022

FUNDING NOTES

- Capital improvement projects process filtered through ranking criteria (shovel ready, disadvantaged communities), gives some amount of money per year. Ranked projects get funded through the ranking system on a biannual basis. Transparent process that residents can comment on. Anything that comes out of feasibility study, CIP process and would need to be ranked through all other projects. Summer-fall of this year.
- Can help provide data we might need for the feasibility study, can help us navigate the CIP process.
- Maintenance through 311 system.
- Funding could happen in combination of ways:
- Projects that are grant funded (outside), but need CIP funds to complete (partially funded)
- Fully funded by grant, but City of Oakland could contribute “in kind” support through staff time, could issue a letter of support
- Measure Q funded park maintenance/trash cans
- Measure DD Glenn Echo: RDG is doing design. Has done assessment, now going into public engagement portion. Seed money from Measure DD, but will have to go for more funding later. Note sure yet what the project will look like. Lots of parklets that go along the creek, so trying to integrate park improvements.

Question 1: Priority sites along lower Sausal Creek watershed (below Highway 580)?

- Potential creek restoration opportunity at Urban Promise Academy identified by the City? (Sausal Creek Walkable Watershed Concept Plan)
- Doesn't know about this. Might just be a good opportunity to connect park to another open channel. Might be a jurisdiction issue with ACFCWCD & gate access issues
- Old Owens-Illinois Glass Factory slated for redevelopment?
- Doesn't really know what's going on with this.
- General notes on priorities:
- Wood Park, Barry Place, Josie de la Cruz, outfall
- Not sure pumping and foe creek is best use of funds

- Ecological benefits, community benefits: water quality, incorporating LID, trash pickup would be beneficial
- Likes all of the ideas we threw out, especially responded to educational components
- Certain amount of some funding (measure DD) goes to art, but not really sure how that works
- Look at CIP project page.

Question 2: Does the Fruitvale Alive Project include anything at Fruitvale Bridge Park?

- Sounds like bay trail is being extended in some way
- Slated to happen this summer (2022)
- Would have to review Fruitvale Alive Project to see what exactly is going on/planned here
- E-mailed Anna Marie the PM, should be the best person

Question 3: Ideas/input you've heard from the community?

- Might want to connect with local representatives to get community member feedback.

Question 4: What educational features would you like to see here?

- Likes the educational signs. Doing something similar as was done at Lake Merritt.
- Most money is spent on getting graphic designer and need to translate in several languages.

Question 5: How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship? Indigenous voices: Interest in partnerships with local groups such as Sogorea Te land trust? Guide educational and cultural/artistic representation, support for ongoing stewardship and maintenance.

- Have been informal agreements in the past
- For example, in downtown Oakland, business improvement groups
- More formal agreements now
- Informal way = adopt a spot, city provides with tools and helps with certain things

Question 6: What do you want to see more of in the watershed (environmental/ecological/ historical educational signs or interactive features, viewpoints, trash cans, benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, restrooms, trails, faux-creeks, pet

waste bags, trees/plants, art, etc.)?

- How much of this is feasible? Putting in restrooms?
- These items sound like it is a possibility. Probably need to frame it from a WQ and restoration point of view

Question 7: What does it take to get the commitment of the city for maintenance if Wood Park were to be the pilot?

- Might float idea of additional maintenance with Parks department
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) reviews things that Oakland does in parks, so might want to bounce it off of them

INTERVIEW #4: WOOD PARK COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP GROUP: HELD 4/6/22

Question 1: Priorities for Wood Park?

- Long Term:
 - Play structure
 - Daylighting creek
 - Connecting to other paths, Fruitvale
- Short Term:
 - Multiple spigots for watering
 - Planting natives
 - Get rid of invasives (ivy and eucalyptus, fennel and broom)
 - If not removing eucalyptus, at least some sort of limbing/maintenance
- Other Ideas:
 - Overlook? Not sure about overlook, because of proximity to private property and overgrown.
 - Signage at entry to park: one at School St and one at McKillop, and even a sign on Fruitvale Ave
 - Circular path through the grassed area with educational signage
 - More use by seniors, there is a senior home nearby. But they need an ADA accessible entrance (school street)

Question 2: Ideas/input you've heard from the community?

