



Courtland Creek Restoration Project Public Outreach

(Phases 1 and 2)

Overview: This report includes the public meeting summaries from both phases of the public outreach campaign conducted for the Courtland Creek Restoration Project. Also, included are the preliminary design comments and responses which showcase how community input informed the subsequent design revisions made before Phase 2 of public outreach began.



Phase 1 Public Meeting Summary Report and Appendices

Courtland Creek Restoration Project

Public Meeting Summary Report

Virtual Public Meeting

July 29, 2021

6:30–8 p.m.

Via Zoom

In-Person Public Meeting

July 31, 2021

10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

Brookdale Park



Courtland Creek Restoration Project Overview

The Courtland Creek Restoration Project (Project), an Oakland Measure DD Initiative, will protect, enhance, and restore Courtland Creek in Courtland Creek Park. The Project will restore approximately 950 feet of open creek channel, and will provide accessible seating, gathering places, and a creek-viewing overlook. The Project will also improve creek habitat and water quality, reduce trash accumulation and illegal dumping, repair steep and eroding creek banks, enhance climate change resilience and park appearance, and serve the community as an educational and recreational resource. Project partners include the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation, the Friends of Courtland Creek, and local schools.

Project Team

- Jennifer Stern, City of Oakland
- Terri Fashing, City of Oakland
- Mandolin Kadera-Redmond, Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation
- Paul Frank, FlowWest
- Anna Klaczyk Constantino, FlowWest
- Ivy Morrison, Circlepoint
- Patti Ransdell, Circlepoint



Meeting Noticing

Project neighbors who live within a 1,000 ft. radius from Courtland Creek Park were sent an invitation to both meetings via mail (Appendix A). The City of Oakland also posted information on the Project website, sent notifications via email, and made announcements via social media.

Meeting Summary

Public Meetings

On Thursday, July 29 the City of Oakland held a virtual public meeting for the Courtland Creek Restoration Project via Zoom and provided the same presentation in-person on Saturday, July 31 at Brookdale Park in Oakland. There were 13 attendees at the virtual meeting (see attendee report in Appendix B) and 26 attendees at the in-person meeting (see sign-in sheets in Appendix C). The purpose of the meetings was to provide an update on the Project progress, receive community input on different design features, and encourage community members to stay up-to-date on the process and upcoming meetings.

The Project team used the Zoom Webinar format to accommodate possible interpretation needs and manage and respond to questions throughout the presentation.

The meetings began with introductions from the Project team, which is composed of the City of Oakland, the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation, FlowWest, and Circlepoint. Jennifer Stern, Watershed Program Specialist for the City of Oakland's Watershed and Stormwater Management Division, acknowledged the longstanding commitment to Courtland Creek and Courtland Creek Park by many of the stakeholders at the meeting.

The Project team then provided a presentation which included the history of the Project and the park, how the Project is being funded, and an explanation of the Project benefits. Flow West provided an overview of the preliminary design for the three project areas/creek reaches: Brookdale Reach, Congress Reach, and Thompson Reach.

The Project team also presented a Project timeline for completion of design and the window for construction. They also discussed the various construction activities that would take place, which include the removal of eucalyptus trees and non-native plants, concrete demolition, earthmoving and grading, the completion of trails, and planting native plants.



After the Project updates, the Project team provided an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions about the presentation and share their input on specific design features. A summary of key themes is provided below.

Design Elements

The Project team sought stakeholder input on the following design elements:

- Congress Reach Overlook Feature
- Creekside Seating
- Interpretive Educational Signage
- Tail and Lighting Design

The majority of attendees at both meetings preferred a natural style for all elements, so that the design reflects the creek setting. However, while this style is preferred, attendees also emphasized that having features that are durable, eco-friendly, and easy to clean is important, particularly to prevent the accumulation of graffiti and other acts of vandalism, which have been a problem previously in the park. It was asked if the conceptual designs have been analyzed with Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and experience and it was suggested that the Project team review seating/overlook designs in other Oakland parks that have proven to be durable.

Congress Reach Overlook Feature

- Many attendees preferred a natural style, but acknowledged that a more modern design made with metal features may be easier to clean and maintain.

