



DATE: November 10, 2025

TO: Council Sustainability Committee

FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT Parks and Open Space in Hayward

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council Sustainability Committee (CSC) reviews and comments on this report.

SUMMARY

In response to a request from the CSC during the meeting on March 10, 2025, and related actions in the Climate Action Plan, staff prepared this report on Parks and Open Space in Hayward. This report summarizes Hayward's current available parkland per capita when compared to nearby cities and Hayward's future efforts and plans.

FISCAL IMPACT

This agenda item has no impact on the General Fund or Measure C.

BACKGROUND

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)¹, parks and open spaces support public health by promoting physical activity, reducing stress, and improving mental well-being. They also strengthen community ties by serving as inclusive community hubs, fostering social connections and enhancing neighborhood cohesion. In addition, parks and open spaces provide critical environmental advantages including reducing air pollution and mitigating the urban heat island effect through increased vegetation growth.

As a leader in climate resilience and environmental justice, the City of Hayward has established a comprehensive set of goals and action items within its General Plan², and Climate Action Plan (CAP)³ to advance the planning, development, and preservation of

¹ [Parks, Recreation and Green Spaces | Active People, Healthy Nation | Physical Activity | CDC](#)

² [2040 General Plan | City of Hayward - Official website](#)

³ [CAP-Adopted-240130.pdf](#)

parks and open spaces. These initiatives are designed to enhance environmental sustainability, promote equitable access to green infrastructure, and support long-term community well-being. The following goals and measures reflect the City's commitment to integrating open space planning with broader climate and equity objectives:

- General Plan Goal HQL-10: Create and support a diverse public park system, connecting trails, and recreation facilities suited to the needs of Hayward residents and visitors.
- General Plan Goal HQL-11: Provide a continuous system of trails and open space corridors that connect local parks, regional open space areas and other destination points within and beyond the city of Hayward.
- General Plan Goal NR-3: Preserve, enhance, and expand natural baylands, wetlands, marshes, hillsides, and unique ecosystems within the Planning Area in order to protect their natural ecology, establish the physical setting of the city, provide recreational opportunities, and assist with improved air quality and carbon dioxide sequestration.
- CAP Action CS-2.3: Work with Hayward Area Recreation District (HARD) and Park District to develop and adopt urban park guidelines.
- CAP Action CS-2.6: Explore opportunities to use the parkland in-lieu fees from updated City's Property developers.

HARD continues to serve as a key partner in advancing the City's parks and recreation goals. In 2024, HARD commissioned a comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey⁴ to identify community priorities for future investment. A total of 664 responses were collected, including 303 from Hayward residents. Survey results indicated that the top three amenity priorities were:

1. Multi-Purpose and Nature Trails,
2. Open Spaces/ Nature Parks and Preserves, and
3. A tie between Community Gardens and Outdoor Community Pool Areas.

The Needs Assessment serves as a guiding document that integrates key components from HARD's Master Plan, Strategic Plan, community engagement, stakeholder and staff interviews, and the District's Mission and Vision. Although it does not supersede existing documents, it provides an updated perspective from the community and ensures consistency with community priorities and long-term strategic goals.

DISCUSSION

Hayward has approximately 9,280 acres of parkland and open space within its borders. The four largest parks contributing to Hayward's total acreage are Eden Landing Ecological Reserve (5,744 acres), Hayward Regional Shoreline (1,260 acres), Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park (1,040 acres), and Garin/Dry Creek Pioneer Regional Park (495 acres). This

⁴ [Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment | Hayward Area Recreation and Park District, CA](#)

