



CALIFORNIA LAND RECYCLING CONFERENCE

Imagine | Innovate | Implement
September 29 – October 1, 2026 | Foster City

AN EQUITY AND PARKS SUCCESS STORY

| Park Creation in Ashland | California _ _ _ _ _



OFFICE OF BROWNFIELDS
Department of Toxic Substances Control | Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative



CENTER FOR CREATIVE
LAND RECYCLING
RECLAIM. CONNECT. TRANSFORM.

SPEAKERS



SARAH FINGERHOOD

Center for Creative Land
Recycling



PETER TRIO

WRT



KIRA MARITANO

Trust for Public Land



BRIAN LACZKO

Hayward Area Recreation and
Park District

AN EQUITY AND PARKS SUCCESS STORY:

Park Creation in Ashland CA



AGENDA

1. **FRAMING** - Sarah
2. **VISION, FINANCE, ACQUISITION** - Brian
3. **PARTNERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT** - Kira
4. **COMMUNITY – INSPIRED DESIGN** - Peter
5. **Q & A** – Sarah



Community members gathering for a World Cup screening event at Ashland Zocalo, June 2026

WHY LAND SITS IDLE

Common drivers of underutilization

UNDERUTILIZED SITES: A broader catch-all for land not being used to its full potential

- **BROWNFIELDS:** Property where redevelopment or reuse is complicated by the presence (or potential presence) of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant (e.g., *former gas stations, dry cleaners, industrial sites*)
- **GREYFIELDS:** Formerly-viable retail and commercial shopping sites that have suffered from lack of reinvestment (e.g., *dead malls, vacant strip centers, empty office parks*)
- **VACANT/ABANDONED LAND:** "vacant" as the broad umbrella (no current occupant) and "abandoned" as a subset showing signs of owner neglect, deterioration, or unclear ownership

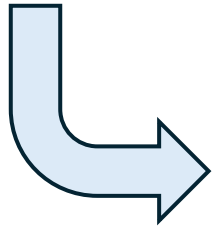


Dr. Nina Scarido Park
Lawrence, MA
GroundWork Lawrence

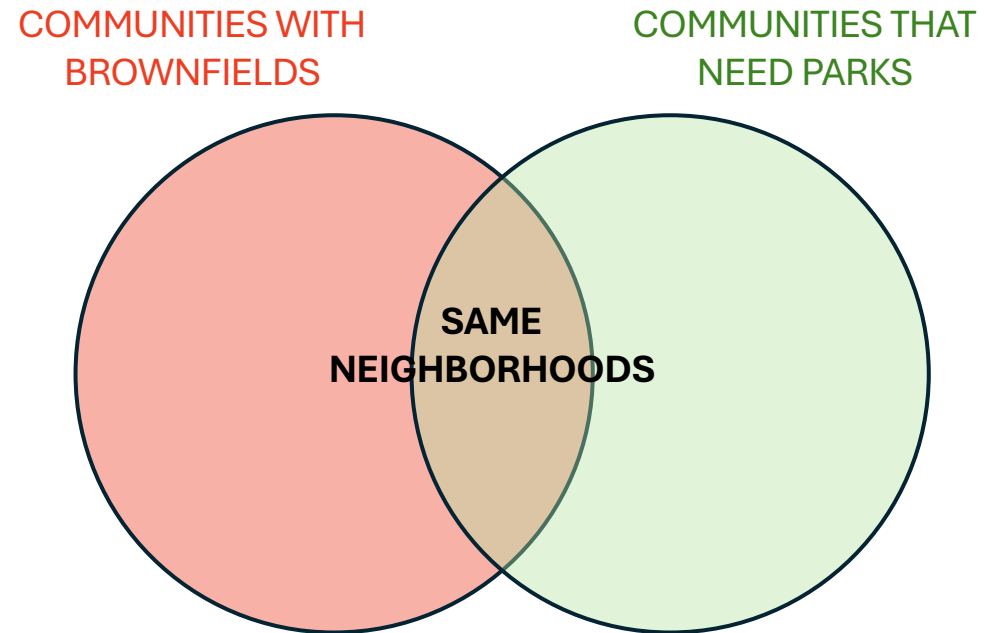
COMPOUNDING BURDENS

The same root cause creates both burdens, in the same neighborhood

- Historic zoning and redlining concentrated pollution in low-income, immigrant, and minority neighborhoods
- The same disinvestment left those neighborhoods without parks or greenspace



