



DATE: September 8, 2021

AGENDA ITEM # 3

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director  
**SUBJECT:** Inclusive Park Assessment

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Receive Inclusive Park Assessment report from the JEDI Subcommittee and comment on recommended approach, process, and next steps

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## **BACKGROUND**

At the regular meeting of July 14, 2021, the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) received and accepted a status report from the Justice-Equity-Diversity-Inclusion (JEDI) Subcommittee and approved the following scope, mission, and concept of “Small Steps to Increasing Inclusivity in our Parks Project:”

Collaborate with Staff to identify which park locations can benefit from the installation of at least a single additional feature of inclusive activity or increased equitable access without requiring large changes to infrastructure or large-scale refurbishment.

- Embrace existing park plans
- Conduct inventory – measure “state of inclusivity/enhanced accessibility” for each park in Los Altos
- Review options
- Identify solutions that bring highest play/experience value at lowest cost
- Determine budget and feasible timeline (currently outside of approved CIP)

## **DISCUSSION**

Staff will work closely with the Subcommittee including Engineering, Maintenance Services and Recreation. All the playgrounds have been inspected and passed by a National Playground Safety Inspector as well as a certified ADA design firm. While it is desirable to enhance the playgrounds with amenities such as shade, additional inclusive features, rubberized surfacing, water features, etc., recommended projects will be evaluated amongst other City priorities.

All playground designs went through previous Parks and Recreation Commissions challenged with limited budgets and tradeoffs including shade, rubberized surfacing, increased access, and multiple play features. Most playgrounds have shaded areas immediately adjacent to the playground for users.

The anticipated outcomes of the Subcommittee’s review of possible inclusive park and playground improvements are part of the Capital Improvement Plan and is not scheduled to be considered by City Council until fiscal year 2023-24.

At its regular meeting of June 22, 2021, City Council adopted the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan including the recommendations submitted by the Parks and Recreation Commission, shown in the chart below.

FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	FY 25/26
<b>\$750,000</b>	<b>\$650,000</b>	<b>\$900,000</b>	<b>\$980,000</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>
Community Center pickleball/basketball court	Halsey House (Pending analysis and City Council direction)	Playground replacement Grant Park	San Antonio Club Play Yard Improvements	Sustainable Park Lighting Improvements
Designated picnic areas (Heritage Oaks/Grant)	Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update (Pending General Plan Update Timing)	Inclusive features for Playgrounds	Grant Park Soccer Turf	
Naturescape construction	Phased drainage & drinking fountains	Fenced-in/dedicated dog park	Skatepark	
Grant Park Kitchen	Senior/Adult fitness equipment	Energy audit Implementation for facilities		
	Park Shade	Acquire Park land		

Staff recommends that the PARC receive Inclusive Park Assessment report from the JEDI Subcommittee and comment on recommended approach, process, and next steps (Attachment A).

Attachments:

- A. Inclusive Park Assessment by JEDI Subcommittee
- B. Inclusive Park Assessment Power Point Presentation

Meeting Date: September 8, 2021  
To: Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC)  
From: Commissioners Morris and Valadez, JEDI Subcommittee  
Subject: Enhancing Park Inclusivity Project– Park Assessment Report

Version 4.0

## **OVERVIEW:**

As part of the “Enhancing Park Inclusivity” project, first presented to the Commission on 7/14/2021, the JEDI Subcommittee completed a tour of each of the Los Altos parks listed below. The purpose of the tour was to conduct an unfiltered survey of how we might enhance the inclusivity of each site *beyond the minimum ADA requirements (currently in compliance)* and brainstorm possible solutions to improve each site.

This assessment is purely subjective and qualitative. It is not based on measurements for clearance, nor any understanding of required infrastructure, nor cost feasibility. However, the Subcommittee referenced the current Landscape Structures, Inc., catalog. The Subcommittee has also benefited from the substantial and steadfast input of City Staff in compiling their observations. This report does not dispute the fact that all Los Altos parks are in compliance with all minimum standards for accessibility and playground safety.

The tour was conducted over the course of three days: 7/28, 2:30-5:00pm, 8/4, 2:30-5:00pm, and 8/17 8:45-10am.

The hyperlinks below will take you to the relevant section. For most operating systems, you may click on the link. For some, you may have to place your cursor over the link, hold the key, then click on the link.

7/28: In order: [Hillview](#), [LAYC](#), [Village](#), [Lincoln](#), [Shoup](#), [Redwood Grove](#).

8/4: In order: [Montclair](#), [Grant](#), [Marymeade](#), [Heritage Oaks](#), [McKenzie](#), [Rosita](#),

8/17: [Tiny Tots](#) Playground at San Antonio Clubhouse.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Receive Inclusive Park Assessment report from the JEDI Subcommittee and comment on recommended approach, process, and next steps.

## **PARK ASSESSMENT REPORT:**

Note 1: In visiting every park below during after-school hours, children and adults overwhelmingly constrained themselves to shaded areas and play structures. All sun-intensive areas and structures remained empty, even when children were on their own and plentiful in other sections of the parks. The Subcommittee concludes that shade is a major enabler to the utility of the recreation spaces.

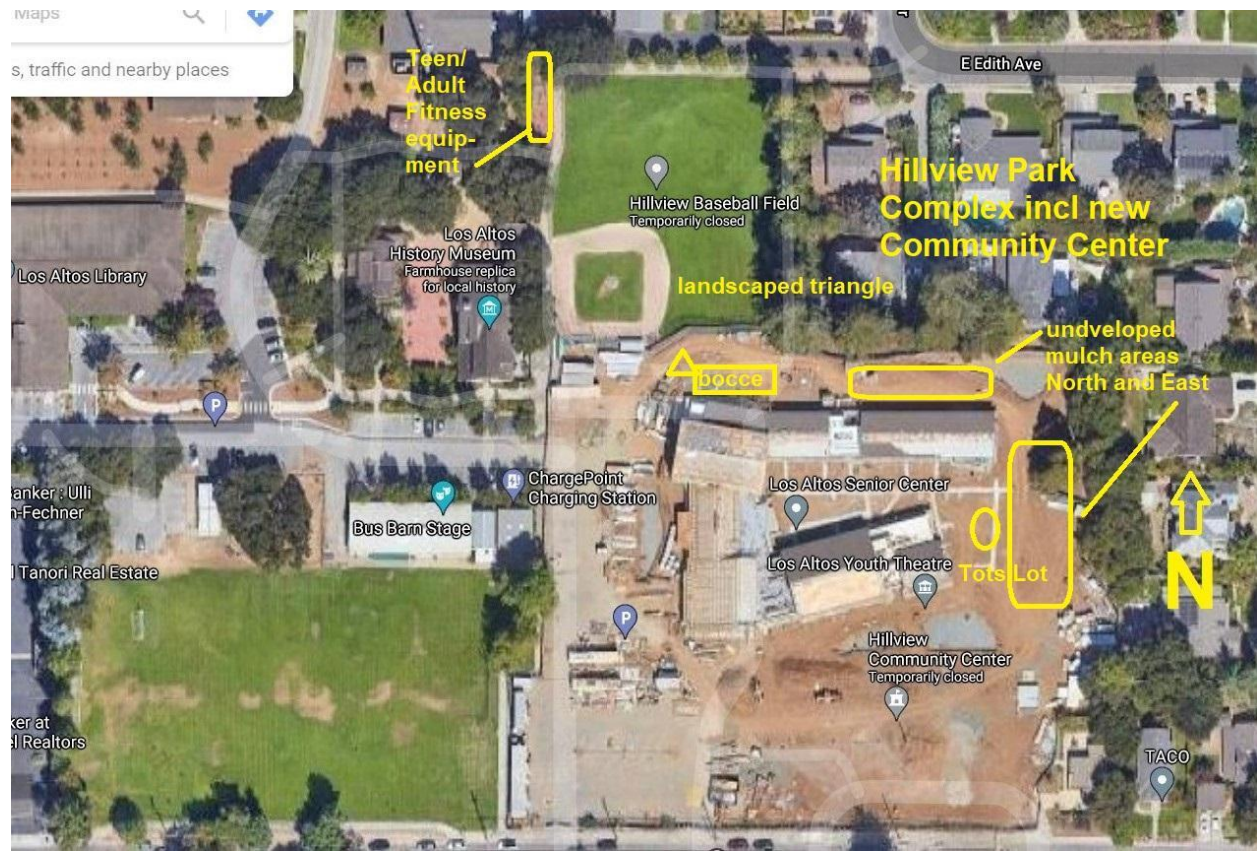
Note 2: Dates noted in parentheses are installation dates for play structures.

Note 3: The Subcommittee conducted the assessment with a focus on increasing access to and inclusiveness of park features for those who *use* the features; we did not assess the parks through the lens of increasing access for those with disabilities who are custodians of users of park features.

Note 4: While some observations may seem outside of the typical scope of JEDI considerations, the Subcommittee believes that every suggestion herein enhances the physical inclusivity, accessibility, and usefulness of the feature(s) across a variety of age groups and abilities in the community.