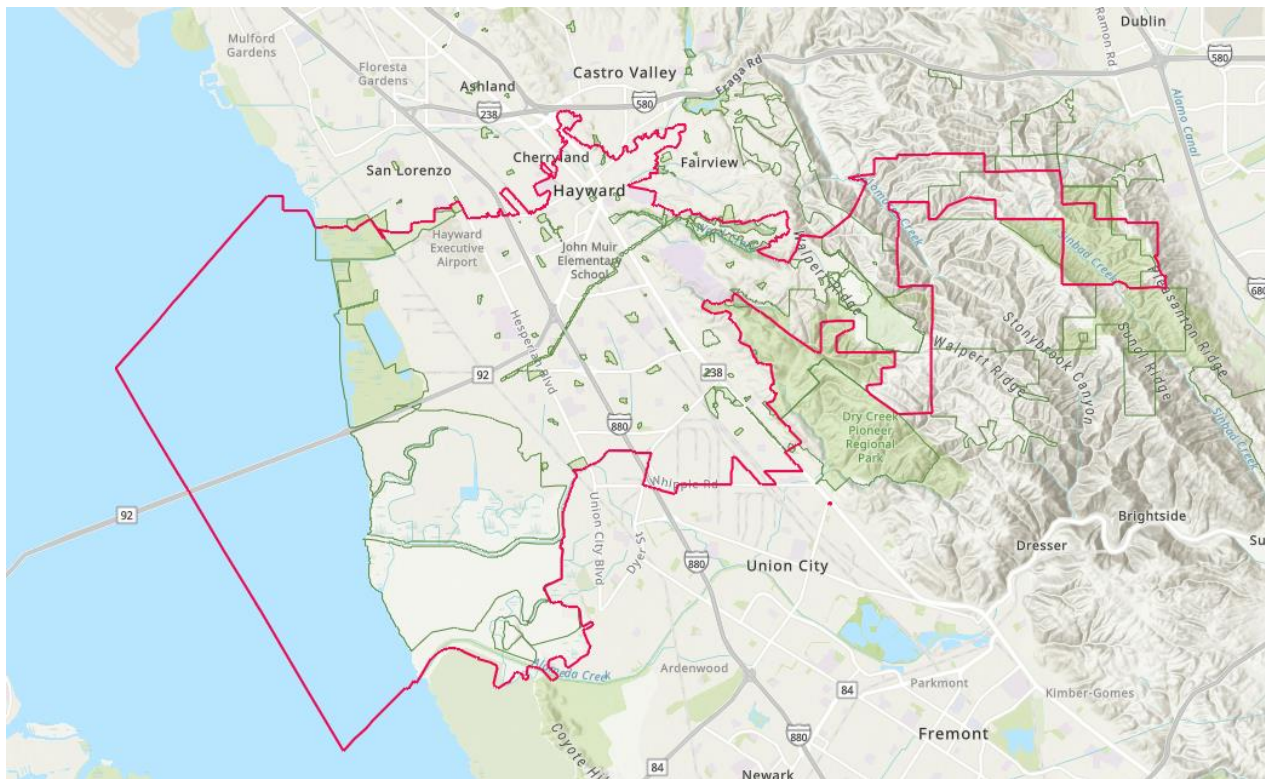
equates to 57.0 acres of parkland or open space per 1,000 residents and ensures that 76%⁵ of Hayward's population lives within a 10-minute walk of a park. Table 1 below provides a comparative analysis of park acreage per 1,000 residents across neighboring jurisdictions. For a map showing access to parks and recreational facilities, please see Attachment II, which was prepared in 2013 during the update of Hayward's General Plan.

Table 1. Park Acreage – Hayward and Neighboring Cities

Jurisdiction	Total Parks	Total Park Acres	Population	Acres of Parks Available/ 1,000 Residents	% of Residents within a 10-minute walk of a park
Hayward	57	9,280	162,954	57.0	76%
San Leandro	22	299	89,294	3.4	57%
Union City	36	1,846	69,161	26.7	92%
Fremont	63	17,898	235,572	76.0	70%

*The data above is a combination of data from the City of Hayward and Trust for Public Land's mapping tool.

Figure 1. Map of Hayward's Parks and Open Space



*Image from Hayward's GIS System

⁵ [ParkServe@ | Trust for Public Land](#)

General Plan Goal HQL-10.2 outlines park standards aimed at expanding and enhancing park access citywide. In collaboration with HARD, the goal is to achieve and maintain the following benchmarks (all are per 1,000 residents):

- Two acres of local parks,
- Two acres of school parks,
- Three acres of regional parks,
- One mile of trails and linear parks, and
- Five acres of total parkland district-wide

Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the current park acreage across these categories, along with HARD's adopted park standards from their 2019 Park Master Plan⁶.