The communities sitting on brownfields are disproportionately the same communities that need parks most



PARKS AS AN UNDERUTILIZED END USE

The environmental justice & political-financial case for centering parks in remediation

The community won't show up to fight for a soil cap. They will show up for a park

- Parks aren't just an amenity— they build the **constituency, political will, and funding narrative** that makes remediation viable.
- Unlock **funding stacks**: park bonds, EJ grants, cleanup grants, green infrastructure funds
- Lower-intensity reuse can mean a **faster, less costly** path to cleanup standards than commercial or industrial redevelopment
- Public funding comes with **built-in community engagement** — more say in shaping the end use than other reuse paths

WHAT A PARK ACTUALLY DELIVERS

The benefits of park development are uniquely reciprocal to the impacts of brownfields



HEALTH: Removes contamination exposure, adds active recreation



ENVIRONMENT/SUSTAINABILITY : Habitat restoration, reduced heat island effect, improved land, water, and air quality



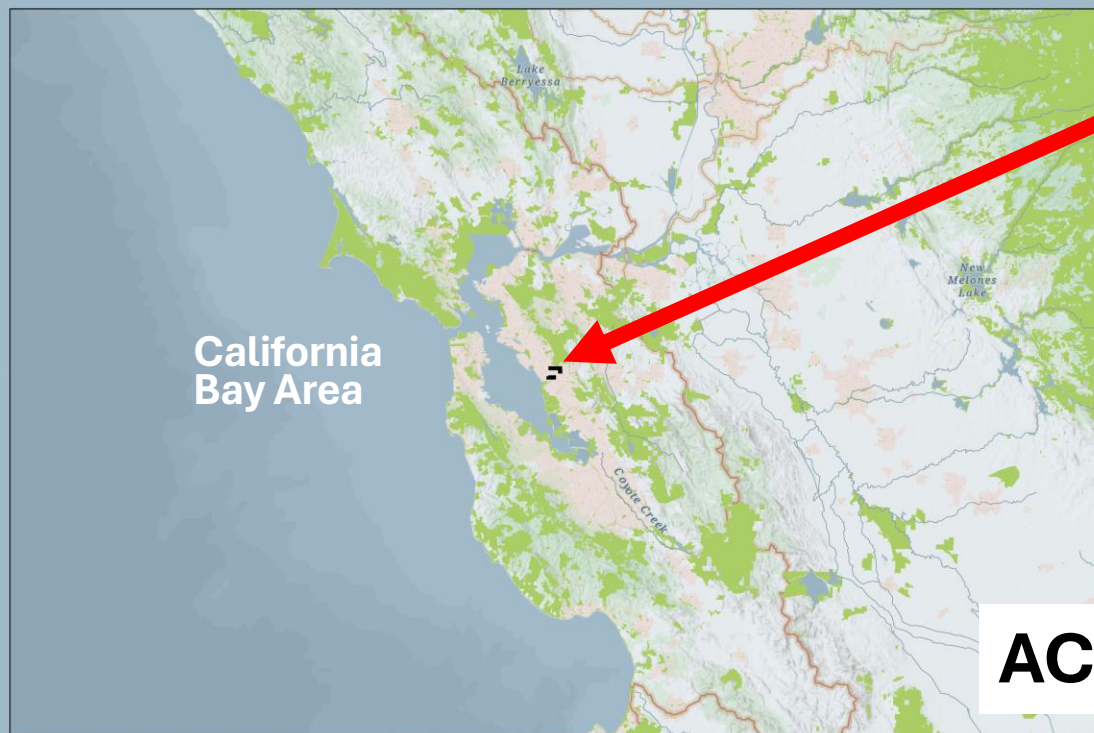
COMMUNITY: Public space, culturally responsive design and programming, invites stewardship



ECONOMIC: Job creation, improved property values, spurred investment

The same neighborhood facing contamination exposure is also facing health, climate, and disinvestment burdens that a park can offset.

PROJECT CONTEXT



ACTIVATING ASHLAND!

