

HIGHLAND

Priority Conservation Area APPLICATION

The proposed Highland Urban Greening PCA sits squarely in the center of Oakland, bounded by Interstate 580, Park Blvd., Fruitvale Ave., and 19th St. It includes the Highland and Bella Vista neighborhoods, both of which are designated Communities of Concern. The area has low access to food and parkland, making the existing parks, particularly Bella Vista Park which hosts a community garden, essential to preserve. Air quality is also a concern in the community, yet street tree planting and creek restoration possibilities provide important opportunities for greening in an area likely to experience urban heat island effect.

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

The entire Highland PCA is considered a Community of Concern by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, defined as having a high concentration of minority and low-income residents. The majority of the area experiences a Park Deficit, according to Oakland's Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element of the General Plan. Fortunately, the PCA does contain numerous smaller Parks within a Community of Concern, and many of these are also Parks within a Parks Deficit Area. Bella Vista Park has the area's only Community Garden within a Community of Concern. Most of the PCA territory is 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. Still, there are many Parks within Low Income Low Access to Food Census Tracts. By improving access to and enhancing existing green space with carbon storage and food-growing potential, this PCA benefits Climate and Resilience and Community Health for a Community of Concern.

The one corner of the Highland PCA which does not experience a park deficit nonetheless is defined by the California EPA as an Environmentally Disadvantaged Community, found to be in the 75th percentile of the EnviroScreen due to their disproportionate share of pollution. Within the PCA is a zone around the county hospital that experiences High Particulate Levels, above Bay Area Air Quality Management District thresholds as laid out in Plan Bay Area for 2040. However, the PCA also contains positive elements to improve the neighborhood's environmental health. Major Urban Corridors intersect the area that connect regional parks to the Estuary, and which allow for enhanced street tree plantings. One of the city's only two Priority Streams (Sausal Creek), determined by the Conservation Lands Network as a focal point for substantial protection, flows through the PCA boundaries. Within the PCA is a Priority Creek Restoration Site, identified for restoration under Measure DD by the City of Oakland. Through creek protection and restoration, the Highland PCA presents an opportunity to benefit Recreation and Climate & Resilience, particularly in regards to hazard risk from flooding. This would co-benefit Wildlife Habitat and Water Supply & Quality as well.