- It would be nice to open up the School Street entrance to the park, taking out the chain link fence and make it feel more welcoming and obvious. Lots of people in the neighborhood don't even know that the park is there. Since that's the part of the park that is actually over Sausal Creek, that might be a place to put educational material and also create a more

obvious and welcoming entrance.

- School Street entrance parcel is owned by the Alameda County Flood Control District (the District is willing-Henry Faulkner was contact)
- Neighbors may want to help with grant writing.

Question 3: What educational features would you like to see here?

- Original apple tree of “the Fruitvale” is at Wood Park!
- History of the slide: http://www.documents.sausalcreek.org/Sausal_History.pdf
- Living history of the Fruitvale
- Signage with animal species
- Mural, mosaic, or some sort of educational signage on the pump station
- Trail aligned with current creek or symbolic creek

Question 4: How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship?

- Used to do monthly cleanup events (3-4 hours each)

Question 5: What do you want to see more of in the watershed (environmental/ ecological/ historical educational signs or interactive features, viewpoints, trash cans, benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, restrooms, trails, faux-creeks, pet waste bags, trees/plants, art, etc.)?

- Educational/interpretative signs, trails, murals.
- Ask the Flood Control District about the faux creek idea

Question 6: Can a creek awareness/access project (i.e., not daylighting) co-exist with your goals for Wood Park?

- Invasive plants are a constant issue
- They really want to daylight the creek (long term vision)
- Want increased awareness of the park (under-utilized)
- Volunteers: Schools/students have often volunteered

INTERVIEW #5: FOSC CURRENT STAFF: HELD 4/8/22

Question 1: Priority sites along lower Sausal Creek watershed (below Highway 580)?

- Issues with access to creek, homelessness, human waste
- Fenced off areas are perfect hiding places for people
- Pocket parks could be a good way to get access

- Thought Josie de la Cruz Park would be a great place for a project:
 - Trail through the park
 - Some sort of overlook
- Representative creek above the undergrounded portion
- Trail all the way along the creek, in whatever way possible
- Faux creek and interpretive signage on top of culvert through Wood Park

Question 2: What existing features do people like and respond well to; how can they be improved?

- Dimond canyon had a reputation, but then changed and now used to access creek

Question 3: What educational features would you like to see here?

- Educational tool for students

Question 4: How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship?

- Hasn't heard anything about how the community would want to be involved. FOSC worked with schools near Josie de la Cruz. Schools like to have kids' gardens.
- Schools like involvement.

INTERVIEW #6: JOSIE DE LA CRUZ PARK: HELD 4/12/22

Josie De La Cruz was born in West Oakland she moved to Fruitvale due to the destruction of West Oakland during the 1950s and 60s. She became a local activist and did a lot of community work in the Fruitvale District

Question 1: Priorities for Josie de la Cruz Park?

- Like to see water in some way
- Clean up of creek upstream of culvert
- Garden/trees (native, vegetables, open to it all!)

Question 2: Ideas/input you've heard from the community?

- Recreational center maintains the garden, along with a high school class and a community member.
- The high school class works with La Clínica.

Question 3: What educational features would you like to see here?

- History of the area
- Park used to be called “Sanborn Park”
- History of the creek, where does the creek come from, where does it go?
- Would be nice to see some of the features that are in Dimond Park.

Question 4: How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship?

- Kids from the schools come to the park and rec center
- People do hang out in the grassy area, and it’s an important area to preserve

Question 5: What do you want to see more of in the watershed (environmental/ ecological/ historical educational signs or interactive features, viewpoints, trash cans, benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, restrooms, trails, faux-creek, daylight creek, pet waste bags, trees/plants, art, etc.)?

- Likes the idea of the faux creek, students could come visit the faux creek.

Question 6: Garden/private property neighbor/property line?

