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PARKS & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT



Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline (Source: Kevin Murray)

5.1 | INTRODUCTION

The City of Martinez has consolidated and added the topics of parks and community facilities in this optional general plan element. Parks, schools, and recreation facilities and services are an essential and vital part of the community. The purpose of this element is to document existing facilities and services, identify areas of improvement, and ensure demand is met as the community grows.

Having access to quality public facilities makes living in Martinez desirable. Services such as parks, schools, and recreation are a source of civic pride and improve quality of life. Martinez is committed to providing a high level of service to all residents, and it is the purpose of this element to establish guidelines that enable the City to continue to offer quality services well into the future, even as the community's needs change.

Some of these services are not run by the City, but instead are overseen by other government bodies. In these cases, while the City retains land use planning authority, the City does not have direct control over the operation of the facilities or the transmission of services to the community. Therefore, the goals and policies addressing these services aim to strengthen the partnership between the City and the respective controlling bodies to serve the Martinez community collaboratively and effectively.

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The Parks and Community Facilities Element includes the following sections:

- 5.2 Parks, Recreational, Community, and Education Facilities:** This section describes the parks, public, and educational facilities throughout Martinez.
- 5.3 Parks & Community Facilities Element Goals, Policies, and Measures:** This section lists the goals, policies, and implementation measures for the Parks & Community Facilities Element.

For each service, current conditions and concerns are summarized and issues that are projected to arise during the life of the General Plan, if any, are identified. The General Plan intentionally provides only a brief description of these services to frame the goals and policies. Several are addressed in greater depth in their own stand-alone document. These documents are noted in the appropriate sections below.



Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline (Source: Kevin Murray)



Cappy Ricks Park

5.2 | PARKS, RECREATIONAL, COMMUNITY, AND EDUCATION FACILITIES

Martinez offers a [wide variety of recreational opportunities](#) and community services for all ages. These facilities are important for both the physical and mental health of individuals and help foster community. Martinez values its public amenities. In recent years, Martinez has greatly benefitted from several park infrastructure upgrades which were made possible by the community's support of Measure H in 2008. With those funds, the City was able to provide several parks with new restrooms and rubber playground surfacing and playground equipment, build a new pool facility, construct a new turf soccer field, renovate numerous ballfields, basketball courts and tennis courts, make general landscape improvements, and enhance Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access. Improvements such as these ensure that residents have access to attractive, safe, and accessible spaces for gathering, relaxation, exercise, and play. Open space, another important community amenity, is discussed in the Open Space & Conservation Element.

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Rankin Park

Parks

The City’s Public Works Department oversees approximately 175 acres of developed park space (further referred to simply as “park space”). This space is distributed between many parks that vary greatly in terms of size and amenities offered. In some instances, the City has partnered with another institution, such as Martinez Unified School District and Mt. Diablo Unified School District, to provide additional park space and contribute to the diversity of recreational opportunities. Table 5.1 below provides the name, type, and acreage information for all the parks maintained by the City.

Table 5-1: List of Parks Maintained by the City

Name	Type	Acreage
Cappy Ricks Park	Neighborhood	1.9
Ferry Point Picnic Area	Memorial	3.8
Foothills Park	Linear	2.3
Golden Hills	Neighborhood	9.6
Highland Avenue Park	Neighborhood	0.25
Hidden Lakes Park	Community	24
Hidden Valley Park	Community and School*	17

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Hidden Valley Linear Park	Linear	2.3
Holiday Highlands Park	Neighborhood	2.0
John Muir	School*	7.4
John Muir Memorial Park	Plaza	0.42
John Sparacino Park (Alhambra)	Plaza	0.55
Main Street Plaza	Plaza	0.45
Morello Park	Community and School*	7.1
Mountain View Park	Neighborhood*	4.5
Nancy Boyd Park	Community and Memorial	7.3
Plaza Ignacio Martinez	Plaza	1
Pine Meadow Park	Neighborhood	9
Rankin Park	Community	42.-
Susana Street Park	Neighborhood	1.2
Steam Train Display	Community	0.25
Waterfront Park	Community*	31
Veterans Memorial Park	Memorial	0.2
	Total:	175.52
*Denotes lease in effect for a portion or all of space.		