Note 5: The report is a broad survey of *all* City parks and includes a number of possible enhancements. It remains the project's goal to explore all the suggestions, but to ultimately narrow down this list after the Subcommittee considers various constraints, limitations, and practicalities (which will be itemized in the next phase of this project), including, but not limited to, cost, budget, End of Life of any current installations, compatibility, feasibility, and community input. Moreover, once narrowed down to a couple or a few recommendations, the final proposed plan will likely include recommended phased installations over a timeline that remains to be determined.

### **HILLVIEW COMPLEX:**



- New Tots playground (2021) encircled by fence.
  - Notes: Consider shade options, additional accessible features, additional adult seating, and, given drought conditions, alternative feature or activity at existing water feature.
  - Suggestion 1: Install shade sails to shade from southerly sun.
  - Suggestion 2: Replace water feature with different accessible activity.



- Open mulch areas (one east of Community Center Tots playground and one north of path to Bocce Ball courts)
  - Notes: these are open areas of moderately varying grade levels; city plan for easterly area is for playcourt(s) and for northerly area is for an environmental water swale.
  - Suggestion 1: either or both areas are prime targets for inclusive structures, and/or picnic/sitting/relaxation areas (with shade); can use alternative no-mow drought tolerant turf combined with various accessible play surfaces.
- Bocce Ball courts:
  - Notes: Consider shade options
  - Suggestion 1: Replace triangle-shaped landscaped area: could be a location for either accessible seating for viewing the baseball games, or a single inclusive playground feature (like a rotating wheelchair merry-go-round), or, for seniors and others, some wheelchair-friendly checkers/chess tables (which double as picnic tables).
- Teen/Adult Fitness playground (age rating unknown to us) at NW corner of Hillview Baseball Field:
  - Notes: Consider adding features and enhancing flatness of ground surface.
  - Suggestion 1: Replace one feature with a feature usable by a person who uses a wheelchair (example: arm-pull rails or overhead rings).

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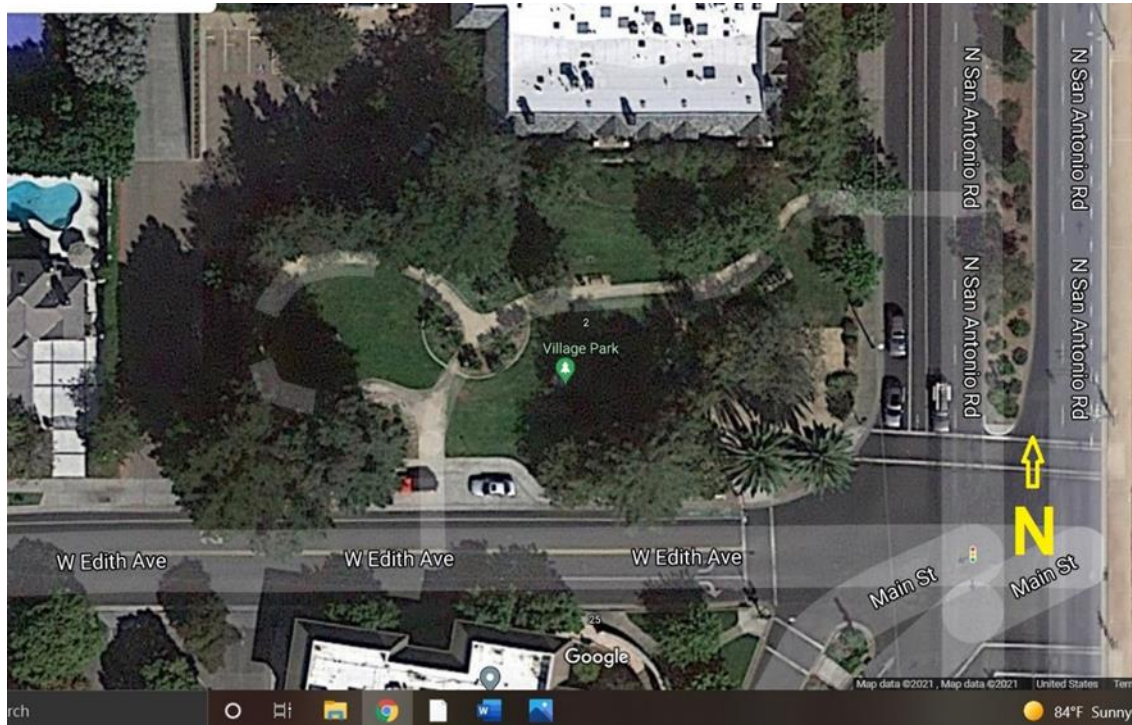
## LAYC TOT LOT

- Notes: Playground (2018) for Ages 0-2. Consider increasing shade options. Artificial surface pad located at the west side of the playground.
- Suggestion 1: Install one or more shade sails to shade southerly sun travel.
- Suggestion 2: Add additional artificial surface to music feature.
- Suggestion 3: Replace one of the bucket swings with an inclusive swing.



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## VILLAGE PARK

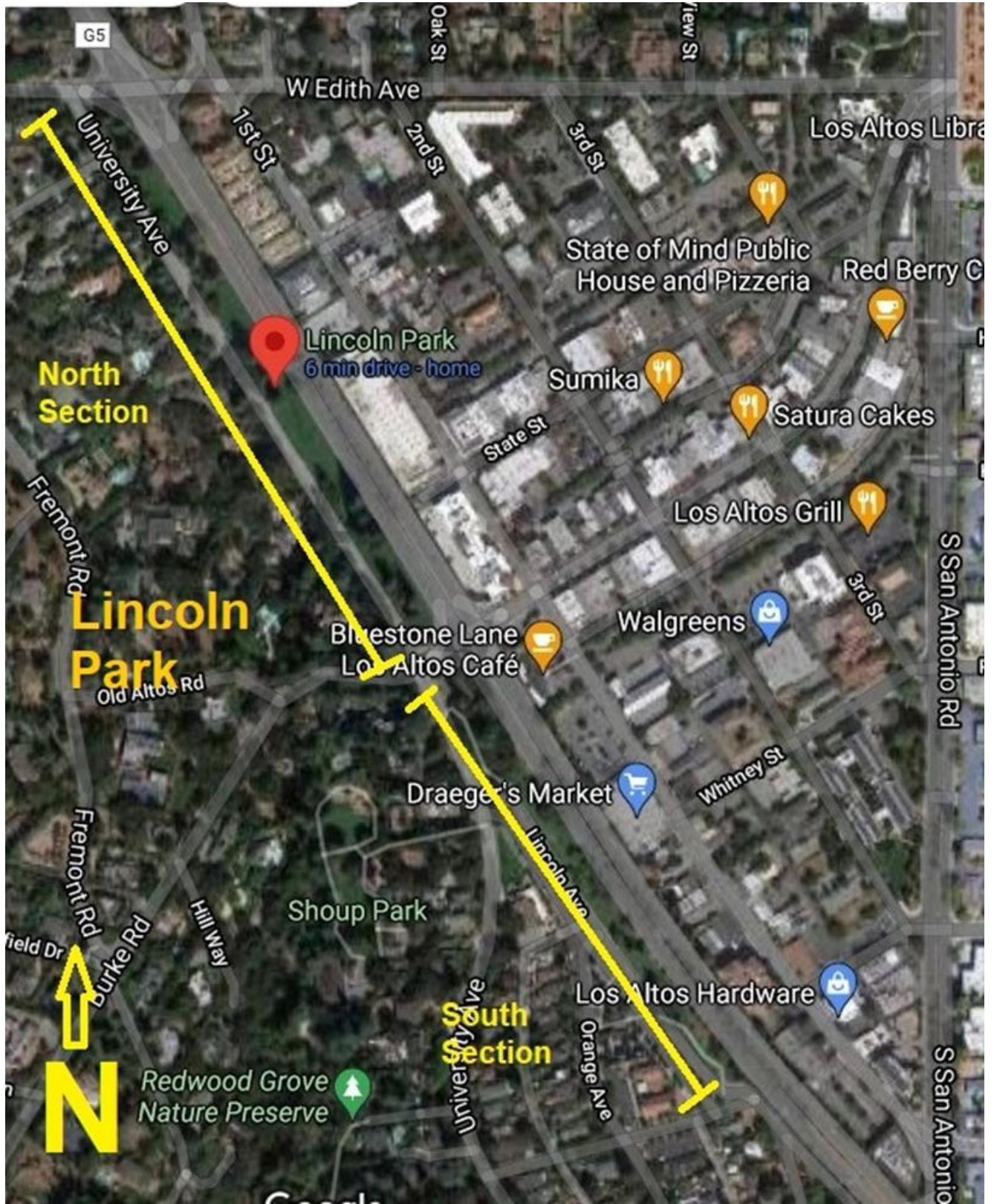


- West Patch:
  - Notes: open grassy area, encircled by benches; trees shade southern sky; a few grills. Highly used by downtown workers on lunches and breaks. Well shaded in the afternoon. Easy access from Edith with concrete path; exit ramp at southwest corner steep and exhibits drainage runoff mud and ruts. Consider adding inclusive activity.
  - Suggestion 1: Add wheelchair accessible checkers/chess tables; place them near the path to ease access and increase use by elders/all ages for table-based activities (see example picture under Rosita Park section).
- Southern Central patch
  - Notes: afternoon shade at west end, direct sun in middle, wet grass all day at east end due to dense evergreen tree shade. Consider adding activity.
  - Suggestion 1: Add a few checkers/chess tables that are wheelchair accessible near the western path. (Could form a nice activity cluster of tables placed at eastern end of West Patch).
- Northern Central Patch: situated adjacent to condo building, no changes suggested
- Eastern Patch:
  - Notes: Two paths from San Antonio and Corner to Eastern Patch seem steep for visitors who use wheelchairs or other walking aides (there are alternative paths available to visitors who use wheelchairs).
  - Suggestion 1: Lessen slope of path coming from corner of San Antonio and Edith.

