

Plan and take your own eco-outdoor adventure!

Ethan Liang, elcago, The Harker School

Project That Inspired Me

Brilliant Detroit Pocket Parks

What they do: Brilliant Detroit transforms vacant lots and underutilized spaces in Detroit neighborhoods into vibrant pocket parks. These small-scale green spaces (often under half an acre) create significant community impact in areas that historically lacked access to nature.

What I Learned:

- Small spaces, big impact: You don't need acres to make a difference - even a corner lot can transform a neighborhood
- Community-centered design: Involving residents ensures the space actually meets their needs
- Equity matters: Prioritizing underserved areas ensures everyone has access to green space, not just wealthy neighborhoods
- Multi-functional design: Successful spaces serve multiple purposes - play, gathering, habitat, stormwater management
- Native plants work: Low-maintenance, drought-tolerant natives reduce costs while maximizing ecological benefits

The Location I Chose

Campbell Civic Center Parking Lot

Corner Section: ~2,500 square feet

Campbell Avenue, Campbell, CA

Why This Location Matters:

Current State: A corner section of the Campbell Civic Center parking lot sits mostly unused. It's just hot asphalt that creates urban heat, contributes to stormwater pollution, and offers zero value to the community or environment.

Why It's Perfect for Transformation:

- High visibility: On Campbell Avenue near the Community Center - residents pass by daily
- Walkable access: Within 1/4 mile of apartment complexes, schools, and downtown
- Serves those who need it most: Near multi-family housing where residents don't have private yards
- Climate action opportunity: Can demonstrate urban cooling and water management in Silicon Valley
- Connection to trails: Could link to existing Los Gatos Creek Trail as a rest stop

My Design Vision

Native Pollinator Garden

California poppies, sages, buckwheat, and milkweed for monarchs. Year-round blooms provide continuous food for bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

Shade Trees

3-4 native oaks or sycamores provide cooling (reducing temps by 10-15°F), bird habitat, and shaded seating areas for people to rest.

Rain Garden & Bioswale

Captures parking lot runoff, filtering pollutants before they reach storm drains. Reduces flooding while demonstrating sustainable water management.

Community Seating

Curved benches made from recycled materials create welcoming gathering spaces for all ages - seniors, families, individuals seeking nature.

Educational Signs

Identify native plants, explain pollinator partnerships, and share the park's ecological benefits. QR codes link to guides in multiple languages.

Community Art

Partner with local schools for mosaic tile work and painted rocks celebrating Campbell's diversity. Youth engagement builds ownership and pride.

How This Makes Our Community Better

Healthier Community

- Accessible green space for 2,000+ residents within walking distance
- Urban cooling reduces heat-related illness during California heat waves
- Cleaner air through carbon absorption and pollution filtering
- Mental health support - nature exposure reduces anxiety and depression

More Equitable

- Free nature access for apartment dwellers and families without yards
- Multilingual signage and universal design welcome everyone
- Located in moderate-income area where green space has been limited
- Youth programs provide environmental education regardless of family resources

More Resilient

- Bioswale captures 15,000+ gallons of stormwater annually, reducing flooding
- Native plants need 75% less water than lawns - critical during droughts
- Trees and plants cool surrounding area by 10-15°F
- Habitat corridor supports biodiversity as climate changes
- Community gathering space strengthens social connections and civic engagement

Better for Wildlife

- Native plants provide critical habitat for declining pollinator populations
- Creates stepping stone connecting Los Gatos Creek to urban neighborhoods
- Supports 30+ native plant species and numerous insects, birds, and butterflies
- Removes 2,500 sq ft of impervious surface that currently harms ecosystems

Why This Matters to Me

Living in Silicon Valley, I've watched development erase nature for years. We have rising temperatures, disappearing wildlife, and unequal access to green space based on income and location. But I also see incredible potential.

This project excites me because it proves transformation doesn't require huge budgets or massive land. One parking lot corner - space we barely notice - can become a refuge for people and pollinators. It can cool our streets, clean our water, and create spaces where neighbors connect and kids learn to love nature.

Most importantly, this is about equity. Everyone deserves access to green space, not just people who can afford houses with yards. By transforming underutilized public land, we make nature a right, not a privilege.

Campbell can lead Silicon Valley in showing that sustainable, equitable urban development is possible. This pocket park is one small step - but small steps, multiplied across our communities, create the transformation we need.



Campbell Civic Center Pocket Park

Campbell Avenue, Campbell, CA • 2,500 sq ft unused parking lot corner

Inspired By

Brilliant Detroit Pocket Parks

Small spaces create big impact when designed with community needs and equity in mind. Native plants reduce maintenance while maximizing ecological benefits.

Design Vision

Native Pollinator Garden

CA poppies, sages, buckwheat, milkweed for year-round blooms

Shade Trees

3-4 native oaks reduce temps 10-15°F

Rain Garden

Captures 15,000+ gal stormwater annually

Community Seating

Recycled material benches for all ages

Educational Signs

Multilingual plant IDs & QR codes

Community Art

School mosaics celebrating diversity

Community Impact

Healthier

Green space for 2,000+ residents • Urban cooling • Cleaner air • Mental health support

More Equitable

Free nature access for apartment dwellers • Multilingual signage • Youth education programs

More Resilient

Stormwater management • 75% less water than lawns • Climate cooling • Social connections

Better Wildlife

Critical pollinator habitat • Biodiversity corridor • 30+ native species

Why This Matters

Living in Silicon Valley, I've watched development erase nature. Rising temps, disappearing wildlife, unequal green space access.

This proves transformation doesn't require huge budgets. One parking lot corner becomes refuge for people and pollinators. It cools streets, cleans water, connects neighbors.

Most importantly: equity. Everyone deserves green space, not just those with yards. By transforming public land, we make nature a right, not a privilege.

Campbell can lead Silicon Valley in sustainable, equitable urban development. Small steps, multiplied, create transformation.

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Campbell Civic Center Pocket Park

📍 2,500 sq ft unused parking lot → community green space

Inspired by Brilliant Detroit: small spaces, big impact

Design:



Native pollinator garden



Shade trees (cooling 10-15°F)



Rain garden (15K gal/year)

-  Community seating
-  Multilingual signs
-  Youth art

Impact:

-  Green space for 2,000+ residents
-  Free nature access for apartment dwellers
-  Stormwater management + climate cooling
-  Pollinator habitat + biodiversity

Why it matters: Everyone deserves nature access, not just those with yards. One overlooked corner can cool streets, support pollinators, and connect neighbors.

Small steps, multiplied, create transformation.

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