- The neighbor has sort of taken over that little swale area above the culverted creek. Could find out from the City where the property boundaries are (asked to find that out). Would be much easier to do work in the area if it is City property, and not private land (with Flood Control easement).

RECREATION CENTER AND PARK INFO:

- Soccer field, basketball courts are used/reserved
- Rec Center has been closed to the public through the pandemic
- Rec Center was built in the early 2000’s (about 20 years old)
- Director’s supervisor, who was around during the construction of the Rec Center, may have some input

INTERVIEW #7: FOSC FORMER STAFF: HELD 4/19/22

Question 1: Priority sites along lower Sausal Creek watershed (below Highway 580)?

- Based on what attendee remembers from DACTIP:
 - Illegal dumping issue
 - » Community members say if there is a beautification effort, tends to

- dissuade dumping
- » Dumping tends to attract more dumping
- » More infrastructure needed (trash cans, places to drop off things)
- Green space access
- Education about where municipal water comes from (not Sausal creek)
- Rats and pests in the Ivy (maintaining vegetation)
- Rallying community support for Sausal Creek
- Educating the public on where it is

Question 2: What existing features do people like and respond well to, how can they be improved?

- Trails, signs, pedestrian walkways, bike lanes
- Art wall by Fruitvale Bridge (mosaic) native plants (Jingletown native plant garden)
- Directed walk from one location to another (head to outfall) with indication of where the creek is
- King tides events, garden day clean up events, expand to be more inclusive of the watershed
- Bio blitz (during earth month) - expand to Jingletown
- Long term maintenance is an issue
- Funding - there's a strategy, sometimes easier to get a line item toward park maintenance if it is aimed at more places. The more constituencies it covers, easier to pass.

Question 3: Ideas/input you've heard from the community?

- Consistent irrigation water to native plant gardens
- Bathroom access is important
- Likes the idea of offering invasive removal and native species planting, but should be a coordinated effort

Question 4: What educational features would you like to see here?

- Wood Park would be a great place to start. Would be nice to have a trail that leads to the open part of the stream
- A way to collect water for analysis
- Knowing where to see Sausal Creek

Question 5: What else do you want to see more of in the watershed (environmental/ ecological/historical educational signs or interactive features, viewpoints, trash cans, benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, restrooms, trails,

faux-creeks, pet waste bags, trees/plants, art, etc.)?

- Interpretive signs would be major for watershed, but probably not for the City (though it's a small financial ask)
- ADA accessibility, especially since a lot of volunteers are seniors (rope at Barry place is sketchy!)
- Make fences look nicer and inviting, but keep it safe
- Water fountains/water filling stations, cyclists could bike through to refill their bottles!
- Citywide Wifi coming? (Oakland Undivided), Wifi in parks!
- Segorea Te Land Trust - there's an interactive Ohlone exhibit up in the hills; down here there could be a forest/wetland type of exhibit
- Bikeable watershed, in addition or as opposed to the walkable watershed - biking feels safer
- Additional thoughts/ideas/funding & angling advice:
- ECAP 2030 - City of Oakland published plan for achieving climate equity
- District 1 City Council member (Dan Kalb, Sheng Thao (running for mayor!) - big climate advocates
- Public health/safety-oriented project ideas: crime, add lighting along pathways
- EJ screen (EPA's environmental justice screening), disadvantaged communities! Bring up statistics
- CAL enviro screening
- Work backwards: who do we have a shot at getting money from? How do we use their language to get funding

INTERVIEW #8: FRUITVALE BRIDGE PARK COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP GROUP: HELD 4/29/22

Question 1: Regarding the Fruitvale Alive Project that is scheduled to be constructed this summer, 2022, will the new segment of the Bay Trail be built as well?

- The privately owned building just west of the bridge where the new trail would go is part of the hold-up, but it's up to the City to decide to move forward with new Bay Trail connection (it was hard to fully understand what Gallo was saying here, but this is what I gathered)

Question 2: What educational features would you like to see here?

