

CONCORD HILLS REGIONAL PARK LAND USE PLAN

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Public Meeting #1: Vision

Concord Senior Center | 2727 Parkside Circle | Concord, CA 94519 July 23, 2015 | 6:30- 8:30pm

EVENT OVERVIEW

Approximately 90 members of the public participated in a workshop to envision the future regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The workshop included a presentation of the project from East Bay Regional Parks District, National Park Service (NPS), and PlaceWorks; three interactive board stations, and a small-group mapping activity. The first interactive boards asked people to indicate on a map where they currently live. Workshop participants came from locations around the Bay Area. Most participants were from Concord, in particular the area directly adjacent to the future regional park, and nearby cities or communities.



SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

The small group activity included a map of the site with potential future trail and road alignments, use zones (areas with high suitability for more intensive park uses such as picnic areas and staging areas), and conservation areas (areas where recreational uses are less suitable due to higher resource sensitivity). The group was directed to annotate the map with additional features or note concerns with features shown, and to respond to the following five questions and prompts included on the map board:

- 1. **Vision.** Our vision for the future regional park is....
- 2. **Trail Network.** Annotate the map and answer the questions below.
 - What are your thoughts about potential trail alignments?
 - What types of amenities should the trails include?
 - What types of trails do you envision?
- 3. **Visitor Center Area.** Describe your vision for the Visitor Center and passive recreation in this area.
- 4. South of Bailey Road. Describe your vision for this area. What types of recreational and educational opportunities should be prioritized here?
- Other. What other recreational or educational activities do you envision for the regional park? Annotate the map or write comments below.



Following the activity, group members reported back with a summary of their team's responses. Major themes from the input received are identified below, and a complete summary of input received on map boards and group notes is provided in Attachment A.

MAJOR THEMES

Although each small group had a unique approach to analyzing the site, there were some common themes that were carried across a variety of responses.

HISTORY

Nearly all of the small groups thought that the site should reflect the unique social and natural history of the site, with many groups emphasizing a combined interpretive approach utilizing both themes. Many groups identified the Visitor Center area as the central site for illustrating this history, although some pointed out that features in the landscape, such as historic buildings and habitat areas, would be valuable for interpretation.



ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

Connections to future trails and mass transit were important features to many of the groups. In particular, groups wanted to have a good connection to the North Concord BART Station and regional trails that would take people into other regional open spaces. A range of desired trail types were identified, including multi-use, single-use, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible trails.

Some groups wanted to significantly limit vehicular access within the park by reducing drivable roads and amenities within the interior of the site.

BALANCE PARK USE WITH CONSERVATION

Most groups highlighted the importance of utilizing the regional park for wildlife habitat and protecting plant communities, with some groups strongly recommending minimal development within the Regional Park. In particular, groups wanted to see protection of wetlands and water resources, including Mount Diablo Creek which borders the site; restoration of native oak species; and continuous habitat corridors, with one group recommending a wildlife overpass across Bailey Road to improve mobility across the busy street.

PARK AMENITIES

Within the use areas, many groups suggested picnic spaces, overnight campsites, and environmental education centers. Other amenities suggested are described below by topic:

- Visitor Center Area. Facilities proposed specifically for the Visitor Center Area also included rentable areas for festivals and parties, concessions ("good food"), and a theatre.
- **Camping.** Some groups utilized the area south of Bailey Road for car camping facilities, while others preferred to have only backcountry sites farther inside the site.
- Magazines. Potential uses identified for the magazines included rentals, storage, conferences, parties, and events.
- **Rail.** Numerous groups suggested utilizing the rail lines to create an active train ride as an activity for children or as a way to move park users through the regional park.
- Other. One group recommended an observatory (potentially at Building 97) and one group recommended including a performance space. Many groups emphasized the importance of having places for youth to visit, including places for scouts to come for events, such as overnight campouts. One group proposed a regional memorial for local soldiers fallen.