Creekside Seating

- There was a strong preference for natural-style seating, potentially using wood from the removed eucalyptus trees. It was also suggested that the Project create a comfortable seating option with back support and find ways to incorporate more mosaic work. It was noted that current concrete structures in the park have held up well, and this may be a suitable material for durable seating.

Interpretive Educational Signage

- There was again a preference for more natural-looking signage, with an emphasis on a material that is easy to clean. It was also asked if mosaic work could potentially be incorporated into sign design as well.



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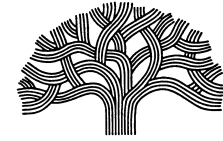
Trail and Lighting Design

- Several attendees were most excited about the trail and lighting improvements the Project would create, noting these would be important to prevent crime and vandalism. Attendees had several questions on the type of material the trail will be made of, if it will be all-weather appropriate, and if it might be possible to allow bicycles upon it. The trail material is still being considered, but it will be ADA compliant and contiguous between all reaches (including some sidewalks).

Attendee Questions and Concerns

There were several questions and comments about elements outside of the design features presented. Key items along with responses are provided below.

- In addition to the design elements discussed, attendees also suggested adding dog waste bag dispensers, sturdy trash cans, and bollards.
- It was asked if the Project team will be laying back the creek banks in any of the reaches.
 - The Project team is planning to do that in the Congress Reach. In the Brookdale Reach, there are some areas where it is possible to do this, but that Reach is much more limited due to private parcels adjacent to the Creek. In the Thompson Reach there is no need for this.
- There were several questions surrounding trees in the park, including If all eucalyptus trees will be removed, what will happen to any remaining tree stumps, and what type of native plants will replace trees removed.
 - All of the eucalyptus trees in the Brookdale and Congress reaches will be removed. The project team is unsure about which removal technique they will take – it will be in line with green solutions and safe herbicides may be possible. The preference of the City and designers is to totally remove them and not leave any stumps remaining. Trees that will be planted to replace those removed can include Willow, Cottonwood, Box Elder, Oak.
- Attendees wanted to know about outreach efforts to specific Project neighbors, including those in nearby buildings and those who live in homeless encampments.
 - The City and Project team have been actively reaching out to these groups and will continue to do so throughout the duration of the Project.
- Attendees wanted to know what the level of environmental review for the Project is.



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- The City has a CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) clearance for Measure DD Projects. For this particular project, the City will have to obtain permits from several environmental protection agencies, including CA Dept Fish & Wildlife, US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- In addition to comments on the proposed design features, attendees also expressed concerns related to the park, including issues of vandalism and graffiti, cars driving through or parking in the park, and unhoused people in the park.
 - The Project team is sharing these concerns with the appropriate City staff to address.

Polling

- Attendees at both meetings were asked about their relationship and engagement with Courtland Creek Park via polls. At the in-person meeting, the poll was conducted via a feedback form distributed and then collected during the meeting (Appendix D). At the virtual meeting, polls were conducted via Zoom (Appendix E).

Conclusion and Next Steps

- Attendees can provide additional feedback on design elements through August 15, 2021 by emailing watersheds@oaklandca.gov. Many attendees also expressed interest in joining the Friends of Courtland Creek and participating in additional park activation activities, such as cleanups and educational outings. The next public meeting will take place in late 2021.



Preliminary Design Comments and Responses

Feature	Summary of Comments	How The Design Incorporates Comments
Congress overlook railing style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference for natural style • Ease of cleaning and maintenance 	The current design includes a wooden railing with wire mesh.
Creekside seating style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong preference for natural-style seating • Use wood from the removed eucalyptus trees • Comfortable seating; incorporate mosaic work • Concrete structures in the park have held up well 	Two accessible benches with backs and armrests will be featured in the park (one in the Brookdale reach and one in the Congress reach). Concrete seating at the overlook will incorporate mosaic work. Other benches made from eucalyptus lumber.
Interpretive signage style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural-looking signage, with an emphasis on a material that is easy to clean 	Signs will be made of durable material, such as Image-LOC aluminum or other durable materials. Image-LOC has a good track record for being graffiti-proof and vandal-resistant. The fabricator will apply an anti-graffiti coating to the finished signs to make it easier to remove graffiti.
Trail style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excitement about the trail and lighting improvements the Project would create - prevent crime and vandalism • Trail surface - all-weather appropriate and bicycle access 	The trail material will likely be surfaced with Granitecrete, which is ADA compliant. Granitecrete surfacing material is all-weather and suitable for bicycle traffic, yet has a more natural appearance than asphalt. Lighting may be added to existing light poles throughout the park.