**San
Leandro**

Tow Yard,
RV Storage &
Empty Businesses

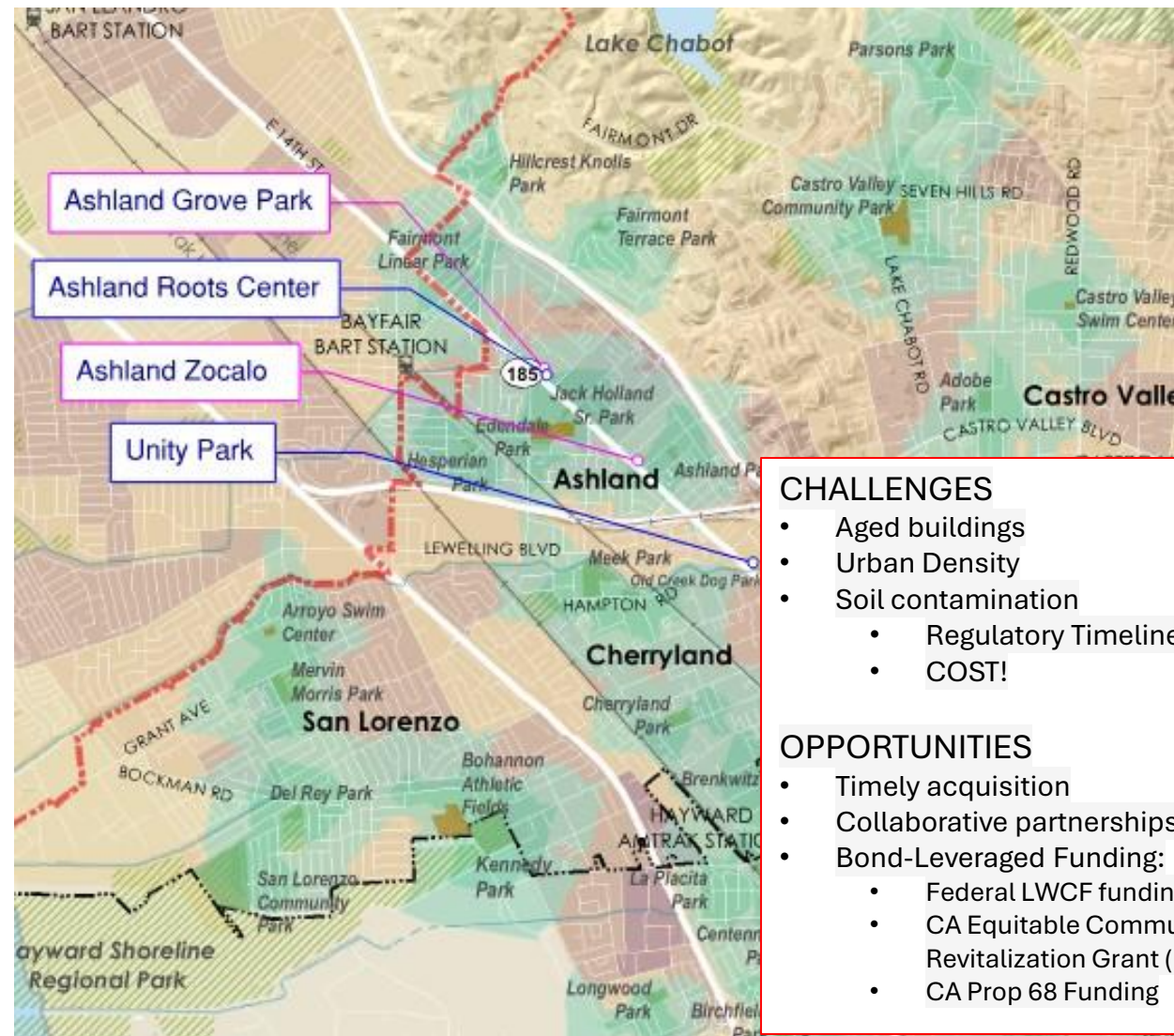
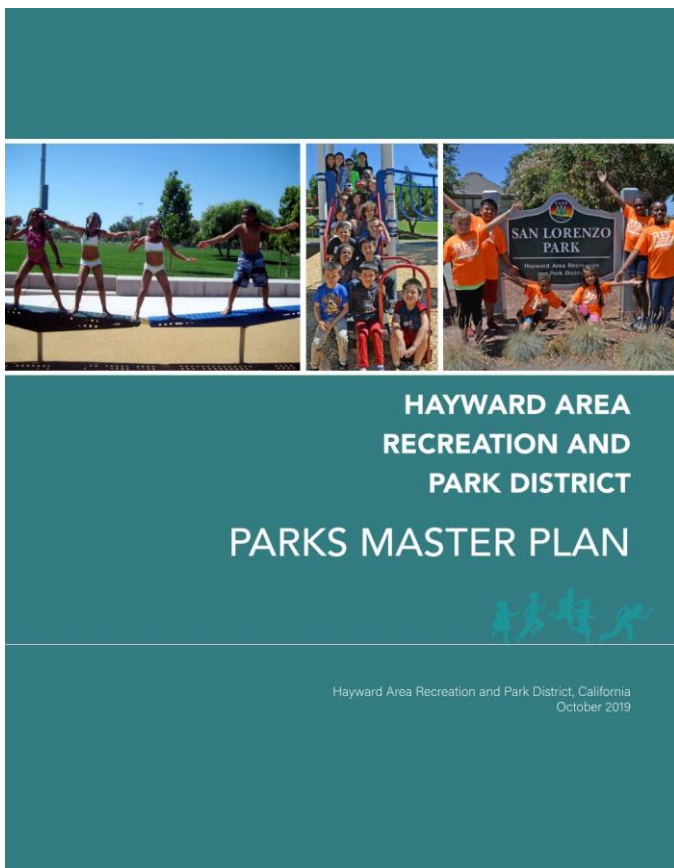
Ashland