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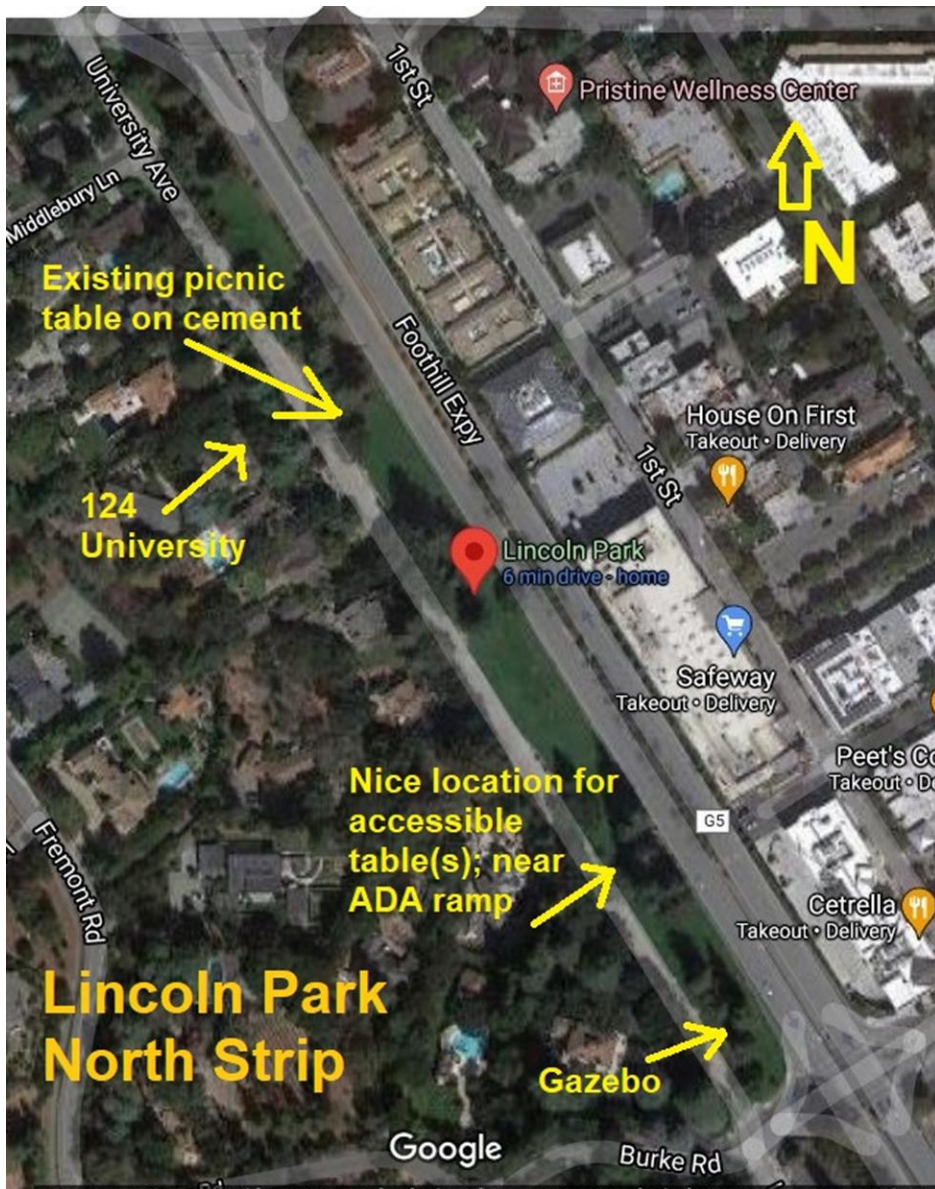


# LINCOLN PARK





- Lincoln Northern Strip (bounded by Foothill, Edith, University, and Burke/Main)
  - Notes: The park is mostly open grass turf, except for the Gazebo, some sculptural art, trash cans, and one picnic table. Access ramps available to the street. Consider additional enablers for seating or picnicking.
  - Suggestion 1: Add wheelchair path from street and ramp access into Gazebo.
  - Suggestion 2: Add wheelchair-accessible picnic table under shade in grass area that backs on southeast end of Safeway store. This area can be accessed through Ramp 1 at nearby parking cutout (see picture). Add Handicap Parking designated space in cutout and wheelchair accessible pathway to table (granite fines over compacted earth, sealed).
  - Suggestion 3: Convert existing picnic table, located at approximately 124 University, to be wheelchair accessible; add wheelchair path to simple ramp at curb and add Handicap Parking designated space.







