

Creekside Park area: The long view

Before the Spanish arrived, Cerrito Creek meandered in a large marsh north of Albany Hill.

Tides raised water levels to the Creekside Park ford (Santa Clara Ave.) – and still do.

History of poor planning:

- Marsh filled (used as dump, slaughterhouse).
- Creek forced into narrow, shortened channels.
- City paved and roofed – rain runs off like flash flood.
- Higher land on all sides -- even west filled higher.
- Outlets at Pierce undersized (below).



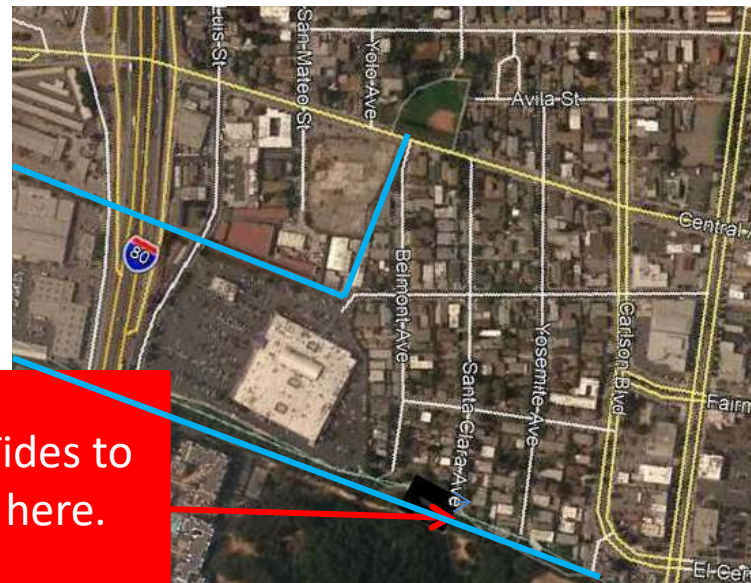
Above: Creekside Park area 1853
Below: Creekside Park area today

Result: Chronic flooding when storms and high tides coincide.

Pond built in 1969 reduced but did not solve the problem.



Left:
Creekside
Park pond,
2005



Tides to here.

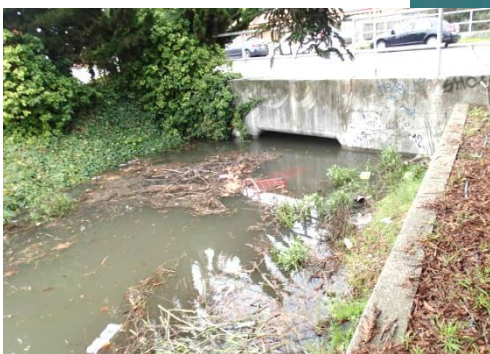
Global warming will bring sea-level rise and more and larger megastorms.

The Creekside Park area, small and relatively low income, is El Cerrito's only flood-prone area.

Rising tides and larger storms increase risk of a Katrina situation.



Above: FEMA flood map of Creekside Park area. Blue = flood prone, not considering tides or sea-level rise.



Cerrito Creek bridge and culvert at Pierce Street, edging Pacific East Mall, in Richmond

Above: At 7' tide (King Tide)

Below: at 6' tide after short heavy rain, 2018



Effective action will require collaboration, difficult hydrological modelling, and costly and complex permits.

These are reasons to begin now.

What should be done?

Resolution to require all departments to consider storm and flood risk, and incorporate into El Cerrito's plans and building and zoning requirements:

- New Parks plan (underway)
- New Storm Drain Master Plan (2018-19)
- Green infrastructure plan (Reduce flood risk while reducing runoff pollution.)
- Urban Greening Plan
- General Plan
- Building and zoning requirements.

Seek collaboration with Richmond and Albany.

Seek hydrologic modeling.

Seek funding as part of adaptations to sea-level rise.

Elaborate on placeholder already in Contra Costa stormwater plan.