RESOURCE REUSE

Many groups recommended using portions of the significant legacy of infrastructure and buildings already on the regional park site for interpretive as well as operational uses. Reuse of the bunkers and buildings for education centers, campsites, and rental spaces was a common theme, and many groups noted that existing road and rail lines should be utilized for trails. As noted above, some groups wanted to reuse the rail lines for recreational train service within the park.

In addition to reuse, one group recommended recycling on-site materials by using demolition debris for new infrastructure. Specifically, the group recommended using the concrete from the existing bunkers as gravel for new trails and picnic sites.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In regard to new regional park development, many groups emphasized that the project should utilize environmentally-conscious practices. In particular, groups wanted the regional park to use solar panels for energy production and practice water efficiency throughout any use areas.



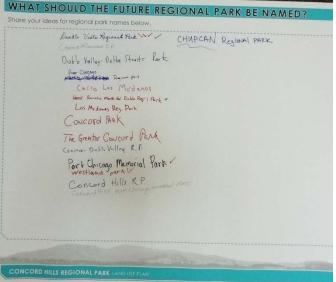
INTERACTIVE BOARDS

The interactive boards were available as the public entered the workshop and asked people to indicate on a map where they currently live (as described above), select a priority for the future regional park, and suggest potential names for the regional park.

What Should the Future Regional Park Be Named?

A blank board was provided for workshop participants to suggest potential names for the future regional park. Participants identified thirteen potential names, as listed below. Some participants placed a check mark next to the name(s) they supported, informally voting for preferred names.

Name (number of check marks received)
Diablo Vista Regional Park (4)
Chupcan Regional Park
Concord California Savannah Regional Park
Diablo Valley-Delta Straights Regional Park
Port Chicago Regional Park
Port Chicago Memorial Regional Park (1)
Concord Hills Port Chicago Memorial Regional Park
Cerro Los Medanos
Los Medanos Regional Park
Rancho Monte del Diablo Regional Park (1)
Concord Regional Park
The Greater Concord Regional Park
Concord Hills Regional Park
Westland Regional Park (1)



Priorities

Workshop participants were given one sticker and asked to place it beside their highest priority for the future regional park. The results included:

Priority	Number of Votes
Regional trail connections	11
(Black Diamond Mines, Mount Diablo)	9
Multi-use trails	9
Interpretative/recreational use of Navy magazines and other structures	8
Hiking trails	5
Group picnic areas/facilities	3
Overlooks	3
Preservation of Navy infrastructure (buildings and rail lines)	2
Educational day camp facilities	2
Event space	2
Backcountry camping facilities	1
Mountain bike trails	1
Equestrian trails	0
Group camping facilities	0
Agricultural programming	0
Other	
Wildlife habitat	3
Name change	1
Disc golf course	1
Rugby field	1



Attachment A: Small Group Activity Results

Participants were divided into nine small groups, with numbers assigned as they signed in to the meeting. Notes received from each group are included below. There was no Group #1, as some participants left early or joined different groups.