**Lincoln Park North**  
**Ramp 1** --approximately behind  
Safeway (across Foothill Expy)

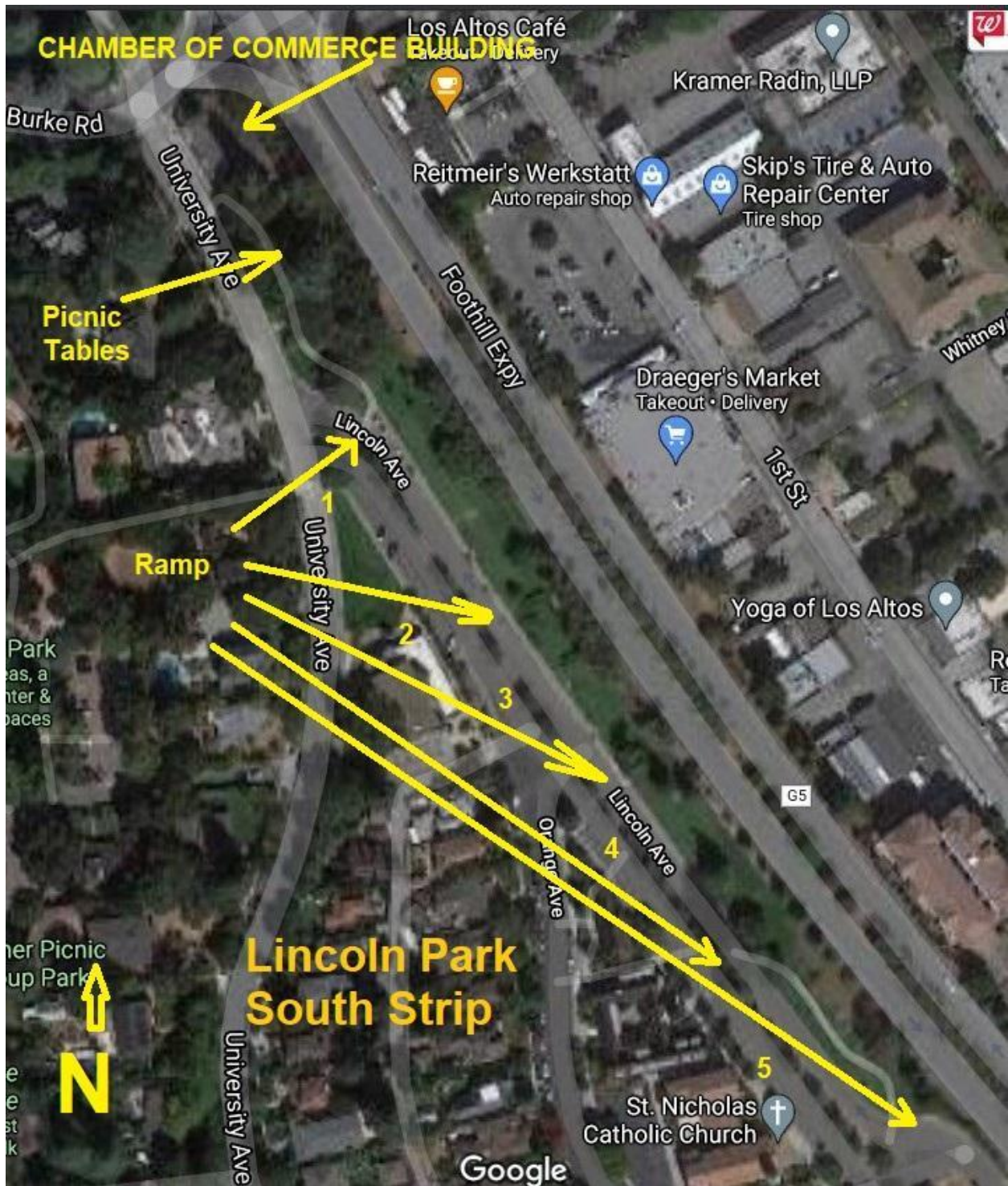


**Lincoln Park North**  
--Existing picnic table on cement  
pad

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- 
- 
-

- Lincoln Southern Strip (bounded by Foothill, Burke/Main, University, Lincoln)
  - Notes: Picnic area near Chamber of Commerce (COC) at northern end; two art sculptures/monuments further south; five (5) cement ramps from street up to sidewalk. Consider additional enablers for picnicking or seating.
  - QUESTION for staff: is the COC building City property? Is COC housed on City Land?
  - QUESTION for staff: is the picnic table part of Lincoln Park or part of COC property?
  - Suggestion 1: replace at least one picnic table near COC with wheelchair accessible table, or keep existing tables as is and add an additional Wheelchair accessible picnic table nearby ADA Ramp 1 near COC. Would require a wheelchair-accessible path from ramp to table; can be decomposed granite over compacted earth (sealed).
  - Suggestion 2: Install 1-2 wheelchair accessible picnic (rectangular) or game (square) table(s) and wheelchair-friendly path further south along park near ADA Access Ramp 2, placed aside or within hedge cloister(hedges arranged in a quadrangle). This would be a sunny installation.
  - Suggestion 3: Install 1-2 game (square) table(s) or picnic bench with adjacent wheelchair pad and path further south along park near ADA Access Ramp 4 under trees or on northeastern (Foothill Expwy) side of trees to afford afternoon shade.



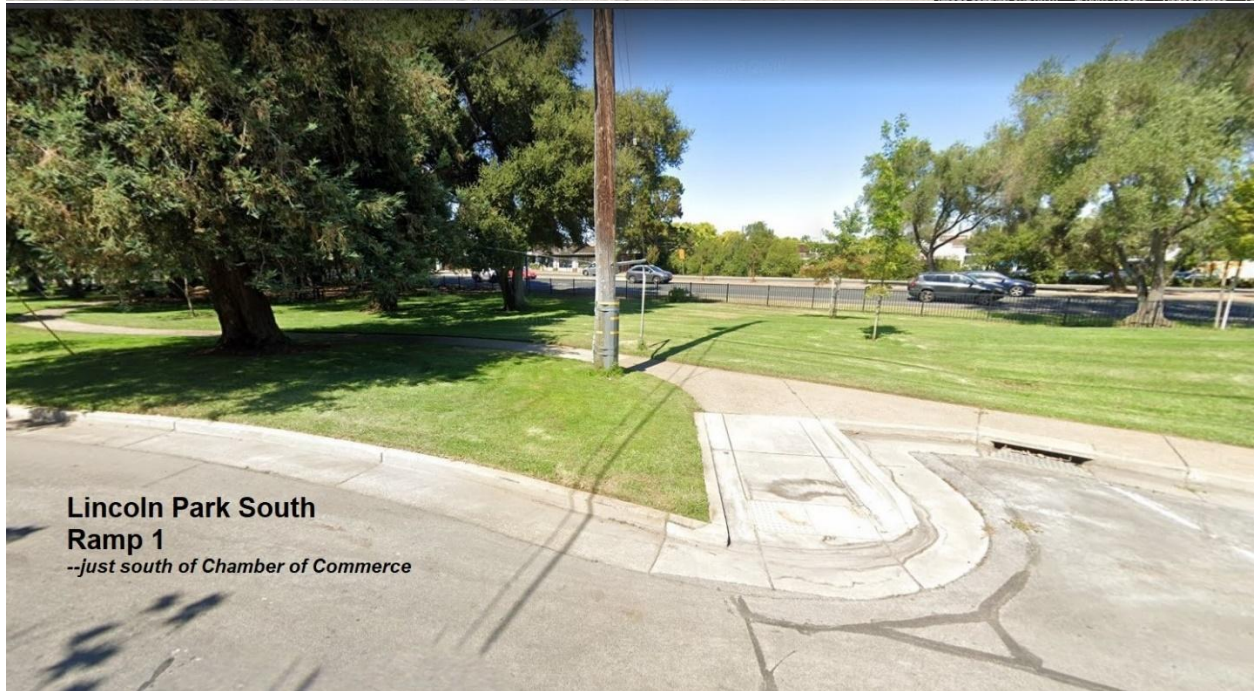






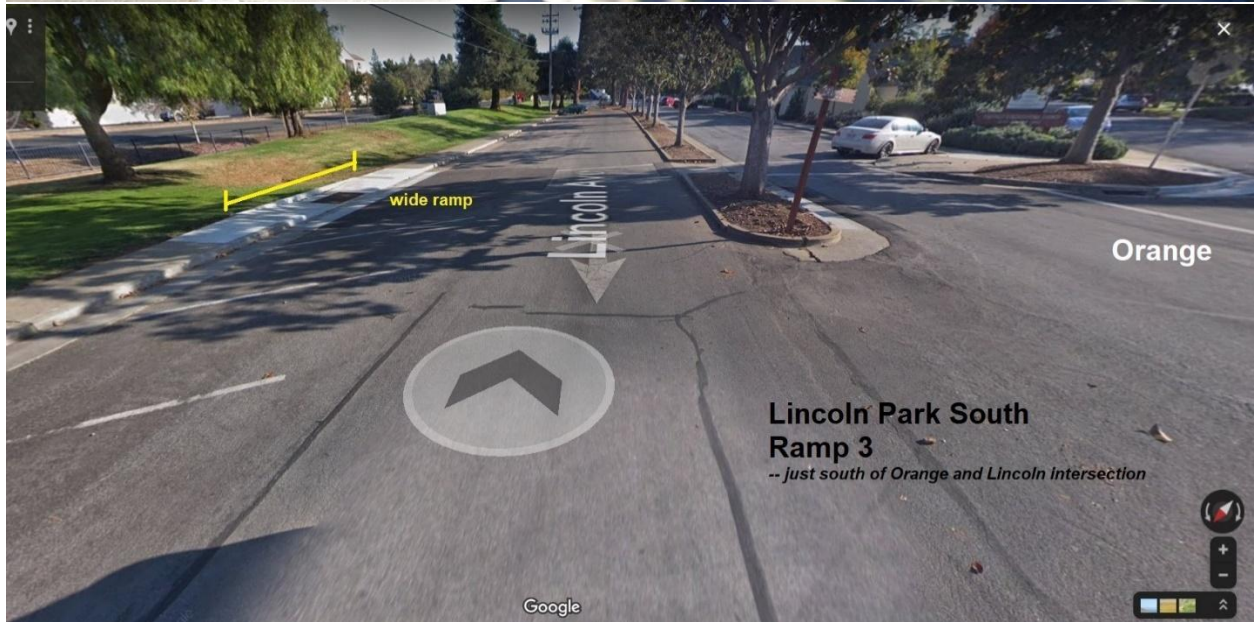
**Lincoln Park South  
Chamber of Commerce Building & Picnic Area**  
*--most northerly edge of park; next photos proceed southerly*