Feature	Summary of Comments	How The Design Incorporates Comments
<p>Railing in Brookdale Reach to discourage dumping</p> <p>Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community expressed desire for materials that were robust and discourage vandalism. Will this be incorporated? 	<p>Concrete split rail fencing is more durable than wood, easy to maintain, and will make it more difficult to push large objects into Creek.</p> <p>Natural surveillance- Trails, overlooks and open spaces are clearly visible from adjacent streets and/or overlooked by housing.</p> <p>Trails have more than one exit/entrance to avoid entrapment. Seating areas are close to pathways. Pathways prioritize a border of low-lying vegetation</p> <p>Territorial reinforcement—Clearly defined and upgraded trails and improved amenities. Fencing delineates which areas are and are not to be occupied and minimizes opportunities for dumping.</p> <p>Maintenance and management- This was considered throughout the design stage. Material and finish selection focus on durability and vandal resistance to minimize maintenance. Plant material and location is selected for its size at maturity to avoid blocking of sight lines. City is prepared to take on long term maintenance.</p>



Phase 2 Public Meeting Summary Report

Courtland Creek Restoration Project

Public Meeting Summary Report

Virtual Public Meeting

May 12, 2022

6:30–8 p.m.

Via Zoom

In-Person Public Meeting

May 14, 2022

10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

Brookdale Park

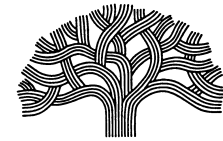


Courtland Creek Restoration Project Overview

The Courtland Creek Restoration Project (Project), an Oakland Measure DD Initiative, will protect, enhance, and restore Courtland Creek in Courtland Creek Park. The Project will improve creek habitat and water quality, reduce trash accumulation and illegal dumping, repair steep and eroding creek banks, enhance climate change resilience and park appearance, and serve the community as an educational and recreational resource. Accessible seating, gathering places, and a creek-viewing overlook will also be provided. Project partners include the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation, the Friends of Courtland Creek, and local schools.

Project Team

- Jennifer Stern, City of Oakland
- Mandolin Kadera-Redmond, Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation
- Paul Frank, FlowWest
- Anna Klaczyk Constantino, FlowWest
- Jaime Luo, FlowWest
- Ivy Morrison, Circlepoint
- Patti Ransdell, Circlepoint



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- Regina Merrill, Circlepoint
- Joaquin Carrig, Circlepoint

- Laurie O'Brien, Circlepoint

Meeting Noticing

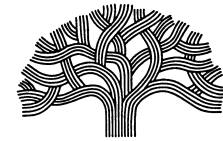
Project neighbors who live within a 1,000 ft. radius of Courtland Creek Park were sent an invitation to both meetings via mail (Appendix A). The City of Oakland also posted information on the Project website, sent notifications via email, and made announcements via social media.

Public Meeting Summary

On Thursday, May 12 the City of Oakland held a virtual public meeting for the Courtland Creek Restoration Project via Zoom and provided the same presentation in-person on Saturday, May 14 at Brookdale Park in Oakland. There were seven attendees at the virtual meeting (see attendee list in Appendix B) and 14 attendees at the in-person meeting (see sign-in sheets in Appendix C). The purpose of the meetings was to provide an update on the Project progress and gain additional input from the community. Since the previous public meetings in July 2021, the Project consultant has completed draft 65% designs, which incorporate feedback received in previous public outreach.



The meetings began with introductions from the Project team, which is composed of the City of Oakland, the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation, FlowWest,



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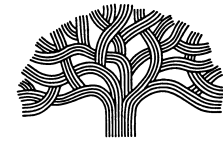
and Circlepoint. The Project team then provided a presentation which included the history of the Project and the park, how the Project is being funded, and an explanation of the Project benefits. Flow West provided an overview of the channel design features, recreation and safety features, and planting zones for each of the three Project areas/creek reaches: Brookdale Reach, Congress Reach, and Thompson Reach. FlowWest provided a grid showing comments received on the preliminary designs and how the current designs will incorporate them. For example, a variety of benches will be installed, including those that are accessible and those that will be made from repurposed eucalyptus logs from the trees that will be removed. While the main focus of the Project is creek restoration, there will be many benefits to the park that will make it more visitor-friendly.