- Rebuild the pier in some way, as it was a great location for teaching
- A way to get people down to the creek

Question 3: How would your members/constituents/community members like to be involved in potential projects/volunteer opportunities/stewardship?

- Community members used to come to cleanups, with teenagers walking from BART (maybe this could be re-started?)

Additional thoughts/ideas/comments:

- Pier was removed because people were sleeping on/under it
- Duke Realty bought the Glass Factory (27 acres)
 - Buildings new office/manufacturing possibility
 - RVs will be removed
 - Will develop the triangular piece of land
- Still trying to figure out Bay Trail connection
 - Safety issues
 - “It’s up to us” if this will happen (the City)
- Triangular piece of land is City property
- Native American Health Center (has been or could be a partner in advocacy?)

APPENDIX B: WOOD PARK COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP GROUP SKETCH PLAN AND VISION STATEMENT FOR WOOD PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



The Wood Park Community

Wood Park is a small park, approximately 3-4 acres, and is snuggled between Sheffield Ave, McKillop Rd. and the streets running off of Fruitvale Avenue. The neighbors surrounding the park have worked hard to maintain Wood Park, make it safer, and increase its use by the community. We believe that adding a playscape for the kids of the area would help the neighborhood combat the misuse of the park and attract a greater number of people of all ages to regularly using the park for recreation.

This park serves many purposes for both the immediate neighbors of the park and the greater communities of Glenview, Dimond, and Fruitvale. People come to this park to walk their dogs, exercise, and play with their friends and children. Both adults and schoolchildren play and practice soccer in the field. The neighbors appreciate these multiple uses of the park, but feel the park is still under-utilized and needs a clear draw for children and families. We would like to see a children's area at the southwest end of the park within the sightline from Fruitvale down School Street.

The neighborhoods adjoining Wood Park have experienced and continue to experience criminal activity in and around the park. Prostitution, drug and gun deals, gunshots in the middle of the night, and drug paraphernalia have been some of the common criminal activities or evidence thereof observed by neighbors. This past year a neighbor was able to obtain a donated wooden play structure that a group of neighbors moved and assembled in the park. During its short presence in the park we saw a marked decrease in the criminal misuse of the park. There were notably less youths hanging out at the end of School Street, less drug baggies on the ground, and more families in the park during the day and in the evenings. In addition to there being more children and families attracted to the park, neighbors also noticed the addition of multi-cultural use as the local Asian, Latino, African-American, and European-American children and families spent time at the play structure and chatted with each other. We would love to see Wood Park become a community hub, drawing together the positive elements of our community and discouraging the negative elements, many of which come from outside the immediate neighborhoods around the park. Unfortunately, the city demanded that we remove the structure because it did not meet the city's safety standards. As soon as the neighbors complied by removing the structure the criminal misuse of the park began to increase once again to its previous levels, and the positive use of the park again decreased.

Our Vision of the Future

As a neighborhood, we would like to see a playscape in this park that would meet the needs of the neighborhood and stimulate creative play and a connection to nature without pushing out the other positive uses of the park. We would also like to create an alternative to the traditional cookie-cutter play structures that fill our parks. The neighborhood group that has worked hard to transform Wood Park over the past six years by removing invasive plants,



planting native species, and creating newly designed plant beds has a strong vision of a park that is welcoming for multiple uses and still contains some sense of wilderness. Our vision for a natural playscape would fit in with this overall vision for Wood Park. It would use natural elements such as rocks, earth and wood, a slide embedded into the

hillside, removal of asphalt and use of crushed rock for pathways. We hope that we can partner with the city to remake this park into a natural oasis in our extremely urban setting by tapping the resources we have in our neighborhood and community. We believe that creating this type of play environment is not only more beneficial to children but also more cost effective than a monolithic play structure..

