APPENDIX B:

DRAFT General Plan Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element Goals and Policies

Goal 1: OPEN SPACE PROTECTION

Maximize the preservation, enhancement, and expansion of open space in Albany for natural resource protection, food production, hazard prevention and abatement, aesthetics, and recreation. (PROS MP Goal 1, Pol 1.6, expanded)

- **Policy 1.1: Green Community.** Maintain Albany as a green community that integrates open space and nature with neighborhoods, protects natural habitat, and educates residents about local vegetation and wildlife. (PROS MP Goal 1)
- **Policy 1.2: Albany Hill.** Designate the crest of Albany Hill for open space and require dedication of this area for conservation and public access as a condition of approval for any proposed development on parcels along the ridgeline. Albany Hill should be considered an essential and valuable regional open space resource. (1992 GP, CROS-3 and 3.1)
- **Policy 1.3: Albany Waterfront.** Recognize the importance of the Albany waterfront as a multiuse open space area and a vital part of the cultural landscape of the East Bay. The City will work toward achieving the maximum feasible open space and recreational uses in the waterfront area and improved public access to and along the Albany shoreline. All future land use decisions for the area west of Interstate 80 shall be consistent with State and regional park plans, trail plans, and Bay conservation and shoreline access plans. (1992 GP,Goal CROS-7, PROS MP Goal 4)

See the General Plan Waterfront Element for a complete set of goals, policies, and actions for the shoreline open space area.

- **Policy 1.4: Urban Open Space.** Incorporate a variety of small open spaces, such as pocket parks, plazas, courtyards, rooftop gardens, tot lots, and landscaped areas, into new development. (new)
- **Policy 1.5:** Open Space in the Public Realm. Enhance the open space value of Albany's streets and public spaces through street tree planting, landscaping, and maintenance and expansion of the urban tree canopy (new, adapted from PROS MP Action 2.4.2 and Goal 2-B).

- **Policy 1.6: Open Space as a Component of Capital Projects.** In planning public improvements such as streetscape projects and public buildings, consider opportunities for public art, landscaping, community gathering places, and other open spaces that beautify the community and supplement existing recreational facilities. (PROS MP Pol 2.4)
- **Policy 1.7:** Community Gardens. Encourage the creation of community gardens in Albany, and the use of open land for food production and urban agriculture. A variety of locations should be considered including parks, school yards, university lands, and other public and private properties. (PROS Action 2.4.3)
- **Policy 1.8:** Creeks. Recognize creeks as an important open space element, and a means of defining the edges of the city and bringing open space and nature into neighborhoods. (new)
- **Policy 1.9: Residential Yards.** Maintain requirements for structural setbacks and minimum yard areas on residential lots to create a sense of openness, provide space for plants and landscaping, and enhance the beauty of Albany. (new)

Possible Implementing Actions

- **Action 1.A: Priority Conservation Area.** Maintain the undeveloped portions of Albany Hill as a regionally designated "Priority Conservation Area." (new)
- **Action 1.B:** Creekside Master Plan Implementation. Implement the open space management recommendations of the 2012 Creekside Master Plan, including vegetation management, trail improvements, signage and other park improvements. (new)
- Action 1.C: Albany Hill Conservation Easements. Work the owner of the 11-acre vacant parcel south of Gateway Towers and land conservation organizations to develop a site plan for the property which maximizes the conservation of open space on the upper slopes and ridgeline portions of the site. Continue to work with owners of other private properties on Albany Hill to reduce fire hazards and manage the Hill's unique ecosystem. (LU Rec-2 and Rec-3 from Creekside Master Plan; PROS MP Action 1.6.1)
- **Action 1.D: Private Open Space Standards.** Maintain requirements for private open space, such as patios and balconies, for new residential units. (adapted from UCV-MP, Pol 4.11)
- **Action 1.E: Eastshore State Park:** Actively participate in the planning and development of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, including the ultimate incorporation of the Albany Bulb into the park area. (PROS MP Action 4.1)

- Goal 2: PARKLAND EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT

 Expand and improve Albany's park system to keep pace with population growth and meet the demand for recreational facilities in the City. (new)
- **Policy 2.1: Park Hierarchy.** Maintain a hierarchy of mini-parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks in Albany, with guidelines to distinguish the types of uses and activities appropriate in each park type. (PROS MP Pol 1.3, 1.5).

