

From Military Base to Regional Park - Evaluation of Land Use Planning and Financing  
Strategies for a New Regional Park in the San Francisco Bay Area

By

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Midway through this program Marin and I were also blessed with our first child Carson. This project is dedicated to him.

*Do not burn yourself out. Be as I am-a reluctant enthusiast... a part time crusader, a half-hearted fanatic. Save the other half of yourselves and your lives for pleasure and adventure. It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. While it is still there. So get out there and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forests, encounter the grizz, climb the mountains. Run the rivers, breathe deep of that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, that lovely, mysterious and awesome space. Enjoy yourselves, keep your brain in your head and your head firmly attached to your body, the body active and alive, and I promise you this much: I promise you this one sweet victory over our enemies, over those deskbound people with their hearts in a safe deposit box and their eyes hypnotized by desk calculators. I promise you this: you will outlive the bastards." - Edward Abbey*

## **Abstract**

The San Francisco Bay Area played a central support role in the efforts of the United States military during World War II with military facilities providing a coastal fortress, shipbuilding center, and shipping gateway to the Pacific. Beginning in the late 1980's, many of the region's military facilities have closed with local governments re-envisioning new neighborhoods, restored habitats, and community facilities on the properties. Two decades after the first round of the Base Realignment and Closure process, however, many former military facilities remain undeveloped with planning visions yet to be realized.

The latest military facility to close in the region is the Concord Naval Weapons Station. Located approximately 30 miles from San Francisco in the suburban east bay community of Concord, the Concord Naval Weapons Station consists of over 5,000 acres abandoned munitions bunkers, rolling hills, and vast grasslands being planned for reuse. Led by the City of Concord, a Reuse Plan was adopted that balanced development with open space protection calling for over 13,000 new homes, extensive commercial development, and an array of community facilities occupying less than a half of the property.

The remaining property is slated to become a new regional park to be managed by the East Bay Regional Park District. This Masters Project evaluates the opportunities and constraints of the future regional park property to develop a conceptual land use plan and identifies the potential financing tools that can be applied. Additionally, it looks at the threats, opportunities, weaknesses, and strengths of the East Bay Regional Park District, its potential partners and stakeholders, and the land itself to craft recommendations that will ensure community and environmental benefits are realized in a timely fashion.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

The Concord Naval Weapons Station (Concord Naval Weapons Station) was originally established on the Suisun Bay and the hills of Contra Costa County in the east bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area in 1942. The base served as an ordnance storage facility to support the United States war efforts during World War II, and occupied over 12,000 acres within two units: the Tidal Unit and the Inland Unit.



Figure 1 – Location of Concord Naval Weapons Station

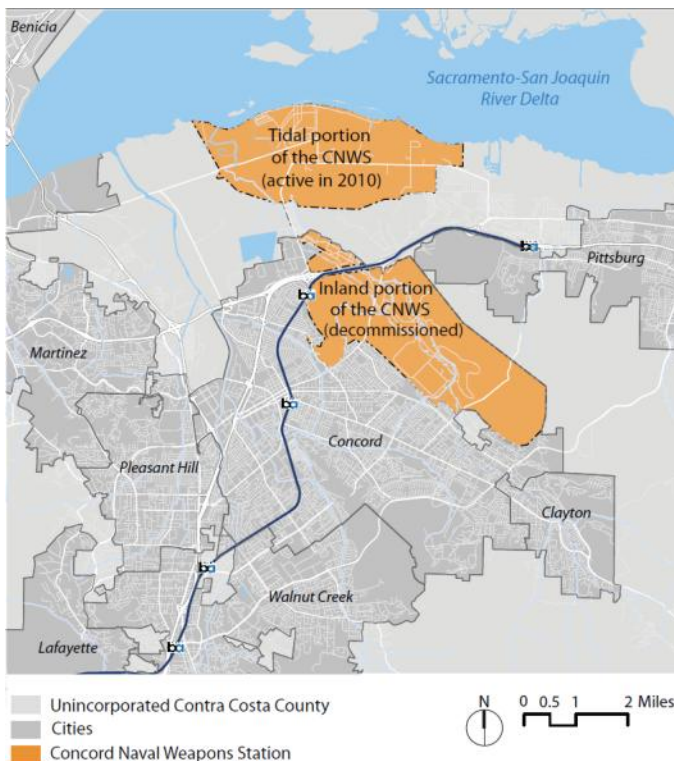


Figure 2 - Concord Naval Weapons Station - Inland and Tidal areas (Source: City of Concord, 2009)

In 2005, Congress officially closed the inland unit of the Concord Naval Weapons Station, which comprises 5,000 acres of largely grasslands and scattered oak savannah between the cities of Concord and Pittsburg. The base lies entirely within the planning area of the City of Concord which, following closure, embarked on an extensive reuse planning

process for the base.

A Reuse Plan was adopted in February of 2010 for the inland portion of the Concord Naval Weapons Station. This Reuse Plan identified development of nearly 13,000 new homes, over 6.2 million square feet of new commercial buildings, a new college campus, and a variety of community facilities. The plan also incorporated a new regional park on approximately 50%, or 2,500 acres, of the site for recreation, habitat, and open space purposes.

The regional park, to be conveyed to the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), has been included in regional conservation and recreational plans for decades. The East Bay Regional Park District Master Plan identifies the former base as potential future parkland. Lands and trail corridors adjacent to the base have been purchased for open space protection and passive recreation in recent years in anticipation of the base's closure and establishment of a new regional park that could provide interpretive facilities, trails, passive outdoor recreation facilities and extensive habitat restoration opportunities (EBRPD, 2007a).

## 1.2 Research Objectives

This Master's Project is being prepared in coordination with the East Bay Regional Park District's planning for a new regional park on the former Concord Naval Weapons Station. The East Bay Regional Park District's proposal for a new regional park on the closed portion of the inland area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station has been incorporated into the City's Reuse Plan and General Plan. The City and the Navy will soon begin developing land disposition plans. As these disposition plans are developed, lands will be



identified for transfer for parks and recreation, open space, and habitat purposes to be conveyed the District.

However, past experience with base closure processes throughout the San Francisco Bay area, and all of California, have indicated that the process can be lengthy and highly political. The inclusion of the new regional park in the reuse plan and city General Plan is not guaranteed, because economic and political conditions can result in development plans being revisited. This Masters Project will review the existing literature concerning the reuse process at the Concord Naval Weapons Station and the experiences at past base closures to develop a series of strategies. The objective is to ensure the community's desire for open space protection and outdoor recreation is achieved while identifying the financing and implementation methods that should be pursued.

Planning for the regional park, and the base reuse as a whole, is in the early conceptual phases. This MP builds upon the resource inventory conducted to develop conceptual land uses that meet the community's expressed desires for the site while protecting, and enhancing, the natural values of the property.

Partnerships will be critical to successful implementation of the East Bay Regional Park District's goals at the site. A preliminary stakeholder analysis is conducted to identify areas of potential collaboration. The information attained from the review of planning documents and resource inventories conducted for the Concord Naval Weapons Station is considered in light of the lessons learned from past base reuse processes in the region and with similar goals. This information is compiled to develop a Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses,

Strength (TOWS) matrix to inform development of strategies that will lead to successful implementation of the suggested conceptual land use plans.

This MP is intended to guide future efforts of the East Bay Regional Park District with regards to accomplishing the goals for a new regional park on the Concord Naval Weapons Station. It provides a useful guide to identifying and implementing partnerships with agencies, non-profits, and community stakeholders. The conceptual land uses proposed in this MP could provide the foundation for a future Land Use Plan to be prepared by the District for the site. Further, this MP will inform District land use planners on the important project milestones where District engagement is necessary.

### 1.3 The Author's role in the Concord Naval Weapons Station base reuse process

This Masters Project is being prepared with the support of the East Bay Regional Park District. The agency, described in more detail below, acquires and manages natural lands in Alameda and Contra Costa County's for the purposes of habitat protection and outdoor recreation.

The author has been employed by East Bay Regional Park District as a Senior Planner in the Interagency Planning Department since June of 2005. In November, 2005, the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission formally announced that the inland area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station had been approved for closure. Discussions and community planning processes concerning the reuse of the base began soon after.

The author has also served as the staff lead in the East Bay Regional Park District's efforts to establish a new regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station since its official

closure. Efforts to date have included working with environmental and community organizations in building support for a new regional park at the site, formalizing partnerships with the National Park Service towards joint efforts at the former base, and participation with the City of Concord in the development of the Reuse Plan. These efforts have resulted in broad community support, sponsorship of the National Park Service in the Districts request for a Public Benefit Conveyance at the site, and inclusion of a new regional park of over 2,500 acres in the Reuse Plan adopted by the City of Concord.

This Masters Project will build upon these efforts and provide a framework for advancing the project through its next stages.

#### 1.4 Need for the Research

The closure of the base and its conversion to civilian use as a regional park requires extensive cleanup of abandoned military infrastructure, restoration of degraded habitat conditions, and establishment of long-term management and maintenance funding. The Reuse Plan adopted by the City of Concord, and the conceptual plans prepared by the East Bay Regional Park District, has identified a range of goals for the regional park site. These include provision of historic and natural interpretation facilities, development of internal and regional trail networks, restoration of Mt. Diablo Creek and its associated riparian corridor, and establishment of outdoor recreation and environmental education facilities.

Numerous military facilities have been closed through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process since this process began in 1988 (Figure 3). Many remain in a largely underutilized or blighted state. The East Bay Regional Park District has participated in the reuse planning for a number of former military facilities throughout the east bay. This

experience has shown that many projects do not get beyond the conceptual stage and commitments for open space, habitat restoration, or other public amenities are often not realized. However, there are successful examples as well such as the reuse of the former San Francisco Presidio and restoration of wetlands at the Hamilton Army Airfield in Novato, CA.

In the past, a critical tool funding infrastructure, community facilities, and clean up on former military facility was tax-increment financing. Local redevelopment agencies would utilize tax increment financing to fund infrastructure, community-improvement projects, and other projects that would stimulate private development by pledging future payments to repay bonds and other types of debt incurred.

State Assembly Bill AB1x26 was signed by the governor on July 1, 2011, and requires municipalities to repay bonds as debts are incurred as a method to close gaps in the state's budget. This effectively ended the ability for projects such as military base reuse projects to rely on tax-increment financing as an investment tool. Given the high cost of clean-up and initial infrastructure necessary to make former military bases suitable for private investment, redevelopment funding was a critical tool.

The loss of redevelopment funding is one indication of the difficult funding environment public projects face in California currently. Parks and recreation facilities have been especially hard hit by California's recent budget situation. Local parks agencies and special-districts, such as the East Bay Regional Park District, have seen budget reductions due to the decline in property values. The California State Park system budget has been cut by \$22 million in 2011 as the state has worked to balance its budget. Current proposals call

for closure of 78 parks in the state parks system. Maintenance has been deferred throughout the system, adding to a projected \$1.2 billion maintenance deficit (California State Parks Foundation, 2011).

The current budgetary challenges in the state and for park and recreation facilities in particular, highlight a couple facts:

- There is significant competition for increasingly limited public funds;
- A stable funding approach will be necessary to ensure the sustainability of a new regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station;
- The District will have to adopt a diversified financing strategy that includes both public and private funding;
- Partnerships and collaborations will be increasingly critical to fulfill community desires.

California has extensive environmental laws that govern development activities. The San Francisco Bay Area region has a number of regional and local land use policies that restrict development as well. This has placed developable land at a premium throughout the area. The San Francisco Bay Area is home to a number of former military facilities that are located in highly desirable areas surrounded by existing urban development. This has made former military properties highly attractive for development as housing, industrial, and commercial properties. They also often contain natural and recreational resources that, when restored, provide significant value to the community and environmental benefits. Finding a balance between providing development value of former military

properties while preserving, and enhancing, natural values is a central focus of community planning processes.

Realizing the community benefits and environmental restoration of former military properties requires a diversified approach that relies on partnerships between federal, state, and local governments, as well as future development entities and non-governmental organization stakeholders.

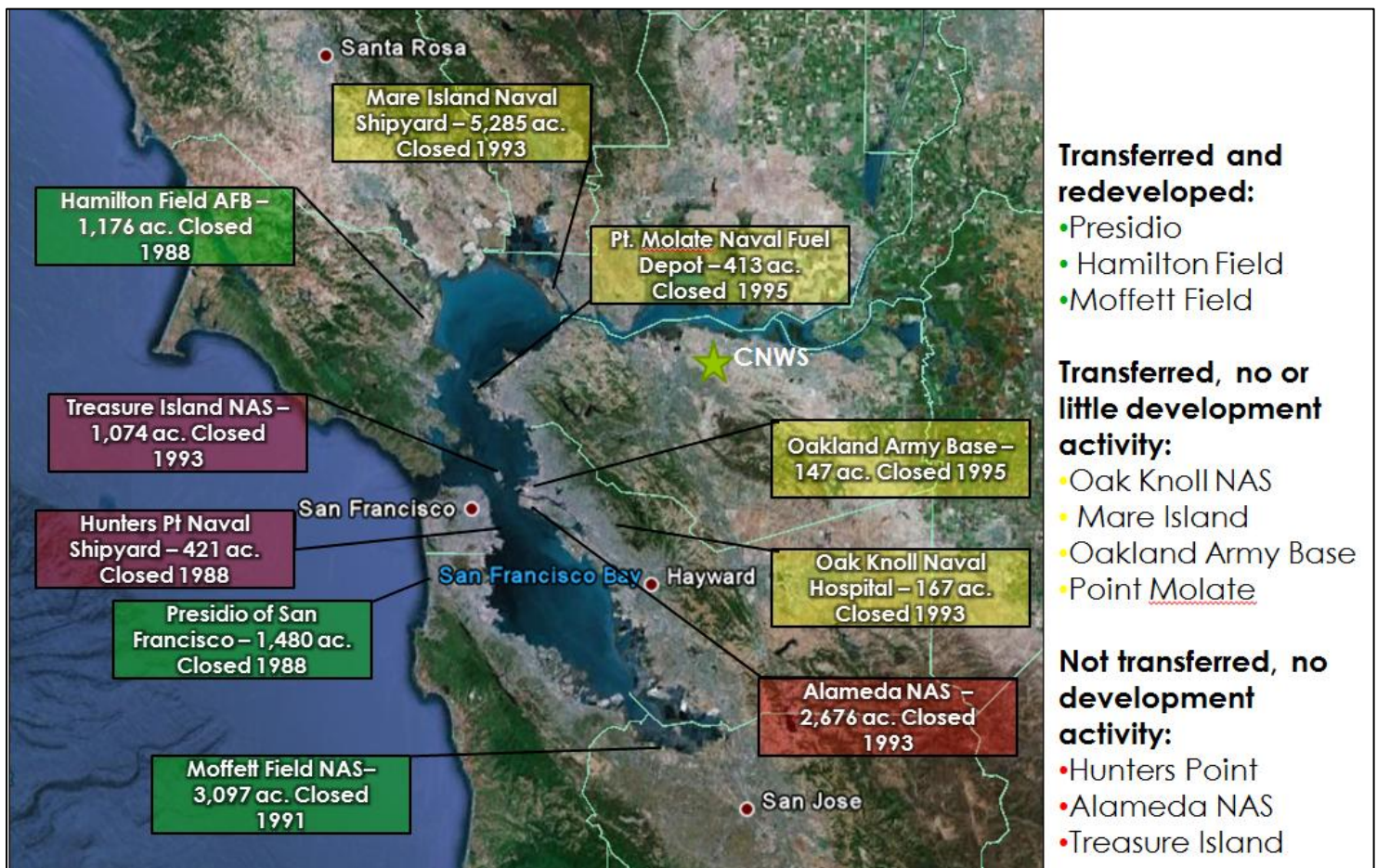


Figure 3 - Closed Military Facilities in the San Francisco Bay Area (CNWS = Concord Naval Weapons Station)

## 2. The East Bay Regional Park District

### ***Vision***

*The East Bay Regional Park District will preserve a priceless heritage of natural and cultural resources open space, parks and trails for the future and will set aside park areas for enjoyment and healthful recreation for generations to come. An environmental ethic guides us in all that we do.*

### ***Core Mission***

*We will acquire, develop, manage, and maintain a high quality, diverse system of interconnected parklands which balances public usage and education programs with protection and preservation of our natural and cultural resources.*

### 2.1 Background

The East Bay Regional Park District operates under California Public Resources Code Sections 5500-5595 for the purpose of “acquiring park, recreation and open space land and developing, operating and maintaining this land” (EBRPD, 2012).

The East Bay Regional Park District manages over 110,000 acres and over 1,200 miles of regional trails throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties in the east bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area (Figure 4). Over 90% of this land is managed as natural habitat. They also operate a number of developed recreation facilities including campgrounds, picnic areas, golf courses, and environmental education centers. Parks in the East Bay Regional Park District receive over 14 million visits a year. The District employs 721 people across eight divisions, providing administration and professional staff for all aspects of



public land management, natural and cultural resource stewardship and interpretation, and visitor management and safety (EBRPD, 2007a).