The designated space types for Table 5-1 above are defined as follows:

- **Community Park:** Intended to meet the demands of a large portion of the City, it is larger and offers more, and often more specialized, amenities than a neighborhood park.
- **Linear Park:** A park located along a roadway, waterway, bikeway, or other similar public corridor.
- **Memorial Park:** A park with the primary purpose of recognizing and commemorating particular historical events, persons, or places.
- **Neighborhood Park:** A park developed to serve the recreational needs of a small portion of the City, typically within a half-mile of the park. It is usually family- and children-oriented and may have play equipment, sports courts, and fields.
- **Plaza:** A formal, generally flat open area characterized by pedestrian walkways and passive features such as benches, fountains, and formal garden planting beds.

- **School Park:** A park developed, improved and maintained on school grounds either by the City or through a joint use agreement, that is used by the community or neighborhood at large. This type of park recognizes the lack of existing neighborhood facilities to serve its immediate area and lack of available land in developed areas for new parks.

Since the 1980s the City's established General Plan parkland to resident ratio has been five (5) acres of park space for every 1,000 residents (184.54 acres for 36,908 residents as of the 2022 State Department of Finance estimate). Martinez residents currently enjoy 4.76 acres of park space per every 1,000 residents. Martinez's parks and open space resources also include approximately 2,200 acres of privately-owned open space within the City limits or sphere of influence, protected by the General Plan's Parks and Open Space Protection Overlay (POPO) designation; and thousands of additional acres of adjacent regional open space or parks owned and operated by East Bay Regional Parks and U.S. National Park Service (Briones Regional Park, Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline, Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline, Waterbird Regional Preserve, and John Muir National Historic Site). For more information on open space see the Open Space and Conservation Element. Figure 5-1 shows the location of the various local and regional parks in the Martinez Planning Area. For additional information on open space protections see Land Use Element 2.0, Section 2.5 – Land Use Designations; Section 2.6 – Land Use Map; and Policy LU-P_1.2 for additional information and policies regarding Measure I and the Protected Open Space and Parks Overlay (POPO) land use designation.

Future Park Demand

According to Plan [Bay Area 2040](#), the population of Martinez is projected to grow to 39,055 by 2035. A corresponding growth of parks acreage of 20 additional acres to a new total of 195 acres would be needed to meet the five (5) acres per 1,000 residents standard. The definition of City park lands in the waterfront area, to be determined by the Marina and Waterfront Trust Land Use Plan, may close this gap.

When developing new parkland, it is important that efforts are made to ensure that this valuable resource is distributed throughout the City so that everyone has access to recreational opportunities. Currently, three general areas have been identified as underserved or are projected to be underserved:

- **Alhambra Hills:** This area is located south of Nancy Boyd Park and north of Foothill Park. The area is expected to see some new development in the future. A neighborhood park would be appropriate to serve the needs of this community. The Land Use Element addresses policies to create additional park space in this area.

- **Pacheco Corridor:** This area is located at the eastern edge of the City and north of Highway 4. The area is increasingly put under more and more pressure from development along Interstate 680. There is the unique opportunity in this area to continue the Contra Costa Canal Trail, which currently terminates at Muir Road, south of State Route 4. The Circulation Element has policies supporting the implementation of the County’s trail expansion plans to extend this trail into Martinez. Another option, suggested by the 2007-2012 [Parks System Master Plan](#), is to study the potential of developing the Martinez Reservoir site into a park. This site, about a mile northwest of the Canal Trail terminus, could further connect to the Trail.
- **Downtown:** This area is projected to see the most growth, which is expected to primarily take the form of infill development. A portion of the area has been identified in the Environmental Justice Element as a disadvantaged community. This area is adequately served by the 31-acre Waterfront Park (it is within a 2-mile radius), and access to the park has been enhanced with the construction of the pedestrian bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad. The City will undertake a plan for the improvement of the Marina and waterfront area which will include additional recreation and park improvements. Such improvements would have the additional benefit of providing attractive public space for visitors and encouraging them to return. In addition to the waterfront area improvements, two projects have been identified to enhance park facilities in the Downtown: 1) creating a linear park along portions of Alhambra Creek, which would also improve natural flood control; and 2) enhancing Main Street Plaza so that it is better integrated into the design and activities of Downtown.