Memorial Park should continue be designated as a community park, intended to meet citywide needs and host citywide activities. Ocean View and Terrace Parks should both continue to be designated as neighborhood parks, as should the proposed new park at Pierce Street.

- **Policy 2.2: Non-Traditional Parks.** Supplement traditional City parks with linear parks, special use parks, school facilities, regional open spaces, and other unique parks that complement the network. (PROS MP)
- Policy 2.3: Per Capita Service Standards. Maintain per capita service standards (acres per 1,000 residents) for parkland. These standards should ensure that the current ratios of parkland acreage to population for Mini-Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Linear Parks, and Special Use Areas are maintained at their current levels or are increased in the future. Service standards should provide the basis for parkland dedication and in-lieu fee requirements for new development.

 (PROS MP Pol 1.1)

Question for Parks and Rec Commission: Should the 2004 standards be carried forward or changed?

- **Policy 2.4: Site Design and Planning Standards.** Observe standards for the design and development of parks and open space areas as presented in the Albany Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. The site plan for each park should be appropriate to its specific conditions and context, and should maximize public access and visibility. (PROS MP, Pol 1.2)
- **Policy 2.5:** New Parks. Pursue the development of new parks that accommodate services and facilities not present in Albany today and that respond to increased demand for park and recreational space and facilities. (new)

- **Policy 2.6:** New Facilities in Existing Parks. Balance the demand for new recreational facilities and structures with the need for unprogrammed open space that meets other recreational needs. Where possible, the development of new recreational facilities and amenities should avoid displacing or crowding out other activities. Maintaining a mix of passive and active open spaces is important to the function and aesthetics of community, neighborhood, and regional parks. (new)
- **Policy 2.7: Resource Preservation.** Design and plan new parks in a manner that preserves and enhances natural resources, protects trees and significant topographic features, and is consistent with the sustainability principles articulated in the General Plan Conservation Element. (*UCV MP Pol 4.5*)
- **Policy 2.8: Recreational Land Use Compatibility.** Ensure that park design and activity programming is sensitive to adjacent land uses, taking into consideration both the effect of the park on nearby uses and the effect of nearby uses on the park. This would include efforts to reduce noise and lighting conflicts due to potentially loud or night-time park activities near sensitive receptors (such as schools or homes), as well as consideration of parking and other impacts. (new)
- **Policy 2.9: Park Expansion.** Explore opportunities to expand existing City parks on to vacant or underutilized land on the perimeter of each park site. (new)
- **Policy 2.10: Public Participation.** Engage the public in the design and review of proposed new parks and park improvements, including public meetings and other activities which secure broad participation. (PROS MP Pol 6.1)
- **Policy 2.11: Private and Non-Profit Recreational Facilities**. Encourage the development of additional private and non-profit recreational facilities that are open to the general public, and that complement the array of leisure-time activities available to Albany residents. (new)

<u>Possible Implementing Actions</u>

- **Action 2.A: Parkland Fees and Dedication.** Maintain park in-lieu fees and/or dedication requirements to ensure that new development pays its fair share or otherwise provides for the demand for parkland and recreational facilities it creates. (new)
- **Action 2.B: Pierce Street Park.** Develop a new park on the 4.5-acre former freeway right-of-way site bounded by Pierce Street, Cleveland and Washington Avenues and the I-80 freeway. Development of the site should be phased based on the availability of funds and community input. (adapted from PROS MP Action 1.4.1)

- **Action 2.C: Design Standards.** Continue efforts to establish recreational facility design standards, potentially including specifications for signage and the types of equipment, models and materials to be used in park development (PROS MP Action 6.2.5)
- Action 2.D: Master Plan Updates. Periodically update the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to identify specific projects, funding sources, and time schedules for implementation. This should include detailed improvement and maintenance plans for the City's parks, which are coordinated with the five-year Capital Improvements Program. (92 GP, Policy CROS-6.1)

Goal 3: PARK MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Maintain and enhance Albany's parks so that they provide attractive open
spaces and high-quality recreational facilities that serve children, youth

spaces and high-quality recreational facilities that serve children, youth, families, and seniors. (PROS MP Goal 3)