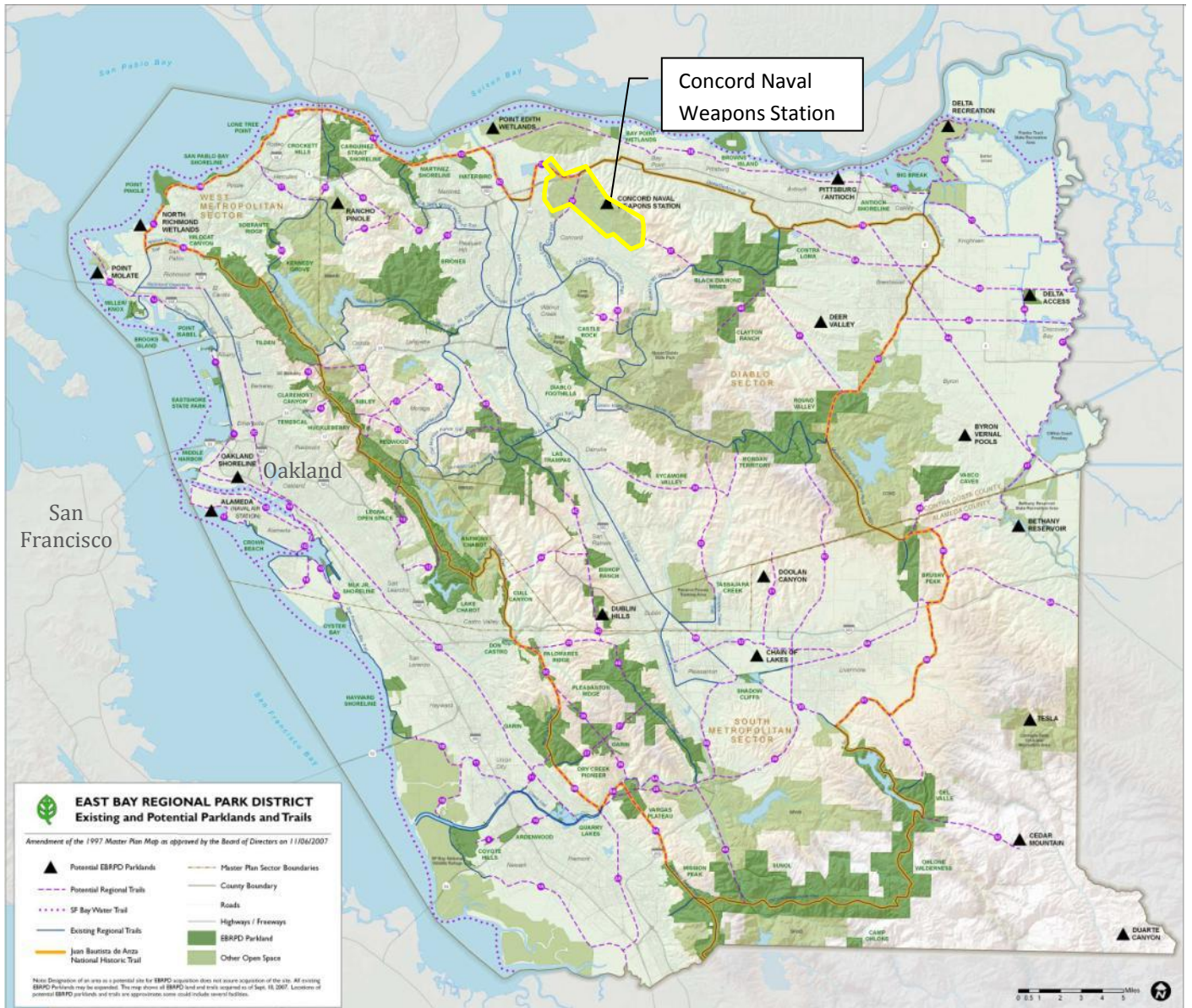


Figure 4 - Lands of the East Bay Regional Park District. Concord Naval Weapons Station site is highlighted in yellow. (Source: East Bay Regional Park District 2012b)

Originally started during the Depression in 1934, the District has enjoyed enormous public support throughout its jurisdiction in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Land acquisition



has been conducted strategically in a manner that connects the District lands with other publically owned open spaces managed by agencies such as the Contra Costa Water District, East Bay Municipal Water District, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

The District lands, coupled with these lands managed by other public agencies, have resulted in protection of vast landscapes in the east bay that serve as both recreational and wildlife corridors while also providing an aesthetic backdrop to the regions communities. These lands contribute significantly to the regions quality of life.

The District is overseen by a board of seven elected directors. The District has a budget in 2012 of \$176.8 million dollars which represents a 6% decrease from the prior year due to the broader economy and reduction in property tax revenues caused by the decline in housing values throughout the east bay region (EBRPD, 2012a).

## 2.2 Measure WW

In November, 2008, voters in Alameda and Contra Costa County approved Measure WW – the Regional Open Space, Wildlife, Shoreline and Parks Bond Extension. The bond provides \$500 million dollars to the East Bay Regional Park District to fund acquisition of lands and capital projects in the regional park system. A portion of the proceeds are provided to

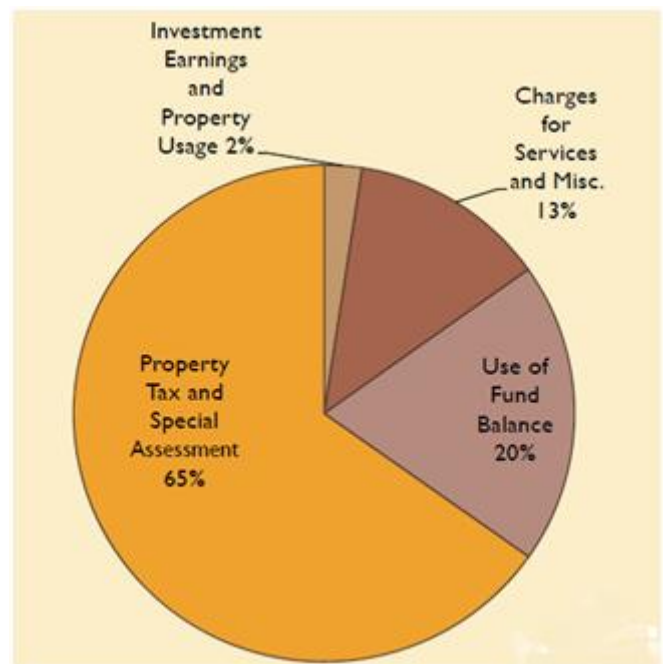


Figure 5 - Source of East Bay Regional Park District Funding - 2012 (Source: EBRPD 2012a)

cities, other park and recreation districts, and other agencies to support local park and recreation projects (EBRPD, 2012c).

The measure specifically identifies a new regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station and includes nearly \$16 million to “acquire, restore and develop a major new regional park” on the former base (EBRPD, 2012d).

*“\$16 million to work in partnership with Concord and the National Park Service to acquire, restore and develop a major new regional park on the inland portion of former Concord Naval Weapons Station. Protect open space and wildlife habitat for Tiger Salamanders and Red Legged Frogs and restore Mt. Diablo Creek. Develop regional recreation facilities including picnic areas, trails for all users, parking and camp sites. Provide interpretive and education facilities and partner with the National Park Service to provide services in the area.” Measure WW Regional Parks Bond Project List, Project Description for Concord Naval Weapons Station. (EBRPD, 2012d)*

### 2.3 Regional Parks Foundation

The Regional Parks Foundation is a 501c(3) non-profit organization established in 1969 that enables and encourages private contributions to support the East Bay Regional Park District. In 2011, the Regional Parks Foundation received nearly \$1 million in private contributions.

The Regional Parks Foundation provides an avenue for private contributions to be solicited and invested in a new regional park to support habitat restoration and development of recreation/environmental education facilities.

## 2.4 Resource Enhancement Program

The Resource Enhancement Program has been in operation since 1998 and provides a good model for how development on a portion of the Concord Naval Weapons Station can enhance resources elsewhere on the property. The program is funded by private entities that need to mitigate for impacts that their development projects incur. The Resource Enhancement Program enables the private entity to contribute funds to restore and enhance habitat on East Bay Regional Park District lands. The program seeks to coordinate mitigation projects with regional restoration goals to ensure that mitigation occurs within the same ecosystem as the impacts were incurred (EBRPD, 2012a).

The program allows for funds from multiple projects or various sources to be pooled to provide a larger mitigation project with a greater chance of success. The program was developed in response to a concern that mitigation projects were often not fully or properly mitigating for their project impacts. This is usually due to either mitigating in very small projects in developed areas that failed to provide value for targeted species or purchased mitigation credits from banks located outside of the impact area.

The mitigation measures applied to the Concord Reuse Project (i.e. the reuse of the Concord Naval Weapons Station) described in Section 5 could be implemented through the District's Resource Enhancement Program to provide for onsite mitigation in a manner than enhances resources within the future regional park land.

# 3. Concord, CA

## 3.1 Location

Concord, CA, sits at the center of Contra Costa County, a largely suburban county near the confluence of the Sacramento- San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Bay. The city of 120,000 lies in the Diablo Valley along the northern foothills of Mount Diablo – the most prominent land form in the east bay region of the San Francisco Bay region.



Figure 6 - Delineation of Rancho Monte del Diablo in the original Mexican Land Grant, date 1834 (Source: Concord Historical Society, 2011)

## 3.2 Settlement History

Originally inhabited by a small tribe of Chupcan Indians, the Diablo Valley was first explored by European outsiders in the late 1700's when the Spanish traveled throughout the region. The first permanent resident of European descent was Don Salvio Pacheco who petitioned to receive title to a land grant in the area from the Mexican government during their control of the region in 1834. The "Monte del Diablo" land grant encompassed nearly all of the current extent of the city of Concord including nearly 18,000 acres stretching from the current location of the Walnut Creek channel east to the Los Medanos Hills and from the Mt. Diablo foothills in the south north to Suisun Bay.

The rancho and surrounding area flourished as a cattle ranching and coal mining region as well as a major commerce center serving the growing cities on California's bays and inland

valleys. The rancho's location along the Suisun Bay and a unique deep-water channel enabled growth of industry and shipping. In 1869, the town of Todos Santos was officially established within the rancho. Within months, townspeople changed the name from Todos Santos to Concord as it remains today.

### 3.3 World War II

By 1879, Concord had a population of 300. It doubled by 1905 and again in 1940. At the start of World War II, the population was 1,400.

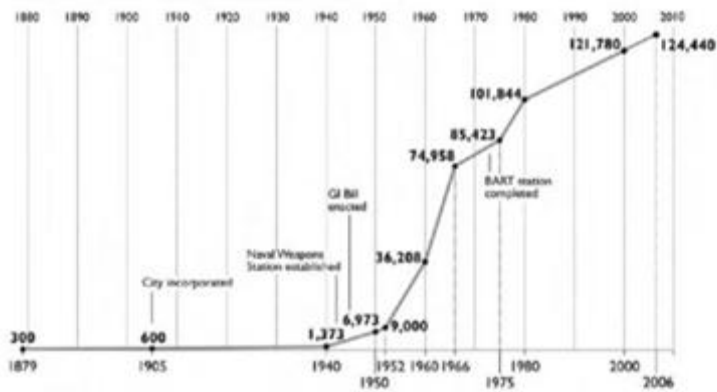
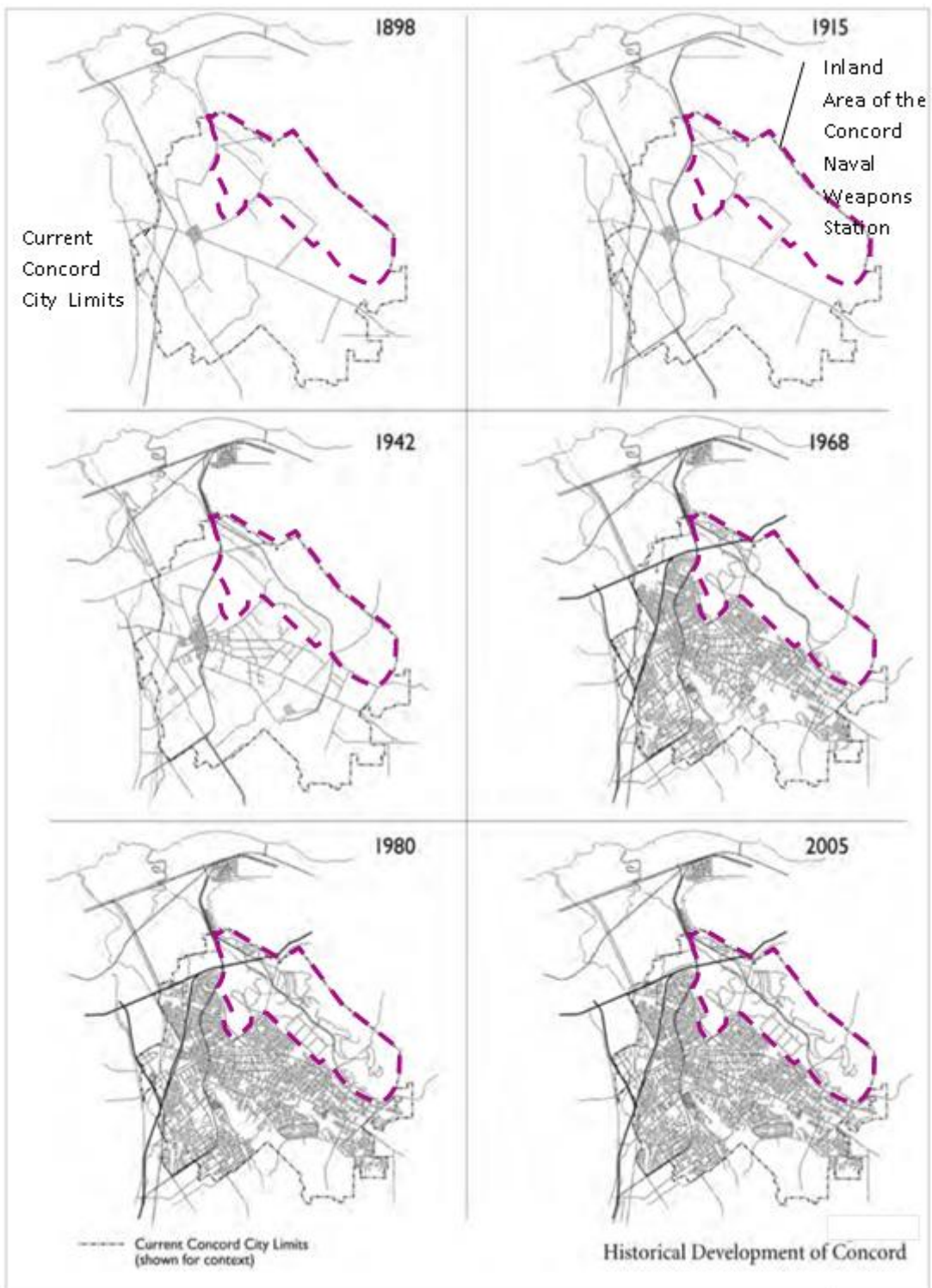


Figure 7 - Concord Population Growth, 1879-2006 (Source: City of Concord, 2011)

The San Francisco Bay Area played a central role in World War II. The region's location on the Pacific Ocean and ports connected to the transcontinental railway line positioned it well for home front support during the war. A number of military bases were established or expanded around the Bay Area during the time and the region experienced unprecedented growth.

The Mare Island Naval Shipyard was the first United States naval shipyard established on the Pacific Ocean. During World War II, it reached its peak capacity and employed nearly 50,000 people. The Concord Naval Weapons Station was established in 1942 as an annex to the Mare Island Naval Shipyard. The weapons station at Concord initially occupied 7,000 acres in the tidal area off of Suisun Bay as an ammunition magazine.



**Figure 8 – Historical Development Pattern of Concord – Highlighting the Rapid Growth Following Establishment of the Concord Naval Weapons Station (Source: City of Concord, General Plan, 2006)**

Soon after establishment, the largest home front disaster of World War II occurred at the Concord Naval Weapons Station on July 17, 1944. A large blast occurred while explosives were being loaded onto a ship bound for the Pacific. The blast, reportedly



felt as far away as San Francisco, destroyed two cargo ships and a number of buildings in the town of Port Chicago at the edge of the base. A total of 320 soldiers died in the blast over 200 of whom were African-Americans who often worked the most



Figure 9 - Images of Explosion at Port Chicago (NPS, 2012)

dangerous jobs. Surviving soldiers were requested to return to work in the weeks

following the blast. These events lead to the “Port Chicago Mutiny” where a group of over 50 African-American soldiers refused to continue loading munitions until additional training and safety protocols were instituted to protect them. They were court-martialed and sentenced to 15 years hard labor.

Thurgood Marshall, serving early in his career as special counsel with the NAACP, appealed the court-martial decision and fought to exonerate the men. The appeal continued through World War II until the surrender of Japan. The men’s sentences were commuted following the war and they were released (Allen, 2006).

The United States military had over 100,000 African-Americans serving at the time of the Port Chicago explosion. However, no African-Americans served as an officer. The segregation of the military and the explosion, and subsequent mutiny trial, at Port Chicago sparked a national debate on civil rights in the military. Late in 1944, the Navy began developing plans to allow for full integration. President Harry S. Truman formally issued an executive order on July 26, 1948 calling for the complete desegregation of the U.S. armed forces and declaring that “there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.” (McKeeby, 2008).

As a result of the explosion and a growing concern for military security, the Navy purchased an additional 5,200 acres of grasslands located directly south of the tidal area in 1944. This “inland area” encompasses much of the Los Medanos Hills and is bisected by Mount Diablo Creek which drains from the headwaters of the mountain with the same name just to the south. The base was developed with a number of munitions storage bunkers, buildings, and railroads.

Following World War II, Concord, along with the entire region, continued to grow. Both the inland and tidal areas of the Concord Naval Weapons Station continued to support the Navy through the Korean, Vietnam, and Cold War.

### 3.4 Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial

The National Park Service has maintained a monument at the site of the explosion on the tidal area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The monument was made an official unit



of the National Park Service with the establishment of the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial by President Obama on October 28, 2009.

### 3.5 Current Population

Today, Concord's population nears 120,000 and the city is considered to be built-out with the exception of the former base. The entire inland area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station is located within the city limits of the city of Concord (Concord, 2007). The neighboring city of Pittsburg has a population nearing 65,000 and directly borders the Concord city limits and Concord Naval Weapons Station. Development from the City of Pittsburg has increasingly encroached on the former base since the end of World War II leaving the base as the only greenbelt between the two cities.

# 4. Concord Naval Weapons Station

## 4.1 Environmental Setting

The inland area of the Concord Naval Weapons station encompasses 5,000 acres of grassland and scattered oak savannah bisected by Mt. Diablo creek.



Figure 10 - Rattlesnake Canyon on the south of Bailey Road portion of the Concord Naval Weapons

The site is transverse by State Route 4, Willow Pass

Road, and Bailey Road. The East Bay Regional Park District is slated to receive the lands east of Mt. Diablo creek and south of Willow Pass Road, including the entire area located



Figure 11 - Station Scattered oak woodlands on the south of Bailey Road area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station

south of Bailey Road. Approximately 50%, 2,500 acres, is slated to become a new regional park.

During the 1960's, a number of groves of eucalyptus and pine species were planted on the base by the United States Forest Service. It was a part of a biomass

production experiment to see what species grew best in California. The base was designated as a wildlife preserve for deer, tule elk, golden eagles, quail, pheasants, and foxes in 1975. A herd of tule elk was established on the base in 1977 as a part of the species reintroduction efforts. They remained on the base until its closure in 2005 when they were relocated to other preserves throughout the state.

#### 4.2 Special Status Species

The Concord Naval Weapons Station provides habitat for a wide variety of species listed as rare, threatened and endangered. Biological reports for the site have indicated the confirmed or likely presence of species ranging from Golden Eagle to red-legged frog. The protection of habitat in this area is considered important due to the sites status as the only greenbelt between the urban development of Concord and Pittsburg and the loss of surrounding habitat from development. Special-status species known to occur onsite include:

- California Red-Legged Frog (FT, CSSC)
- California Tiger Salamander (FT, CSSC, SCE)
- Burrowing Owl (CSSC)
- Golden Eagle (FP)
- Northern Harrier (CSSC)
- Loggerhead Shrike (CSSC)
- Northwestern Pond Turtle (CSSC)
- White-tailed Kite (FP)<sup>1</sup>

A number of other special status species are considered to be “potentially present” on the Concord Naval Weapons Station site. Species considered to be potentially present have not been recently identified on the property, but have suitable habitat.