Playscape Versus Traditional Play Structure

A playscape is a play space that looks and feels like a natural environment with as little man-made components as possible. A natural playscape is an outdoor play environment that engages children with nature, providing them with a wide range of opportunities for creative, open-ended play, exploration and healthy development. Playscapes are essentially natural playgrounds, and





encourage a fluid connection between the playscape and the rest of the park’s environment. They are designed with the intent to bring children back to nature using elements such as fallen logs, tree stumps for seating, vertical logs for forts, slides embedded in the side of hills, etc. On the other hand, standard play structures or playgrounds are commonly associated with clearly separated children's areas occupied by a play structure. These structures offer very little in terms of imaginative, open-ended play. Play structures are a way of prescribing and standardizing play for children.

Cost and Maintenance

Cost and maintenance of a playscape would be more financially sustainable than that of a traditional play structure. By using simple natural materials such as straight planks of wood, logs, tree stumps, boulders and earthen mounds (much of which can be obtained free of cost) the city would be able to eschew the costs of expensive ADA required rubber surfaces and costly metal and plastic play structures. Although each project is





different depending on size, budget and needs a typical 5,000 square foot playscape generally can cost \$25,000 to \$40,000 (although they can range in price from \$5,000 to \$100,000). In addition, city work hours to erect a natural playscape could be greatly reduced as much of the work could be done by neighbors collaborating with city

employees. With nothing to paint and no eroding ADA surface needing replacement maintenance needs would also be kept low, and could largely be taken care of by neighborhood park volunteers, freeing the city of additional maintenance concerns.

Maintaining the Multiple Uses of the Park

The neighbors who enjoy Wood Park it love it dearly. The addition of a playscape would enhance Wood Park while still allowing it to be a multi-use area for the community. Adding 5-6 natural play elements would use little space and would not interfere with the positive ways our park is already used. It would still allow for the spring and summertime pick-up games of soccer and the leagues who use the park for practice and games. Nature walks would be enhanced by the added natural elements and there would still be plenty of room for Tai Chi and running. As a neighborhood we feel positive that using these beautiful naturally occurring elements would also edge us closer to environmental



sustainability. Indeed we believe that the addition of a playscape would attract not only more children to the park but a greater range of the community overall as more people learned about the park and felt safer taking advantage of its beautiful haven.

Type of Play

Research suggests that Natural Play Areas promote cooperative play by giving children a greater variety of play choices. Natural Play Areas offer more opportunities for children of various ages, interests and motor abilities to play together. Since play in a natural playscape environment is not prescribed to one area that relies on their physical capabilities to "use" the equipment on a structure, children are more apt to play regardless of their age, size, or physical capabilities. Natural Play Areas also allow for a wider range of "play" with each component. Rather than playing in a specific, prescribed way, these play areas invite imagination and multiple approaches to young minds.



Risk of Injury

Playscapes offer a wide range of open ended play options for children while remaining safe. Playscapes are designed to eliminate fall heights. The most frequent injury to children on playgrounds is a fracture of the upper limb resulting from falls from climbing apparatus (Fissel, 2005). The second most



common cause of injury to children on playgrounds is falls from slides (Fissel, 2005), which is eliminated if the slide is embedded in a hillside and has no falloff at the end. Fall heights are the largest safety issue for most safety inspectors. Playscapes combat the issue of fall heights by using topography changes for children to climb and experience changes in



height. Topography changes allow designers to be creative when placing components in the playscape. Playscapes have rolling hills and fallen logs rather than a central play structure with monkey bars. Playscapes have much lower injury rates than standard playgrounds (Fjortoft and Sageie, 2000). By eliminating fall heights playscapes offer a safe alternative to play structures.

Environmental Benefits

Playscapes are better for the environment on numerous levels. Their construction requires far less materials in general, and the materials used are non-toxic, local, often found or recycled, and part of the natural world. Construction is simpler and can be done mostly by volunteers with non-motorized tools. There is none of the off-gassing that the padding in standard play structures can create, and because the maintenance is much simpler there is no need for repeated use of expensive and environmentally unfriendly materials. Finally and certainly as importantly, a natural playscape encourages a relationship with the natural world, allowing children to develop a consciousness of their environment, creating the environmental stewards of the future.

A natural playscape is a good fit for our neighborhood, for the William D. Wood Park environment, for the financial climate, for the earth, and, most of all, for our kids!



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