

WEST OAKLAND

Priority Conservation Area APPLICATION

The West Oakland PCA, proposed as Urban Greening, is roughly bounded by the 880, 980, and 580 Interstates. This fact hints at many of the environmental hardships afflicting this area surrounded by, and including, longtime industrial use. Much of the area has been designated environmentally disadvantaged or a food desert. At the same time, the area has a number of parks and a few key community gardens, which along with many green corridors provide opportunities for enhanced access to natural space and additional street trees.

The West Oakland PCA qualifies as Urban Greening because of its benefits to **Community Health, Climate & Resilience** and **Recreation**. It would co-benefit Water Supply & Quality.

The entirety of the West Oakland PCA territory is considered a Community of Concern by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, defined as having a high concentration of minority and low-income residents. About half of the area experiences a Park Deficit (Source: Oakland's Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element of the General Plan). Therefore, it is important to conserve the Parks within a Community of Concern that are present in the area, including multi-block parks on either side of Mandela Parkway, and the handful of smaller Parks within a Park Deficit area that are closer to the freeways. Though small in size, West Oakland contains a couple of the city's only Community Gardens within a Community of Concern, including City Slicker Farms. The western half of the PCA contains census tracts defined by the USDA as Low Income-Low Access to Food, because at least 70% of the residents must travel more than 0.5 miles to reach a healthy food source such as a grocery store. The PCA identifies several Parks within Low Income-Low Access to Food census tracts that should be conserved. By protecting and increasing existing green space with carbon storage potential, this PCA benefits Climate and Resilience. It benefits Community Health by increasing park and food access in a Community of Concern.

Aside from blocks around Adeline St. and Peralta St., most of West Oakland has been defined by the California EPA as Environmentally Disadvantaged Communities, found to be in the 75th percentile of the EnviroScreen due to their disproportionate share of pollution. This correlates to the perimeter of West Oakland, bounded on all sides by Interstates and therefore falling within a 1,000 ft. Freeway Buffer. In addition to the area immediately adjacent to the freeways, many pockets of West Oakland experience High Particulate Levels, above Bay Area Air Quality Management District thresholds as laid out in Plan Bay Area for 2040. Almost half of West Oakland is made up of parcels that were used for industrial purposes prior to 1968 that may contain PCBs and mercury, flagged by the Alameda County Clean Water Program for potential stormwater contamination as Old Industrial Land. Near many of these parcels are Residential Areas within 300 ft. of an Industrial Zone, mapped by the City of Oakland. However, Major Urban Corridors (including the Green Streets of the Lake Merritt Station Area Specific Plan) are located

in this area that connect large regional parks to the Estuary, and which require enhanced street tree plantings. Thus, this PCA presents an opportunity to benefit Community Health and Climate & Resilience by increasing carbon storage potential through added tree cover in areas expected to experience urban heat island effect and high levels of contamination. Efforts to clean up current and former industrial land could also co-benefit Water Supply & Quality.

Due to its proximity to the Bay, a significant portion of West Oakland is threatened by potential Sea Level Rise of five-feet, depicted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. By including this area in a PCA, the City of Oakland has an opportunity to address hazard risk due to flooding / sea level rise, thereby benefiting Climate & Resilience. The PCA would also benefit Recreation through its protection and inclusion of two branches of the San Francisco Bay Trail.