The City may continue to look for opportunities to expand its park facilities. The City requires parkland dedication or payment of park in-lieu fees for new development, but these funds may not be sufficient to purchase additional land. Land dedication may be required of new developments to create new park sites. Because Martinez is largely “built out,” feasible potential parkland beyond what is identified above is scarce. This is especially true for community parks which tend to have sports fields and thus require a large amount of flat, open space. Further, should the City acquire more parkland, the parks maintenance budget would need to be increased so as not to compromise service to other City parks. More information on parks can be found in the City’s 2007-2012 [Parks System Master Plan](#).

Public Facilities

Rankin Aquatic Center: The [Rankin Aquatic Center](#) is located at 100 Buckley Street. This aquatic center includes a play pool with a beach entry, spray play equipment, and 1-3 foot depth teaching area. The Center also includes a lap pool with eight lanes for swim meets and lap swimming with the ability for staff to create three 30-meter lanes for long course swimming.

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Additionally, the lap pool includes a diving well, self-operating handicap lift, and easy access stairs. Bordering the pools are five covered picnic areas for shade. The administration building houses aquatic personnel and has room for lifeguard classes and in-service trainings. The large open bathrooms provide natural light, showers, and toilets that are ADA-accessible.

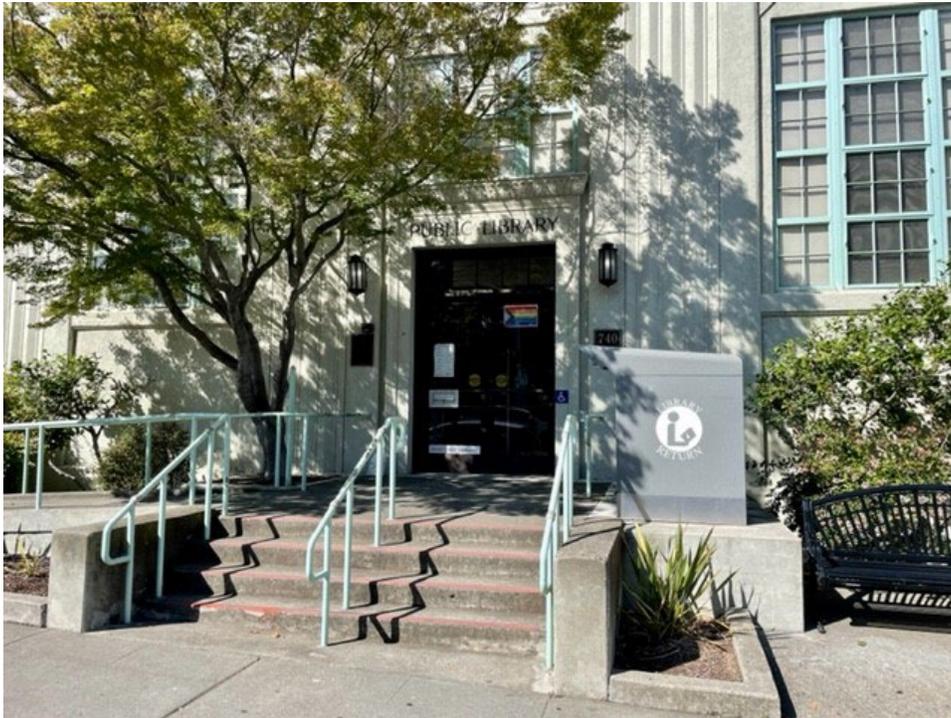
Martinez Marina: For more than 55 years the [Martinez Marina](#) has been supporting boating and fishing enthusiasts from the Martinez area and beyond. The Marina includes a boat launch ramp, fishing pier, boat slips, and harbor master building. The landward side of the Marina includes lands leased from the City to private recreational uses, including the Sea Scouts facility, the Bait Shop, a retail marine shop, and the Yacht Club – a social fraternal organization related to boating endeavors. Future work may include more dredging, breakwater seawall repair, and entrance reconfiguration contingent upon the availability of public and private funding. The City continues to maintain the Marina by upgrading facilities and continued dredging of the water channel. A separate Marina and Waterfront Trust Land Use Plan will be developed to increase recreation opportunities for the area and financial stability for the on-going maintenance needs of the Marina.



