

CHAPTER VII

OPEN SPACE

GOALS:

The City of Brisbane will be a place...

Where open space lands have been set aside to protect the natural environment;

Where outdoor areas provide recreational open space and educational opportunities;

Where open space and natural areas provide respite to both residents and businesses; and

Where residents reciprocate by respecting and maintaining the land and the waters for future generations.

OPEN SPACE

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CHAPTER VII

OPEN SPACE

Government Code Section 65560(b) defines "open space land" as "any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use.. and which is designated on a local, regional, or State open space plan as any of the following: (1) open space for the preservation of natural resources...; (2) open space used for the managed production of resources...; (3) open space for outdoor recreation...; and (4) open space for public health and safety." For the purposes of the 1994 Brisbane General Plan, the land use designation "Open Space" is reserved for lands that are essentially unimproved and dedicated or proposed to be dedicated to the public for outdoor recreation and for the preservation of biotic communities. Aquatic areas that are in whole or part in private ownership, such as the Brisbane Lagoon, are not designated Open Space, but are given an aquatic designation denoting the unique nature of each resource. Areas of land that are essentially unimproved and which are in private ownership are called "open areas." These areas are not designated on the land use maps, and are addressed by the policies in Chapter V of this Plan.

VII.1 EXISTING PARKS, AQUATIC AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

A comprehensive survey of existing and planned parks and open space was undertaken by a joint committee of the Parks, Beaches and Recreation and Planning Commissions. They evaluated the type and amount of parks and open space available to Brisbane residents against the standards of the National Recreation and Parks Association. They found that, although the NRPA standards were useful in gauging the amount of parkland considered appropriate for a residential population, several of the definitions did not comfortably apply to the configuration of Brisbane and therefore needed to be amended. They also found that the NRPA standards did not address parks and open space needs of a non-residential population.

The background report on Existing and Planned Parks, Recreation, Historic & Cultural Resources, OS-1, updated and republished in March 1994, reflects the work of the Commissions. The report concludes that in most categories, Brisbane currently meets or exceeds NPRA standards for parks and open space for residential populations based on acreage per 1,000 population. The following Table 6 summarizes this analysis. However, the public desires additional open space.

The policies in this chapter and in Chapter VIII of this Plan address maintaining and enhancing parks, open space and aquatic areas over the ten-year General Plan period and increasing the amount of parks and dedicated open space to continue to meet the needs of the community.

1994 GENERAL PLAN PARKS STANDARDS

A. MINI/NEIGHBORHOOD/LINEAR PARKS		
Mini Park--a small-scale outdoor area for limited public or private park and recreation uses.		
	Total Acreage	Ratio
1994 Existing:	1.0+/- acres Marina par course/ picnic area; Community Center Park; Plug Preserve; Joy Condominiums yard area	0.3+/- acres per 1,000 existing residential population
Existing + Planned with Northeast Ridge:	1.25+/- acres Northeast Ridge Neighborhood III recreation area	0.3+/- acres per 1,000 projected residential population
Neighborhood Park--a public area of at least 0.5 acre for a range of recreational activities, such as field games, court and playground games, crafts or picnicking, including school/park facilities.		
	Total Acreage	Ratio
1994 Existing:	22.5+/- acres Marsili Field; Lipman School/courts; Kids & Things/court; Brisbane Elementary; Firth Park	7.6+/- acres per 1,000 existing residential population
Existing + Planned with Northeast Ridge:	23.2 +/- acres Northeast Ridge Neighborhood 1-South recreation area	5.5+/- acres per 1,000 projected residential population
Linear Park -- A long, narrow area used for one or more varying modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking or horseback riding, including built or natural corridors, such as utility rights of way fire roads and canyons.		
	Total Acreage	Ratio
1994 Existing:	7.4+/- acres Sierra Point public access trail; Bicentennial Walkways	2.5 acres per 1,000 existing residential population
COMBINED STANDARD FOR MINI/NEIGHBORHOOD/LINEAR PARKS:		Minimum of 10.5 acres per 1,000 residential population, representing continuation of the 1994 existing level of service.