- **Policy 3.1: Planning for Diverse User Groups.** Ensure that Albany's parks are designed to provide for residents of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and physical capabilities. This should include outdoor spaces for varied activities which serve the needs of different user groups. (new)
- **Policy 3.2:** Modernization. Continue to enhance and modernize recreational buildings such as the pre-school building and the senior center. (PROS MP-Actions 3.3.1, 3.5.1)
- **Policy 3.3: Sports Fields.** Renovate and maintain City sports fields and continue to collaborate with areawide sports field users on field programming and maintenance. Explore opportunities to create new sports fields, including fields on locations outside of Albany, through joint powers agreements, and joint efforts with field users. In addition, to increase the usefulness of athletic fields, encourage field designs and configurations that can accommodate multiple sports rather than one sport alone. (adapted from PROS MP Pol 3.1)
- **Policy 3.4:** Outdoor Cultural Space. Provide flexible outdoor spaces in City parks that can be programmed for community gatherings, art displays, performances and other cultural activities. (PROS MP Pol 2.3, Action 2.3.1)
- **Policy 3.5:** Dogs. Continue to work with local dog owners, park users, and community organizations to balance the demand for dog play areas with other considerations such as habitat protection, safety, and accommodation of active open space uses. Maintain a community dog park at Memorial Park and allowances for leashed dogs on city and regional park properties. (new)
- **Policy 3.6:** Night Lighting and Artificial Turf. Consider the costs and benefits of night lighting and artificial turf as a means of expanding the usability of fields. (PROS MP Policy 3.2)
- **Policy 3.7: Maintenance.** Maintain park and recreation facilities in a manner which keeps them safe, attractive, clean, and a positive part of their neighborhoods. In the annual budgeting process, a priority should be placed on the repair, rehabilitation and preventive maintenance of park facilities. (PROS MP Policy 6.3 and 6.5)

- **Policy 3.8: Vegetation Management.** Ensure that park landscaping and maintenance practices are consistent with City policies to reduce wildfire hazards and manage vegetation, especially in Creekside Park and elsewhere on Albany Hill. These practices should also reinforce City programs to conserve water and promote Bayfriendly landscaping. (new)
- **Policy 3.9: Volunteers.** Use volunteers to supplement City staff and extend the range of recreational services that are provided to Albany residents. The City should offer volunteer opportunities for such tasks as assistance with special events, administrative tasks, and "adopt a park" maintenance and stewardship programs.

 (PROS MP Action 6.2.4)
- **Policy 3.10: Security.** Ensure that the design and operation of City parks maximizes the security and personal safety of park users. (*new*)
- **Policy 3.11: Integrated Pest Management.** Apply integrated pest management principles in park maintenance, with an emphasis on non-toxic, environmentally-safe pest control methods (PROS MP Action 6.4.1)
- **Policy 3.12: Scheduling.** Coordinate the scheduling of activities in recreation centers, on sports fields, at playgrounds, and in parks in general to avoid conflicts, reduce wear and tear, and more evenly distribute activities among parks. As noted in Goal 4, this should include coordination with the Albany Unified School District. (new)
- **Policy 3.13: Funding.** Consider a variety of strategies to increase funding for capital projects and to enhance park maintenance, such as local fundraising, grants, development partnerships, and special taxing districts such as Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts. (PROS MP)

Possible Implementing Actions

- Action 3.A: Parks and Recreation Commission. Maintain a City Parks and Recreation Commission with the responsibility for reviewing plans for parks, open space, landscaping, and street beautification, and considering public input on such plans. The Parks and Recreation Commission should also advise on park maintenance activities and other matters concerning the delivery of park and recreation services. (PROS MP Action 6.1.1 and 6.3.3)
- Action 3.B: Memorial Park Master Plan. Update the 1998 Memorial Park Master Plan and identify needed improvements for the coming years. This may include improvements to the entry promenade, as called for by the 2004 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. (new, updates PROS Action1.5.1)