GROUP	VISION	VISION TRAIL NETWORK		VISITOR CENTER AREA	SOUTH OF BAILEY ROAD	OTHER	MAP NOTES		
NUMBER	NUMBER		TRAIL ALIGNMENTS	AMENITIES	TYPES				
2	Preserve wildlife habitat History and interpretation WWII and prior Expand creek protection (200-300 foot buffer) Restore native plants Remove non-native grasses Preserve open space/viewshed along Hwy 4 corridor Restore oak populations Reduce grazing	Connectivity of roads to bike trails Trailheads at Bailey Road with facilities Trailhed by visitor center Trails connected to other parks	Interpretive signs	Maybe need to separate uses (bicycling, pedestrian, horses) – may be dependent on geography Night hikes to highlight wildlife	 History of the site Film/theater Story of Port Chicago Picnic areas – split decision on café Rooms that tell different stories of the site Environmentally friendly – solar panels; water efficient Create habitat in that area Education about feral animal populations Relocate visitor center – [current location is] not easy to access without a car – consider Bailey Road for area currently identified for park operations 	Horse trail and connectivity to other parks Ardenwood-like type of experience Kiosk/trailhead with maps for trails so don't have to go to Visitors Center	Dog park Restricting feral dog/cat access No pesticides Railroad uses – maybe a train ride, like at Tilden Films Sustainable nice yards – minimal impacts – use recycled water Plant/donate trees in memory of loved ones/important people Easy access to Visitor Center Fitness stations and mileage – maybe near Visitor Center	Bathrooms in use areas and at Bailey Road and potential staging areas Historic Farm area south of Bailey Road	
3	A large regional park dedicated to providing open spaces, wildlife habitat, and low impact recreation while being extensively connected to new existing open space and trails, with easy access to new and existing residential communities, emphasizing mass transit and non- motorized travel and connection to the park	Bailey Road under or overcrossing Easy access from BART Some single use trails	Benches on view points Water fountains Citizen science camera stations	Multi-use Some single use: enough single use trails to allow pro races at times	Good example is Rosie the Riveter visitor center Mass transit connections to area are critical Small train tours in park (like Tilden) – solar or something Strong emphasis on youth and populations that don't usually get outdoors – how to make it appealing to these groups?	Maybe a train section for kids Over or underpass to connect across Bailey Road Trail connections to other open space	Enough different types of trails to allow races (bike, hike, run) without conflicting with other uses Address bunkers Solar panels to power facilities in or out of the park	Critical trail connections between visitor center area and EDC. Train loop from Bailey Road to Visitor Center Prioritize habitat in the South of Bailey Road area. No active recreation into this area but create connections.	

group Number	VISION	TRAIL NETWORK			VISITOR CENTER AREA	SOUTH OF BAILEY ROAD	OTHER	MAP NOTES
		TRAIL ALIGNMENTS	AMENITIES	TYPES				
4	Social (navy, town of Port Chicago) and natural history Recreation footprint Camping Supplement the shoreline Port Chicago Important to interpret larger arc of social history, far before the Navy to include Native American, Mexican settlements, town of Bay	Ridge trail Hope some are less steep for different abilities	Trail information at trailhead (UTAP) Non-intrusive cell phone tours Trash cans, poop bags, mutt-mitts	Not keen on mixed-use trails Paved – think accessibility	Social and Natural – full arc of human settlement Naval history Plowshares – into swords – Plowshares Cistern – make history accessible Environmental education Performance spaces	Campground Environmental education	Environmental education Railroad tracks – preserve some Bunkers – rentals? Handcart races Performance spaces	Preserve original Bay Point and Clayton Railroad
	Point/Port Chicago, eminent domain							
5	 Preserve all eras of history Preserve open space Trail linkages – city and regional Recreation variety and balance Not all trails multi-use Dedicated for Hiking only Biking only Overnight camping – with science buildings? 	Continuous trail should be established along the ridge Linkages of trails to developed areas and existing areas: Delta de Anza Trail, Black Diamond, Contra Costa Canal. Also to BART. Possible limited off-leash areas	 Benches, natural spots to stop and take a break while hiking, preferable at viewscapes Overnight camping option for groups of youths Bunkers: retain some (possible in concentrated areas) but not all. Remove some single ones Signage: while on the trail, have signs explain historic facts or natural history or geography of area/what you are looking at 	Some mixed use, but there is enough space to have some trails dedicated to separate user groups (mountain bikes, etc.) like equestrian, etc. Definitely provide options to separate bikes and hikers.	Building with exhibits - a la Rosie the Riveter Group picnic area Oak tree restoration Concessions Children's trail – small, easier bike loop Accessible trails	Environmental education – geology, Miwok history, bunkers - interpretive trail to illustrate		Create observatory at Building 9 Ridge Trail
6	 Planting of trees Interpretation of history – preservation Recreation – trails, multiuse Name to reflect early inhabitants Open space Wildlife corridor – animal overpass 	Identify areas of difficulty	Include ADA, water, restrooms, benches Multiuse trails – areas of freedom for dogs Sheep/cattle leasing	More loop trails	History timeline – educational/interpretive movie Central archline for CCC – library – use other available buildings The area is defined by the explosion and mutiny – need to add human element of what happened to the people of Port Chicago Mock-up of various eras	Picnic areas Campgrounds Ranger station Geological interpretation of natural history	Environmental Living Program (ELP) Educational	