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<sup>1</sup> FT = Federally Threatened; CSSC = California Species of Special Concern; SCE = State Candidate Endangered; FP = Fully Protected

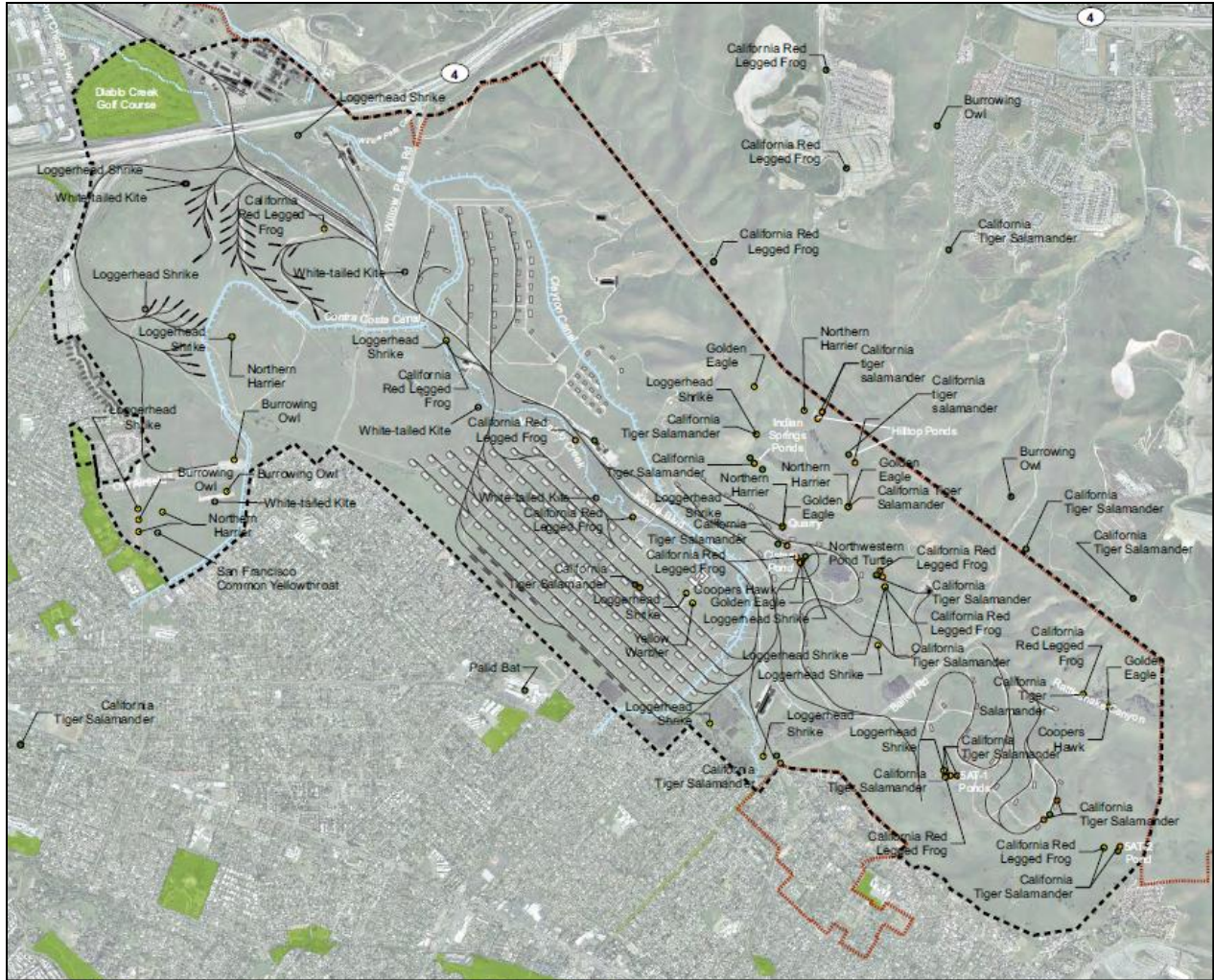


Figure 12 – Representative Special Status Species Occurrences, Concord Naval Weapons Station (Source: City of Concord, 2009)

#### 4.3 Environmental Clean Up

A major barrier that stalls military base reuse or impacts the implementation of successful development plans is often the level of environmental clean-up required. The clean-up of the Concord Naval Weapons Station is mandated by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) which establishes a phased process for the investigation and restoration of hazardous waste disposal and spill sites.



The Navy, as the current property owner, is responsible for addressing environmental health and safety hazards on the former base. An installation restoration program for the Concord Naval Weapons Station was initiated in 1983. Twenty one sites have been identified in an Initial Assessment Study within the inland area that required clean-up. Eight of these sites are located within the area of the property slated to become a new regional park.

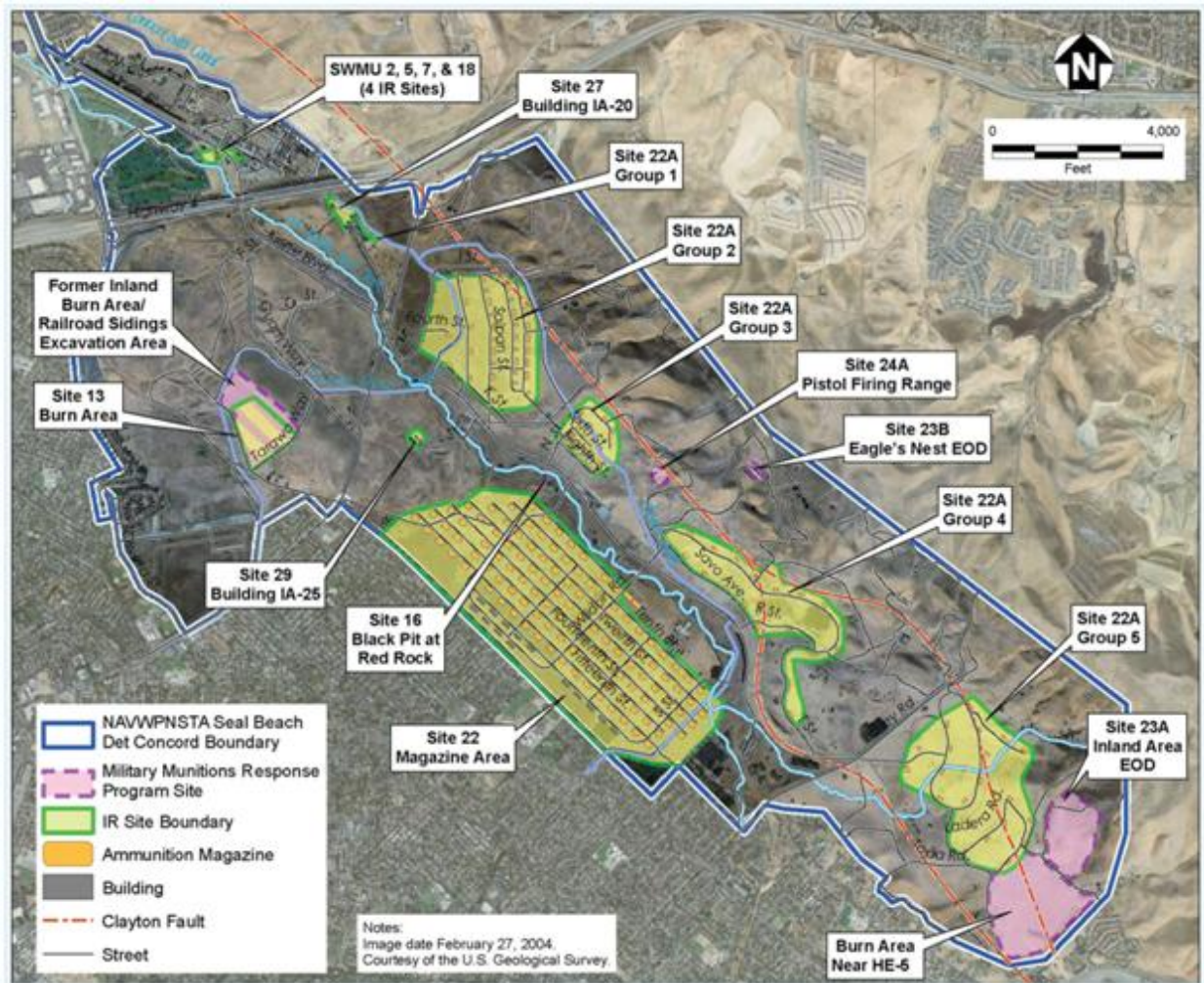


Figure 13 – Areas of Environmental Contamination to be cleaned up by U.S. Navy (Source: Navy, 2007)

The primary contaminant within the area identified for a new regional park is arsenic, likely from past herbicide use, within the soils where the former munitions bunkers are

located(Site 22A). Other sites consist of a large burn area, an explosive destruction range, a firing range, and a detonation area. All of these contaminated sites are slated for further investigation and development of clean-up plans to be performed by the Navy. The East Bay Regional Park District will have to ensure consistency with future open space and recreational use at the time of disposition discussions (U.S. Navy, 2007).

#### 4.4 Joint Use Committee

Conservationists in the Bay Area have long been interested in the preservation of the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The bases location as a greenbelt between the cities of Pittsburg and Concord provides an important visual backdrop and a natural break in the urban development. The Los Medanos hills provide the only undeveloped natural corridor between the protected lands of Mount Diablo State Park and Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve and the Suisun Bay. Further, the site remains in a relatively undeveloped state providing habitat for a range of species.

The East Bay Regional Park District began formally seeking access to the Concord Naval Weapons Station for recreational purposes when the inland portion of the base was placed in “mothball” status in 1999. Congressman George Miller, who represents the region in the U.S. Congress, convened a joint use study for the base that included representatives of various organizations including East Bay Regional Park District. A report on the potential joint-use of the base was prepared for the Navy and submitted to Congress in January of 2000 (Heredia, 2000). The report identified the potential for a range of community uses including establishment of outdoor recreation facilities and trails on the inland portion of the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The report identified the City of Concord and East Bay

Regional Park District as being the entities responsible for developing facilities and maintaining recreation sites and trails (Miller, 2000).

The joint use committee continued to meet to develop plans for site. The attacks in New York on September 11, 2001 resulted in heightened security across the military. As a result, the planning for joint use of the facility was halted and no additional plans were developed until the BRAC Commissions formal closure of the base in 2005.



**Figure 14 - View across the Concord Naval Weapons Station towards Mt. Diablo in the South. Mt. Diablo Creek runs through the center of the property. The property to the adopted Reuse Plan proposes development of the property to the right (west) of the creek and establishment of a regional park to the left (east) of the creek**

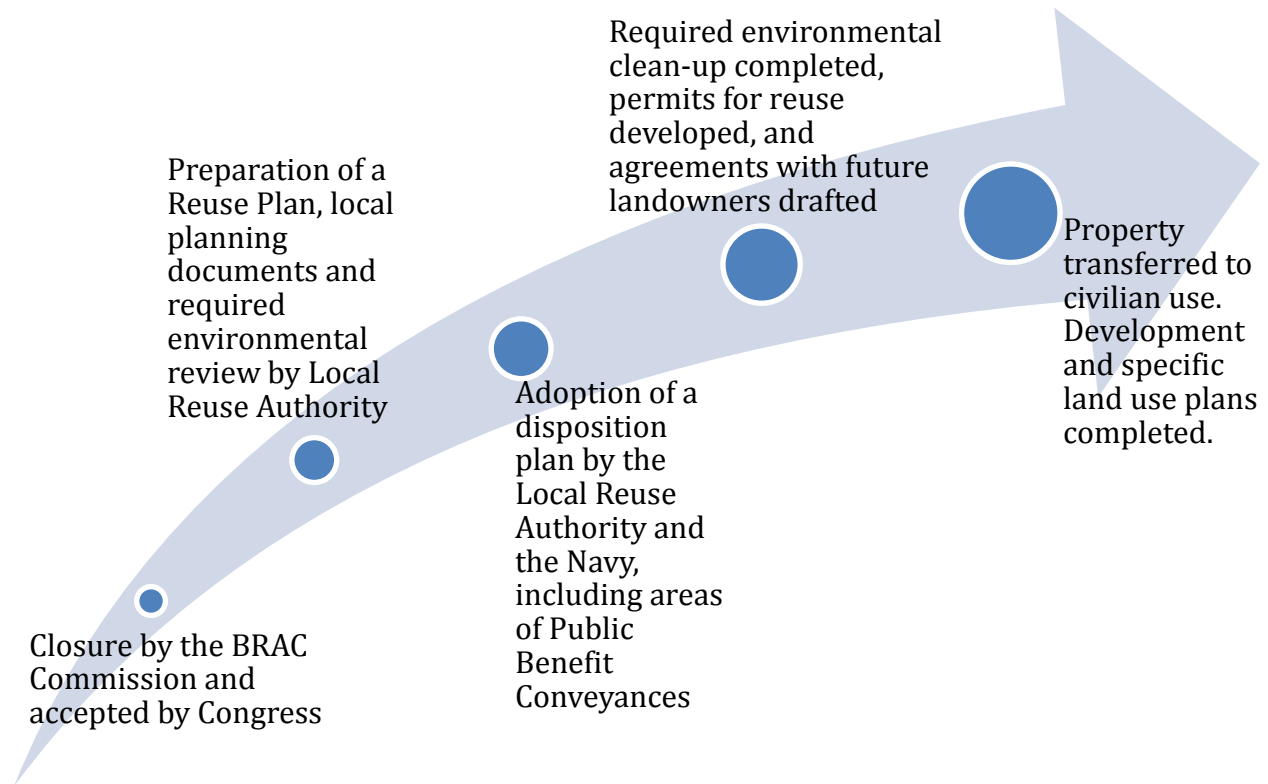
# 5. Concord Reuse Project

## 5.1 Base Closure Process

Hundreds of military bases have been closed throughout the nation following the end of the Cold War in the 1980's. The San Francisco Bay Area, given its strategic location during the World War II, was ringed by military facilities that providing shipbuilding, airfields, weapons storage, and various support services for the war abroad.

Starting in 1988, the Department of Defense began officially closing and decommissioning many of the military bases throughout the region. Upon closure, a Local Reuse Authority is established composed of the primary stakeholders in the reuse process to serve as the point of contact for negotiations with the Department of Defense and the party responsible for preparation of a reuse plan for the closed facility. For the Concord Naval Weapons Station, the Concord City Council was designated as the Local Reuse Authority.





**Figure 15 - Generalized Process for Military Base Closure, Planning, and Disposition for Civilian Use (Adapted from Source: EPA 2012)**

## 5.2 Reuse Plan

In 2005, Congress officially closed the Inland Unit of the Concord Naval Weapons Station.

The Inland Unit comprises 5,000 acres of largely grasslands and scattered oak savannah between the cities of Concord and Pittsburg. The base lies entirely within the planning area of the City of Concord who, following closure, embarked on an extensive reuse planning process for the base.

The Concord Reuse Plan was adopted in February of 2010 for the inland portion of the Concord Naval Weapons Station that identified development of nearly 13,000 new homes,

millions of square feet of new commercial buildings, a new college campus, and a variety of community facilities. The plan also calls for the preservation of approximately 50%, or 2,500 acres, of the site for parks and open space purposes.

The park and open space areas would be conveyed to the East Bay Regional Park District to establish a new regional park consisting of interpretive facilities, trails, and passive outdoor recreation facilities – as well as extensive habitat restoration opportunities. The East Bay Regional Park District is pursuing the property through a Public Benefit Conveyance with the federal sponsorship of the National Park Service.

### 5.3 Major Milestones

The major milestones to date have included (Concord 2012):

- 1999 – Concord Naval Weapons Station “mothballed” by Department of Defense
- 2000 – Joint Use Proposal Submitted to Congress
- 2001 – Joint Use Proposal postponed due to security concerns in the wake of events of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.
- 2005 – Base Realignment and Closure Commission officially closes Inland portion of the Concord Naval Weapons Station
- 2006 – Community planning process for reuse of Concord Naval Weapons Station Initiated
- 2007 – East Bay Regional Park District submits Notice of Interest for a Public Benefit Conveyance for lands east of Mt. Diablo Creek and south of Willow Pass Road
- 2008 – Concord City Council adopts preferred alternative for the Reuse Plan substantially incorporating East Bay Regional Park District Public Benefit Conveyance request
- 2009 – Reuse Plan and environmental impact reports for preferred alternative adopted by Concord City Council

The next steps will require the U.S. Navy to prepare federally required environmental studies and work with the City in development of disposition plans for the property. The disposition plan will involve the East Bay Regional Park District and formal consideration of the Public Benefit Conveyance proposal.

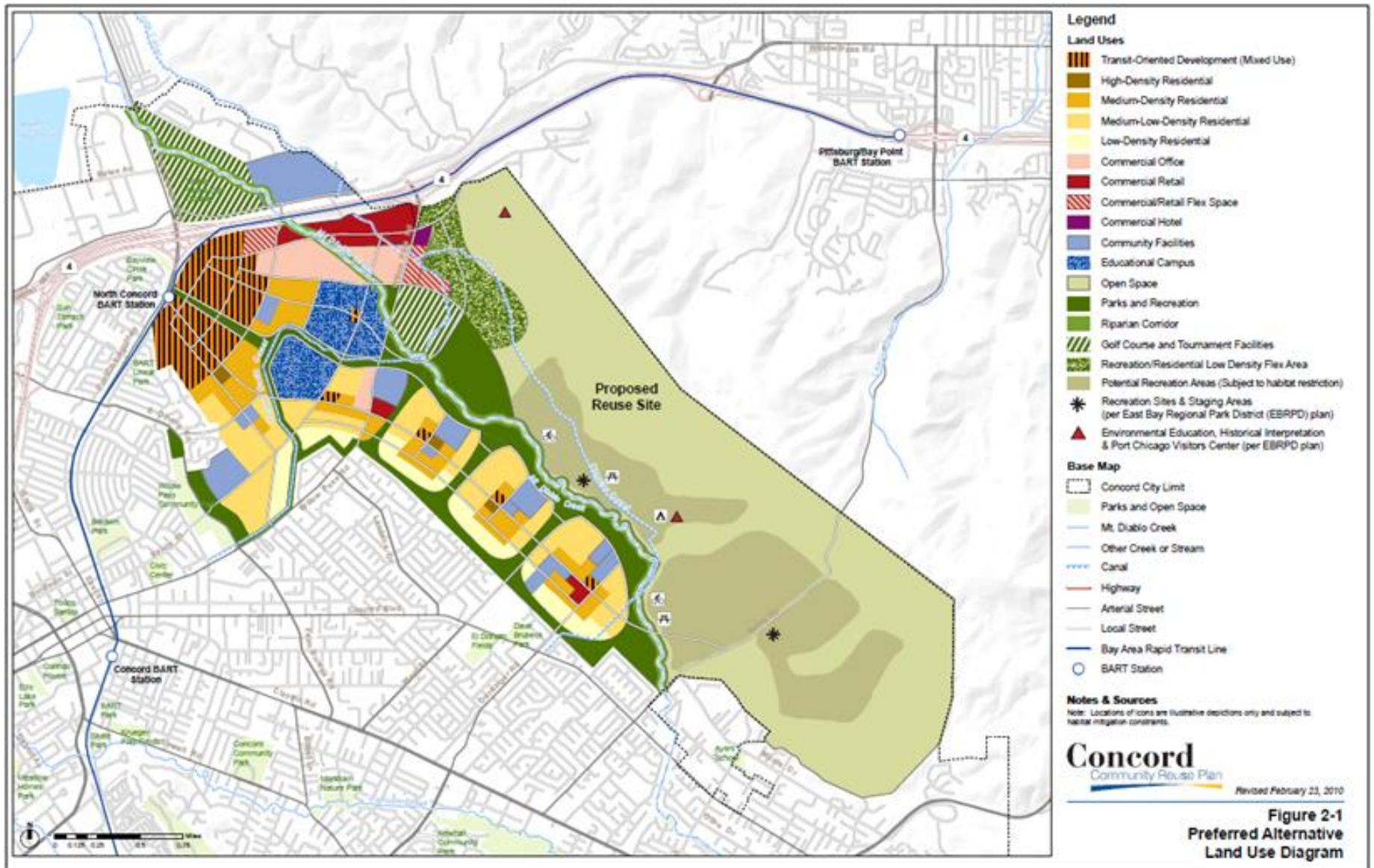


Figure 16 - The Concord Reuse Project Preferred Alternative Land Use Diagram. The area of the future regional park is located east of Mt. Diablo Creek and labeled as “Open Space” or “Potential Recreation Area”. Note the Recreation/Residential Low Density Flex Area was removed in the subsequent Concord Reuse Project Area Plan and designated for inclusion in the future regional park (Source: Concord, 2009)