Rankin Aquatic Center

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Martinez Public Library

Library: The [Martinez Public Library](#) is a branch of the Contra Costa County Library system and is located on the corner of Court and Ward Streets. The Library maintains nearly 33,000 items including books, magazines, periodicals, compact discs (CDs), digital video discs (DVDs), video and audio cassettes and other electronic resources such as e-books, which are available on the Library's website. In addition, the Library provides a variety of services such as self-service check out, story time, book clubs, craft, music, and activity workshops, college prep help, a reading garden, and computers with internet access. In 2011, the Library was renovated with Measure H funds and is therefore not expected to require major infrastructural improvements in the near future.

Senior Center: Located Downtown at 818 Green Street, the [Martinez Senior Center](#) promotes educational, recreational, and social activities as well as provides services that meet the needs of the senior citizens of Martinez and surrounding cities. Members must be 50 years of age or older to join the Senior Center. The Martinez Senior Center provides a monthly newsletter to their members, which lists on-going activities, tours and special events.



Martinez Intermodal Train Station

Intermodal Train Station: The Intermodal Station is located at 601 Marina Vista and provides a state-of-the-art train station currently operated by Amtrak.

Boys and Girls Club: The [Boys and Girls Clubs of Contra Costa County - Diablo Clubhouse](#) is located at 1301 Alhambra Avenue in a facility leased from the City. The Club provides a place for safe, positive and healthy development of youth in the City. Youth programming in Martinez teaches life skills and social development.

Indoor Sports Facilities: Two sports facilities located at 360 Ferry Street operate in two rehabilitated warehouses owned by the City and leased to two private operators. The facilities currently provide a venue for basketball and baseball facilities for the community.

Ken Bothée Bocce Courts at the Martinez Bocce Courts Complex: Martinez is home to the [Martinez Bocce Federation](#). The Federation is the largest bocce league in America with almost 2,000 members and 15 courts at the Martinez Bocce Courts Complex. Martinez is considered the bocce ball capital of the United States with its roots in the predominately Sicilian population that occupied the shoreline area in the days of commercial fishing, and brought the sport of bocce to the United States.



Ken Bothée Bocce Courts at the Martinez Bocce Courts Complex (Source: Kevin Murray)

Historic Train Depot: The [depot](#) is located at the north end of Ferry Street and is the site of the original Central Pacific depot of 1877. It became a Southern Pacific depot in the 1880s, and later served as the Amtrak depot until a new Amtrak station opened in 2001. Plans for future use of the depot include a potential museum or commercial use.

Martinez Waterfront Amphitheater: This outdoor venue located at 115 Tarantino Drive used for musicals, plays and City events. Future plans for the amphitheater will be the subject of the Marina and Waterfront Trust Land Use Plan.

Martinez Historic Museum: The [Martinez Historical Society](#) was created in 1973 to save and preserve an 1890 cottage and its site in downtown Martinez. Convinced that the City's history deserved a repository where papers, documents, photographs and artifacts could be housed, the Historical Society prevailed upon the City of Martinez to join with them in acquiring use of the "Borland House" for this purpose. A lease was obtained from the Contra Costa College District, and the Historical Society took possession in February 1974.

Alhambra Pioneer Cemetery: High on a hill, with scenic views of the Carquinez Straits and the City of Martinez, is the [Alhambra Pioneer Cemetery](#) and final resting place of Contra Costa County's founders. Originally, the cemetery was part of the Don Juan Martinez Estudillo estate.

John Livingston and Beverly Holiday bought the land in 1849 and subsequently created the cemetery in 1851. At the same time, the Alhambra Cemetery Association was formed to manage the property and burials. Contra Costa County established Potter's Field in 1873, adjacent to the Alhambra Cemetery. The next one hundred years was a very challenging and difficult period for the cemetery. In the mid-1870s, a wildfire swept through the cemetery, destroying wooden markers and the location of some decedents. In the 1940s an unscrupulous caretaker was incarcerated at San Quentin for double-selling cemetery plots. At the same time, the "Alhambra Cemetery Commission" ceased to exist as a legal body and no owner was placed on file until the property was deeded to the State of California in 1971. The City now owns the cemetery and is responsible for its care and maintenance.