B. COMMUNITY PARKS		
Community Park--a public area of at least 2 acres in size serving the residential and business communities, such as outdoor community gathering places or multi-use recreational complexes.		
	Total Acreage	Ratio
1994 Existing:	0 acres	0 acres per 1,000 residential population
Existing + Planned with Northeast Ridge:	8.5+/- acres Community Park (Old County Road); Northeast Ridge school/park site	2.0 acres per 1,000 projected residential population
STANDARD FOR COMMUNITY PARKS:	Minimum of 8 acres per 1,000 residential population, representing the top of the range of the NRPA standard.	

C. SPECIAL RECREATIONAL USE	
Special Recreational Use--A structure for specialized or single purpose recreational activities.	
1994 Existing:	5 structures Sierra Point Fishing Pier; Marina; Harbor Master building; Kids & Things building; Community Center building
STANDARD FOR SPECIAL RECREATIONAL USE:	To be determined by City facilities study.

D. CONSERVANCY		
Conservancy -- An area of protected and managed natural /cultural resources.		
	Total Acreage	Ratio
1994 Existing:	84.6+/- acres Owl and Buckeye Canyons: Sierra Point Canyon; Costanos Canyon; Firth Canyon	28.7+/- acres per 1,000 existing residential population
Existing + Planned with Northeast Ridge:	220+/- acres Northeast Ridge habitat	52 +/- acres per 1,000 existing residential population
STANDARD FOR CONSERVANCY:	66 acres per 1,000 residential population, representing existing, Northeast Ridge dedication, and 40% conservation of the "Brisbane Acres" per the HCP.	

VII.2 OPEN SPACE, AQUATIC AREAS AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Brisbane's unique natural setting provides unparalleled access to open space and recreational opportunities unique to the San Francisco Bay Area. As noted in Table 6, the majority of existing open space in the General Plan planning area is composed of parks which are ecological reserves and areas conserved for endangered species, including San Bruno Mountain State and County Park, and Owl and Buckeye Canyons. Within the City Limits, Sierra Point, Firth and Castanos Canyons preserve the San Bruno Mountain eco-system. The Bay, Brisbane Lagoon and the Marsh in the Northwest Bayshore subarea are aquatic resources, each a special environment. Brisbane's love of nature and pride of setting makes appropriate access to and preservation of open space one of the highest priorities of General Plan policy.

The following policies reflect the community's strong interest in designating and preserving open space during this General Plan period.

Policy 81 **The City Shall conduct an on-going effort to identify sites or portions of sites having particular value as open space, wildlife habitat, wetlands, or other environmental qualities that should be preserved and protected. In such cases, the City shall explore the feasibility of acquisition of these areas by the City or by other public or private agencies that are engaged in the ownership and preservation of open space, and, when legally possible, imposing a requirement that such areas be dedicated by the owner to the public for open space purposes.**

Policy 81.1 **Work to preserve open space lands to protect the natural environment and to provide outdoor educational and recreational opportunities consistent with the sensitivity of the resource.**

Policy 82 **Encourage the preservation, conservation and restoration of open space to retain existing biotic communities, including rare and endangered species habitat, wetlands, watercourses and woodlands.**

Program 82a: Educate the public of the continued threat of invasive species through the Brisbane Star.

Policy 83 **Maintain the visual beauty of the Mountain, the ridgelines, hilltops, wildlife and plant habitat including the Brisbane Acres.**

Program 83a: In the official actions of the City, including resolutions and ordinances, recognize the importance of maintaining and preserving the natural eco-system and beauty of San Bruno Mountain.

Program 83b: Comply with the provisions of the Habitat Conservation Plan to protect endangered species habitat.

Program 83c: Cooperate with public and private groups involved in rare plant protection, habitat restoration and maintenance of mountain eco-systems to preserve open space on San Bruno Mountain.

Program 83d: Provide an annual report to the City Council on Federal, State and private opportunities for open space acquisition on San Bruno Mountain and elsewhere in the City.

Policy 84 Strengthen and broaden the public's commitment and knowledge regarding San Bruno Mountain and its wildlife and habitat.

Program 84a: Cooperate with the County and State to enhance San Bruno Mountain Park and adjacent lands in Brisbane by joint public information programs about the Mountain and by encouraging supervised volunteers in protection and preservation efforts.