GROUP	VISION	VISION TRAIL NETWORK		VISITOR CENTER AREA	SOUTH OF BAILEY ROAD	OTHER	MAP NOTES	
NUMBER		TRAIL ALIGNMENTS	AMENITIES	TYPES				
7	Connected biking and equestrian trails Quiet places Dog friendly Super connected on all sides Camping	[Connect] with major trails [Rail] tracks to bike trails Along creeks	Bathrooms Water Views Trash receptacles Good camp sites connected to trails	Bike Dog Equestrian ADA (south [of Bailey Road])	Education –history and ecology Super accessible (pedestrian/bike) Aesthetically pleasing Food (good food) Rentable areas (festival, parties) Beyond group sites	Wheel-chair/ADA trail	Functional train for people with limited mobility Wildlife is a priority! Hike-in group camp (scouts)	Trail connections at all major points
8	Picnic Open space preservation Resource education Accessibility	Connection of south and north via rail Planned loops	Water? Restrooms	Single-use, where appropriate (for safety) – identify mountain bike trails according to terrain Off leash areas	 Education Target young people Focus on environment and history of the area Classes/hands-on focused on native species and ecology NOTE: discussion to move visitor center to a different location. If moved, Building 1A-24 complex can be a recreational rental 	Less impacted by development Education opportunities (maps, panels) Group camp site	Recycle remainder of rail (leave some for historic preservation) and bunker material (gravel) Sensitivity to existing wildlife	Visitor center located at Bailey Road
9	Accessible open space Areas of cultural or historical/natural importance Safety – users and residents nearby Transit links through park	Good connections to existing trail networks	Trail and interpretive signs Hike-in capacity Overlook benches Trailhead restrooms – pit toilets for campsites Disabled accessible portions	Dedicated single track for pedestrians and bikes	Interactive, education, interpretive History and demise of Port Chicago Transit links – shuttle? Rail tour? Parks office – operations and maintenance	Developed drive-in campsites Regional military memorial for local soldiers fallen	Bunker use: • Rent out? • Storage • Conferences • Parties/events	

GROUP	VISION	VISION TRAIL NETWORK			VISITOR CENTER AREA	SOUTH OF BAILEY ROAD	OTHER	MAP NOTES
NUMBER		TRAIL ALIGNMENTS	AMENITIES	TYPES				
1035	 Wildlife preservation and enhancement Historical interpretation Educational components – teaching/learning opportunities – use of outdoors, observation techniques and areas Accessible to all ages and groups, including transportation through park to make it usable by all populations A variety of recreational uses 	 Trails in steep areas and sensitive habitats should be closed when wet/muddy Preserve ridgelines from Seeno development Connecting these trails to regional trail systems Trails should protect/avoid known sensitive areas 	Small markers along trails to explain views and history	Multi-use: bicycling, hiking, walking, running (cross-country challenging), equestrian (for horsepack camping) Network of accessibility – accessible connections	 Enhanced opportunities for wildlife viewing – burrowing owls; create seasonal pond and wetlands for CA Tiger Salamander Avoid building/creating permanent contamination areas that can't be cleaned up in the future Vibrant, interactive and comprehensive interpretive center Outreach to City/County school systems Focus on history: human history (racial, social justice, military) and natural history (biological, geological) Opportunities for volunteers, docents, citizen scientists 24-7 interpretive opportunities – inside and out Natural history of entire area – Mount Diablo meridian, mapping efforts 	Campground – variety Environmental education center Disc golf course – this will work here!	Railroad buffers – opportunity to use existing tracks and grades Picnic areas scattered throughout the park Keep concessions to a minimum Work with City of Concord to maintain a 250 foot buffer along Mount Diablo Creek.	Create California Tiger Salamander pond and observation area for burrowing owls near Visitor Center Area Protect breeding ponds for California Tiger Salamander near use area South of Bailey Road