Attendee Questions and Comments

After the Project updates, the Project team provided an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions about the presentation and share their input. A summary of questions and comments, along with responses, is provided below.



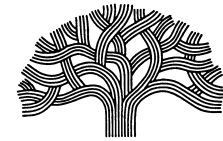
- Is the money that Councilmember Sheng Thao's office received for recreational improvements to the park included in the Project funding?
 - No. Money from Councilmember Thao is for improvements to other recreational features near the creek, while Project funding is solely for the creek restoration and trail enhancements. Project funding is



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provided by Measure DD: Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks Bond, Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Department of Water Resources Urban Streams Restoration Program, Environmental Protection Agency San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund, and the Caltrans Clean California Local Grant Program. Money from Councilmember Thao was for improvements to other recreational features near the creek, while Project funding is solely for the creek restoration and trail enhancements.

- Who from the neighborhood is involved in park improvements outside of the Project, and how do we keep in touch?
 - Anyone who is interested in becoming more involved in the Project is invited to reach out to Mandolin Kadera-Redmond (OPRF) at friendsofcourtlandcreek@gmail.com, and is invited to join the next Friends of Courtland Creek Meeting taking place 5/19 via Zoom.
- Will there be any areas that provide direct access to the creek? There was initial desire to allow kids to play in it.
 - There are locations that will allow maintenance access in some of the reaches. They will allow people to walk down to creek, but they are not official path as they are not ADA accessible.
- Is there any way to avoid a fence or concrete wall in the Brookdale to have a more natural creek look? Some attendees are in favor of having fencing at the cul-de-sac area but wanted to minimize it in other areas, where the littering and illegal dumping are not as prevalent.
 - There will not be a concrete wall, the goal is to make it look like a natural creek environment. There will be a concrete split rail fence instead, which will provide a more natural look while also serving the purpose of keeping trash out. Some park visitors wanted a railing installed as the bank is steep.
- Is there an opportunity for youth paid apprentices in rebuilding and maintenance?
 - Yes, the City of Oakland is hoping to work with Civicorp, which is a job training program for youth for some of the work on this Project. One of the goals of the Project is to include community and youth.
- There was a suggestion to involve students at Fremont high school who make benches for different organizations.
 - While the benches made from the removed eucalyptus trees will need to be made by a milling company, several different styles of benches



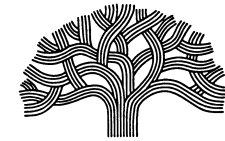
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are being considered, and the Project team can explore other options like these.

- Has a dog park been considered as part of this Project? It was suggested that this may help reduce crime.
 - The focus of this Project is creek restoration, not recreation, but this may be a good suggestion to raise with Councilmember Thao. Other amenities like waste bag dispensers
- Could the larger exotic trees be removed? One attendee noted that on the entrance of culvert opposite to the street there is a large acacia.
 - The Project team is aware of a few smaller acacia trees, which are getting removed. The City's priority is removing the eucalyptus and not changing the character of the Thompson Reach.

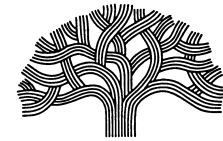


- As the Project team is planning to plants, is there an opportunity to collaborate on the planting and design?
 - Yes, there will be opportunities to collaborate on planting and design. The Project team can present which plants are proposed to local students and show why they have been selected. A contractor has been hired for planting and maintenance for three years, the progress and success of which will be monitored regularly. However, some plants will be kept back for a community planting day.