Program 84b: Through public school programs, encourage and promote San Bruno Mountain as an educational resource.

Program 84c: Lobby and work with environmental and conservation groups, and State, County and Federal agencies to ensure the preservation and maintenance of San Bruno Mountain State and County Park.

Program 84d: Through the Recreation Program, provide educational and volunteer programs to adults and youth regarding San Bruno Mountain.

Program 84e: Provide information on the natural ecology of the Canyons through publications and presentations, and encourage citizens to respect the fragility of these eco-systems.

Program 84f: Provide an annual report to the City Council and the community of all activities pertaining to the acquisition, preservation and appreciation of San Bruno Mountain, including information from the HCP manager.

Policy 85 Encourage the preservation and conservation of aquatic resources in Brisbane: the Lagoon, the Bayfront and the Marsh.

Program 85a: Seek opportunities to utilize aquatic areas for recreational and educational activities consistent with the sensitivity of the resource.

Program 85b: Develop provisions in the Zoning Ordinance, including setback requirements, to protect the natural ecology of aquatic resources.

Program 85c: Provide information to citizens on the eco-systems of the Bay, the Lagoon and the Wetland Marsh and how citizens can participate in respecting and conserving these resources.

Program 85d Work with responsible agencies, property owners and environmental and conservation groups to ensure preservation of aquatic ecosystems

Policy 86 Provide access to natural areas consistent with the nature of the resource.

Program 86a: Develop and maintain a network of trails and pathways throughout the City to provide appropriate access to open space and to link City trails with County and regional trail systems.

Program 86b: Extend the trail system to include aquatic areas and provide access to public transportation systems.

Program 86c: Examine the potential to extend a pedestrian and bicycle trail between Sierra Point and the Candlestick Recreation Area along the Bay to the east of Highway 101 in cooperation with regional efforts to obtain the same objective.

VII.3 FUTURE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

The following policies address the provision of parks and open space during the General Plan ten-year time frame. See Chapter VIII for policies and programs on recreational programs and facilities.

Policy 87 Maintain parks and open space to serve the community equivalent to or greater than the acreage/population standards set by the National Recreation and Parks Association.

Program 87a: Use the standards in Table 6 as guidelines for the provision of parks and open space for the community

Policy 87.1 Publicly dedicated open space both in and around the City shall be preserved. The City shall therefore discourage and oppose any attempted conversion of such dedicated open space to urban uses, and shall not authorize or approve the relinquishment, abandonment or release of any open space dedication unless there is a finding of a compelling and overriding public interest and public benefit to be served thereby.

Policy 88 Develop parks to maximize passive recreational opportunities.

Program 88a: Encourage local businesses, citizens, and public and/or private landowners to participate in the planning, acquisition, development, maintenance and use of park facilities.

Program 88b: Continue to work with citizens to plan and develop a community park on the Old County Road site.

Program 88c: Require impact fees or exactions as contributions to the acquisition, development and maintenance of passive open space, park and

recreation facilities in conjunction with the mitigation requirements for development projects.

Policy 89 **Work with local employers to preserve open space and to develop outdoor open areas that would benefit employees as well as residents during and after the work day.**

Program 89a: Examine the potential for obtaining funding, including open space, park, and recreational impact fees, to provide benefits for the non-resident population. Consider joint development of facilities.

VII.4 THE OPEN SPACE PLAN

Government Code Section 66564 requires the City to prepare an Open Space Plan that contains an action program consisting of specific programs the City intends to pursue in implementing the Plan. The required goal of the plan is the comprehensive, long-range preservation and conservation of open space lands within the jurisdiction. Under the definition of Open Space in the 1994 Brisbane General Plan, ownership by a public agency is an integral part of long-term preservation efforts.

The economic climate at the time of the preparation of this General Plan makes it very difficult for public agencies to acquire open space. Cities throughout the State are losing revenues, reducing staff and cutting back on critical services. The same is true of other agencies. There have been no new programs to fund open space acquisition developed at the State or Federal level. The only hope for grant funding comes from citizen initiatives. Any open space plan must take into account the lack of predictable funding for land acquisition.