Trails: Trails are important to Martinez and provide significant opportunities for recreation throughout the City and surrounding areas. Hikers, bikers, and equestrian riders all share a need for trails, although their specific requirements for types of trails may vary. Trails provide recreational value associated with physical fitness and the enjoyment of the natural and scenic environment. Also, some trails provide safe, off-street links between neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other public facilities. The trails system provides access to public places and to scenic vistas that represent a significant natural amenity to the community. The City's trails are shown in Figure 5-2

Recreational Facilities and Programs: The City of Martinez offers a range of recreational facilities including a water facility, sports fields, and tennis and bocce courts. In addition, other agencies such as Martinez Unified School District and the East Bay Regional Parks District operate facilities that can be used by the public. Demand for recreational facilities will continue, and the City is faced with many challenges to provide sports facilities and a community center, particularly on weekends and evenings. The City also provides a variety of recreational programs including preschool activities for young children, sports and swimming programs, summer and school break vacation camps, and adult sports programs. In addition, the Senior Center provides enrichment programs and activities for seniors.

Education Facilities

In Martinez, there are opportunities for people of all ages to improve their education, whether their goals are oriented toward career development, self-improvement, or pleasure. In addition to their educational functions, educational facilities include play areas, public meeting spaces, and community facilities that augment the City's parks and recreation facilities.

Schools: The [Martinez Unified School District \(MUSD\)](#) serves over 4,000 students grades K-12 and operates four elementary schools (grades K-5), one middle school (grades 6-8), one high school (grades 9-12), two alternative/independent study schools, and one adult education

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school. [Mount Diablo Unified School District \(MDUSD\)](#) operates one elementary school within the City limits, and serves Martinez school children in other facilities outside of the City. Based on student enrollment analyses conducted by MDUSD and MUSD, all facilities were determined to have been able to adequately serve the Martinez community through the 2021/2022 school year.



Alhambra High School

Martinez Adult Education: As part of the Martinez Unified School District, [Martinez Adult Education \(MAE\)](#) has served the Martinez community since 1919. MAE offers courses in over 25 career and technical certificate programs. The campus is located at 600 F Street.

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5.3 | PARKS & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT GOALS, POLICIES, AND MEASURES

GOAL PC-G-1: Continue to provide high-quality parks that allow the entire community to access high-quality recreational opportunities.

Policy PCU-P-1.1: Continue to enhance and maintain existing facilities.

Policy PCU-P-1.2: Develop new park facilities and/or upgrade existing facilities that provide accessibility, durability, and low maintenance.

Measure PCU-I-1.2a: Establish priorities and recommend funding for specific park and recreational facilities through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process. Funding information for these improvements shall include estimates for ongoing maintenance costs.

Policy PCU-P-1.3: Require developers to contribute to the parks and open space system based on their proportional share of needs generated by new residents in accordance with the Quimby Act.

Policy PCU-P-1.4: Periodically update Park Impact fees to continue to ensure the City's ability to maintain park and recreation facilities.

Policy PCU-P-1.5: Partner with local and regional, state, and federal agencies to create new park facilities.

Policy PCU-P-1.6: Promote the use of recycled water and drought resistant, native, and climate resilient plants for City parks and civic spaces.

Measure PCU-I-1.6a: Reduce water consumption where possible through the use of artificial turf, native plants, drought-tolerant landscaping, water conservation technology (such as efficient timers, and water heads), and possible use of recycled water in parks and recreation facilities.

Measure PCU-I-1.6b: Proactively work with the Contra Costa Water District for the installation of recycled water distribution infrastructure.

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Policy PCU-P-1.7: Promote installation of electric vehicle charging stations within park and recreation facilities.

Measure PCU-I-1.7a: Seek grant funding for electric vehicle charging stations within existing park and recreation facilities.

GOAL PCU-G-2: Acquire and develop park land using a standard of five acres per one thousand residents.

Policy PCU-P-2.1: Develop civic parks, plazas and squares that provide urban park spaces and community gathering places as funding permits.