Table 2-1: Preferred Alternative Development Program

Land Uses	Acres	Units and Population					SF and Jobs				Notes
	Total Acres	Gross DU/Acre	Units	% of Units	Persons/Unit	Population	Gross FAR	SF	SF/Job	Jobs	
<b>Residential</b>											<p><b>1. Recreation/Residential Low Density Flex Area:</b> The flex area adjacent to the Tournament Sports Facility is assumed to be Low-Density Residential use for purposes of analyzing environmental impact, but can be developed to support a larger recreation area, subject to a determination of financial feasibility and impact on the City's fiscal sustainability.</p> <p><b>2. Commercial/Retail Flex Space:</b> The flex area between the North Concord BART Station and Willow Pass Road is assumed to be Commercial Retail use for purposes of analyzing environmental impact, but can be developed as Commercial Office use depending upon market conditions and impact on the City's fiscal sustainability. The flex area south of Willow Pass Road is assumed to be Commercial Office, but could be developed as Commercial Retail to support complementary uses to the Tournament Sports Facility, subject to a determination of financial feasibility and impact on the City's fiscal sustainability.</p> <p><b>3. Open Space</b> creates potential for regional recreation per the EBRPD's PBC request and areas for habitat protection and restoration.</p> <p><b>4. Percent Open Space:</b> This figure would increase to 66 percent if the Recreation / Residential Low Density Flex Area is developed as recreation.</p>
High-Density Residential	20.0	50.0	1,000	8.1%	1.85	1,850					
Medium-High Density Residential	36.0	30.0	1,080	8.8%	1.85	1,998					
Mixed-Use Residential/Retail	35.0	30.0	1,050	8.6%	1.85	1,943					
Medium-Density Residential	300.0	15.0	4,500	36.7%	2.11	9,495					
Medium-Low Density Residential	353.0	10.0	3,530	28.8%	2.94	10,378					
Low-Density Residential (see Note 1)											
150 acres are designated as Recreation/Residential Low Density Flex Area	278.0	4.0	1,112	9.1%	2.82	3,136					
<b>Total</b>	<b>1022.0</b>		<b>12,272</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		<b>28,800</b>					
<b>Commercial</b>											
Office/Transit-Oriented Development	12.0						1.70	688,624	225	3,949	
Office Park (see Note 2)											
25 acres are designated as Commercial/Retail Flex use	92.0						0.51	2,043,835	225	9,084	
Town Center Retail	10.0						0.68	296,208	500	592	
Neighborhood Commercial Center	16.0						0.34	236,966	500	474	
Regional Retail (see Note 2)											
15 acres are designated as Commercial/Retail Flex use	90.0						0.26	1,019,304	500	2,039	
Mid-Rise Hotel	10.0							400,000	840	476	
Family/Business Hotel	5.0							120,000	840	143	
Commercial Cluster 2 - Campus Setting	50.0						0.51	1,110,780	225	4,937	
Mixed-Use Residential/Retail	0.0						0.43	131,116	500	262	
<b>Total</b>	<b>285.0</b>							<b>6,246,833</b>		<b>21,956</b>	
<b>Institutional</b>											
PBC - CSU East Bay Campus/Education Campus	150.0						0.35	2,286,900	500	4,574	
<b>Total</b>	<b>150.0</b>							<b>2,286,900</b>		<b>4,574</b>	
<b>Community/Other</b>											
Community Facilities (inc. K-12 schools)	103.0										
Other Uses - Health, Group Care, Homeless	10.0										
Other Uses - Religious Centers, Libraries, Community Centers	72.0										
PBC - Sheriff and Fire Training	80.0										
PBC - Center for Adaptive Learning	2.0										
PBC - Habitat for Humanity East Bay	3.0										
Transit Center/Yard	15.0										
<b>Total</b>	<b>285.0</b>										
<b>Parks</b>											
Neighborhood Parks	43.0										
Community Parks	415.0										
Recreation Facilities - Existing Golf Course	88.0										
Recreation Facilities - Sports Complex	75.0										
City-Wide Park	100.0										
Riparian Corridor	178.0										
Open Space (see Note 3)	2387.0										
<b>Total</b>	<b>3286.0</b>										
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,028</b>		<b>12,272</b>			<b>28,800</b>		<b>8,533,733</b>		<b>26,530</b>	
		<b>Average DU/Acre</b>				<b>12.0</b>					
		<b>Percent Open Space (see Note 4)</b>				<b>65.4%</b>					

DU = dwelling units; FAR = floor-to-area ratio; SF = square feet; PBC = Public Benefit Conveyance; CSU = California State University  
Source: City of Concord, January 30, 2009

revised February 23, 2010

Figure 17 - The Concord Reuse Project Preferred Alternative Land Use Development Program. Note 3 indicates the potential establishment of a new regional park and use of the Public Benefit Conveyance method (Source: Concord, 2009)

#### 5.4 Public Benefit Conveyance – Federal Lands to Parks Program

The Federal Lands to Parks program is a program of the National Park Service administered under Section 203 (k)(2) of Public Law 91-485, as amended (40 U.S.C. 484 (k)(2)) that is established to convey surplus federal land for parks and recreation purposes (NPS, 2012a). The program has facilitated the transfer of over 169,000 acres of surplus federal lands to state and local government since its inception.

Upon closure of the base, East Bay Regional Park District contacted National Park Service to begin conversations pertaining to the transfer of a portion of the base for a new regional park. The National Park Service can facilitate the transfer of former federal lands such as the Concord Naval Weapons Station to local agencies. A Notice of Interest in a Public Benefit Conveyance of the lands east of Mount Diablo Creek and south of Willow Pass Road was submitted to the City of Concord during the reuse planning process accompanied by a letter of support from the National Park Service (EBRPD, 2007b).

The Federal Lands to Parks Program allows for the lands included in the reuse plan for Public Benefit Conveyance to the East Bay Regional Park District to be conveyed at a dramatically reduced cost and potentially for free provided that the lands are to be used for accepted park and recreation purposes (NPS, 2012a).

#### 5.5 Reuse Plan Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

The Concord City Council, acting as the Local Reuse Authority, adopted an Environmental Impact Report, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act, and the associated

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program on February 23, 2010. The reports evaluate the environmental impacts, that implementation of the preferred alternative on the Concord Naval Weapons Station would have across a range of environmental topic areas. The report was conducted at a programmatic level of analysis, requiring additional environmental analysis as project specific proposals are brought forward.

The California Environmental Quality Act asserts that a project should reduce its environmental impact to the maximum extent feasible. A project should first avoid an environmental impact. If avoidance is not possible, it should then be minimized and mitigated. Where an impact is found to not be able to minimized and mitigated to a less than significant level, the lead agency (e.g. the City of Concord) must prepare a statement of overriding considerations describing the conditions that necessitate the environmental impact.

The environmental impact report for the Concord Reuse Project identified a number of measures that the future developers of the Concord Naval Weapons Station would be required to implement. A central goal, and base financial assumption, of the project was to provide opportunities for onsite mitigation. Onsite mitigation would reduce the overall costs to a project developer as it would provide the opportunity for environmental impacts to be mitigated without the additional costs of land acquisition. The East Bay Regional Park District's initial goals and guiding principles for the new regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station included language that sought to engage project developers and the state and federal resource agencies to identify appropriate resource enhancement and restoration activities within the regional park area that could serve as mitigation for the

impacts on the proposed developed portions of the site (see Section 6). Onsite mitigation is the preferred approach as it provides localized mitigation so that the community that is impacted receives the benefits of restoration and resource enhancement and it also provides the East Bay Regional Park District with a private source of capital necessary to achieve the goals to preserve and enhance natural resources within the regional park.

The measures included in the Concord Reuse Project environmental impact report that would provide for developer participation in resource enhancement and restoration activities within future regional park are shown in Table 1.



**Table 1- Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and Opportunities for the new Regional Park**

Mitigation Measure	Action	How it Relates to the Regional Park
Land Use 1	Prepare design standards that incorporate measures to transition and integrate new development with adjacent uses and incorporate such measures into development plans	Projects adjacent to the regional park should be responsible for developing features that provide for a smooth transition. This will be relevant for the commercial development proposed along Willow Pass Rd, the tournament sports facility, and the city park. Additionally, should be used to require developers to provide pedestrian access across Mt. Diablo Creek.
Biological Resources 1	The City of Concord shall require project proponents to demonstrate avoidance of wetland fill to the extent practicable and agree to mitigate unavoidable temporary impacts to wetlands by restoration in place following construction or remediation; mitigate permanent fill of wetlands at a minimum of 1:1 acreage ratio concurrent with or prior to wetland impacts; and provide the City with evidence of the purchase of credits in a mitigation bank, or with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for creation of wetlands coupled with proof of that the mitigation site will be preserved in perpetuity and than an endowment has been established to fund the long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation site.	There are a number of locations for potential wetland restoration or enhancement within the regional park site and on neighboring properties that could potentially be added to the regional park. Implementation of the proposed development in the Reuse Plan can result in wetland restoration and enhancement in the regional park.
Biological Resources 2	Prior to approving any construction or remediation involving impacts to Mt. Diablo Creek, the City of Concord shall require project proponents to demonstrate avoidance of creek impacts to the extent practicable and agree to implement best management practices to avoid and minimize adverse effects on water quality during construction; mitigate unavoidable temporary impacts to the creek by restoration in place following construction; mitigate unavoidable permanent fill of the creek at a minimum 1:1 acreage ratio, concurrent with or prior to creek impacts; and provide the City with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for creation of aquatic habitat coupled with proof that the mitigation site will be preserved in perpetuity and that an endowment has been established to fund the long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation site.	Development projects will fund restoration and enhancement of Mt. Diablo Creek. While it is unclear whether Mt. Diablo Creek will be transferred to the East Bay Regional Park District, it is clear it will be the central natural feature of the park. Restoration/enhancement of the creek will benefit the natural value of the park.
Biological Resources 3	Prior to approving any construction or remediation involving impacts to riparian habitat on the site, the City of Concord shall require project proponents to demonstrate avoidance of riparian habitat impacts to the extent practicable and agree to mitigate unavoidable impacts at a	Development will provide enhancement and mitigation of other riparian habitats in addition to wetlands and Mt. Diablo Creek. The regional park area includes a number of side drainages and ephemeral drainages that would

	<p>minimum 3:1 acreage ratio, concurrent with or prior to riparian impacts; and provide the City with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for creation of riparian habitat coupled with proof that the mitigation site will be preserved in perpetuity and that an endowment has been established to fund the long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation site.</p>	<p>benefit from restoration.</p>
<p>Biological Resources 4</p>	<p>The City of Concord shall require project proponents to demonstrate avoidance of Willow Pass Creek and its aquatic habitat, drainages within the California annual grasslands, and pond habitats of aquatic habitat impacts to the extent practicable and agree to implement best management practices to avoid and minimize adverse effects on water quality during construction; mitigate unavoidable temporary impacts by restoration in place following construction; mitigate unavoidable permanent fill of aquatic habitats at a minimum 1:1 acreage ratio, concurrent with or prior to such impacts; and provide the City with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for creation of aquatic habitat coupled with proof that the mitigation site will be preserved in perpetuity and that an endowment has been established to fund the long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation site.</p>	<p>Development impacts to Willow Pass creek and drainages throughout the grassland area will provide enhancement, restoration, and a management endowment for restoration of grassland drainages within the regional park area.</p>
<p><u>Biological Resources 5</u></p>	<p>The City of Concord shall require project proponents to demonstrate avoidance of red-legged frog breeding habitat impacts and impacts to Mt. Diablo Creek to the extent practicable and agree to construct permanent exclusion fencing around new residential or industrial development; distribute pamphlets to new residents and construct signage explaining the importance of controlling pets near sensitive areas; avoid installation of any lighting in red-legged frog breeding habitat and use only low-intensity or downcast lighting near red-legged frog dispersal habitat; minimize wet-season construction near aquatic habitats; enclose construction areas with temporary exclusion fencing; implement best management practices to avoid and minimize adverse effects on water quality during construction; have a qualified biologist identify a suitable site to which frogs may be relocated if detected during construction, conduct a construction personnel education program, and perform pre-construction surveys for red-legged frogs; mitigate unavoidable temporary impacts to red-legged frog habitat at a 1:1 acreage ratio (i.e., by restoration in place following construction plus additional habitat mitigation at a 0.1:1 ratio); mitigate unavoidable permanent impacts to red-legged frog breeding habitat at a minimum 3:1 acreage ratio and to red-legged frog nonbreeding habitat at a minimum 1:1 acreage ratio, concurrent with or prior to such impacts; and provide the City with evidence of the purchase of red-legged frog habitat</p>	<p>Development will provide enhancement and mitigation of other riparian habitats in addition to wetlands and Mt. Diablo Creek. The regional park area includes a number of side drainages, ephemeral drainages, and wetlands that provide potential habitat for red-legged frogs that would benefit from restoration required as mitigation by the project developer.</p>

	credits in a mitigation bank, or with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for the enhancement and preservation of red-legged frog habitat coupled with proof that the mitigation site will be preserved in perpetuity and that an endowment has been established to fund the long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation site	
Biological Resources 6	The City of Concord shall require project proponents to demonstrate avoidance of tiger salamander breeding habitat impacts and impacts to Mt. Diablo Creek to the extent practicable and agree to construct permanent exclusion fencing around new residential or industrial development; distribute pamphlets to new residents and construct signage explaining the importance of controlling pets near sensitive areas; avoid installation of any lighting in tiger salamander breeding habitat and use only low-intensity or downcast lighting near red-legged frog dispersal habitat; minimize wet-season construction near aquatic habitats; enclose construction areas with temporary exclusion fencing; implement best management practices to avoid and minimize adverse effects on water quality during construction; have a qualified biologist identify a suitable site to which frogs may be relocated if detected during construction, conduct a construction personnel education program, and perform pre-construction surveys for tiger salamanders; mitigate unavoidable temporary impacts to redlegged frog habitat at a 1:1 acreage ratio (i.e., by restoration in place following construction plus additional habitat mitigation at a 0.1:1 ratio); mitigate unavoidable permanent impacts to tiger salamander breeding habitat at a minimum 3:1 acreage ratio and to tiger salamander nonbreeding habitat at a minimum 1:1 acreage ratio, concurrent with or prior to such impacts; and provide the City with evidence of the purchase of tiger salamander habitat credits in a mitigation bank, or with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for the enhancement and preservation of tiger salamander habitat coupled with proof that the mitigation site will be preserved in perpetuity and that an endowment has been established to fund the long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation site	Development will provide enhancement and mitigation of other riparian habitats in addition to wetlands and Mt. Diablo Creek. The regional park area includes a number of side drainages, ephemeral drainages, and wetlands that provide potential habitat for tiger salamanders that would benefit from restoration required as mitigation by the project developer.
Biological Resources 7	The City of Concord shall require project proponents to minimize grading impacts within 1/4 mile of the Cistern Pond and minimize permanent impacts to Mt. Diablo Creek, and agree to have a qualified biologist conduct surveys for communal/traditional nesting areas, implement measures to minimize impacts to turtle nests if a communal/traditional nesting area is detected, install temporary exclusion fencing around any construction areas, and have a qualified biologist conduct preconstruction surveys for all	The Cistern Pond is located within the regional park area. Improvements in this area would be minimal and only what is necessary to provide for habitat enhancement and natural resource interpretation.

	<p>construction within 1/4 mile of aquatic pond turtle habitat; have a qualified biologist relocate any turtles detected during pre-construction surveys or during construction to suitable habitat well away from active construction areas; and have a qualified biologist conduct a construction personnel education program.</p>	
Biological Resources 8	<p>The City of Concord shall require project proponents to avoid planning trails or other recreation features within 200 feet of coastal sage scrub in Rattlesnake Canyon; to agree to deposit construction materials only in areas lacking snakes or suitable cover for snakes; and to agree to have a qualified biologist conduct a construction personnel education program, conduct preconstruction surveys prior to the construction of recreational or interpretive features in open space areas with rock outcrops, and relocate any whipsnakes or horned lizards detected near construction areas to suitable habitat areas well away from construction areas</p>	<p>No trails are planned within Rattlesnake Canyon. Site surveys would be conducted prior to trail development to ensure no coastal sage scrub habitat is impacted.</p>
Biological Resources 9	<p>The City of Concord shall require project proponents to avoid planning trails or other recreational features within 1/4 mile of the existing eagle nest (unless seasonal closure of such trails or recreational features occurs) and to agree to have a qualified biologist conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting eagles and to maintain a 1/4 mile buffer between any active nest and new construction disturbance during the breeding season.</p>	<p>No trails are planned within 1/4 mile of the golden eagle nests. However, to accomplish this, an easement or acquisition of a portion of the privately owned ridgeline properties to the east may be necessary. The District should work closely with the neighboring landowner and the City of Pittsburg to provide for easements or boundary adjustments through acquisition as necessary to accommodate development of the ridgeline trail spine in a manner that will avoid the golden eagle nest site.</p>
Biological Resources 10	<p>The City of Concord shall require project proponents to agree to maintain buffers free from new disturbance around active owl burrows during the breeding season; have a qualified biologist conduct pre construction surveys, relocate burrowing owls from burrows that are to be disturbed by construction during the nonbreeding season, and conduct comprehensive breeding-season and nonbreeding-season surveys to determine owl use of the individual project site prior to construction; mitigate permanent impacts to burrowing owl habitat at a minimum ratio of 6.5 acres of mitigation habitat per pair (or per single owl, if unpaired) that will be displaced by development if mitigation occurs on-site and of 9.75-19.5 acres of mitigation habitat per pair (or per single owl, if unpaired) that will be displaced by development if mitigation occurs off-site; and provide the City with evidence of the purchase of burrowing owl habitat credits in a mitigation bank, or with a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for the enhancement and preservation of burrowing owl habitat coupled with proof that the mitigation site will be preserved in</p>	<p>Any recreational facility development should be planned in a manner that avoids burrowing owl habitat. Specific resource conservation zones should be established to provide for permanent burrowing owl habitat and enable the project developers of the adjacent development area to invest in onsite mitigation to enhance burrowing owl habitat.</p>

	perpetuity and that an endowment has been established to fund the long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation site.	
Biological Resources 18	The City of Concord shall require project proponents to demonstrate avoidance of impacts to oak woodland/savannah to the extent practicable; agree to have a qualified arborist prepare an Oak Protection Plan describing measures to protect trees to be saved; and mitigate unavoidable impacts to oak-dominated habitats through the replacement of impacted oaks, as described in a Tree Replacement and Planting Plan.	The District should avoid entirely any impacts to Oak Woodlands and identify areas where oak reforestation may be appropriate – providing for onsite mitigation opportunities and enhancement of oak woodlands.
Utilities 1c	The City of Concord will require developers to install “purple pipe” in outdoor irrigation systems throughout the project area to maximize the potential use of recycled water to reduce demand on the potable and raw water supplies	The District should work closely with the project developer and the City of Concord to identify opportunities to extend “purple pipe” into the identified irrigated turf areas to provide for recycled water use in irrigated and landscaped park areas.
Utilities 6	It will be incumbent upon the City of Concord, CCCSD, and CCWD to have an agreement in place regarding the provision of recycled water to the site. The City of Concord needs to reach an agreement with CCCSD, or an alternative off-site provider, to ensure that the recycled water treatment and transmission facilities are sufficiently expanded to serve the project. Alternatively, an on-site recycled water treatment plant may be constructed, which may eliminate the need for expanded off-site facilities	The District should work closely with the project developer and the City of Concord to identify opportunities to extend “purple pipe” into the identified irrigated turf areas to provide for recycled water use in irrigated and landscaped park areas.
Source: City of Concord, 2009		

# 6. Regional Park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station – Conceptual Plans

## 6.1 Major Themes

The establishment of a regional park on the 2,500 acres planned to be retained as open space on the Concord Naval Weapons Station would be driven four major themes. These themes are developed with consideration to the site and surrounding regions history, the grassland and scattered oak ecosystem, the properties location near major urban centers and demand for outdoor recreation, and the need to coordinate with the planned adjacent development to provide onsite mitigation opportunities.