Car Lot

Industrial Site

Cherryland

Hayward



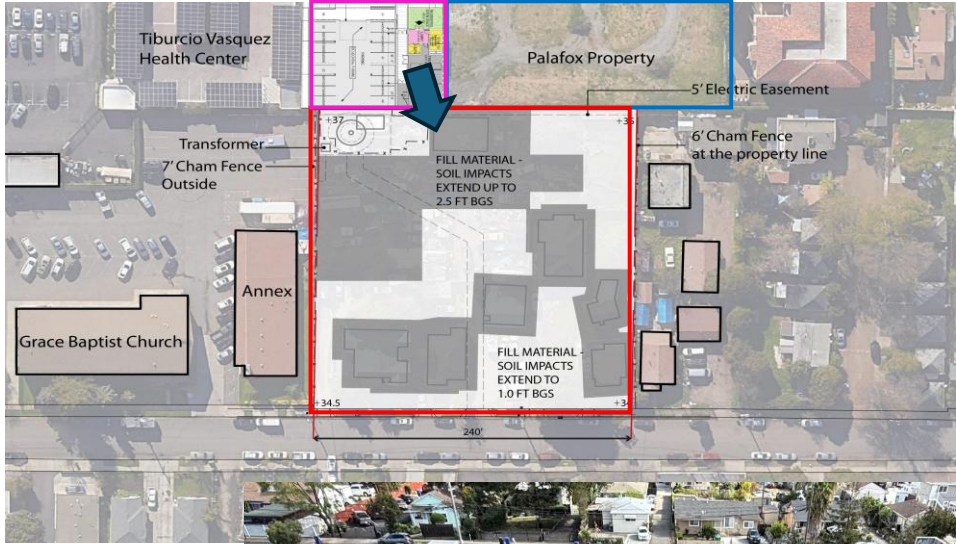
CHALLENGES

- Aged buildings
- Urban Density
- Soil contamination
 - Regulatory Timelines
 - COST!

OPPORTUNITIES

- Timely acquisition
- Collaborative partnerships
- Bond-Leveraged Funding:
 - Federal LWCF funding
 - CA Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG)
 - CA Prop 68 Funding

ACTIVATING ASHLAND !



Excavation Begins!