- **Action 3.C Park Improvement Programs.** Conduct periodic needs assessments, master planning, and improvement programs for neighborhood parks, including Ocean View Park and Terrace Park, and mini-parks, including Dartmouth Tot Lot and San Gabriel Mini-Park. (new)
- **Action 3.D: Playground Improvements.** Develop an improvement and/or replacement program for Albany's playgrounds. As part of this program, consideration should be given to expanding the Dartmouth Tot Lot and developing a picnic area and shelter. (PROS MP Action 3.4.1., expanded)
- **Action 3.F: Maintenance Programs.** Develop and periodically update maintenance standards and programs for parks, sports fields, and other recreational facilities, including budgets for the various tasks required to keep each park and field in good condition. (PROS MP Action 6.3.5, 6.4.2, and Pol 6.4, Action 6.5.1 and .2, Pol 6.6, Action 6.6.1)

Citywide budgeting practices and procedures should ensure that adequate funds are set aside for park maintenance and that line items are established for specific park maintenance activities (e.g., sports field maintenance, building maintenance, medians and traffic islands, etc.). Maintenance practices should aim for reduced costs through minor improvements such as installation of automated irrigation systems and drought-tolerant landscaping.

- **Action 3.F: Maintenance Assessment.** Regularly evaluate the distribution of maintenance tasks between City workers and other parties, including contractors, non-profits, park user groups and neighborhood residents. Clear operating procedures should be followed for all maintenance activities, and for the delegation of maintenance tasks to entities other than City staff. (PROS MP Action 6.5,1)
- **Action 3.G: Reclaimed Water Use.** Continue to explore opportunities for reclaimed water use on City parks, and on medians and planting strips. (*new*)

Goal 4: RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Provide high quality services and recreational programs that meet the diverse sports, fitness, and leisure time needs of Albany residents. (adapted from PROS MP Goal 6)

- **Policy 4.1:** Responsiveness to Demographic Change. Ensure that recreational programs are periodically evaluated and adjusted in response to demographic changes in the city, recreational trends, changes in technology and consumer preferences, and other factors. (adapted from PROS MP Pol 6.7 and Action 6.7.1)
- **Policy 4.2:** Children and Teen Programs. Continue to provide and maintain facilities for child care, early childhood education, and teen programs operated by the City or by private interests. (PROS MP Pol 3.3)
- **Policy 4.3: Senior Services.** Maintain and enhance programs for senior citizens at the Albany Senior Center and at other locations in the City. Expand off-site activities such as tours and travel. (PROS MP Pol 3.5)
- **Policy 4.4: General Interest Programs.** Provide a range of recreational activities and life-long learning classes for adults, such as computer instruction, job training, crafts, sports, and fitness. (PROS MP Pol 3.6)
- **Policy 4.5:** Community Events. Hold communitywide events such as concerts and festivals in City parks as a way to build community spirit, bring residents together, and celebrate the value of parks to Albany. Such events should be managed to ensure that maintenance needs, parking, noise, litter, and other impacts are addressed. (new)
- **Policy 4.6: Fitness.** Support exercise and fitness programs which contribute to the health and wellness of Albany residents, including martial arts and other physical activities. (PROS MP Pol 3.7)
- **Policy 4.7: Arts and Leisure.** Incorporate arts, leisure, cultural, and continuing education programming into recreational programs, to complement sports, play, and active recreation. (PROS MP Pol 2.2)

Possible Implementing Actions

Action 4.A: Evaluations. Continually evaluate programs in terms of costs, fee structure, persons served, community interests, and the level of subsidy required. (PROS MP Pol 6.7 and Action 6.7.3)

See the Community Services and Facilities Element for additional policies and actions on arts and cultural programs, senior services, and child care.

Goal 5: JOINT USE AND COLLABORATION

Promote joint planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, and use of park sites, school sites, UC Village open space, and other recreational and community facilities. (adapted from 1992 GP Pol CROS-6.2)

- **Policy 5.1:** School District Facilities. Support joint use agreements between the City of Albany and the Albany Unified School District to increase after-hours access to school facilities for Albany residents and school day access to facilities in City parks for Albany students. (new)
- **Policy 5.2: UC Village.** Work with the University of California to maintain baseball/ softball fields, a recreation center for Village residents, a community garden, and other amenities which benefit UC Village residents and Albany as a whole. Promote access to the parks and athletic fields within UC Village by Albany residents and sports teams, and encourage the University to maintain a "no net loss" policy for the recreational open space acreage within the UC Village property. (PROS MP Action 1.6.5, Action 3.2.1, UCV MP, Pol 4.7 and 4.8))

In accordance with the UC Village Master Plan, space should be provided for at least one youth soccer and youth softball field, and two youth baseball fields, on the UC Village property. In addition, outdoor recreation space should be provided near the UC Village Community Center.

