

**NATURESCAPE**

**Status – May 2014**

The Naturescape project was mentioned in the PARC presentation to the Los Altos City Council at the joint Council/Commissions meeting on April 29, 2014. To date we have identified several potential sites for the Naturescape and developed (pro bono by Landscape Architecture Construction Co.) a conceptual plan based on the McKenzie Park site. The conceptual plan is basic enough that it could be applied to any of the proposed sites.

**Project development steps**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| • Define a Naturescape and its purpose       | Done           |
| • Identify likely users                      | Done           |
| • List benefits to community                 | Done           |
| • Identify potential site(s)                 | Done           |
| • Develop a conceptual plan                  | Done           |
| • Submit draft proposal to PARC              | May 14 meeting |
| • Select site – 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2d choices |                |
| • Develop a preliminary budget               | Ongoing        |
| • Submit to City Council                     | Date TBD       |

**Future development steps**

- Obtain approval and CIP status from City
- Find and hire appropriate designer
- Review designers preliminary plan & budget
- Obtain public input – neighborhood and citywide
- Finalize the detailed plan & budget
- Develop a maintenance plan & budget
- Obtain City Council approval to bid the project
- Construction of first Naturescape
- Publicity rollout
- Grand opening involving community and interested parties

## **Proposal for a *Naturescape***

Today our children are seldom outside on their own. When they are, conventional playgrounds with plastic slides and metal pipe structures provide no experience with nature.

A *Naturescape*, on the other hand, offers children an opportunity to escape from TV, electronic games and keyboards and play in a natural setting with natural components and features - logs, boulders, mounds, sand, paths, trees and shrubs. A chance to connect with nature. *Naturescapes* are open-ended play options that encourage children to use their imagination, curiosity and creativity in play.

*Naturescapes* blend natural materials, features, and indigenous vegetation with creative landforms to create a complex of environmental objects in ways that challenge and fascinate children - teaching them about the wonders and intricacies of the natural world while they play within it. Children who have the opportunity to play in natural surroundings stay mentally and physically engaged for longer periods than on standard playgrounds and show more advanced motor fitness - including coordination, balance and agility.

Such a site can provide an important community based demonstration of environmental awareness and stewardship that children can carry with them as an adult.

For senior citizens and handicapped adults the *Naturescape* is in-town, accessible by foot or bicycle, providing a peaceful site for rest and meditation. Exposure to nature even in a small, urban preserve benefits all of our citizens, young and old.