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- Are there documented amphibian populations in the creek?
 - There are no documented amphibian populations, there may have been some anecdotal sightings from previous residents but nothing else.
- Attendees expressed concerns about the chop shop that operates off Brookdale and asked if the City has a plan to address this.
 - This is outside the scope of this Project, but it is being discussed at the Friends of Courtland Creek meeting next week.
- Is the diversion channel only activated if there's a significant rainfall? At what threshold is it activated?
 - It does not take much flow for at all for the diversion channel to be activated, it is located downstream at the end of the Brookdale Reach. The City wants to maximize the amount of water in the downstream reaches. In a typical storm event, 80-90% will go down the bypass and 10-20% will go through the creek.
- At the Thompson Reach there are dead tree carcasses, will these be removed? It was noted that these dead trees present a safety concern and their removal could provide more opportunities for living plants.
 - The plan is not to remove these, but the Project team is open to that kind of input if there's a strong desire for them to be removed.
- There is a fence that has fallen and is covered in ivy from one of the neighbors, can this be removed?
 - The fence will be removed.
- Is there an opportunity for a flat surface or a table for students to perform testing at?
 - The Project team can investigate this.
- Will the Welcome to Courtland bench in the middle of the creek stay?
 - The bench will stay, the Project team is hoping to do more mosaic work at the concrete bench at the Congress Reach.
- Can you jog on the trail?
 - Yes
- Will there be any lighting in the Congress and Thompson Reaches? Is solar lighting being considered as an option? Lighting is important!
 - The only lighting improvements will be replacing the bulbs in the light fixtures in the Brookdale Reach. Other Reaches don't currently have the electrical wiring for light fixtures and adding that infrastructure isn't currently in the scope. The Project team can talk to Councilmember Thao if there is significant interest in lighting.
- There were concerns related to residents in nearby apartment buildings. It was asked if anything is being done to address these.



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- The apartment building is working with the Project team to address this concern. And one of the specific residents in question has been told to vacate the building.
- The yellow barriers keeping cars out of the three designated reaches are welcomed. What about adding them to the reach between Congress and Thompson? It is currently being used as a parking lot, as is the hopscotch and four-square space.
 - The hopscotch space and reach mentioned are outside of the Project area. The Project team would have to ask Councilmember Thao about any work concerning reaches outside of the scope.
- An attendee suggested using the concrete wall located in one of the Reaches for tennis or racquetball. Another attendee suggested a mural could be painted on it and that he knows a lot of local muralists.
 - The trail area isn't large enough to be used for tennis. It could possibly be done near the basketball court.
- Why aren't the plum trees and large ash tree being removed from the Thompson Reach?
 - The Project team is attempting a light-handed approach to this reach. Some plum trees will be taken out. Regarding the ash tree, that could be discussed during the next round of design.
- Will removed trees be replaced to prevent people from parking in that space?
 - Railings will be added to prevent people from parking in open spaces. Where there are larger spaces we can put a boulder or maybe logs from the cut down eucalyptus trees.
- Can you prevent scratching on signage?
 - The material that will be used for signage is supposed to be scratch resistant.
- Where do the creeks go?
 - The creeks are part of the Peralta system. They empty out into the San Leandro Bay, near the southeastern tip of Alameda. Most of the creeks are underground until they spill out into the estuary. Also, most reaches of the creek are on private land.
- Will the crib wall downstream get touched?
 - No. Limited work is being done to that area.
- How realistic is the timeline?
 - The Project team is optimistic about the timeline, but it can take a long time for permits to be approved. Ideally, they will be approved by the end the year and almost certainly by next summer. The bid process could take some time as well, maybe as long as eight months



- Will there be a communal gardening space?
 - There is an existing community garden space in the park. An additional garden space could be considered if there is interest.
- Are any of the construction contractors bidding for the Project from the community?
 - The Project team is making sure local contractors are considered is part of the process. There is an emphasis on hiring local minority-owned small businesses. Also, anyone who's interested can submit a bid.
- An attendee commented that this Project is the most exciting thing to happen in Courtland Creek since the park first opened. It is great for neighborhood safety.

Polling

- Attendees at both meetings were asked about their engagement with Courtland Creek Park via polls. At the in-person meeting, attendees were asked to raise their hand to indicate their response. At the virtual meeting, polls were conducted via Zoom. Combined results from both meetings are provided in Appendix D.

Conclusion and Next Steps

- Attendees can provide additional feedback through May 31, 2022 by emailing watersheds@oaklandca.gov or completing the survey available on the [project website](#). Many attendees also expressed interest in joining the Friends of Courtland Creek and participating in additional park activation activities, such as cleanups and educational outings. The next Friends of Courtland Creek Park meeting will take place via Zoom on May 19; those interested in joining can email Mandolin Kadera-Redmond (OPRF) at friendsofcourtlandcreek@gmail.com to register.
- Beginning in July 2022, the Project will enter phase III, which includes construction bidding and contractor selection. Additional updates will be provided on the Project website as they are available.