Google

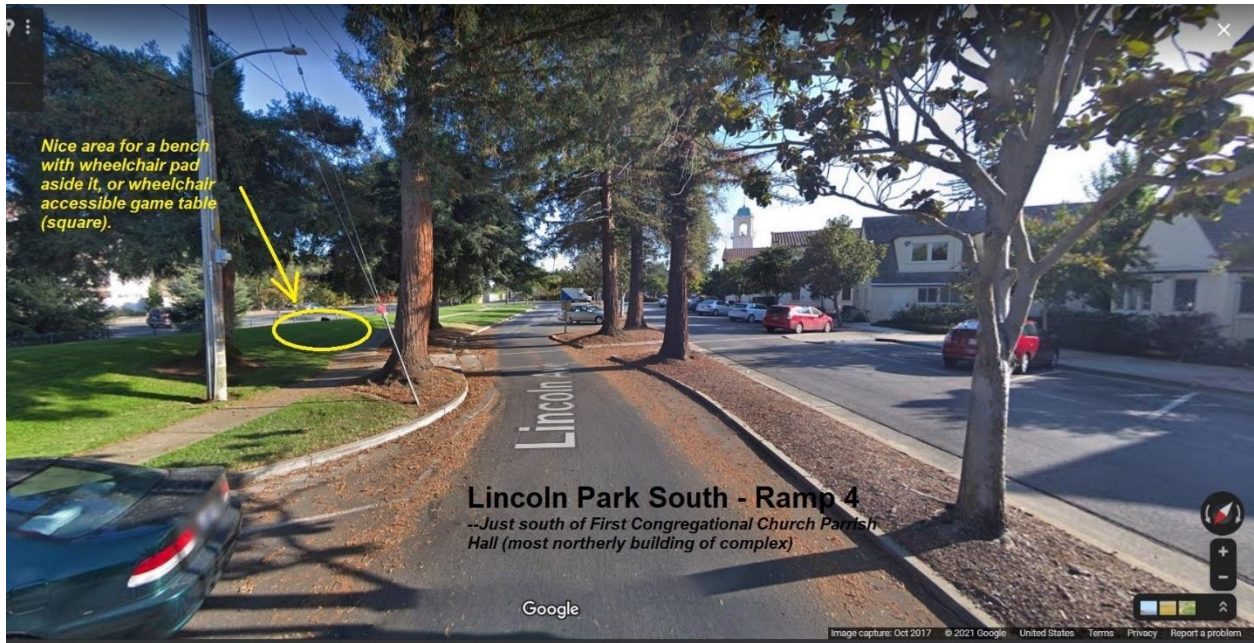


**Lincoln Park South  
Ramp 1**  
*--just south of Chamber of Commerce*





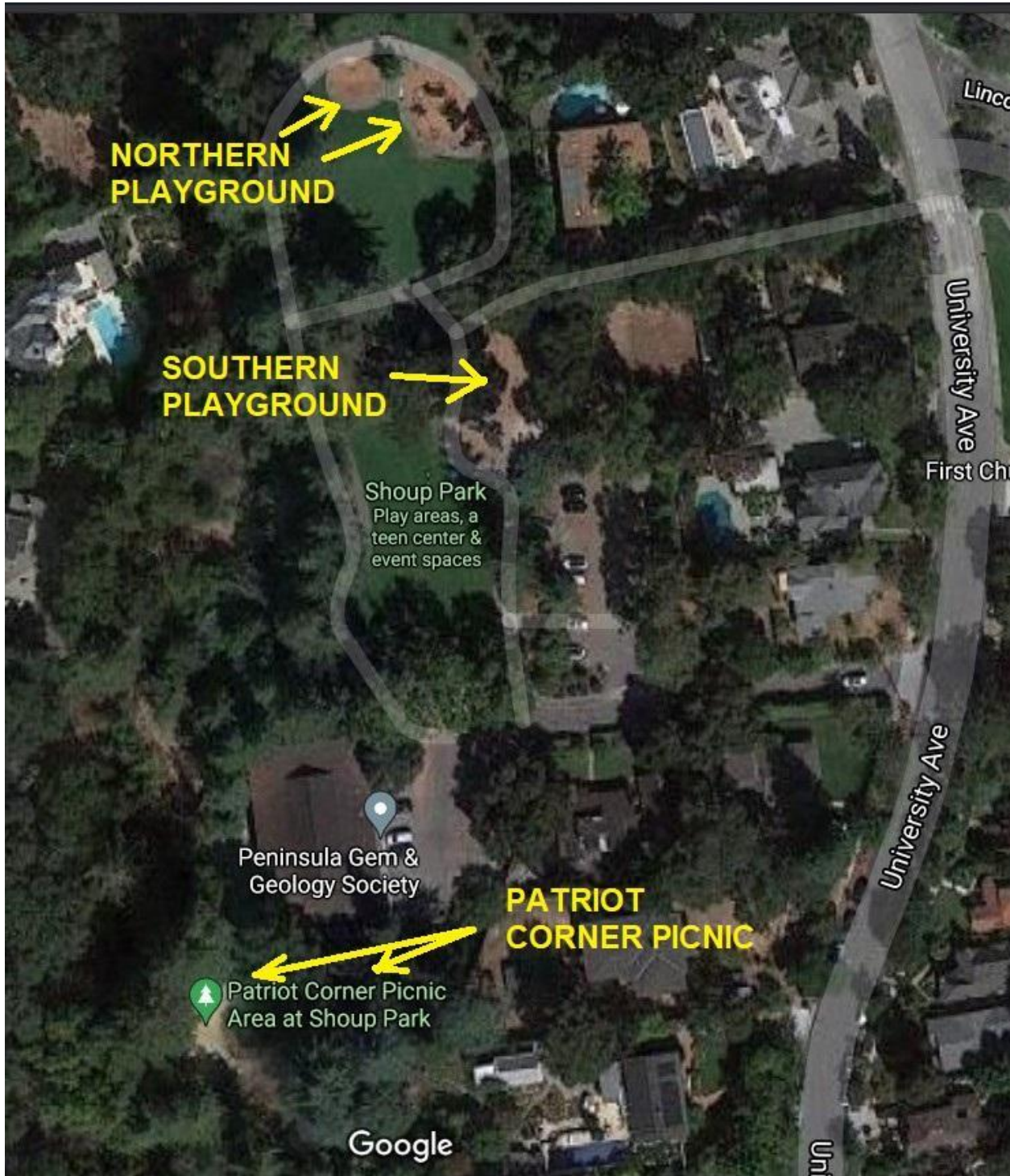




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# SHOUP PARK







- Shoup South Playground (2004) nearest Parking Lot:
  - Notes: Consider additional inclusive play structure features; ramp into structure area descends to bark.
  - Suggestion 1: Add on-grade accessible path and platform to left side swings, replace one swing with inclusive version.
  - Suggestion 2: Resurface entire area left of ramp in soft rubber play surface and replace 1-2 swings with inclusive model(s).
  - Suggestion 3: Modify Dinette feature to accommodate a wheelchair; add on-grade accessible path and platform to Dinette feature.









**Shoup Park  
Southern  
Playground** --view  
south from swings

"Dinette" feature



**Shoup Park Southern  
Playground** -- "Dinette" Feature



- Shoup North Playground (2004) farthest from Parking Lot:
  - Notes: two adjacent play rings (areas): East ring contains a swing structure supporting two swings; West ring contains a multi-featured play structure and ramps that descend into bark. Consider additional inclusive play structure features.
  - Suggestion 1: East ring: Replace one swing with an inclusive swing; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.
  - Suggestion 2: East Ring: Enlarge/extend existing swing structure to add 1-2 new inclusive swings or a single wheelchair-hosting swing. Add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature(s).
  - Suggestion 3: East Ring: Same as Suggestion 2 above except include soft rubberized surface.
  - Suggestion 4: West ring: Modify the circular horizontal ladder to hold a single inclusive feature; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.





