

**Albany Parks and Recreation Commission
General Plan Briefing
July 11, 2013**

The Albany Parks and Recreation Commission was briefed on the Albany General Plan at their regular meeting on July 11. Consultant Barry Miller delivered a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting the purpose of the General Plan, the status of the current Plan, the extent to which the Plan deals with parks and recreation issues, and a discussion of park issues that might be covered by the Plan. This was followed by a discussion with the Commission about long-range planning issues.

The following comments were made by the Commission:

- Is the idea to consolidate parks and rec policies in one part of the General Plan and then expand it?
- Is the “interactive” feature of the General Plan website open to all? How can we give comments from Albany residents more weight on the website than those from out of towners?
- Add a parks and rec survey to the website, and include a question about residency, so Albany resident comments can be distinguished from outsiders seeking to influence local policy
- Will the Planning and Zoning Commission hold large workshops, like the ones done during voices to vision? How can we avoid interest groups stacking the General Plan meetings, or people from outside of Albany influencing the outcome of our process?
- Can we have a study session on the Park Master Plan? Build in community participation—Park Master Plan is not really ready for an update yet
- Will General Plan address reclaimed water use, maintenance issues? Plan is more about facility planning and less about operations and maintenance
- Where will economic development issues be addressed, such as businesses located next door to houses
- The plan should take a regional perspective when it looks at recreational facilities. It’s not just about Albany—our residents use Point Isabel and other regional parks. We don’t have an 18-hole golf course in Albany, but the need for such facilities should still be addressed. Address the effects of facilities and spaces in nearby cities on the need for space and facilities in Albany.
- Look at joint powers agreements with other communities, for instance, the Tom Bates sportsfields. Those fields serve Albany even though they are in Berkeley and should be mentioned in the plan.
- Consider dog parks, canine recreation needs, dog park siting criteria.
- How do we keep a 20 year perspective when things change so quickly? How do you keep the Plan relevant?
- How can this commission be most helpful in this process?
- Can the Plan address donations of land? Urban agriculture and community gardens
- Plan must address Albany bulb homeless issues
- How will we deal with homeless in parks? Perhaps a joint meeting with the waterfront committee
- Projected trends—seniors—what is expected in demographics? Are we going to be like Emeryville? Or Hercules? Where are we going? Will Albany evolve as it has in the past or will it get more built up?

The public was invited to comment following the discussion but no comments were made.