Measure PCU-I-2.1a: Pursue opportunities for acquisition of underutilized or abandoned properties for development into linear parks, civic squares, and additional park land.

Policy PCU-P-2.2: As development occurs citywide, develop linear parks and green spaces that create alternative routes for walking. Where possible reuse abandoned or underutilized transportation corridors for pedestrian walking and hiking.

Policy PCU-P-2.3: Annually review priorities, standards and guidelines for park facilities and revise as necessary to reflect any changes in standards, guidelines, community trends and or needs.

Policy PCU-I-2.3a: Conduct reviews and updates of the Parks and Community Facilities Element of the General Plan as needed.

Goal PCU-G-3: An interconnected trail system providing access to recreational opportunities should continue to be developed and enhanced as funding permits.

Policy PCU-P-3.1: Partner with local and regional agencies to improve trail connections within and beyond the City limits and coordinate funding for trail acquisition, construction and maintenance, whenever feasible.

Measure PCU-I-3.1a: Establish priorities for funding for specific park or trailhead land through the Capital Improvement Program process.

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Measure PCU-I-3.1b: Consider purchasing land or accepting land dedication suitable for future trail development and recreational uses as land becomes available.

Policy PCU-P-3.2: Improve trail utilization and experience through installation of wayfinding signage to locate trails, and educational signage along trails regarding biological resources.

Policy PCU-P-3.3: Locate and construct new trails where access is easy to maximize their potential use and enjoyment by residents and visitors. Consider locating new trails within unused street rights-of-way (such as the Panoramic Drive “paper street” between Green Street and Thomas Drive).

Policy PCU-P-3.4: Incorporate trail development in the City’s Capital Improvement Program.

Policy PCU-P-3.5: When considering development on parcels that provide missing links in the planned trail system, trails and connections should be incorporated into the development plan with a possible easement or dedication of public right-of-way when possible.

Policy PCU-P-3.6: Work with the East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD), Contra Costa Water District, Contra Costa County, adjacent cities, regional trail groups, and other public agencies on trail planning issues, including trail development and linkages, and promotion of connections to the San Francisco Bay Water Trail.

Policy PCU-P-3.7: Construct trails according to the standards established by the California Trails Manual and EBRPD standards.

Policy PCU-P-3.8: Locate new trails, and promote existing trails, with an emphasis on scenic qualities, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and making connections with local and regional open space areas, parks, points of interest and community facilities.

Policy PCU-P-3.9: When appropriate, encourage the public purchase of private lands for the preservation of open space ridge lines.

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Policy PCU-P-3.10: Require future development within or upon ridgelines to provide access to and from or through the development via public trails through appropriate conditions of approval.

Policy PCU-P-3.11: Prepare and adopt a Trails Master Plan that inventories and maps existing, planned and proposed trails and connections, identifies potential funding sources, and prioritizes trail segments for future development.

Policy PCU-P-3.12: Provide hiking trail maps at City facilities and on the City's website and publicize online interactive maps and mobile applications when available.

GOAL PCU-G-4: Provide high quality recreational programming and facilities.

Policy PCU-P-4.1: Continue to provide, reimagine, innovate, and expand an array of recreational programs to the public.

Measure PCU-I-4.1a: Offer high quality recreational programs that cover costs through user fees.

GOAL PCU-G-5: Provide safe and accessible joint public facilities.

Policy PCU-P-5.1: Continue to maintain and upgrade when feasible existing educational facilities so there are a wide range of facilities and activities for the community within school properties.

Measure PCU-I-5.1a: Encourage the Martinez Unified School District and the Mount Diablo Unified School District to open facilities (including playgrounds and courts) to the public, particularly during the summer months.

Measure PCU-I-5.1b: Consider new methods to fund joint public facilities and improve as needed.

GOAL PCU-G-6: Ensure adequate and high-quality educational facilities to serve the community.

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Policy PCU-P-6.1: Continue to work with the Martinez Unified School District and the Mount Diablo School District to assist in obtaining funds from state and federal sources to improve school facilities and performance.

Policy PCU-P-6.2: Continue to support library facilities within the City of Martinez by ensuring access to library services and working with the Contra Costa Library District.