## 6.2 Vision and Guiding Principles

Following the selection of the “Clustered Villages” preferred alternative by the Concord Naval Weapons Station Community Advisory, the following handout was developed and distributed to the City and various stakeholders. The handout was developed in response to questions from city leaders, Community Advisory Committee members, and the general public on what the East Bay Regional Park District’s plans for the open space area was. Recognizing that such plans would have to balance multiple goals, a series of goals and principles that would guide more refined land use plans and inform the city on anticipated use were included. The goals and guiding principles are:

1. *Resource Protection* – *The District will work closely with the City, state and federal resource agencies, project developers, and other stakeholders to ensure the protection of critical natural and cultural resources found on the Concord Naval Weapons Station.*
  - *Establish appropriate Resource Protection Zones in areas of sensitive resources, protected wetlands, and known cultural sites;*
  - *Develop long-term resource management plans focused on resource protection and enhancement while preserving public access opportunities.*
2. *Resource Enhancement, Restoration, and Mitigation* – *The District will proactively engage project developers and state and federal resource agencies to identify lands appropriate for resource enhancement and restoration and provide for required mitigation for proposed development on the Concord Naval Weapons Station site.*
  - *Develop extensive tree replanting program where appropriate and consistent with habitat requirements;*
  - *Facilitate restoration of Mt. Diablo Creek, wetlands and other sensitive habitats with City, project developers, and regional stakeholders;*
  - *Facilitate onsite mitigation for loss of sensitive habitats, wetlands, and impacts to species from proposed development elsewhere on the Concord Naval Weapons Station site in coordination with state and federal resource agencies, the City of Concord, and project developers.*

3. Public Access and Recreation – *The District will work diligently to ensure that resource protection and enhancement programs are balanced with the need to provide for public access and recreation throughout Concord Naval Weapons Station site.*
  - *Provide an extensive trail system consisting of both paved and unpaved trails for bikers, hikers, equestrians, joggers and others which connect to the vast regional network linking to parks and trails such as Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, Mt. Diablo State Park, the Iron Horse Trail, and the Delta DeAnza Trail.*
  - *Provide access to passive recreation opportunities unparalleled in the region through bird watching, sunset vistas and views of Mt. Diablo, hiking and other opportunities.*
  - *Establish large group picnic areas and gathering sites, including the potential for group camping facilities, utilizing existing internal roadways and developed areas.*
4. Environmental Education and Interpretation – *The District will pursue creative opportunities and collaborative partnerships to provide world-class environmental education and interpretation programs and facilities throughout the Concord Naval Weapons Station to preserve and share the unique natural, cultural, social, and military history of the Concord Naval Weapons Station and the Central Contra Costa County region.*
  - *Provide for an environmental day camp and education center geared towards educating the region's youth about the area's natural and cultural history;*
  - *Establish a world class historical interpretation and visitors center in partnership with the National Park Service, Friends of Port Chicago, and others which honors the veterans who served on the Concord Naval Weapons Station property, conveys the significance of the events at Port Chicago, provides displays on the history of Concord and the Diablo Valley region, and provides a staging area to facilitate access to the National Park Service's Port Chicago Memorial.*

The icons included in the open space area and the language proposing recreational use was eventually integrated into the adopted Reuse Plan and provides the foundation for the development of more refined plans while establishing the basis for partnerships between the East Bay Regional Park District and the City of Concord and National Park Service.



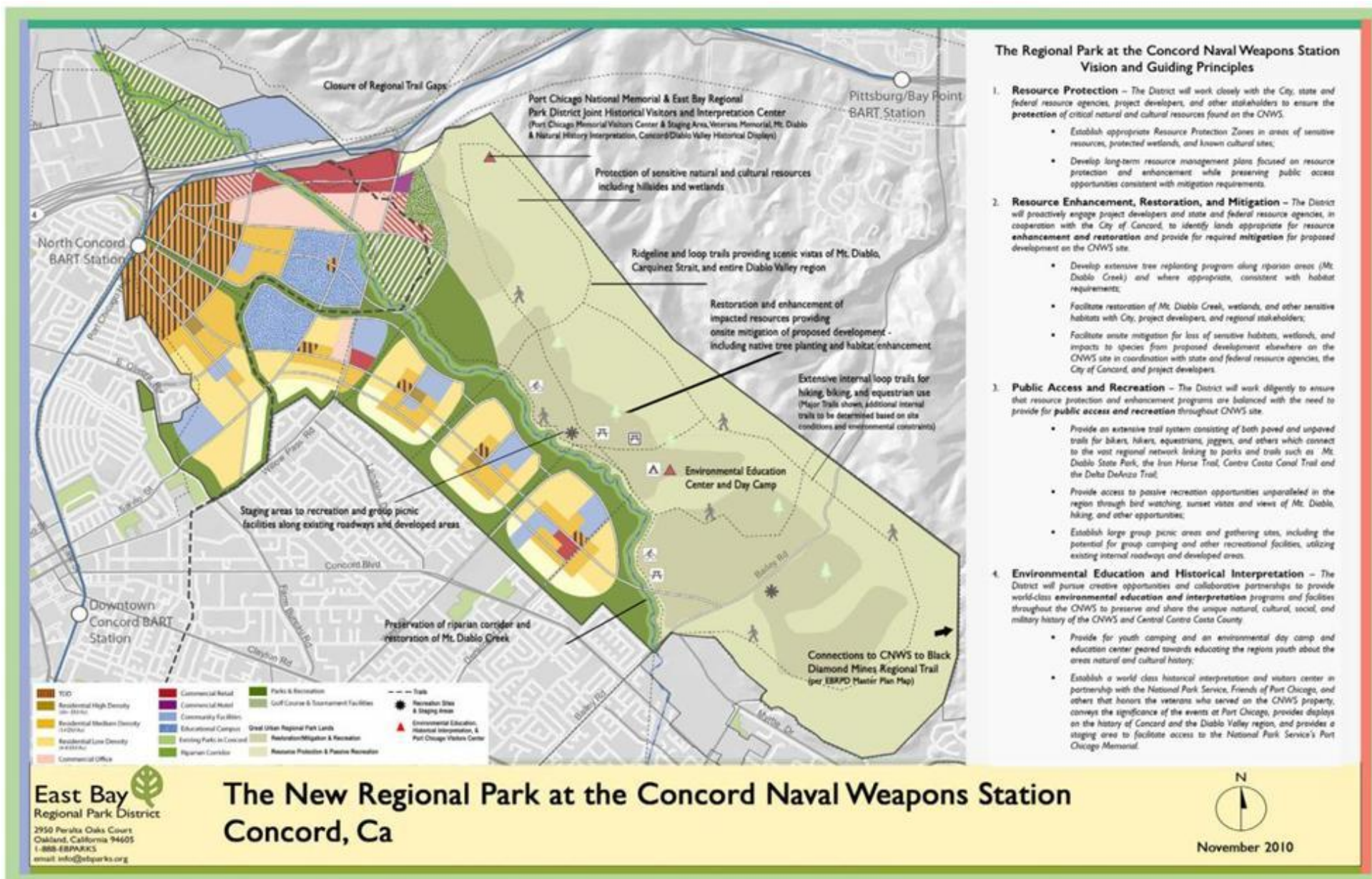


Figure 18 - Conceptual Map provided to the City of Concord and Community Advisory Committee originally in Fall of 2008 (and subsequently amended) providing a framework for a future regional park and it's relation to proposed development

As a part of this MP, further refinement of the vision presented on for the new Regional Park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station has been conducted. This has been done to provide greater definition of what future public access on the site will look like while providing information to the City, potential future developers, natural resource regulators, and other stakeholders on where recreational activity will occur and where resource enhancement/mitigation activities can be implemented.

### 6.3 Planning Areas

For planning purposes, the Concord Naval Weapons Station contains two distinct units (Figure 18).

1. Primary Area – The primary area is anticipated to be the area that will include more developed recreation and park operations facilities. This area encompasses the open space lands identified in the Concord Naval Weapons Station Reuse Plan located east of Mt. Diablo Creek between Willow Pass Road and Bailey Road. This area includes approximately 1,690 acres.
2. South of Bailey Road – The South of Bailey Road area is anticipated to be an area primarily of passive recreational use. Future opportunities to expand the area with connections to other District lands to the south exist. This area includes approximately 850 acres.

### 6.4 Staging Areas

Visitor access to the new Regional Park would occur through both motorized and non-motorized means. Access to the primary area would occur along the current main access

road, Kinne Boulevard. No unregulated thru-access would be provided through Kinne Boulevard.

*Staging Areas - Primary Area -*

1. Northern Staging Area – The primary staging area on the north end of the Regional Park would be located off of Ayers Road or Willow Pass Road. This staging area would accommodate vehicles and have sufficient space for parking and turn-around for vehicles towing trailers for equestrian use (Figure 19). This area would include restrooms and potential for an irrigated turf site with picnicking and access to internal trails. The total area would be roughly 5 to 10 acres.
2. City Sports Facility Area – The Reuse Plan included the development of a large city park to include sports fields and play areas to be operated by the City of Concord adjacent to the regional park area east of Mt. Diablo Creek. Parking areas for the planned City sports park facility should also accommodate general Regional Park parking. A staging area located off of Kinne Boulevard near the boundary of the planned sports facility and the new Regional Park could provide a synergy between the two uses. Visitors would be able to access both the active recreation sites planned by the City and the passive recreation facilities within the new Regional Park.
3. Internal Staging Area at former Building 95 site – This staging area would provide access to internal trails and recreational sites located at the southern portion of the primary area. Staging could be accommodated at the existing paved site of the former Building 95 (See Appendix A for map of building sites) (Figure 19).

4. Internal Staging Area at Build IA-24 – This staging area would be located off of Kinne Boulevard at the mid-point of the primary area. The IA-24 site and surrounding lands are planned to be the central feature of the new Regional Park with expansive irrigated turf sites, picnic areas, developed recreation sites, and access to the internal trail system.

*Staging Areas - South of Bailey Road Area –*

1. One staging area accommodating vehicle access with sufficient space for equestrian trailers would be located at an appropriate site directly off of Bailey Road on the “South of Bailey Road” portion of the new Regional Park (Figure 19).
2. Future staging area opportunities could be explored off the Regional Park property at the area’s southern boundary near Kirker Pass Road.

6.5 Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access could occur from a number of defined locations (Figure 20).

*Pedestrian Access - Primary Area:*

1. Sports Facility - Appropriate pedestrian access points from the planned City sports facility into the adjacent Regional Park should be identified during the design phase of the sports facility.
2. Village Connections – Pedestrian access from the planned “villages” should be accommodated through development of a footbridge or other means over Mt. Diablo Creek into the new Regional Park. The Concord Naval Weapons Station Reuse Plan

identified three possible sites, roughly located at the sites of the existing creek crossings.

3. Eastern Boundary Connections – Land use beyond the Regional Park boundary to the east in the Los Medanos Hills remains in discussion. Future uses should accommodate trail connections to the Regional Park trail system at appropriate points.

*Pedestrian Access -South of Bailey Road Area:*

1. Connections to Neighboring Open Spaces – The trail system within the South of Bailey Road area can be extended into neighboring open space areas with future acquisitions or trail easements.
2. Neighborhood Connections – Opportunities exist to provide connections into the South of Bailey Road area from the neighborhoods located along Myrtle Drive.

6.6 Utility Connections

The majority of developed facilities would be located in the lower elevations of the Regional Park area along the existing Kinne Boulevard. These facilities would require utility connections (power, water, and sewer). Additionally, the District anticipates development of irrigated turf sites at appropriate locations within this area. Recycled water connections from the planned recycled water system within the developed portions of the base should also be made. These connections should be included in the design plans as development of the Reuse Plan area proceeds (Figure 21).

## 6.7 Internal Trails

The past Navy use and land management activities have created an extensive network of paved roads, railroad beds, and fire roads which will serve as the internal trail network for the Regional Park. For conceptual planning purposes, the District proposes maintenance of the existing paved roads and fire roads (Figures 12-25).

### *Internal Trails - Primary Area:*

1. Mt. Diablo Creek Trail – The former railroad bed which traverses through the primary area between Mt. Diablo Creek and Kinne Boulevard would be converted to a new regional trail. This trail would provide access from the planned City sports facility through the Regional Park to the staging area planned at the former Building 95 site. The pedestrian connections over Mt. Diablo Creek into the planned villages would also connect to this trail.
2. Cistern Pond Paved Path – The paved loop path that exists around the Cistern Pond, Coulter pine grove and bunker sites would be maintained as an internal paved loop for hikers, bikers and equestrians.
3. Ridge Trail – A ridge trail roughly following the current alignment of ridgeline fire roads would traverse the length of the primary area. Land uses to the east in the Los Medanos Hills should provide trail connections to this ridge trail. The location can be adjusted as necessary to avoid sensitive resources.
4. Connector Trails – A number of existing paved roads and fire roads provide access from the lower elevations of the property to the ridge trail area. These trails would be maintained as appropriate and managed as part of the internal trail network.

5. Other Trails – Additional trail connections and paths would be provided throughout the areas identified as potential developed recreation sites.

*Internal Trails - South of Bailey Road Area:*

1. Looped Trails – The existing railroad beds and paved roads within the South of Bailey Road Area would be maintained as a paved looped-path network for hikers, bikers, equestrians, etc. (Figure 25).
2. Connector Trails – Existing fire roads extending from the paved roads would provide connections to adjacent neighborhoods and open space areas.

6.8 Developed Recreation Sites

Developed recreation sites would be located in the lower elevation areas, at existing building sites and at areas of former bunkers.

*Developed Recreation Sites - Primary Area:*

1. Avila Road/Willow Pass Road Staging Area – The area around the Avila Road/Willow Pass Road Staging Area would include irrigated turf with the potential for picnic facilities and access to the internal trail network.
2. Building IA-24 – The developed site at Building IA-24 and surrounding lowlands would be the central developed recreation site of the Primary Area. This would include expansive irrigated turf areas with picnic facilities and access to the internal trail network. The former Building IA-24 would be explored for its potential reuse. Possible uses could include a swim center, indoor climbing gym, interpretive center or other use to be determined.

3. Former Bunker Areas – All of the bunkers on the property are expected to be removed except for a few as necessary for interpretation of the site’s military history. The former bunker areas will be explored for their reuse potential for camping, picnicking, and other uses to be determined.
4. Southern End – A developed recreation site could be located in the southern end of the Primary Area. Potential uses could include environmental day camps, interpretation facilities, overnight camping and other uses to be determined.

*Developed Recreation Sites - South of Bailey Road Area:*

1. The South of Bailey Road area is expected to be primarily a passive recreation site. Interpretation signage could be developed along the paved roadways at the site of a former tank car on the property. Former bunkers are expected to be removed. These former bunker sites could be redeveloped with picnic facilities and shade structures as appropriate.

## 6.9 Park Operations

Park operations facilities would be located within the primary area at existing building sites. Buildings will be assessed for their reuse potential. The main park operations facility is expected to be housed at the site of Buildings 420, 93, etc. Uses at this site would include vehicle maintenance, sign shops, equipment storage and other park corporation yard needs. Additionally, the District Fire Department would house a station on the site, whether co-located at Building 93 or at another former Navy building on the property.



#### 6.10 National Park Service/East Bay Regional Park District Joint Visitors Center

The National Park Service (National Park Service) currently operates the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial on the tidal area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The National Memorial is located on the Tidal Area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station and is currently under active military use managed by the U.S. Navy. Visitation to the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial remains restricted due to military security. Military operations are expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

This severely limits the National Park Service's ability to implement the educational goals of the national memorial. The conceptual plans at the Concord Naval Weapons Station include a joint National Park Service/EBPRD Port Chicago Visitors and Historic Interpretation Center which would interpret the history of the events at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine, honor those who served, and provide historical information regarding the entire Concord Naval Weapons Station and Diablo Valley. This site could also serve to provide a staging area for the National Park Service to provide guided tours to the Port Chicago Memorial within the active military site.

National Park Service has a long tradition of partnerships with an array of stakeholders including local, regional, and state governments. Throughout the system, they have identified more than \$55 billion in historic preservation investment throughout tax incentives and more than \$5 billion in preservation and outdoor recreation grants (NPS 2012b).

The Second Century Commission report on the National Park Service further emphasized partnerships in the National Park Service system and included recommendations to build a

robust array of public and private partnerships – particularly for parks located in urban areas with a mosaic of land uses such as the parks located in Contra Costa County (NPS, 2012c).

East Bay Regional Park District has a long tradition of working closely with National Park Service on multiple programs in the East Bay. Upon closure of the of the Concord Naval Weapons Station, East Bay Regional Park District began developing a formal partnership with the National Park Service and identifying how efforts at the former base could advance the missions of both agencies. The primary areas of cooperation have been identified in facilitating transfer of land at the Concord Naval Weapons Station to East Bay Regional Park District through the Federal Lands to Parks Program administered by the National Park Service and the potential to provide for joint facilities and programming to fulfill the mission of the recently established Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial.