NAVIGATING A CHALLENGING SITE



**THEN,
ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY VISION**



**TRUST FOR
PUBLIC
LAND®**

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

About Us

**We create parks and protect land for
people, ensuring healthy, livable communities
for generations to come.**

Photo: Joe Martinez



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TPL's Park Development Program



**Building and
Improving
Parks & Trails**



**Green
Schoolyard
Initiatives**



**Creating and
Leveraging
Public Funding**



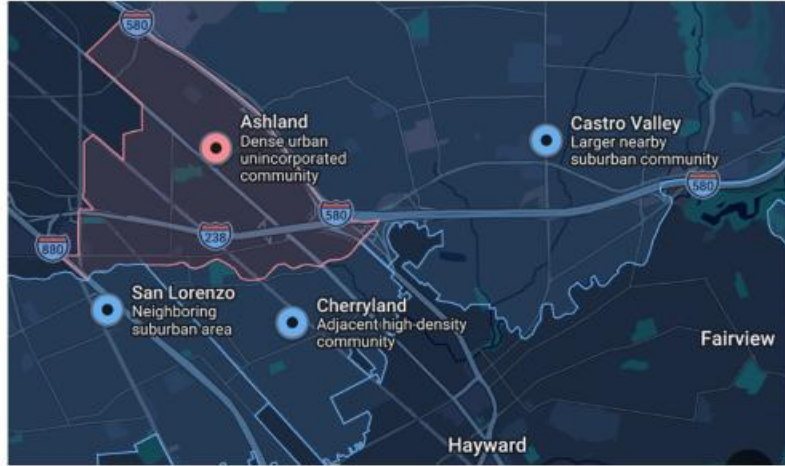
**Planning and
Technical
Assistance**



**Building
Capacity and
Stewardship**

COMMUNITY AT THE CENTER

- Prioritizing critically underserved communities



Today in the U.S.
100 million people,
including 28 million kids,
don't have a park within a
10-minute walk of home.



COMMUNITY AT THE CENTER

- Working in partnership to make change



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COMMUNITY AT THE CENTER

- Multi-Modal Engagement, Listening



A NEW PARK FOR ASHLAND
UN NUEVO PARQUE PARA ASHLAND / ASHLAND을 위한 새로운 공원

TELL US WHAT YOU WANT IN A FUTURE PARK ON MATEO STREET
Cuéntanos lo que quieres en un futuro parque en la calle Mateo
당신이 무엇인지 알려주세요 Mateo Street의 미래 공원에서.

YOUR PARTICIPATION CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN!
Tu participación puede hacer que suceda
귀하의 참여 그렇게 할 수 있습니다

ONLINE SURVEY!
CLOSES OCTOBER 20TH
(Responde nuestra encuesta en línea
Cierre el 20 de octubre
온라인 설문 조사에 참여하세요) 10월 20일 종료