Policy 5.3: Gill Tract. Coordinate with the University of California for mutually beneficial uses of the Gill Tract. Such plans should protect and enhance Village Creek and other natural environmental features, including significant trees. (PROS MP Action 1.6.5)

See the Land Use Element for additional policies on the Gill Tract.

- **Policy 5.4: Veterans Memorial Building.** Collaborate with Alameda County on the operation and management of the Veterans Memorial Building, with the ultimate goal of transferring ownership of the building to the City. (92 GP Pol CROS-6.)
- **Policy 5.5: East Bay Regional Park District.** Work with the EBRPD to improve awareness of regional recreational facilities and parks among Albany residents, and to expand the regional park system for the benefit of all residents in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, including those in Albany. (new)

Policy 5.6: Adjacent Cities. Continue to foster partnerships and joint use opportunities with the cities of Berkeley, Richmond, and El Cerrito to improve park and recreational services and ensure the most efficient use of local resources. (PROS MP Action 6.2.1)

See the Waterfront Element for a discussion of coordination with regional, state, and federal agencies on waterfront park improvements.

Policy 5.7: Program Development. Coordinate the development of recreational and community service programs with other agencies and organizations, including the School District, UC Village, the YMCA, and other service providers, to avoid redundancy and maximize the choices available to Albany residents. (PROS MP Action 6.7.4)

Possible Implementing Actions

- **Action 5.A:** Tom Bates Sports Complex (Gilman Street Fields). Continue City support for joint powers agreements to operate sports facilities in nearby communities, including the Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex at the west end of Gilman Street in Berkeley. (PROS MP Action 3.2.2)
- **Action 5.B: Vista School.** Work with the Albany Unified School District to explore improvements on the Vista School site which would augment the recreational options available to residents in the surrounding neighborhood (PROS MP Action 1.4.1)
- **Action 5.C:** Cougar Field. Encourage the Albany Unified School District to improve and expand the use of Cougar Field to allow greater and more varied community use of the facility and to alleviate the overuse of Memorial Park Field (PROS MP Action 1.5.2, Action 3.2.3)
- Action 5.D: Funding and Community Access Improvements at Veterans Memorial Building.

 Continue to explore potential funding sources for the maintenance, improvement, and acquisition of the Veterans Memorial Building, consistent with the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. Until the building can be acquired, the City will work with Alameda County on improving building operations and increasing community access. (PROS MP Action 2.2.2, 1992 GP Pol CROS-6.5)

- Goal 6: TRAILS
 - Develop an integrated, comprehensive system of trails linking neighborhoods and schools to recreational facilities and open spaces, including the waterfront. (PROS MP Goal 5)
- **Policy 6.1: Trail Sustainability.** Ensure that the planning and design of trails is sensitive to environmental protection priorities and issues such as sea level rise, habitat protection, and hillside erosion. If necessary, identify secondary alignments in the event trails must be seasonally closed for habitat protection purposes. (adapted from 92 GP Pol CROS-7.2, and expanded)
- **Policy 6.2:** Connecting Trails. Focus trail development in Albany on improvements that connect existing pathway and trail systems and make it safer and easier to travel around the city on foot or by bicycle. (adapted from 92 GP Pol CROS-6.4)

See the Transportation Element for additional policies on trails and connectivity.

Policy 6.3: Trail Safety. Ensure that trails are designed to maximize user safety and reduce potential conflicts between pedestrians, bicycles, motor vehicles, and trains. (new)

See the Transportation Element for additional policies on trail safety.