Figure 19 –Stained Glass windows depicting scenes from the Concord Naval Weapons Station were removed from the bases chapel for use in a potential visitor’s center. (Source: National Park Service, 2011)

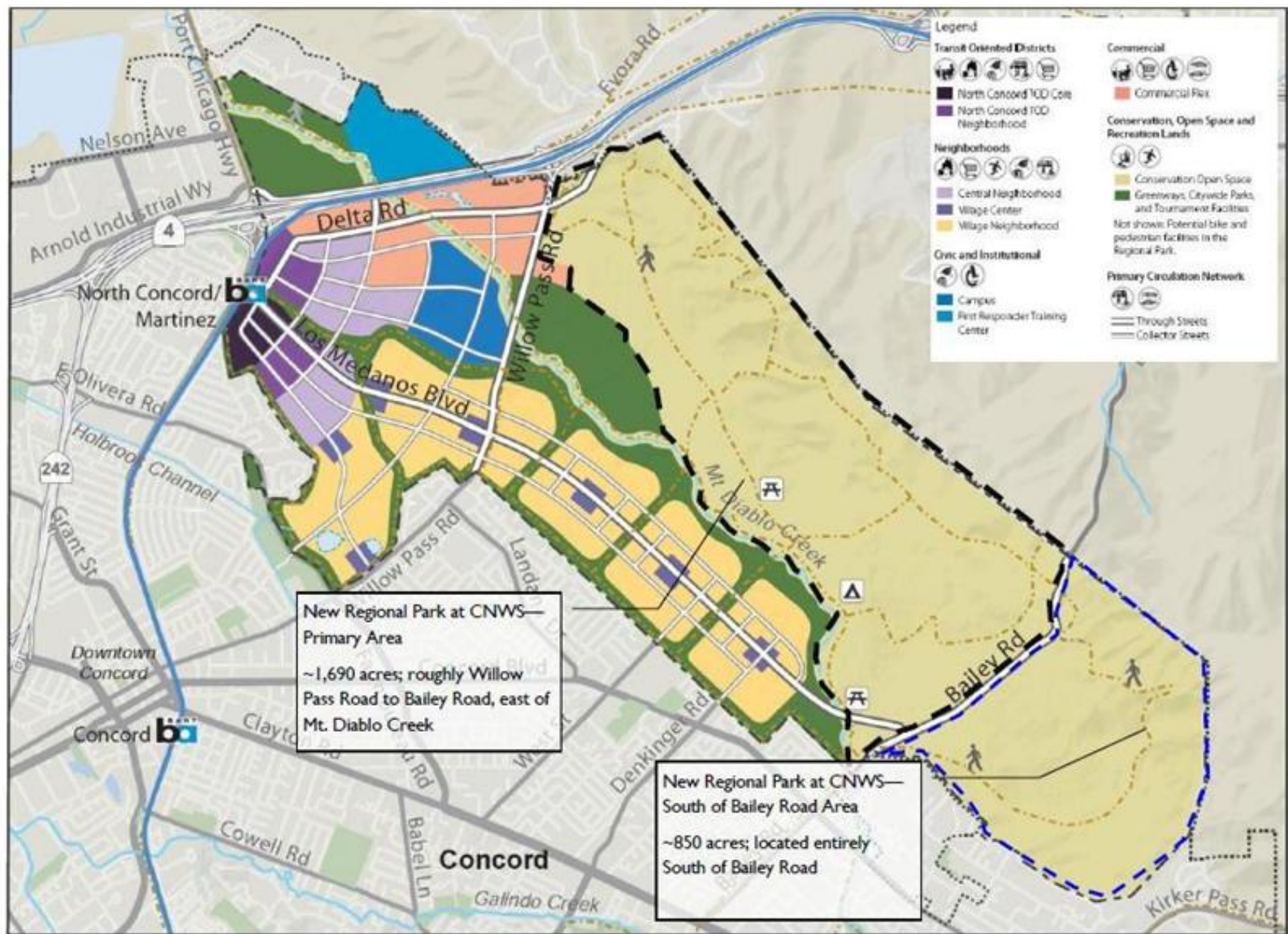


Figure 20 - Concord Naval Weapons Station Reuse Plan and Regional Park Planning Areas



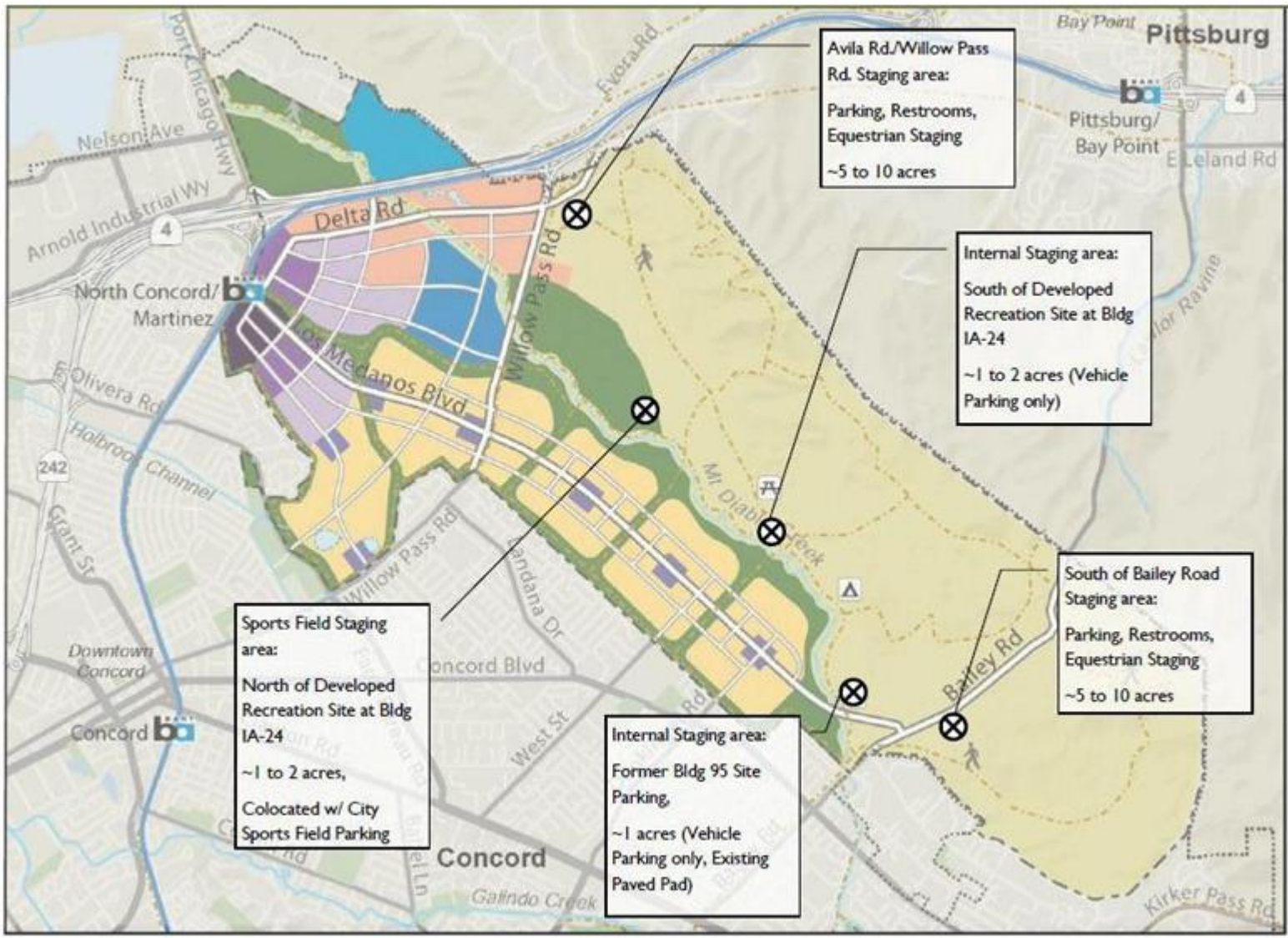


Figure 21 - Regional Park at the CNWS Staging Areas

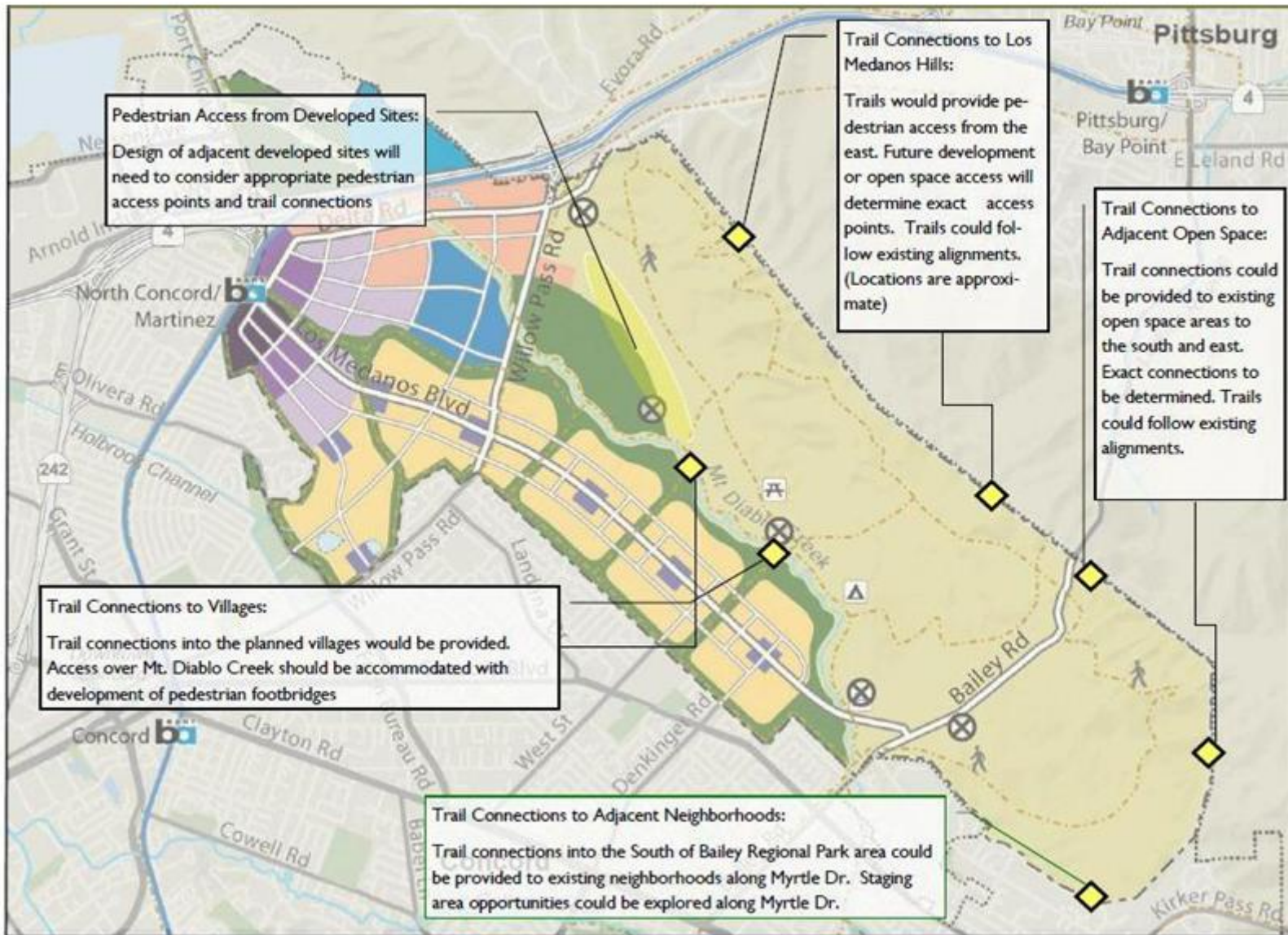


Figure 22 - Regional Park at the CNWS Pedestrian Access Points



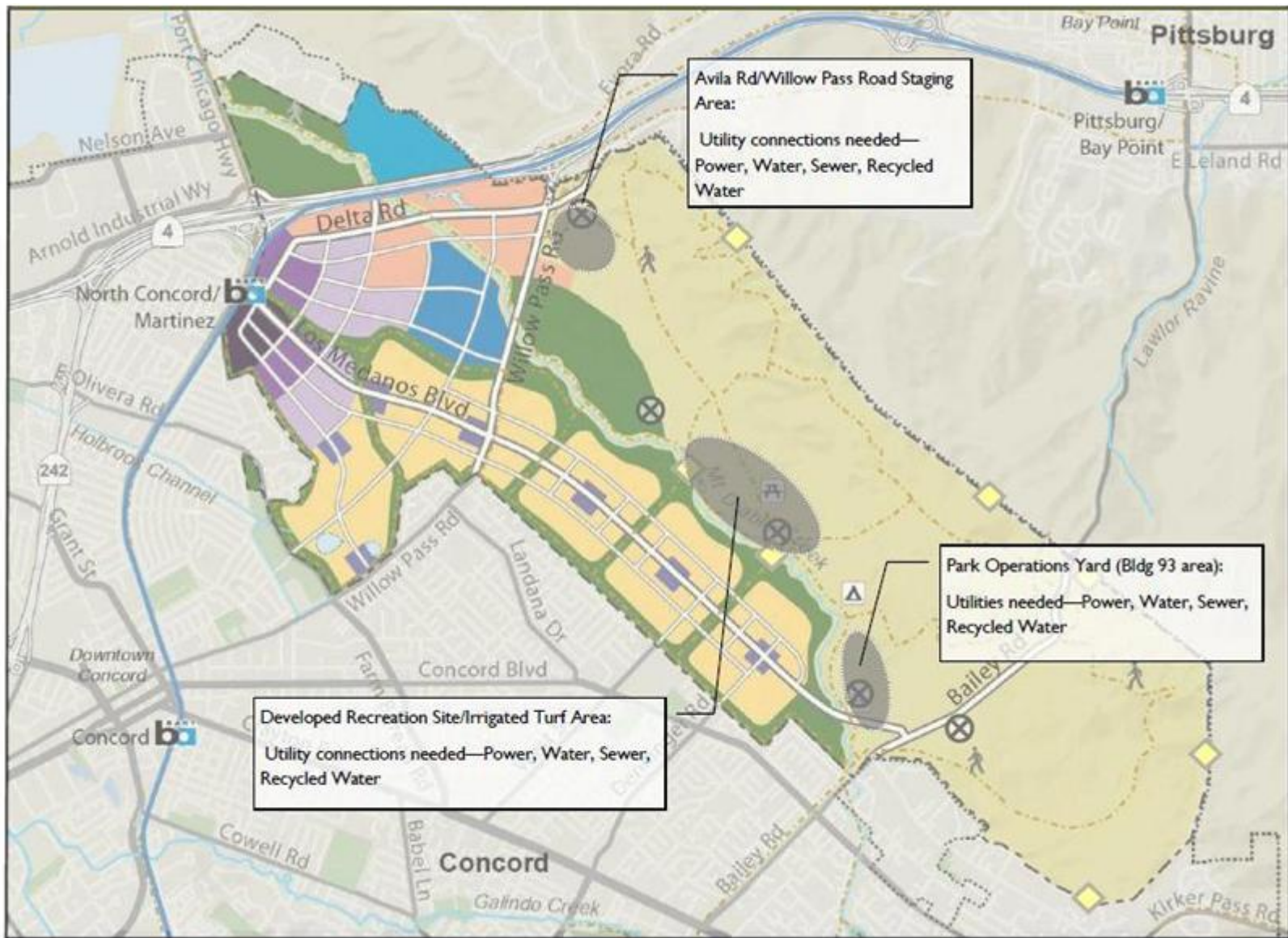


Figure 23 - Regional Park at the CNWS: Necessary Utility Connections to Adjacent Development

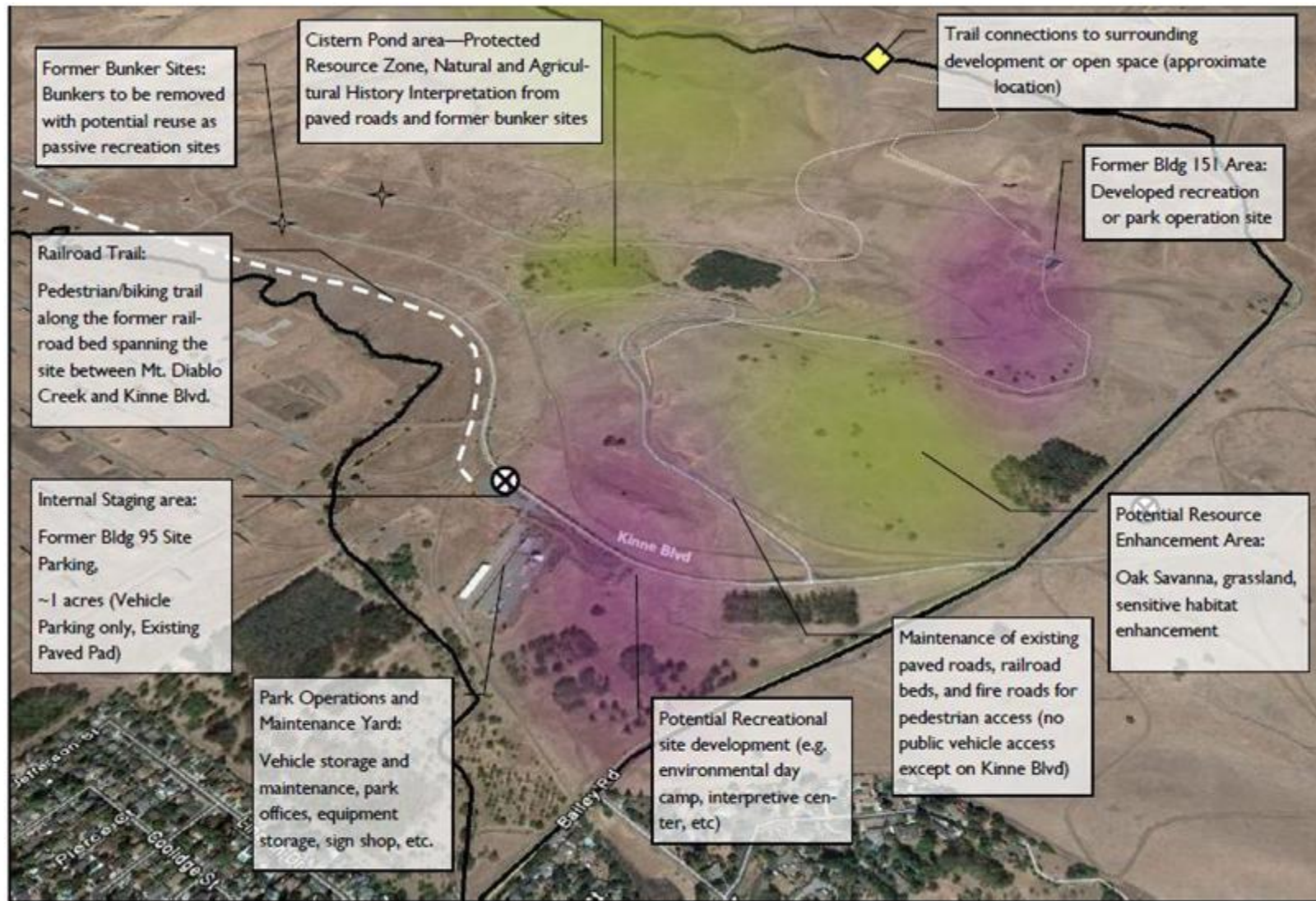


Figure 24 - Regional Park at the CNWS - Primary Area, South End: Conceptual Land Use