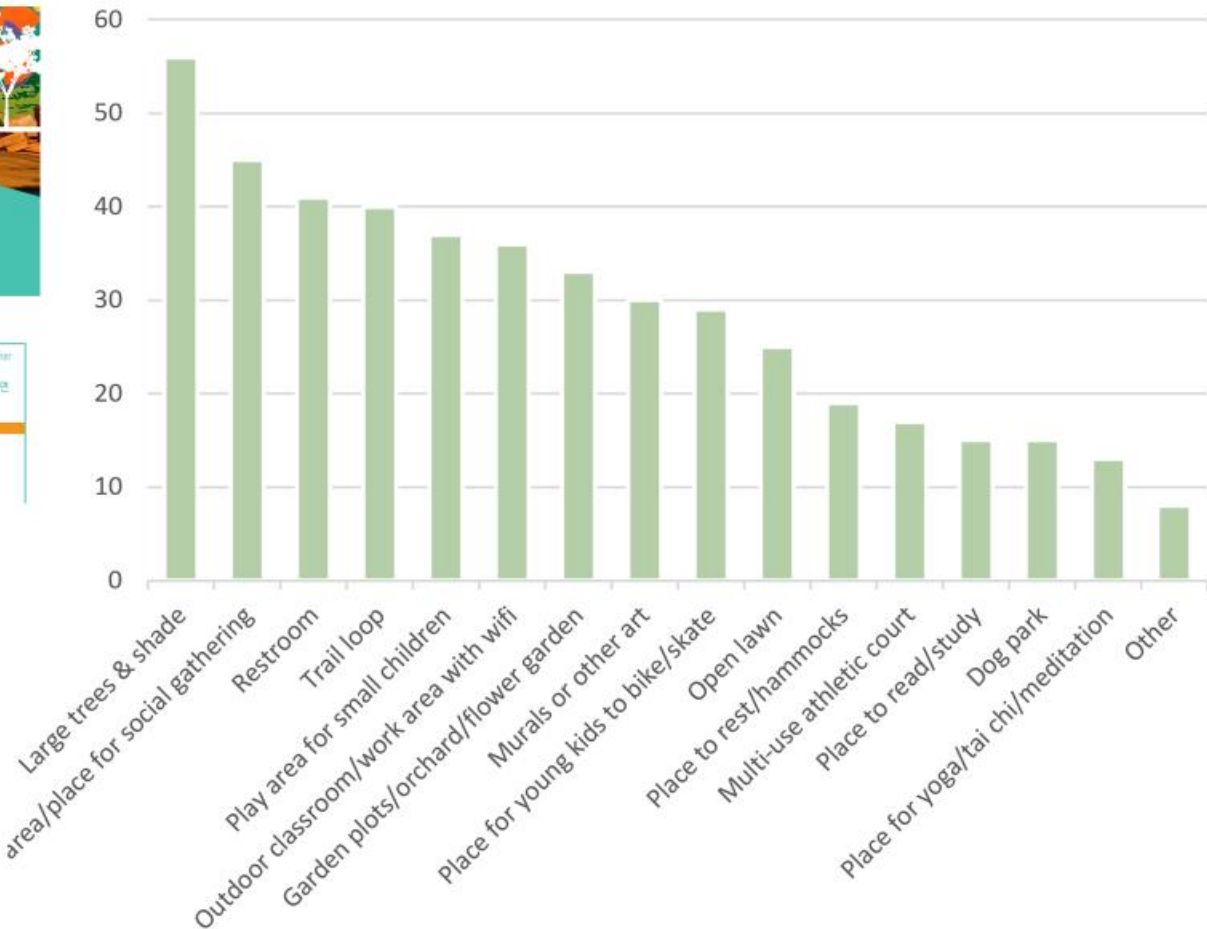
PARK WORKSHOP SATURDAY, OCT 24 1PM
(Participa en un taller virtual de Diseño de Parque
Taller del Parque el sábado 24 de octubre 1pm
가상 공원 디자인 워크숍에 참여하세요) 10월 24일 토요일 오후 1시

SIGN UP TO LEARN MORE
(Regístrate para obtener más información.
자세히 알아 보려면 가입하세요)

VISIT THE WEBSITE!
(Visita el sitio web! 웹 사이트를 방문하십시오!)

<https://qrco.de/mateostreet>

Which of the following features would you most like to see in a new park in Ashland?



A screenshot of a virtual meeting. The main window shows a presentation slide with three park layout options: 'Outdoor Living Room', 'Backyard Green', and 'The Gardens'. The slide includes the text 'Imagine being in each of these parks? Which layout would you like the best?' and 'If you could choose one concept, which would you choose?'. There are three arrows pointing to the layouts with the text 'use me'. The right side of the screen shows a grid of video feeds of participants.