- **Policy 6.4: Interpretive Signage.** Encourage interpretive signage and other features which educate trail users about Albany's natural resources and history. (new)
- **Policy 6.5:** Waterfront Access. Improve trail connections to the Albany waterfront, particularly between the Ohlone Greenway and the Bay Trail. (PROS MP Policy 5.2)
- **Policy 6.6:** Bay Trail. Work cooperatively with appropriate agencies in completing local segments of the Bay Trail, including spur trails between the waterfront and Albany neighborhoods. The City supports the long-term vision of a continuous shoreline trail for non-motorized vehicles around San Francisco Bay. (PROS MP Pol 5.3)

See the Waterfront Element for additional policies on shoreline access and trail improvements.

Policy 6.7: Albany Hill. Maintain and expand the system of trails on Albany Hill, including connections between Creekside Park and the neighborhoods on the hill's perimeter. (PROS MP Policy 5.5, Action 5.5.2)

- **Policy 6.8:** Creek Trails. Coordinate trail planning and improvement programs for Cerrito and Codornices Creeks with the cities of Berkeley, Richmond and El Cerrito, non-profit organizations such as Friends of Five Creeks, and appropriate county, state and federal regulatory agencies. (adapted from PROS MP Action 1.6.3 and 1.6.4; Pol 5.6)
- **Policy 6.9:** Transportation ROWs. Continue to support the enhancement of transportation rights-of-way (ROWs) for linear parks and trails, such as the Ohlone Greenway beneath the elevated BART line. (adapted from PROS MP Policy 5.1)
- **Policy 6.10: Mid-Block Paths.** Maintain existing pathways that provide mid-block connections within neighborhoods, including Manor Way and Catherine's Walk. (PROS MP Policy 5.4, Action 5.4.1 and 5.4.2)

Possible Implementing Actions

- Action 6.A: Bay Trail Improvements. Continue implementation of the Bay Trail Plan along the Albany shoreline, and ensure that provisions for Bay Trail spurs and improvements are included in any future plans for Golden Gate Fields. The City will work with landowners, appropriate citizen and environmental groups, the State Department of Parks and Recreation, Caltrans, the Regional Park District, the Coastal Conservancy, and ABAG to implement this action. (92 GP Pol CROS-7.1)
- **Action 6.B: Albany Hill Trails.** Provide for a dedicated trail easement through the 11-acre parcel on the west side of Albany Hill, with connections between Pierce Street, the end of Hillside Avenue, and existing trails in Creekside Park. (Creekside MP, LU Rec1; PROS MP Action 5.5.2)
- Action 6.C: Cerrito Creek Trail. Provide for a pedestrian bridge across Cerrito Creek between Albany Hill and the north side of the Creek in El Cerrito, consistent with the adopted Creekside Master Plan. Explore options to provide additional linear creek access between San Pablo Avenue and Albany Hill, including a potential future trail easement on the north end of the Orientation Center for the Blind property. (Creekside MP, LU Rec 4 and 5-6; PROS MP Action 5.2.1, Action 1.6.2)
- **Action 6.D:** Codornices Creek Trail. Continue joint planning with the University of California and the City of Berkeley on improvements to the Codornices Creek Trail. Explore options for eventual spur connections to the Bay Trail. (PROS MP Action 5.6.1)

See the Transportation Element for additional policies and actions on connections between the waterfront and UC Village.

- **Action 6.E:** Community-Based Creek Restoration. Continue to support the work of Friends of Albany Hill, Friends of Five Creeks, and other community based organizations to enhance the open space and trail potential of Codornices Creek, Cerrito Creek, Village Creek, and other natural areas in the city. (new)
- **Action 6.F: Ohlone Greenway.** Pursue improvements to the Ohlone Greenway, such as game courts, interpretive signage (historic, natural, cultural, etc.), tot lots, toddler play facilities, and community gardens, where appropriate and compatible with noise levels, nearby residences, and other design factors. (PROS MP, Action 5.1.1 and Pol 3.4)
- **Action 6.G: Key Route Median.** Pursue trail improvements, landscaping, and other amenities on the Key Route Boulevard median between Solano Avenue and El Cerrito. (*PROS MP Action 2.4.1*)
- **Action 6.H: Active Transportation Plan Updates.** Periodically update the Albany Active Transportation Plan to update information and plans for pedestrian and bicycle trails and pathways in and around the city. (adapted from 92 GP Pol CROS-6.3)