To address this difficult issue and to assist in drafting the Open Space Plan contained in this chapter, several questions pertaining to open space acquisition were included in the General Plan alternatives survey. Respondents were asked to give their views on whether the City should acquire most of the private undeveloped lands in Brisbane for open space or whether the City should allow owners to develop these lands if public benefits, including open space, would be forthcoming. Figure VII-A illustrates the response: 58% of respondents chose development with public benefits. Respondents were then asked to state their preferences for these public benefits. The response is illustrated in Figure VII-B: open space is among the top five priorities.

FIGURE VII-A

Response to Voter Survey

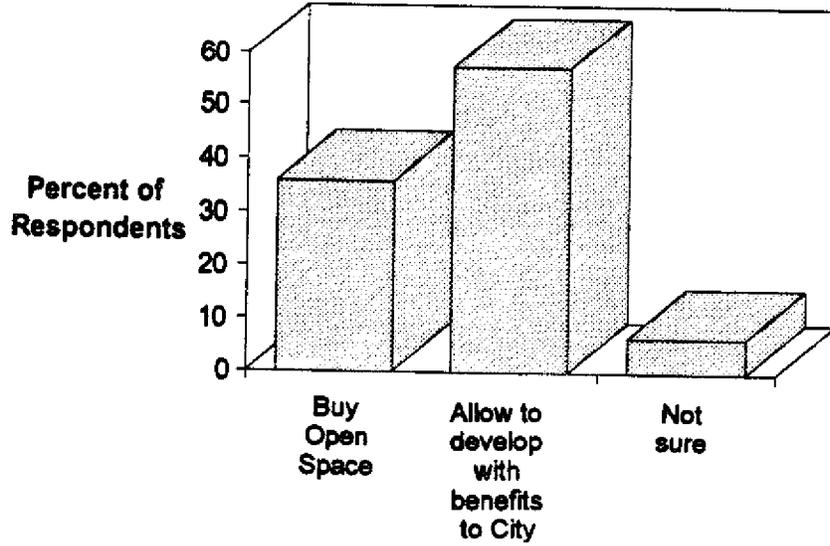
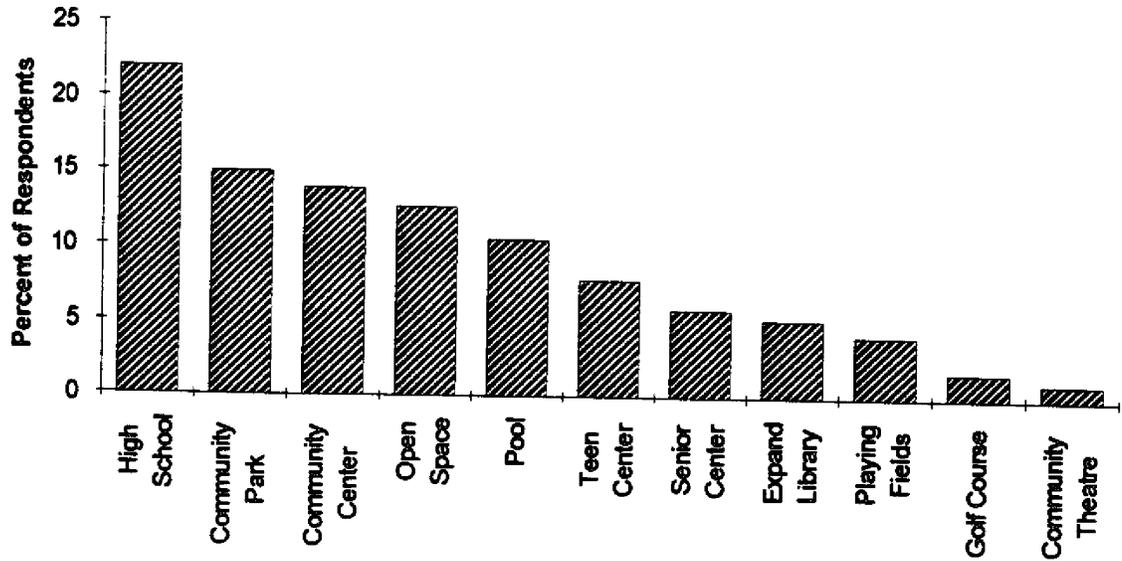