COMMUNITY AT THE CENTER

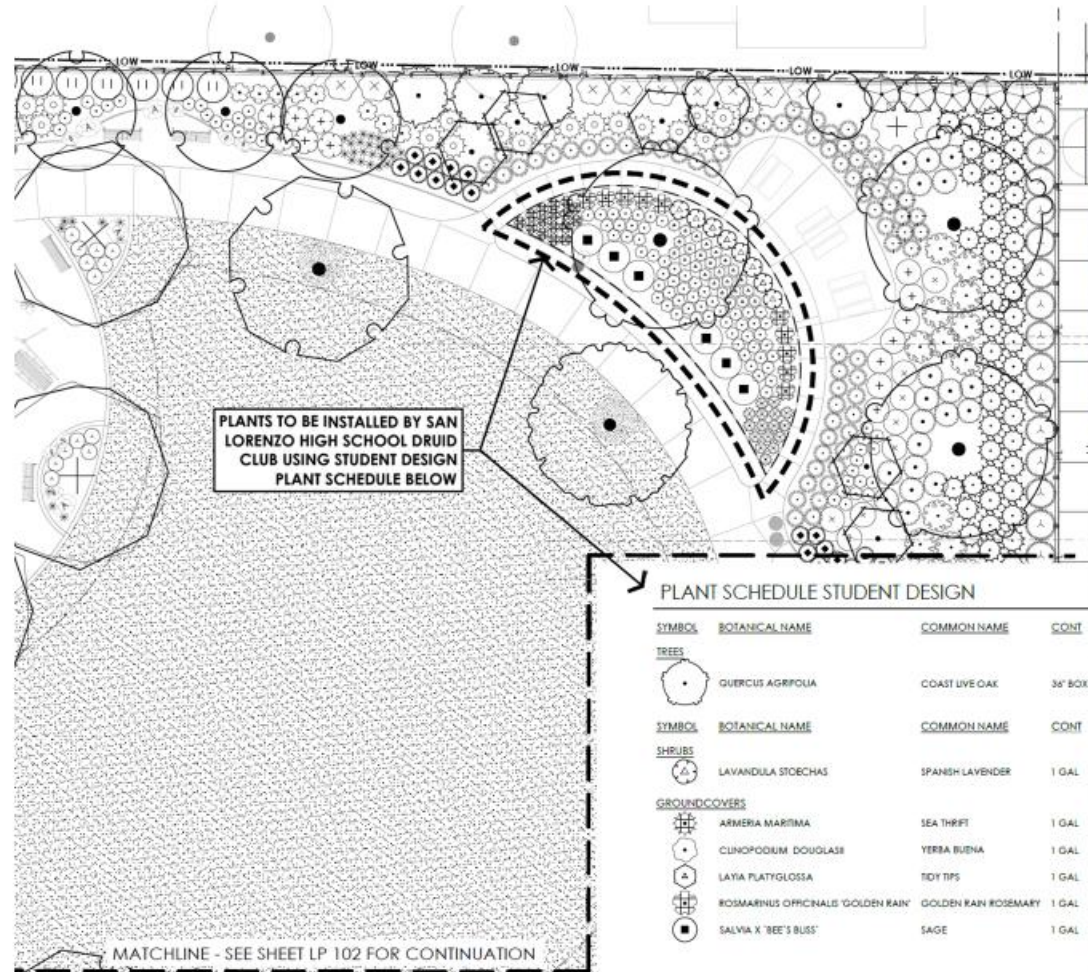
- Placemaking & Participatory Design



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COMMUNITY AT THE CENTER

- Connection and stewardship
- Project-based learning for local youth



BUILDING CAPACITY FOR FUTURE CHAMPIONS



Local High School Druids Club pollinator planting



Same planting area 1 year later!

COMMUNITY-INSPIRED DESIGN

Maintaining a community vision through site constraints, complexity, and challenges