**Shoup Park Northern Playground**  
*--Circular Monkey Bars feature*



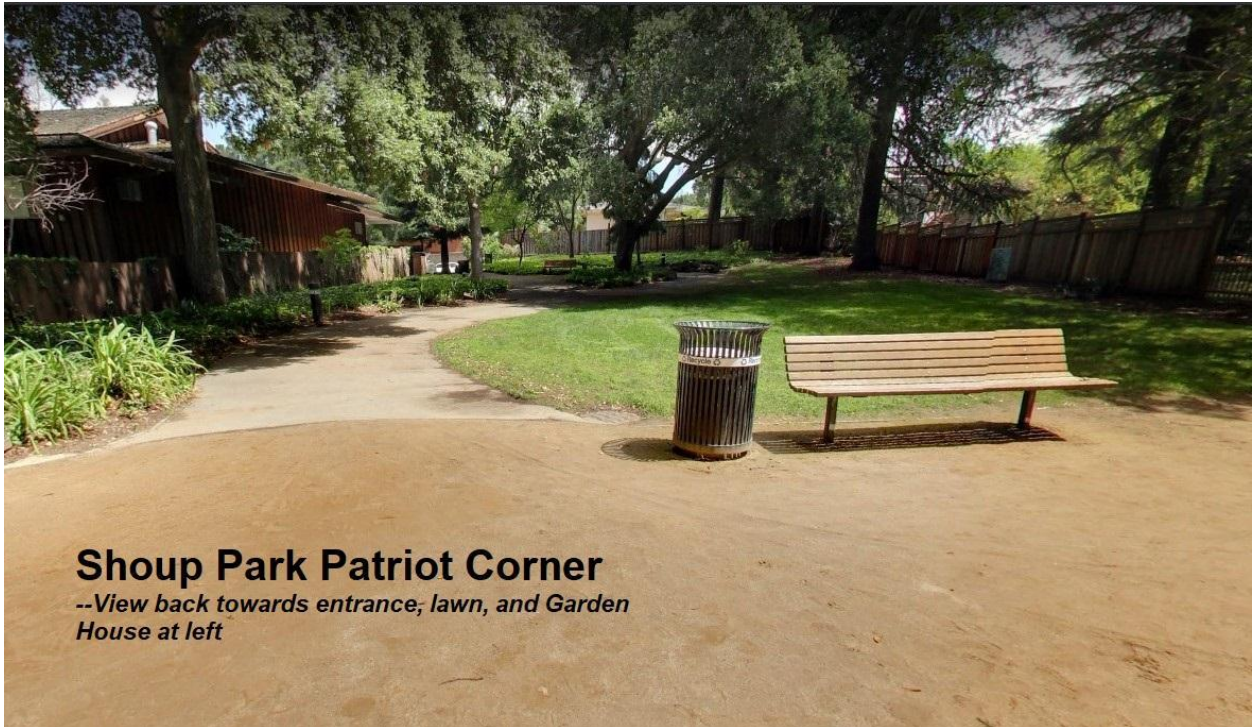
*(looking south)*

**Shoup Park  
Northern  
Playground --  
stand-alone swing  
structure in large  
area**

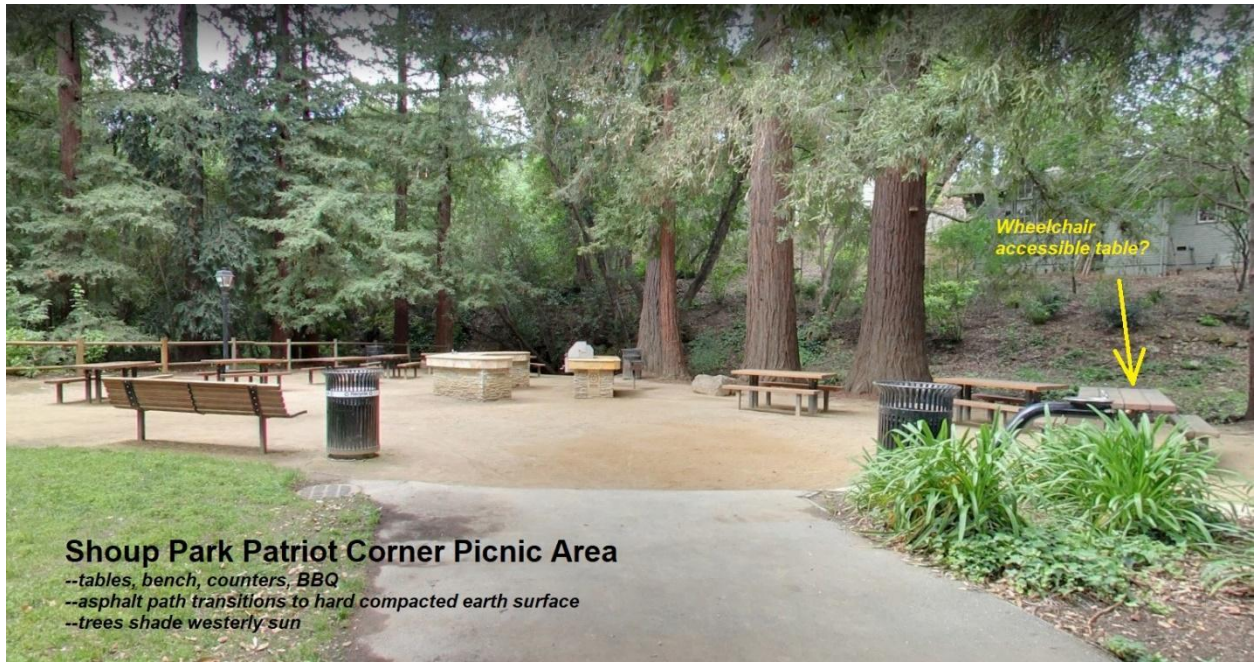




- Shoup Park Patriot Corner Picnic Area:
  - Notes: path from parking lot to picnic area is asphalt; picnic circle is compacted dirt surface; reasonably traversable with wheelchair; one table has extended top and may be wheelchair accessible. Consider adding inclusive seating and tables.
  - Suggestion 1: Replace 1-2 picnic tables with models that are wheelchair accessible and signify as such.
  - Suggestion 2: Move both trash receptacles away from bench, tables, and water fountain in order to eliminate differentiation in seating equity. Move receptacles to perimeter of picnic area and/or back toward the entrance adjacent to the asphalt path to make sure all tables are away from trash.







**Shoup Park Patriot Corner Picnic Area**

- tables, bench, counters, BBQ
- asphalt path transitions to hard compacted earth surface
- trees shade westerly sun



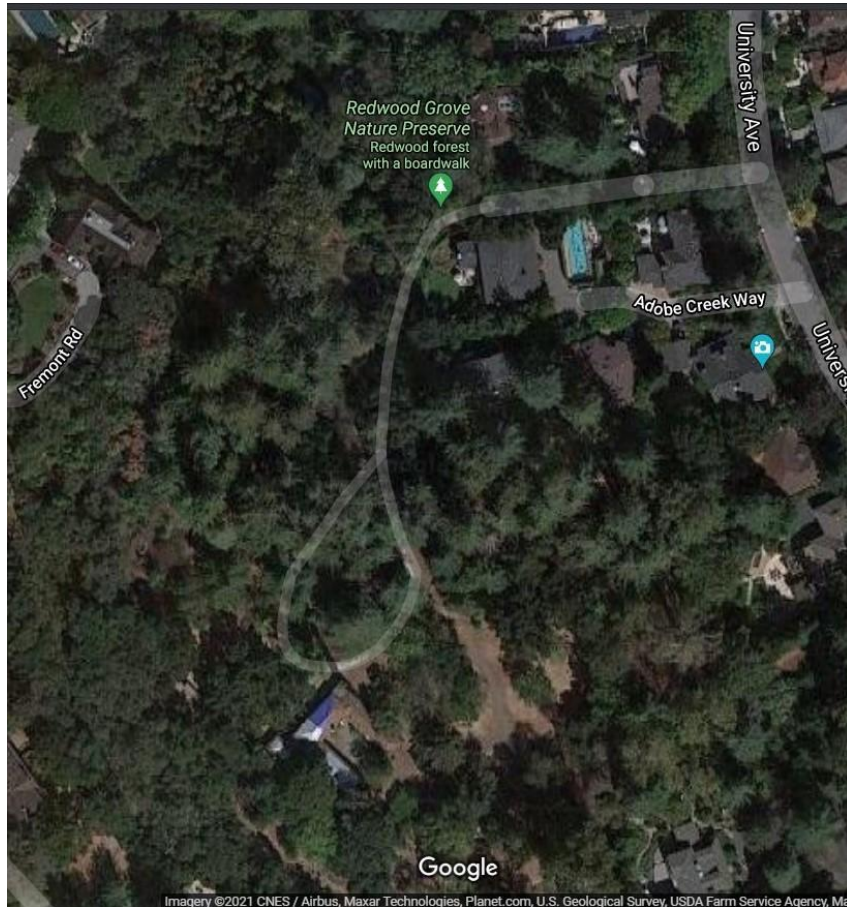
**Shoup Park Patriot Corner Picnic Area**

*--Is this a wheelchair accessible table?*

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## **REDWOOD GROVE**



- Notes: The initial path into the grove is accessible. Consider uneven transitions on boardwalk. Consider increasing accessibility in other portions of the park. Halsey House area was not inspected.
- At this time, we defer any specific suggestions to increase inclusivity at Redwood Grove pending decisions about the park by other City departments/groups.

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## **MONTCLAIRE PARK**

- Notes: Play structure for ages 2-5 years (2008). Bark-filled play area; consider additional inclusive play features and ways to increase access into the play area.
- Suggestion 1: Replace one of the swings with an inclusive model; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.
- Suggestion 2: Remove springy horse feature and install new inclusive feature atop synthetic playing surface connected to perimeter curb seamlessly.
- Suggestion 3: Modify 1-2 tables to accommodate wheelchair
- Suggestion 4: Smooth out swale at street entrance to park to allow wheelchair access.





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## **GRANT PARK:**

- Notes: All ages play structure (2008). Play area is all bark surrounded by curb. Consider additional inclusive play features.
- Suggestion 1: replace tire swing with 1-2 inclusive swings; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature(s).
- Suggestion 2: (no picture) modify bicycle feature to be inclusive by removing pedals; add on-grade accessible path and platform to enhanced feature.





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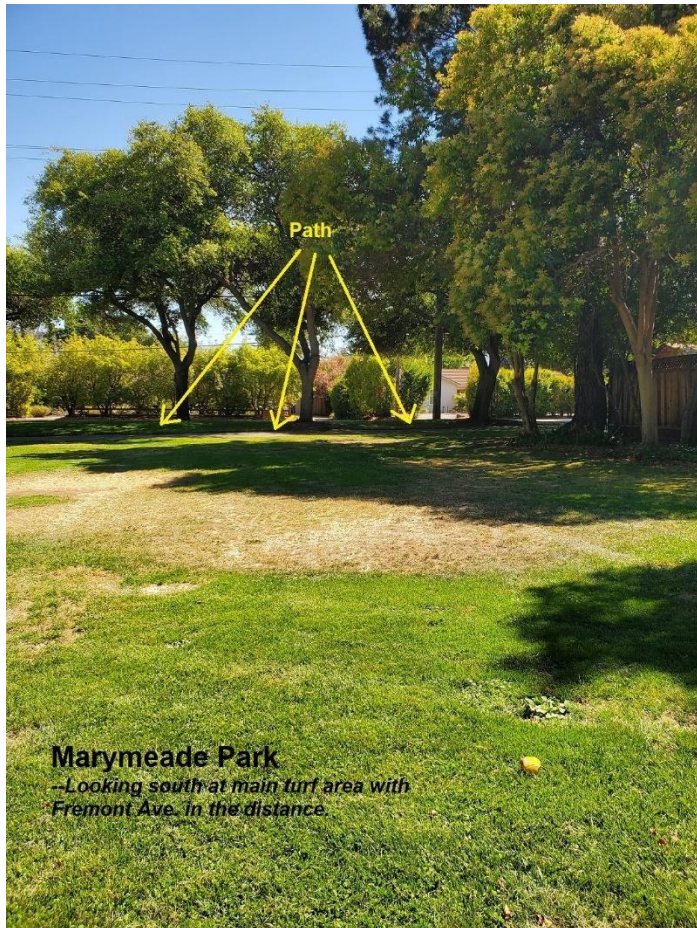


## **MARYMEADE PARK:**



- Notes: Multi-age playground (2007). Consider adding inclusive playground features; pit is bark. Large turf area extends south of playground and picnic areas; consider adding inclusive benches and tables.
- Suggestion 1: Install 1 bench with adjacent wheelchair pad or 1 wheelchair accessible gaming or picnic table at southwest edges of lawn area near Fremont so traversing lawn is not required.
- Suggestion 2: Replace 1 swing with inclusive model (at either youth or tot locations).
- Suggestion 3: Install an additional ramped path along eastern perimeter of bark pit from south to north and install table or bench at top (approximately at oval in photo below).
- Suggestion 4: Modify one picnic table in picnic area to be wheelchair accessible.
- Suggestion 5: Modify existing square gaming table at south edge of Tot structure (see photo) by removing one permanent stool to enable wheelchair access to table.
- Suggestion 6: Install 1 bench with adjacent wheelchair pad or 1 wheelchair accessible gaming or picnic table near path in shade just south of playground areas (not too close to bathrooms).