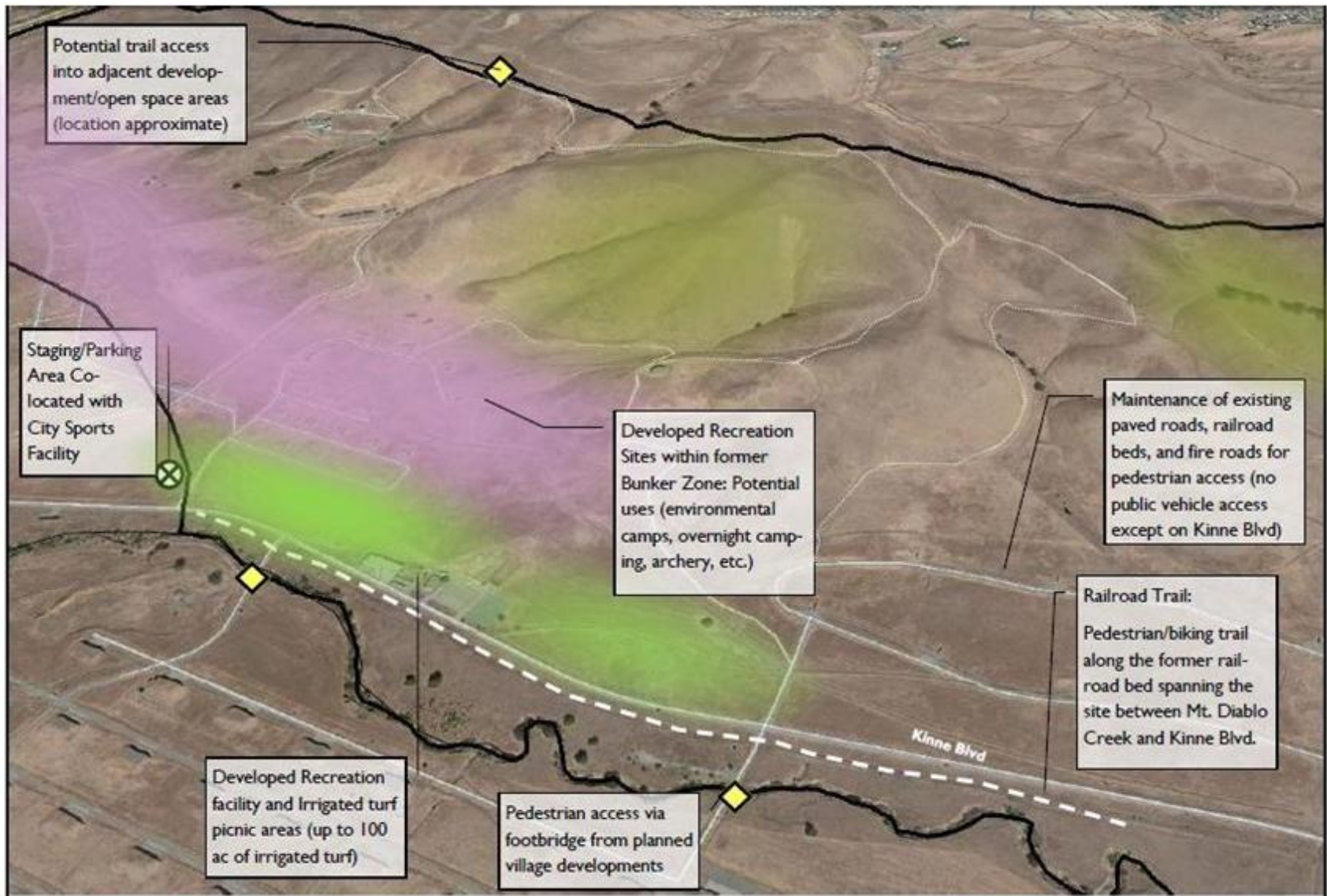


Figure 25 - Regional Park at the CNWS - Primary Area, Central Portion: Conceptual Land Use



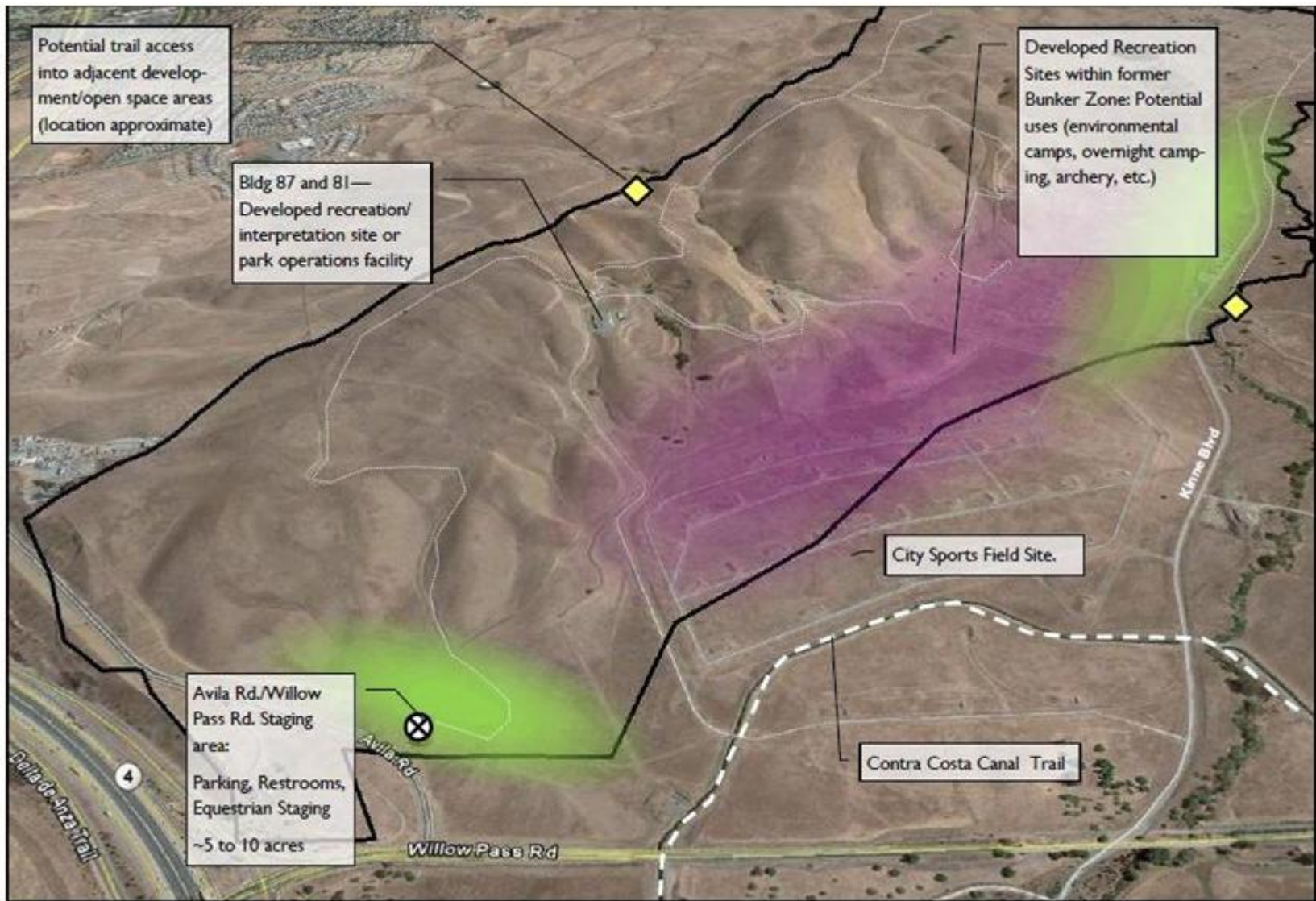


Figure 26 - Regional Park at the CNWS - Primary Area, Northern End: Conceptual Land Use

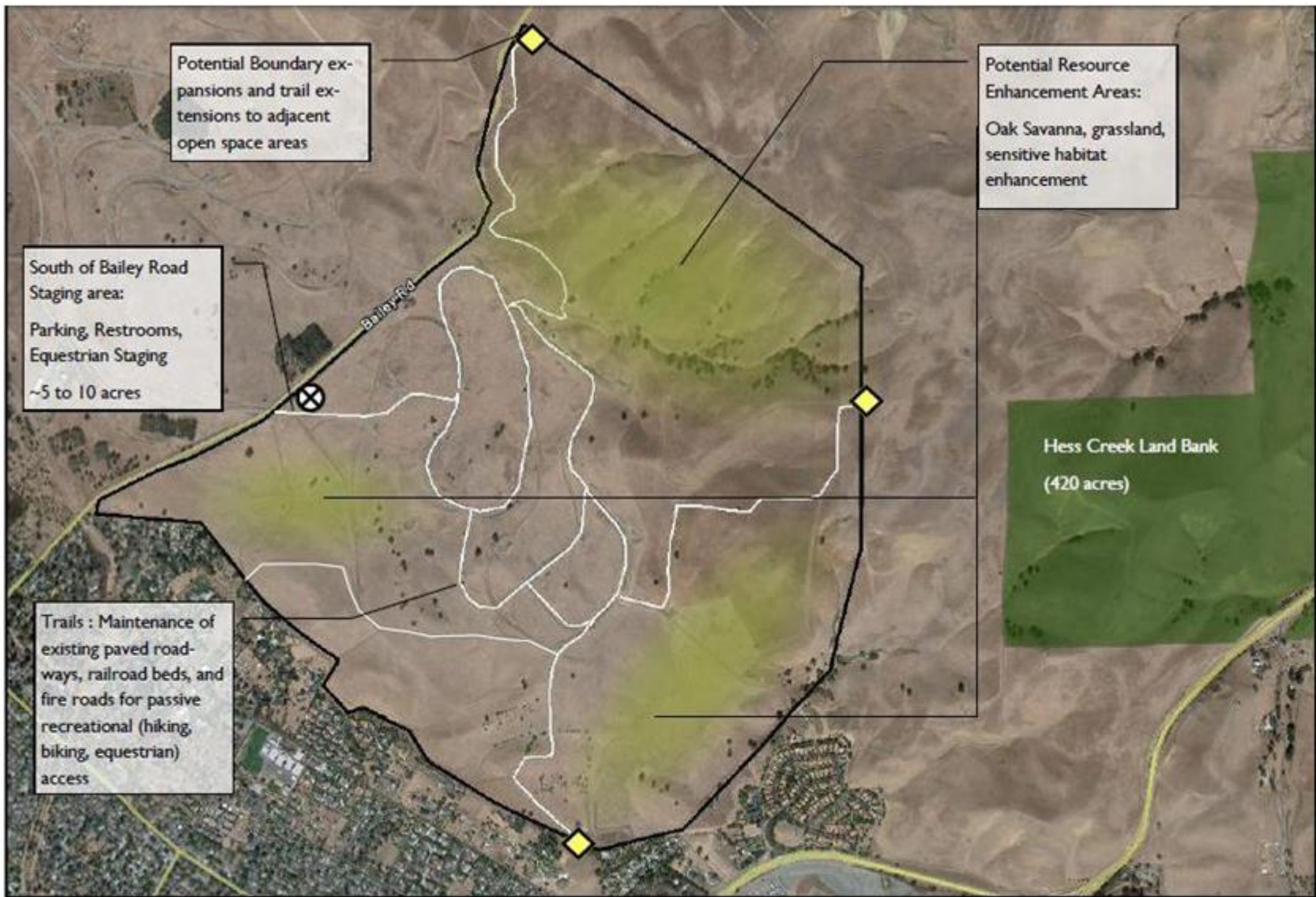


Figure 27 - Regional Park at the CNWS - South of Bailey Road Area: Conceptual Land Use



## 6.11 Regional Park Planning, Management, and Operation Activities

The activities necessary to implement the conceptual land use plan for a new regional park can be broadly defined as being:

- Acquisition – Activities to acquire land on the former base as well as adjacent lands necessary to achieve the regional park goals for recreation and habitat protection;
- Land Stewardship – Long-term management and maintenance of natural resources on the property and monitoring of resource enhancement projects;
- Material Cleanup – Clean up of physical materials and former buildings on the property to a level suitable for public use (environmental contamination is assumed to be cleaned-up to an appropriate level as required by state and federal law);
- Environmental Restoration – Restoration of degraded habitats;
- Interpretation – Development of interpretive facilities and programs regarding the sites natural and cultural history and environmental education;
- Park Operations – Operation of the park including public safety activities, visitor services, and infrastructure maintenance;
- Trail Development and Maintenance – Development and maintenance of trails throughout the site and connecting to adjacent protected properties;
- Recreational Facility Development – Development of recreational facilities potentially including overnight camps, visitor centers, and other uses to be determined.

# 7. Financing Tools

## 7.1 Adopted East Bay Regional Park District Budget

A major source of Park District funding is property tax collected by the County. The East Bay Regional Park District receives almost 3 cents of every dollar collected by the County. Each \$500,000 in developed residential or commercial property value at Concord Naval Weapons Station would provide \$5,000 to the County in tax revenue, \$150 of which would go to the District to help fund parks.

The East Bay Regional Park District general operating fund totaled \$101 million in 2012. Property tax revenues represent 88% of the District's operating revenue. The proposed development on the Concord Naval Weapons Station site would generate significant property tax revenues, which the East Bay Regional Park District would receive their proportional share. These funds will provide significant operating funds for a future regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station.

Additionally, the \$16 million allocation provided by Measure WW will provide funds that can be used for public safety improvements on the property, trail development, and acquisition of neighboring properties necessary to achieve the parks goals. These funds can be used to providing matching funds leveraged with outside grant opportunities as well.

## 7.2 Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing was assumed to be the principle financing mechanism for the infrastructure, clean-up, and public spaces included in the Reuse Plan. Tax increment

financing allows development of infrastructure and community projects that will catalyze private development. The funds used to pay for redevelopment projects are provided by pledging future payments to repay bonds and other types of debt incurred. This method of financing was essentially removed as a potential funding source for military base reuse projects with the passage of AB1x26.

The California Military Base Preservation and Reuse Act, AB 1644, was introduced to the California legislature in response to the dissolution of redevelopment agencies. This act would allow for California communities with closed military facilities to designate the Local Reuse Authority as the successor agency to the redevelopment agency and allow for the transfer of redevelopment (e.g. tax-increment) funds to be used to facilitate military base reuse projects (AB1644, 2012)

### 7.3 Special Assessments

An increasingly common strategy for funding parks improvements and management in the East Bay Regional Park District. This strategy is used when land is received as mitigation or in conjunction with a development project. There are currently six special assessment areas, called a Zone of Benefit, throughout the District jurisdiction:

Table 2 – Existing EBRPD Special Assessment Districts		
Description	Rate	Parcels Assessed
Five Canyon Zone of Benefit	\$38.65 per dwelling unit	1,091
Dublin Hills Zone of Benefit	\$27.97 per dwelling unit	327
Walpert Ridge Zone of Benefit	\$124.72 per dwelling unit	603
San Ramon Hills Zone of Benefit	\$34.97 per dwelling unit	140
Stone Valley Zone of Benefit	\$145.50 per dwelling unit	26
Sibley Volcanic Zone of Benefit	\$86.56 per dwelling unit	245
Source: EBRPD, 2012a		

The Concord Reuse Project calls for the development of over 12,000 homes. Even a modest special assessment applied to these properties on an annual basis would provide a substantial revenue source to fund the parks operation, development of recreation facilities, and environmental education and interpretation programs.

To develop an appropriate assessment value, an independent engineers report providing the cost basis and benefits received by the adjacent development would need to be prepared. A vote of the property owners would then be conducted to approve the establishment of a special financing district. This vote can occur at the time that a master developer is assigned to the property and allow the Park District to establish such an assessment district prior to sale to individual property owners.

#### 7.4 Development Mitigation

As described in Section 4, substantial mitigation of the proposed developed areas of the Concord Reuse Project will be required. The Park District's Resource Enhancement Program can facilitate this mitigation in a manner that will provide the development with mitigation opportunities that do not require property acquisition while benefiting the regional park and the general ecosystem by facilitating localized mitigation within the same watershed that the impact is occurring and increasing the overall natural value of the regional park.

Mitigation agreements would likely be negotiated between the Park District, the project developer, and the City during disposition negotiations and formulation of development

agreements. Ultimately, the mitigation will have to be consistent with the permits issued by the natural resource regulatory agencies such as the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The City of Concord is currently developing a Natural Resources Conservation Strategy that will identify specific mitigation activities as a part of their site-wide permitting process. The Park District will have the opportunity to implement the conservation strategy and should participate in its development to ensure that mitigation strategies balance the District's plans for recreational use of the property while achieving the ecological goals. Further, monitoring and long-term maintenance of mitigation projects should be funded by the project developer through the establishment of a mitigation endowment or other means.

#### 7.5 Development Agreements

A common approach employed in base reuse projects is to negotiate agreements that stipulate the responsibilities of a developer in exchange for the rights to develop the property. These agreements often dictate what infrastructure projects and public areas the developer will be responsible for constructing. They can also require establishment of endowments or funds to provide for a local agency implement public and environmental improvements called for in a reuse plan.

The project at the Concord Naval Weapons Station is expected to attract a great deal of interest amongst the development community. The level of development proposed at the site would provide substantial value that gives the City substantial opportunity to require significant concessions in return for development rights. This could provide a significant source of funds for a new regional park.



However, a review of the past base reuse projects indicates that over-reliance on funds to be provided by developers can result in delayed public and environmental benefits. Contributions to public benefit projects often do not occur until development is underway and the developer begins to realize some return on investment.

#### 7.6 Public-Private Partnerships

Successful base reuse projects with substantial community and environmental benefits are often built upon mutually beneficial public-private partnerships. The reuse and restoration that has occurred at the Presidio is one such example. The District should identify potential opportunities to partner with private entities to achieve the park goals. One such area of opportunity would be in the primary developed recreation site located in the central portion of the primary area of the future regional park. This site could provide space for a private entity to operate a developed recreational facility such as a swim center, climbing gym, or other facility.

#### 7.7 Public-Public Partnerships

Partnerships with other public entities, including the City of Concord and the National Park Service, provides opportunity to fully the conceptual land use plans and meet the goals of the project in a cost-effective manner. The Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial provides an excellent partnership opportunity to provide for historic interpretation at the site that would benefit both the National Memorial and the regional park.

Concord will embark on a number of infrastructure projects necessary to ready the site for development. These projects may include, but are not limited to, roadway and access

improvements to provide for circulation, development of utilities such as water, sewer and recycled water facilities, and flood control work on Mt. Diablo Creek to accommodate storm water runoff. Partnership and close coordination with the City of Concord in development of infrastructure and other activities necessary to ready the site for development can enable more efficient investments.

The City of Pittsburg borders the Concord Naval Weapons Station to the east and there is potential for the lands adjacent to the regional park to be developed for housing. Coordination with Pittsburg during the development of specific plans for the area to the east will allow for the inclusion of trail connections and protection of critical habitat areas.