Table 2. Hayward Park Acreage Details

			Target Minimum Acreage per 1,000 Residents	
Park Type	Acres	Acres per 1,000 residents	HARD	City
Local/ Community/Districtwide Parks	613	3.8	2	2
School Parks	123	0.8	2	2
Regional Parks (EBRPD)	2,800	17.2		3
SubTotal	3,536	21.7		5
Eden Landing Ecological Reserve (State)	5744	35.1		
Total (with Eden Landing)	9,280	57.0		

Trails and Linear Parks (in Miles)	44.3 miles	0.27 miles	1.2 miles	1 mile
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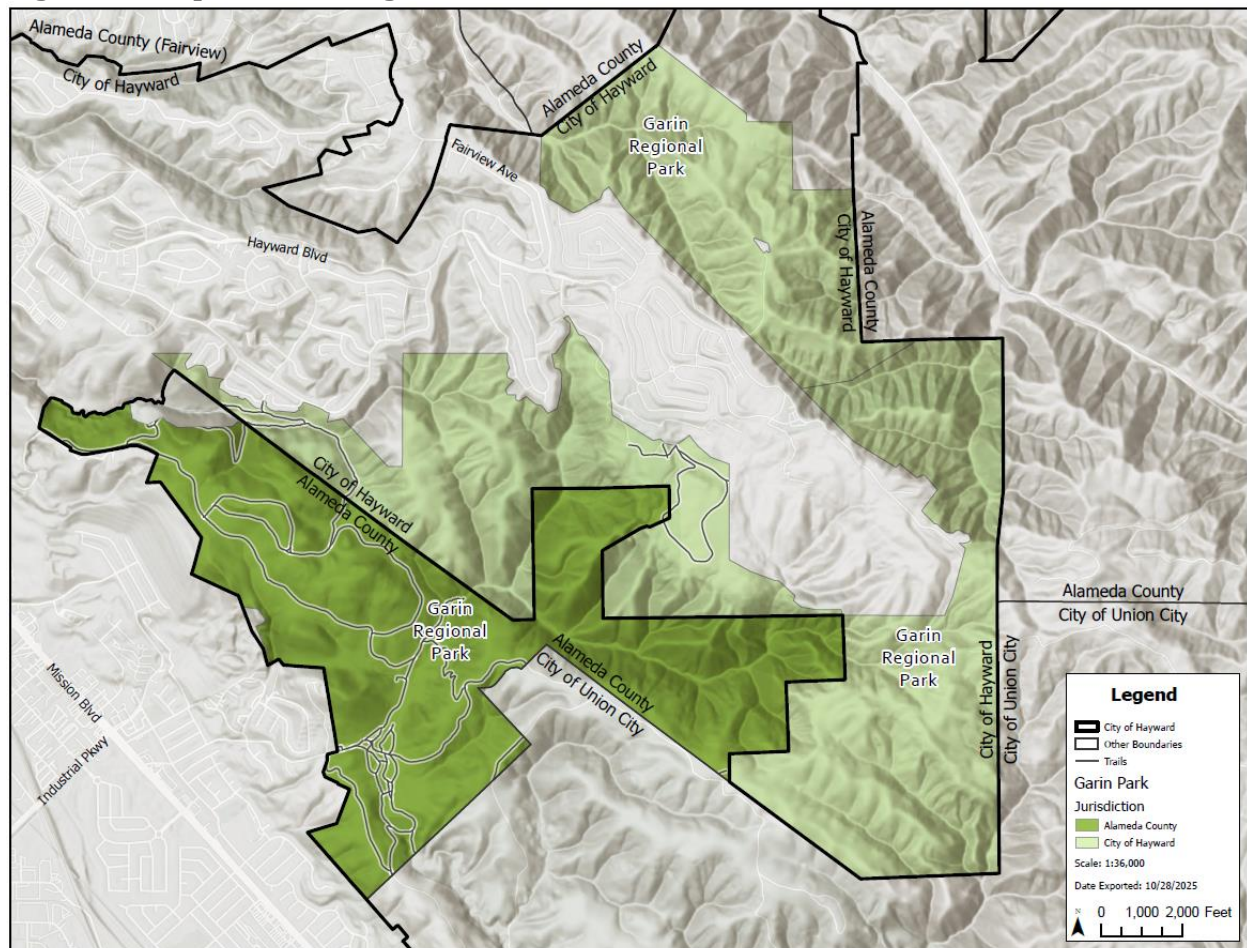
The school park acreage referenced above encompasses exterior fields, sports courts, and open lawn areas that are currently accessible for recreational use by the public. If all school sites were open for public access, the City of Hayward would gain an estimated additional 168.27 acres of recreational space. This increase would increase the City's school park acreage to approximately 1.8 acres per 1,000 residents.