**Marymeade Park**  
-Looking north from main lawn at picnic area and west end of playground area (swings)



**Marymeade Park**  
-L to R: picnic area, swings, large play structure, small play structure, bench, tennis courts



# Marymeade Park

--Westerly view of playground structures;  
note game table in foreground



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## **HERITAGE OAKS:**



- Notes: Consider additional inclusive features on Play structure (2008) and on bouldering playground. Both play pits are all bark.
- Suggestion 1: Extend T-Bar for swings to add an inclusive model; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.
- Suggestion 2: Install wheelchair path to digging activity feature.
- Suggestion 3: Modify one picnic table to allow wheelchair accessibility.
- Suggestion 4: Install accessible surface at small play structure.

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## **McKENZIE PARK:**



- East Park Section: Southwest (SW) Play Structure Ages 5-12 (2007):
  - Notes: Playground surface is bark.
  - Suggestion 1: Extend existing swing structure to add an inclusive model. Add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.
  - Suggestion 2: Replace tire swing with wheelchair swing; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.
- East Park Section: Northeast (NE) Play Structure Ages 2-5 and Picnic Area (2007):
  - Notes: same as Ages 5-12 Play Structure.
  - Suggestion 1: Replace one of the tot swings with inclusive swing; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.
  - Suggestion 2: Modify table or counter features of play structure to allow wheelchair accessibility; add on-grade accessible path and platform to enhanced feature.
  - Suggestion 3: Modify one picnic table to allow wheelchair accessibility.
- West Park Section:
  - Notes: This section is buffered from residences, bound by medical offices on north, Tennis Courts and City yard on East, and Foothill Expressway southwesterly. There is an old Climbing Structure (age unknown) just west of the tennis courts.
  - Suggestion 1: Replace Climbing Structure with a substantially sized inclusive activity feature, such as a sound/musical item or a wheelchair-capable merry-go-round. Install inclusive surface.





**McKenzie Park East Park Section  
SW Olders Playground Structures**



**McKenzie Park SW  
Youth Play Structure**





**McKenzie Park East Park Section Youngers  
Play Structure, Tot Swings, & Picnic Area**





**McKenzie Park  
West Section**

- Climbing Structure*
- Picnic Area*
- decent open turf  
area behind  
photographer.*



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## **ROSITA PARK:**

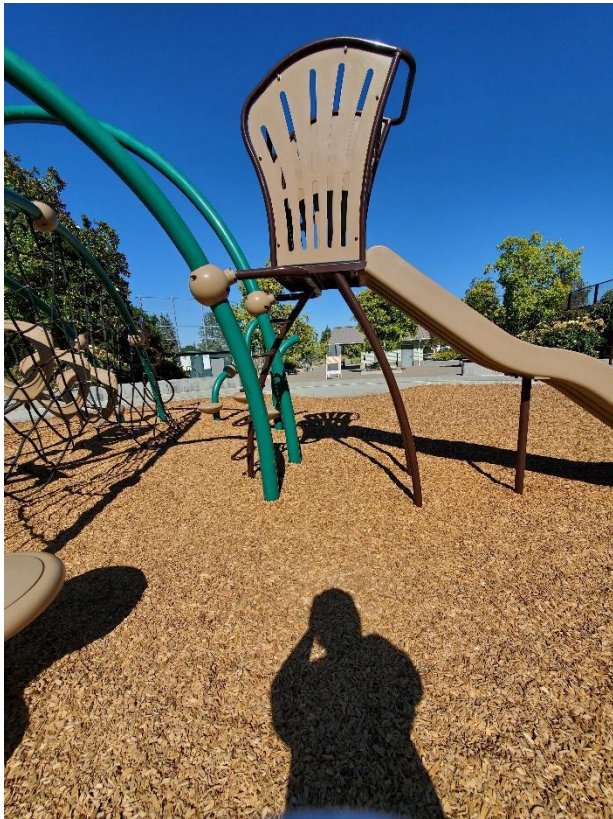


- Notes: Large all-ages play structure (2011); playground surfaces are bark. There are concrete ramps down into the bark. This playground is sun-intensive and, despite community members elsewhere in the park, there were no children on the play structure. There is substantial open space in this playground area. Consider adding shade and additional inclusive features.
- Suggestion 1: Add shade sails on southerly sides of play structure.
- Suggestion 2: Assess “Telephone” Feature for wheelchair accessibility and add on-grade accessible path and platform to this feature.
- Suggestion 3: Install a new inclusive feature in the open space within the perimeter of the playground; add on-grade accessible path and platform to new feature.
- Suggestion 4: Install 1-2 additional game (square) tables that are wheelchair accessible. I have included a picture of one that already exists, though non-benched sides need to be extended. (Note: This type of table is what we are suggesting for Village Park.)