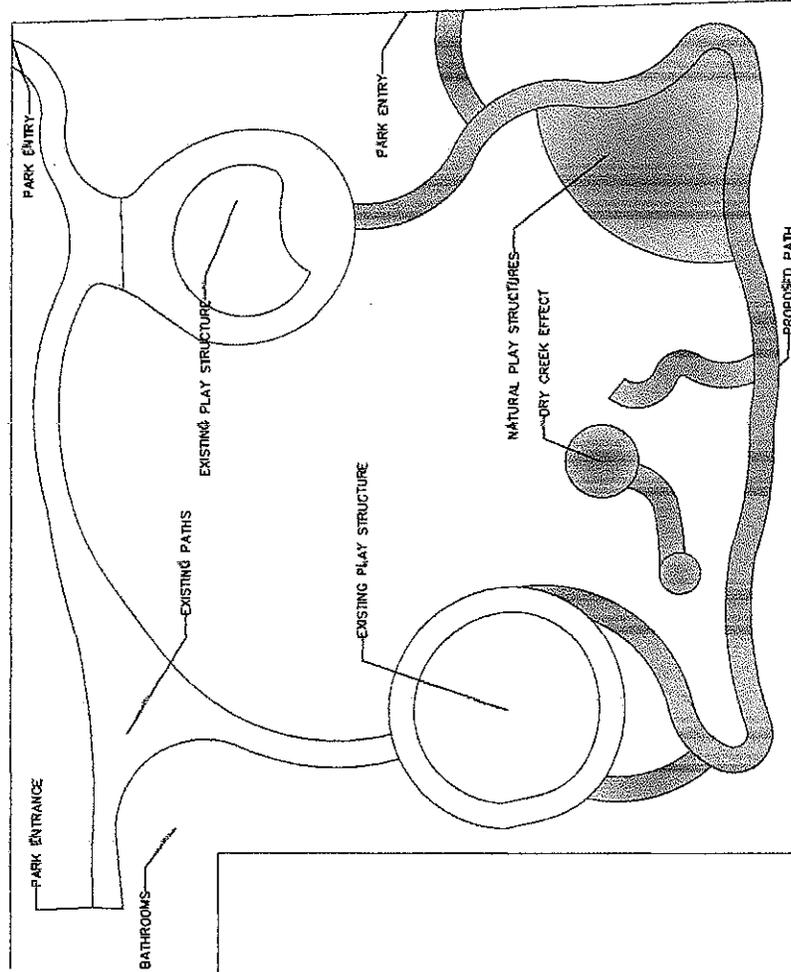
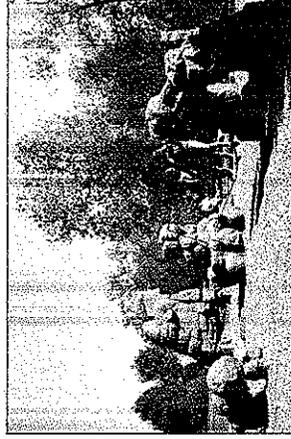
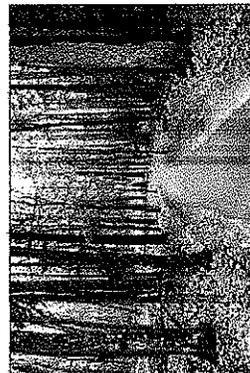
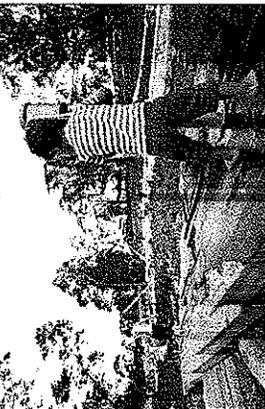
Public real estate in Los Altos is extremely limited. We have looked at three possible *Naturescape* sites in north and central Los Altos; Redwood grove, Hetch-Hetchy strip and McKenzie Park. Each site has positive and negative aspects.

	<u>Redwood Grove</u>	<u>Hetch-Hetchy</u>	<u>McKenzie</u>
Location	North LA	North LA	Central LA
Accessibility	Walk-in	Walk-in	Parking
Naturalness	Good	Good	Fair
Existing Play Area	Yes - Shoup	No	Yes - 2 on site
Solitude	Good	Good	Fair
School Proximity	No	Santa Rita	Loyola
<b>Parking</b>	<b>Street</b>	<b>Street</b>	<b>Parking Lot</b>
Restrooms	Yes	No	Yes
Water	Close	Close	Yes
Need/Priority	Some	Great	Some

## **NATURESCAPE COMPONENTS**

Proposed play components for the Naturescape might include the following and others the designer may suggest.

- Trees & shrubs to create a natural setting
- Meandering pathways
- Dry creek bed with footbridge
- Sand box at lower end of dry creek bed
- Large grassy mound, i.e. (20' W x 40s' L x 5'H)
- Climbing wall at end of mound i.e.(12'L x 5'H)
- Horizontal logs i.e.( 3 @ 18"D x 20'L)
- Log stumps i.e.(18 @ 18"D x varying heights 12"- 30")
- Notched climbing poles i.e. (3@12"D x 8'H)
- Climbing boulders i.e.(6 @ 30" – 36"H)
- Sit spots – flattened logs i.e. (3 @ 4'L along paths)



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Scale					
City of Los Altos	PARKS & REC. COMMISSION				
	MCKENZIE PARK				
	825 ALTOS OAKS DR.				
	LOS ALTOS, CA 94024-5413				
			<b>LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE</b> 1000 AVENUE 100, SUITE 100 LOS ALTOS, CA 94024-5413		
Client Name	CITY OF LOS ALTOS				
Project Name	MCKENZIE PARK				
Scale					
Sheet No.	2 of 2				
Project No.	94024-5413				
City	LOS ALTOS, CA				
Author					
Checker					
Designer					
Project Manager					
Date					

**CONCEPTUAL IMPROVEMENT**