## 7.8 Grants

A potential significant funding source for development of capital improvements and environmental restoration sites is grants. As indicated by other military base reuse projects involving a successful environmental restoration component, grants can be a powerful funding source that does not restrict the project to coordination with development activities. This provides for a more independent project and reduces risks due to market instability or ensuring implementation of developer commitments. The Presidio (San Francisco) and Hamilton Airfield (Novato, CA) reuse projects have both made successful use of private foundation and government grants to facilitate habitat restoration in a manner that incorporates recreational use.

Grant funding is often competitive and the availability of matching funds or other funding sources contributes to the chances of selection. The District's existing budget, and the

Measure WW allocation for the Concord Naval Weapons Station, provide a substantial source of matching funds that can increase likelihood of successful grant awards.

Grant programs are administered by state and federal agencies as well as non-profit philanthropic trusts such as the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. The availability and requirements for these funds is variable from organization to organization and year to year. However, the regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station would likely be well situated for the award of grant funding given the substantial population that the park would serve and the sensitive habitats it seeks to preserve and enhance.

### 7.9 Volunteer Groups

Volunteer groups are increasingly utilized by public land management agencies. These groups typically assist in trail development/maintenance projects and environmental restoration projects.

The East Bay Regional Park District has a number existing volunteer programs. The Ivan Dickson Volunteer Trail Maintenance Program is the primary program operated by the park district to facilitate volunteer participation in trail maintenance and construction. The program has managed over 121 projects with over 6,000 volunteers. The projects have resulted in over 25,000 hours of volunteer labor.

The Volunteers for Outdoor California is a non-profit organization founded in 2006 that also facilitates a number of trail maintenance and habitat restoration volunteer projects on public lands in the state. They work with agencies such as the East Bay Regional Park District to plan projects and then provide the training and supervision of volunteers to implement a project.

Two recent trails have been successfully developed by the Ivan Dickson and Volunteers for Outdoor California programs. These include loop trails within Crockett Hills Regional Park in Crockett, CA, approximately 15 miles from the Concord Naval Weapons Station, and the Brushy Peak Regional Trail near Livermore, CA, approximately 35 miles away. Both trails were substantially developed by volunteers, with oversight from park district staff.

The East Bay Regional Park District also engages volunteers in habitat restoration projects such as removal of non-native invasive species, shoreline cleanup, and grassland restoration.



# 8. TOWS Analysis

## 8.1 Threats, Opportunities, Weakness, and Strengths Analysis

The TOWS matrix is an analytical tool that provides a framework to develop strategies based on an array of internal and external variables. The analysis begins with a comprehensive analysis of the external factors (e.g. City of Concord, National Park Service, future development) and internal factors (e.g. EBRPD capacity, existing funding sources, and planning framework). These factors are then applied to a series of scenarios to develop a suite of strategies to provide for successful implementation.

- The Weakness/Threat (WT) Strategy – the general goal of the WT strategy is to minimize both the weaknesses (internal factors) and threats (external factors);
- The Weakness/Opportunity (WO) Strategy – The general goal of the WO Strategy is to minimize the weakness (internal) and maximize the opportunity (external);
- The Strength/Threat (ST) Strategy – The general goal of the ST strategy is to maximize the strengths (internal) and minimize the threats (external);
- The Strength/Opportunity (SO) Strategy – The general goal of the SO strategy is to maximize both the strengths (internal) and opportunities (external).

Utilizing the information developed in the review of the project history, the primary stakeholders, and the experiences of similar projects the strategies necessary to ensure timely and successful implementation of the conceptual land use plans have been developed.

**Table 4 – Implementation of a new Regional Park on the former Concord Naval Weapons Station – TOWS Analysis**

	<p><b>Internal Strengths (S)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proven history in land management and recreation planning</li> <li>2. Experience with military base reuse/land transfers</li> <li>3. Relationships with potential partners (National Park Service/"Friends" Groups/Local Land Trusts/Env. Advocacy Groups)</li> <li>4. Trust and relationships with regulatory and permitting agencies</li> <li>5. In-house planning, stewardship, maintenance, operations, and public safety resources</li> <li>6. Measure WW allocation and ability to Leverage Measure WW funds with additional grants</li> <li>7. Resource Enhancement Program</li> <li>8. Regional Parks Foundation</li> <li>9. Adjacent property acquisitions</li> <li>10. Access to the base</li> </ol>	<p><b>Internal Weaknesses (W)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limited Operational Budget coupled with increasing land management responsibilities (=less\$/acre)</li> <li>2. Current lack of ownership/control of regional park area</li> <li>3. Lack of authority of Concord Naval Weapons Station land</li> <li>4. Restricted access due to military control</li> <li>5. Inability to negotiate directly with Navy</li> <li>6. Off base development proposals with ability to impact regional park restoration and recreational goals</li> <li>7. Inability to direct process.</li> </ol>
<p><b>External Opportunities (O)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Port Chicago Naval Magazine N.M.</li> <li>2. Engaged stakeholders</li> <li>3. Broad community support</li> <li>4. Visible property</li> <li>5. Foundation/Government Grant Sources</li> <li>6. Natural Resource Conservation Strategy being prepared by City</li> <li>7. Synergy with adjacent development</li> </ol>	<p><b>S/O Strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to formalize relationships with NPS and Port Chicago National Memorial Park – collaborate in offsite interpretive efforts until onsite facilities can be developed</li> <li>2. Regularly engage community stakeholders in regional park progress – host field trips</li> <li>3. Prepare visual materials that can be used on website and other materials to build community support and support grant applications.</li> <li>4. Actively engage in development of Natural Resource Conservation Strategy to maximize environmental enhancement and accommodate recreational development</li> <li>5. Identify recreational and interpretive opportunities that appeal to other community organizations (e.g. veterans groups, Concord Historical Society, Mt. Diablo Interpretive Assoc.)</li> </ol>	<p><b>W/O Strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pursue outside grant funding</li> <li>2. Engage in development agreement negotiations and selection of master developer to extent possible</li> <li>3. Pursue early transfer discussions with Concord and Navy for areas not adjacent to development (e.g. south of Bailey Road area)</li> <li>4. Development phasing plan</li> <li>5. Continue with acquisition of adjacent lands and easements to connect to existing protected areas</li> </ol>
<p><b>External Threats (T)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development market volatility</li> <li>2. Political shifts</li> <li>3. Continued drag on property tax revenues</li> <li>4. Adjacent ridgeline development</li> <li>5. Resource restrictions on public access/recreational development</li> <li>6. Conflicts with adjacent development</li> </ol>	<p><b>S/T Strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use regional land management history to lead disposition and transfer of open space/regional park lands (rather than tying it to development timelines)</li> <li>2. Pursue early transfer and allow public access to the South of Bailey Road area to provide public benefit and continue to build community support that can weather political shifts</li> <li>3. Engage with offsite, adjacent development activities along the ridgeline in neighboring Pittsburg to provide for boundary expansions and bring value to that development</li> <li>4. Engage closely in development of the Natural Resource Conservation Strategy and mitigation plans to ensure consistency with regional park plans.</li> </ol>	<p><b>W/T Strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop relationships with project developers early to ensure inclusion of infrastructure and access to regional park that provides value to the development as well</li> <li>2. Identify opportunities for public/private partnerships</li> <li>3. Solidify support amongst external stakeholders – keep them engaged</li> <li>4. Help existing community coalition groups to transition to keep advocacy relevant as project progresses</li> </ol>

# 10. Recommendations

The development of a new regional park on the former inland area of the Concord Naval Weapons Station provides a substantial opportunity to provide outdoor recreation experiences, protect existing environmental resources, and enhance degraded resources in one of the east bay's largest cities. The substantial development proposed in the adopted Reuse Plan provides both an opportunity and constraint for development of a new regional park. Further, lands outside of the Concord Naval Weapons Station will relate closely to the regional park whether providing habitat and recreational corridor connections or accommodating future development with likely impacts on the areas resources.

The following recommendations are provided based upon on the information compiled, the land uses envisioned, and the available financing tools.

- Phasing Plan – As a part of the development of applications and materials for the Federal Lands to Parks program and the disposition plan, the East Bay Regional Park District should develop and include a phasing plan. The phasing plan should take into consideration the phasing of adjacent development within the Reuse Plan area. Areas that are not directly adjacent to the planned development area (e.g. the “south of Bailey Road area”) should be considered for early opening in the phasing plan while areas that would benefit from coordinated utility development and to be used for mitigation and resource enhancement activities should be appropriately timed with development activities.



- Coordination with Development - Development of the park should be timed with the project development. This will provide efficiency in the development of infrastructure. Early engagement in the formulation of development agreements and negotiations with the project developers can identify opportunities to develop park infrastructure as a part of the overall development and allow for efficient resource use. This will lessen the capital improvement burden of the Park District and enable funds to be utilized in the development of recreational facilities.
- Restoration and Mitigation - Habitat restoration and environmental enhancement can be accomplished in a manner that accommodates both mitigation of the proposed development of the Concord Naval Weapons Station and establishment of the Regional Park. The East Bay Regional Park District should engage closely with the City of Concord, the natural resource agencies that issue permits (e.g. Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Army Corps of Engineers, among others). Enhancement of the property can principally be funded by the project developer through mitigation contributions into the District's Resource Enhancement Program. Additional resource enhancement activities beyond those required by the mitigation requirements should be pursued through grant funding.
- Management and Maintenance Funding - Long term management and maintenance of the property can be support by the General Fund, but should be supplemented through the establishment of a Special Financing District such as a Zone of Benefit or Community Facility District prior to development of the reuse project. Ongoing habitat management can be funded, in part, through the establishment of mitigation

agreements and endowments to be provided by the project developer to be negotiated during discussion of development agreements.

- Partnerships on Historical Interpretation - The history of the Diablo Valley and the Port Chicago National Monument provides a substantial historic interpretation opportunity. The partnership between the National Park Service and East Bay Regional Park District to identify and implement joint programs and facilities should be maintained and strengthened. The history of the property and its national significance in World War II and subsequent military history provides a compelling history that can be used to build a broad base of support amongst stakeholders not normally engaged in environmental/park campaigns. Grant funding should be pursued from a range of private foundations and government sources interested in both historical preservation and veterans affairs to develop a world-class interpretive facility.
- Conveyance - While park development should be appropriately timed with the adjacent development, transfer of the open space/regional park properties to the District should occur at the earliest possible and appropriate time. This will give the District control of the site and minimize risk of future open space reductions due to potential changes in development plans arising from volatility in the development market or political shifts. Opportunities for interim public access should be pursued and early transfer of lands that can be readily operated and that have no outstanding environmental cleanup responsibility of the Navy should occur at the earliest possible time.

- **Boundary Expansions** – Expansions of the regional park boundaries should be pursued to ensure successful implementation of the habitat and recreational goals. Currently, the upper ridgelines of the Los Medanos Hills are not entirely located within the regional park area. The lack of control over the entire watershed would limit the potential habitat restoration and potential development activities in the upper reaches of the watershed could impact restoration and enhancement activities within the regional park. Additionally, recent land acquisitions to the south of the Concord Naval Weapons Station allow for potential connections to the Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve and Mount Diablo State Park. Acquisition of adjacent lands or access easements that ensure protection of the upper watershed and recreational connections to protected lands to the south should be pursued. Measure WW allocations for the Concord Naval Weapons Station could be used for these purposes.

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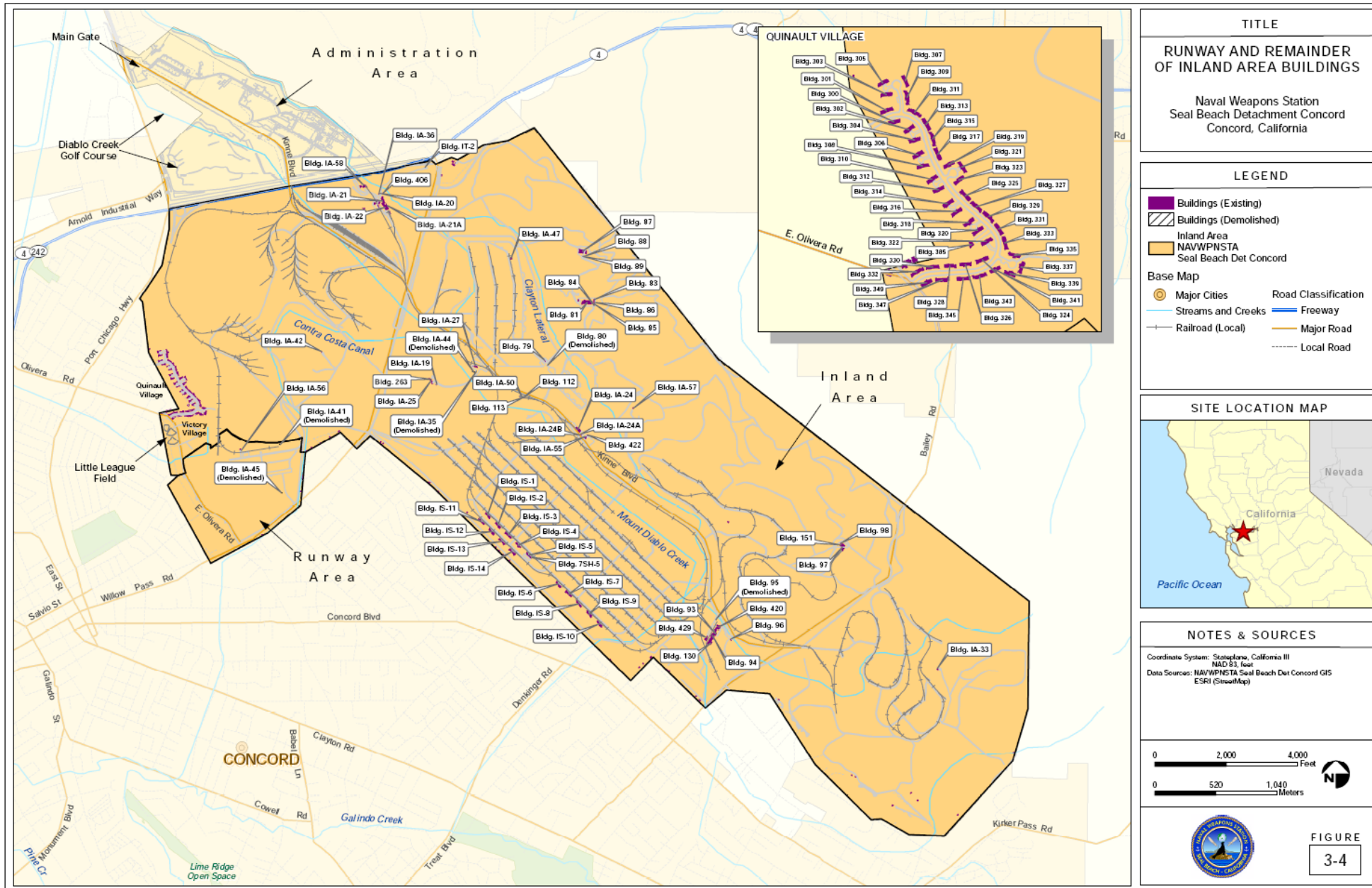
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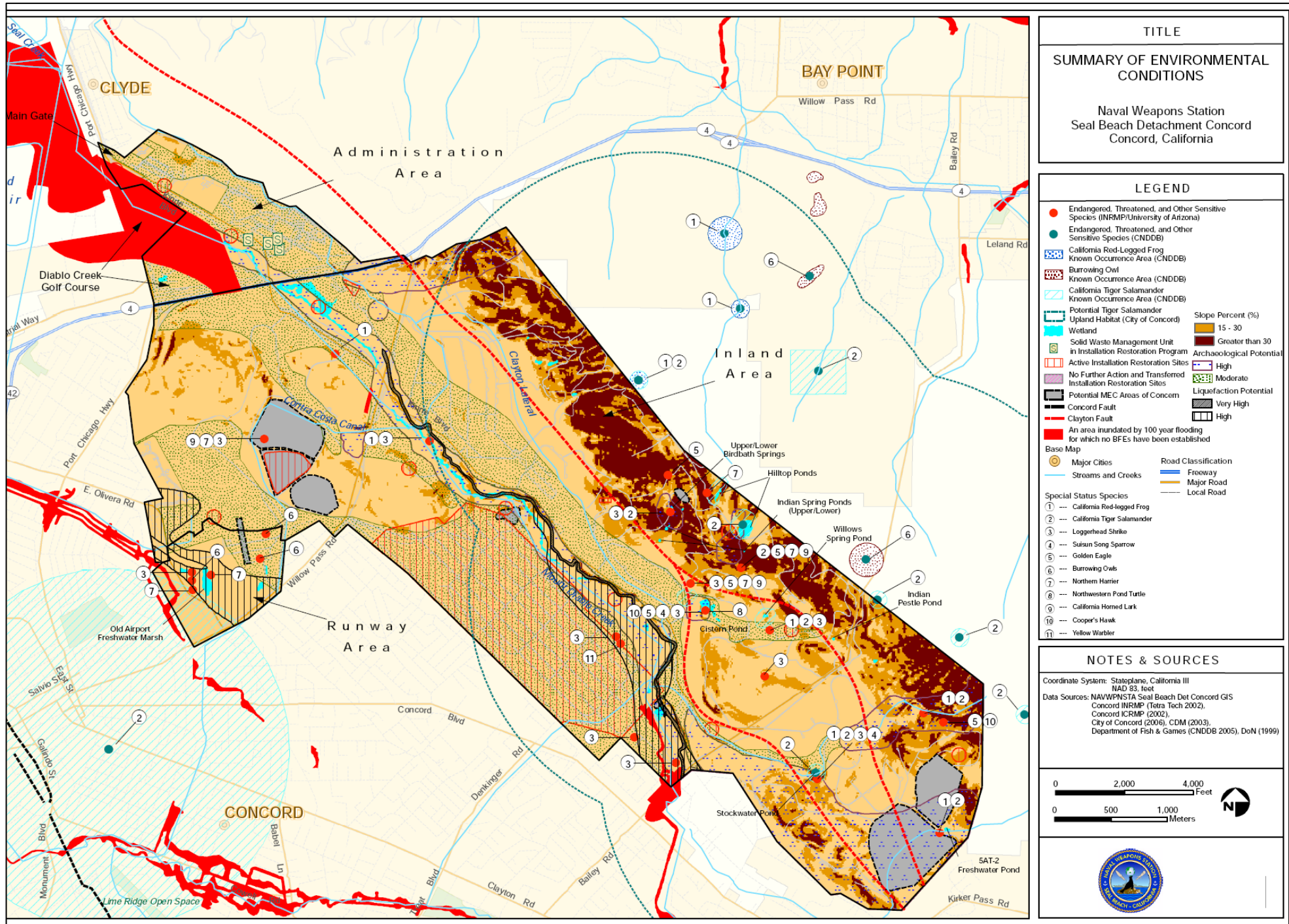
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Appendix A : Map of Building Sites (Source: Department of the Navy, 2006)





Appendix B: Summary of Environmental Conditions(Source: Department of the Navy, 2006)