The total size of Garin/Dry Creek Pioneer Regional Park (Garin Regional Park), is 5,372 acres, of which only 495 acres are within the City of Hayward. The remainder is in Unincorporated Alameda County and Union City. If the unincorporated island, shown in dark green below in Figure 2, were included in Hayward, the City's total parkland and open

⁶ [HARD Master Plan](#)

space would increase by approximately 1,105 acres—increasing the total to 10,385 acres and 63.7 acres per 1,000 residents.

Figure 2. Map of Garin Regional Park



The City of Hayward’s upcoming La Vista Park project will contribute an additional 38.9 acres of parkland and approximately 2,300 linear feet of walking trails to the City’s parks and open space network. Planned amenities include basketball courts, designated dog run areas, playgrounds, picnic facilities, outdoor exercise equipment, slides, a bioretention science garden, scenic overlook, and a community amphitheater. Construction is scheduled to commence in the spring of 2026, with project completion anticipated by late fall to early winter of 2027.

The creation of parks and open spaces within the City of Hayward can be achieved through multiple avenues. One primary method involves funding and land designation, whereby the City, HARD, or the East Bay Regional Park District may acquire or repurpose existing land for the purpose of developing parks and open space. These entities may also collaborate through joint partnerships to advance shared goals in park planning and implementation.

Another key mechanism is the use of Park Impact Fees⁷, which are assessed on new development projects to offset their impact on public parks and recreational infrastructure. In lieu of paying the full fee, developers may opt to dedicate land as partial or full credit toward their obligation. Table 2 outlines the current park impact fees applicable to various categories of development. The following fees are derived from the Parks Development Impact Fee Nexus Study conducted in 2019.

Table 2. Park Impact Fees – Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Type of Development	Park Impact Fee per Unit
<i>Residential – New Buildings</i>	
ADU that is 750+ s.f.	\$ 3,812
Studio/0-Bedroom Unit	\$ 3,812
1 Bedroom Unit	\$ 5,967
2 Bedrooms Unit	\$ 10,764
3 Bedrooms Unit	\$ 18,798
4+ Bedroom Unit	\$ 26,148
<i>Industrial – New Buildings and Additions</i>	\$ 0.96 per s.f.

A few notes regarding the Park Impact Fees:

- Separate fees apply to residential additions/remodels that increase bedroom count.
- Fees for affordable housing are discounted at 50%.
- There is no fee for commercial development.
- Fees are not geographically restricted and may be allocated to any park or open space project citywide, regardless of the location of the contributing development.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Studies⁸ have demonstrated that cities with robust park and open space systems are better positioned to attract and retain businesses and residents, foster stronger community engagement, and enhance overall quality of life. These benefits often contribute to increased property values and may generate positive economic impacts for the broader community.

⁷ [Park Impact Fees | City of Hayward - Official website](#)

⁸ [Park Investment and Economic Vitality - Trust for Public Land](#)

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

This agenda item supports the Strategic Priority to *Invest in City-Owned Facilities and Properties*. Specifically, this item is related to implementation of the following project:

Project FP7: Begin construction of La Vista Park.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

Parks and Open Spaces preserve biodiversity, manage stormwater through natural filtration processes, and reduce air pollution. Vegetation within these areas can contribute to lowering urban temperatures by mitigating the heat island effect, thereby enhancing the City's resilience to climate change.

PUBLIC CONTACT

No public contact was made for this agenda item.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will take appropriate next steps following direction from the Committee.

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Recommended by: Alex Ameri, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Jayanti Addleman, Interim City Manager