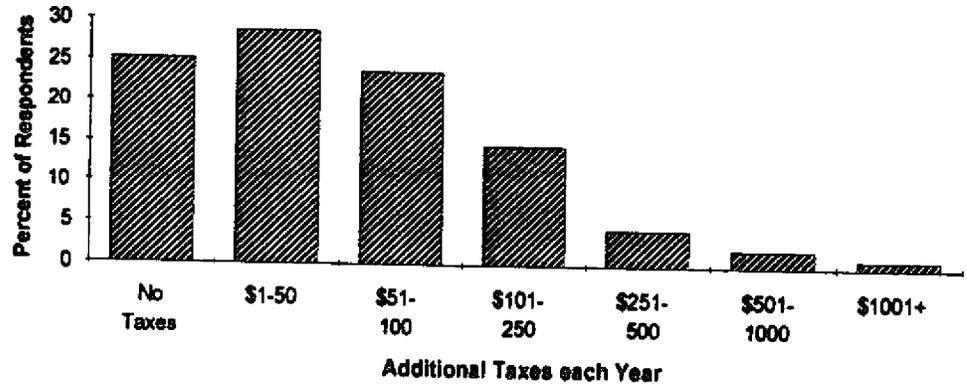
FIGURE VII-B

Highest Priority for Contributed Public Improvements



To test the strength of local commitment to open space acquisition, respondents were asked whether and to what extent they would be willing to contribute to acquire open space. A full 75% of respondents said they would be willing to contribute some amount of funds annually. This is considered an exceptional response in the current economic situation. This is illustrated in Figure VII-C.

**FIGURE VII-C
Response to Voter Survey**

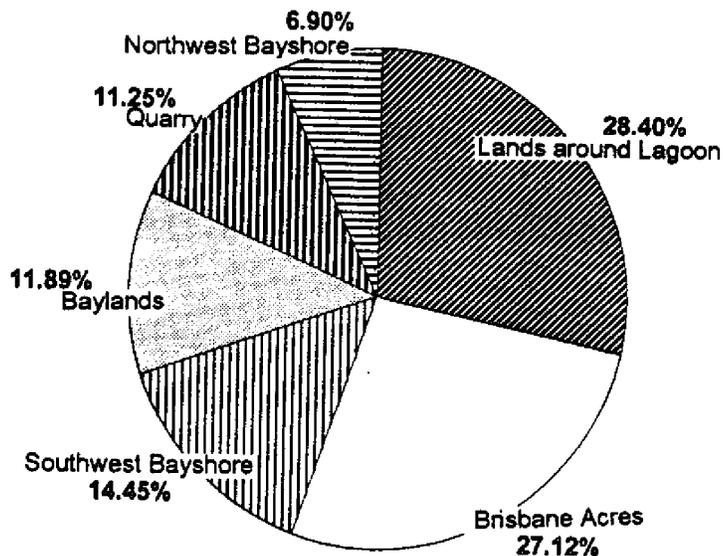


Survey Question:

"Assume that any purchase of privately owned land for open space use must be paid for out of City tax revenues. If the City were to follow your own priorities for open space purchases, how much would you and members of your household be willing to pay each year in additional taxes over a 25-year period to purchase such open space?"

Respondents were also asked to identify their highest and second highest priority for open space acquisition for public use. Lands around the Lagoon and the Brisbane Acres were chosen by the greatest number of respondents.

**FIGURE VII-D
Combined Highest and Second Highest Priority for Open Space Purchase**



The following policies are based on these responses. They establish an "opportunistic" strategy for open space acquisition. The policies commit the City to maximize opportunities for open space preservation, to establish priorities and designate responsibilities, and to seize opportunities for the preservation of open space whenever they arise.

Policy 90 **On an ongoing basis, aggressively seek opportunities to preserve open space.**

Policy 91 **Explore the widest range of options for preserving open space lands, including acquisition, dedication, and exactions on development projects.**

Program 91a: On an ongoing basis, explore and pursue funding sources for acquisition of open space lands with habitat, recreational or other natural resource value.