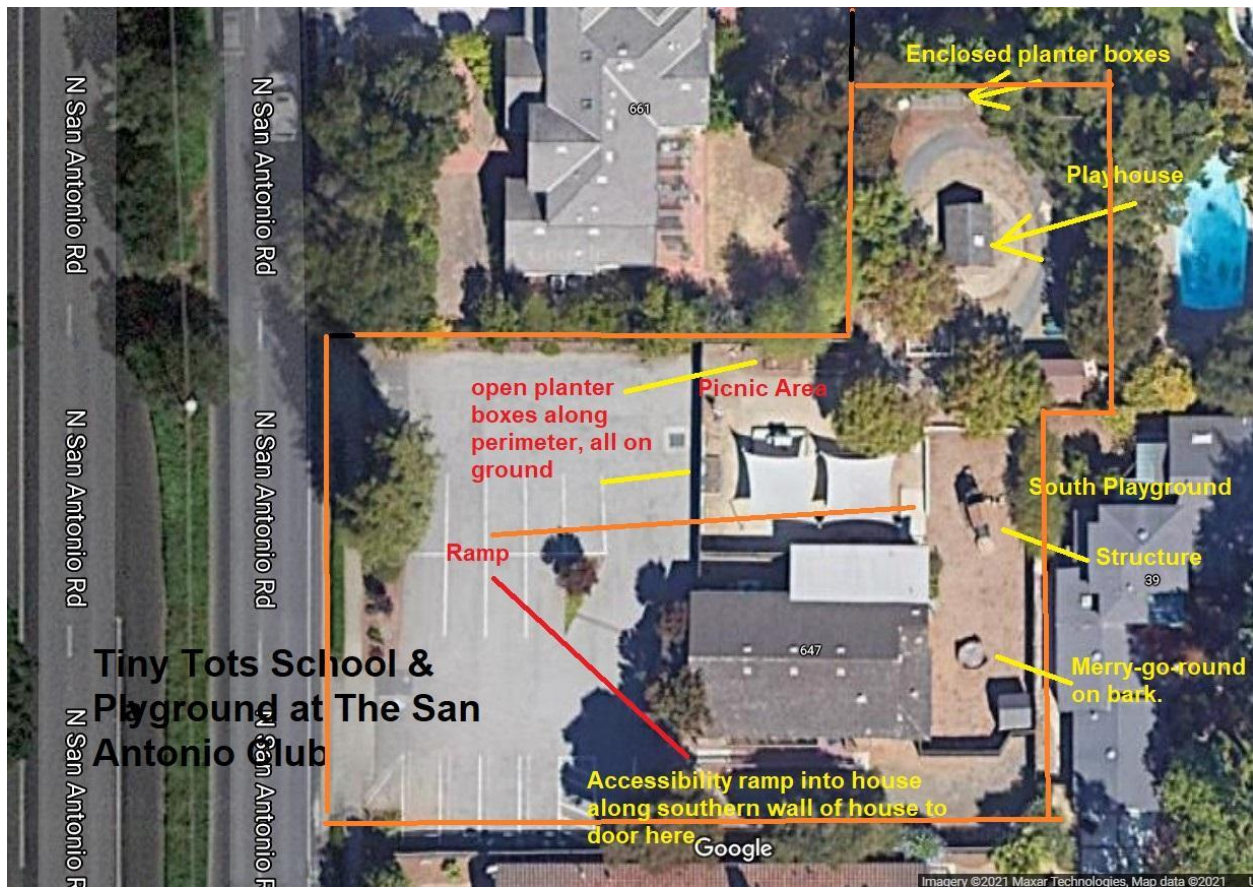




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## **TINY TOTS SCHOOL AND PLAYGROUND AT THE SAN ANTONIO CLUB:**



- Status: Due to lack of open public access, we are providing a more detailed description of this park. (Ignore cleaning supplies visible in pictures as the school was being prepared for opening.) Several excellent activities. Explore additional inclusive features including tables. Southeast Playground Area is in bark with play structure (2011) located at north end. There is a seamless concrete ramp to the bark grade (no curb). There is a semi-accessible merry-go-round (requires a lifted transfer to enter) at the south end. Consider enhancing accessible paths and accessibility to the mini-playhouse. Compacted earth and an asphalt path cover most of the rest of the ground surface, which is acceptable for wheelchairs, walkers, and crutches. Good shade everywhere – sails and tree canopies -- EXCEPT over southeast playground area. As long as the programs do not extend into afternoon, this should be okay, but once all-day school is implemented, area becomes quite sun-intensive. This large yard has tremendous potential.
- Suggestion 1: Add on-grade accessible path to the merry-go-round.
- Suggestion 2: Install new inclusive activity feature in the northeast corner of the Playhouse Yard.
- Suggestion 3: Modify 1-2 activity boxes by elevating their height to be wheelchair accessible.
- Suggestion 4: Modify 1 picnic table to be wheelchair accessible.
- Suggestion 5: Add ramp from asphalt up onto playhouse platform; widen Playhouse entry to accommodate child's wheelchair.





Tiny Tots northwest corner

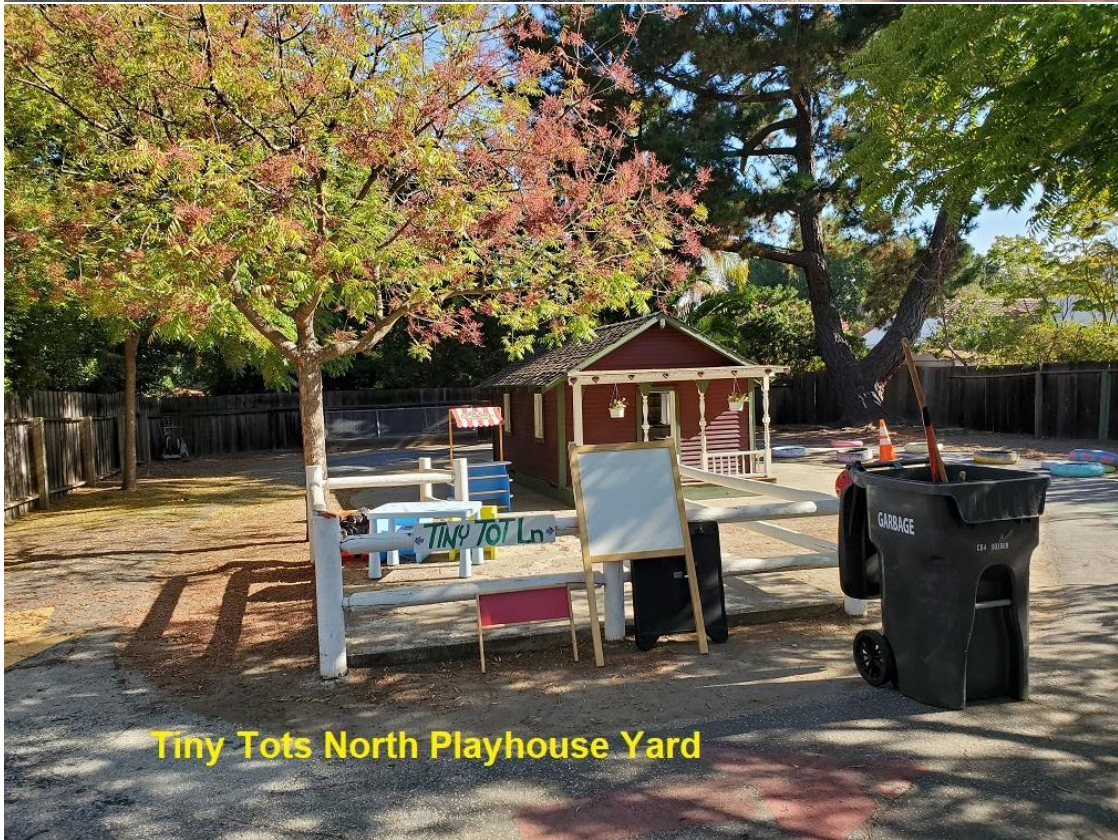


Tiny Tots  
Westerly North  
Fence





**Tiny Tots West Side of North Playhouse Yard**



**Tiny Tots North Playhouse Yard**





**Tiny Tots East Side of North Playhouse Yard**



**Tiny Tots Southeast Playground Area**

**Ramp**





asphalt path

Tiny Tots Enclosed Planting boxes at North fence of Playhouse Yard



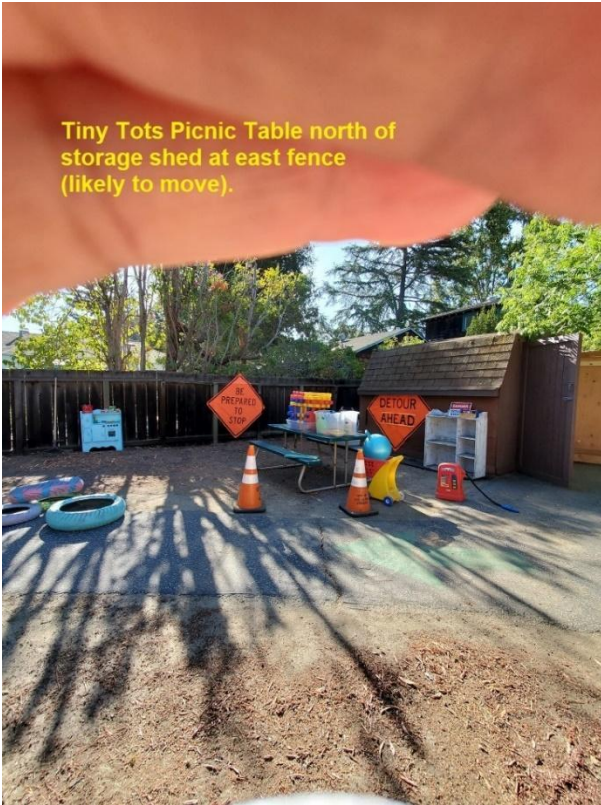
Playhouse Interior looking North



Tiny Tots Northeast corner of Playhouse Yard



Tiny Tots Picnic Table north of storage shed at east fence (likely to move).





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=====END OF REPORT





# *Enhancing Park Inclusivity*

September 8, 2021

Los Altos PARC

JEDI Subcommittee Report

Commissioners Teresa Morris, Jeanine Valadez

**Parks  
Make  
Life  
Better!**



# Agenda

- Present Project Update: Inclusive Park Assessment Report
- Next Steps
- Subcommittee Ask of PARC





# Method for This Park Assessment

- Walked through every park in Los Altos - some interaction with visitors
- Noted each park's general features: surfaces, shade, sound, access, structures
- Compiled maps and photos for each park, highlighting features and qualitative attributes
- After reviewing Landscape Structures' catalog and other sources, brainstormed suggestions for each park that would enhance inclusivity beyond our current compliance with ADA requirements





# Some Considerations

The report is a brainstorm compilation; did not consider:

- End of Life (EOL) of targets, suitability, compatibility, community input, cost

The assessments are qualitative and subjective

- No measurements, no infrastructure requirements, no cost assessment

The focus was on increasing inclusivity for those who use park features

- We did not make assessments for those with disabilities who are custodians of users of park features

The suggestions aim to enhance user experiences across ages and abilities





# Suggested Potential Changes

- Add shade: Shade is a major enabler to the utility of our recreation spaces and structures
- Add/Enhance paths to tables
- Build community with more game & picnic tables and bench seating
- Replace/add play structure features with additional inclusive ones
  - ✓ Swings, merry-go-rounds, sound feature, raised activity tables, others
  - ✓ Enhance/add some paths, platforms, and ramps to new features
- Convert some surfaces to soft rubber or sealed decomposed granite
- Consider enhancement opportunities in some non-turf empty spaces



# Next Steps

- Meet with Staff and playground manufacturers to discuss options, feasibility, and costs
- Derive several scenarios that prioritize suggestions based on economies of scale, installation efficiencies, and budget
- Narrow down the list to a few feasible opportunities
- Compile a first pass implementation plan and present to PARC





# In Closing: Subcommittee Ask of PARC

- Receive Park Assessment Report
- Q&A on Subcommittee's approach, process, and next steps