FROM CAR DEALERSHIP TO GREYFIELD



2009 – Used Car Dealership



2010 – Greyfield

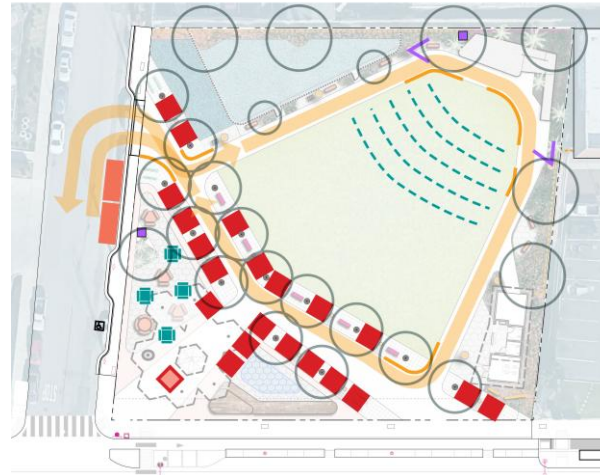


2017 – Futsal Courts

FROM DESIGN TO VISION



DESIGN VISION



PROGRAMMING VISION

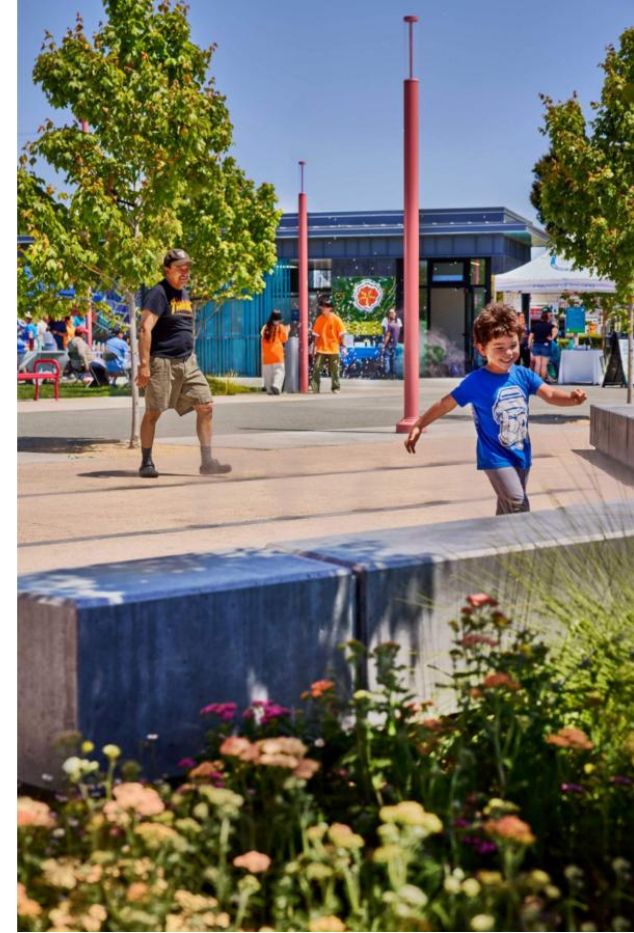


CONSTRUCTION



2025 DELIVERY

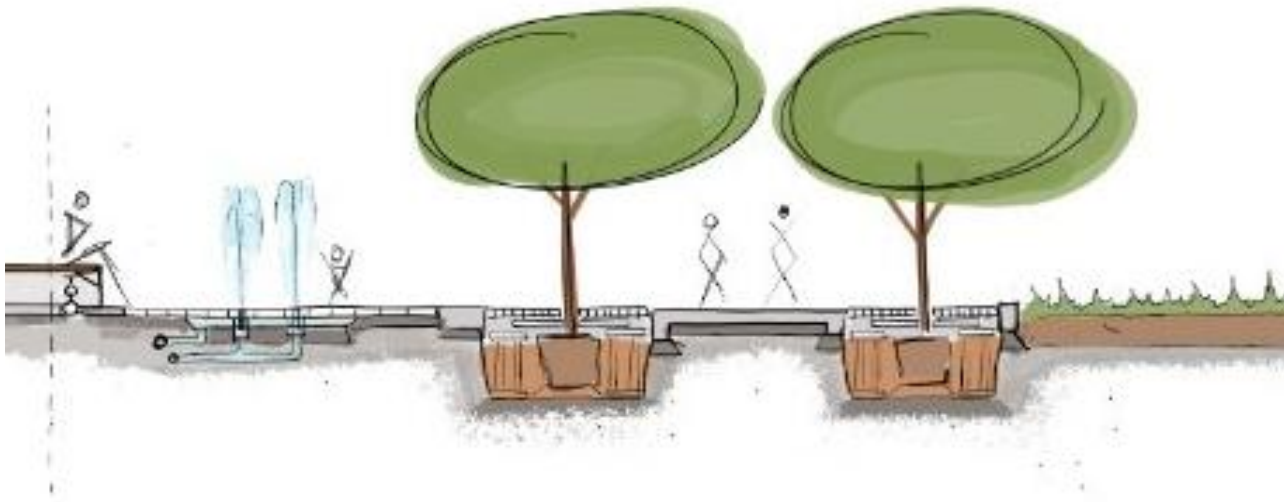
A Vibrant Community = A Vibrant Design



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DESIGN APPROACH

- Shade & Urban Cooling
- Creating a Town Center/Gateway



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The First of Many New Community Living Rooms for Ashland



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AUDIENCE Q&A

Moderated by Sarah



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THANK YOU!

IMAGINE, INNOVATE, IMPLEMENT
THE FUTURE OF LAND RECYCLING



We appreciate your feedback, follow this QR code
to submit an evaluation form on Whova.

**Join the conversation, use #CALRC2026 to share
your photos, insights and highlights!**



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