Program 91b: In conjunction with all new development and the redevelopment of existing uses, where appropriate, require dedication of lands with habitat or other natural resource value to remain as open space and/or in-lieu fees for open space acquisition.

Policy 92 **Follow the priorities indicated by citizens in the General Plan survey for the acquisition of open space for preservation of natural areas and recreational potential.**

Policy 93 **Establish an implementation program for open space acquisition.**

Program 93a: Consider legally available means of funding open space acquisition, such as taxing, assessment districts and other funding mechanisms

Program 93b: Establish an open space fund to consolidate in-lieu fees, donations, and grants so as to be ready to acquire open space as funds are sufficient and opportunities arise.

Program 93c: Encourage volunteer efforts in supporting open space acquisition, through such activities as initiating legislation, fund-raising and generating philanthropic dedications.

Program 93d: Provide an annual report to the City Council on the state of the open space resources in the community, the amount and type of open space land, the needs for operating and maintaining existing lands, and new acquisitions and funding sources.

Program 93e: Review and establish open space priorities annually as part of the budget and Capital Improvement program development process.

Program 93f: As apart of the open space acquisition plan, provide updated information on County, State and Federal open space plans and programs.

Program 93g: In setting priorities and programs for open space acquisition, review proposals for conformance with the County, State and Federal plans

Program 93h: For reference and assistance in establishing open space priorities, prepare a comprehensive map of vacant lands in the planning area and update the map annually.

Program 93i: Investigate establishing or joining special open space acquisition districts.

Program 93j: Investigate the possible benefits and disadvantages of an expansion of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area into the eastern and northern peninsula of San Mateo County.

Program 93k: Consider establishing an environmental commission of local citizens to help advise the City Council on open space acquisitions and environmental matters in general.

Program 93l: On an annual basis, send out a letter to all property owners of potential open space, to see if they would like to donate it to the public.

The following Table 7 establishes a timeline and responsible party for each of the policies in the Open Space Plan.

Table 7
Open Space Plan Implementation Programs

Policy/ Program	Product	Responsibility	Review/Approval	Timeline
#90	Seek opportunities to preserve open space and natural areas.	All City Departments, Citizens & conservation groups		Ongoing
#91	Explore options.	All City Departments, Citizens & conservation groups		Ongoing
#91a	Pursue funding sources.	All City Departments, Citizens & conservation groups		Ongoing
#91b	Require dedications and/or in-lieu fees.	Planning Department	City Council Planning Commission	Ongoing
#92	Follow priorities in General Plan Survey.	All City Departments	City Council Planning Commission	Ongoing
#93	Establish implementation program for acquisition.	Planning Dept, Parks & Recreation Dept., Public Works Dept., Finance Dept.	City Council Planning Commission	1994-95
#93a	Consider means of funding.	Finance Department	City Council	Ongoing
#93b	Establish open space fund.	Finance Department	City council	1994
#93c	Encourage volunteer efforts to support open space acquisition,	All City Departments, Citizens & conservation groups		Ongoing
#93d	Provide annual report to City Council.	Planning Dept, Parks & Recreation Dept., Public Works Dept., Finance Dept.	City Council	Annual
#93e	Establish open space priorities.	Planning Dept, Parks & Recreation Dept., Public Works Dept.,	City Council Planning Commission Parks, Beaches & Recreation	Annual

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#93f	Provide information on plans & programs of other agencies.	Planning Dept, Parks & Recreation Dept., Public Works Dept.,	City Council Planning Commission Parks, Beaches & Recreation	Annual
#93g	Review for conformance with agency plans.	All City Departments	City Council Planning Commission Parks, Beaches & Recreation	Annual
#93h	Prepare and maintain map of vacant lands.	Planning Department	City Council	Consider in the 1995-96 Budget
#93i	Investigate establishing or joining open-space acquisition district.	Planning Department	City Council	Consider in the 1995-96 Budget
#93j	Investigate expansion of Golden Gate Recreation Area.	Planning Department	City Council	Ongoing
#93k	Consider establishing emironmental commission.	Planning Department	City Council	1994-1995
#93l	Letter to property owners re: donations.	Planning Department	City Council	Annual