

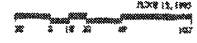
MEMORIAL PARK MASTER PLAN

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

TGP, INC.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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Goals

In June 1990 the Memorial Park Work Group adopted the following goals (which are still valid for the 1995 master plan update) to guide the master plan:

Goal One: Make Memorial Park memorable.

Memorial Park should provide an experience strong enough to be retained in people's memories and hearts. There are several components to achieving this goal. There needs to be one or two elements in the park that are strong enough to be carried around in our minds. The experience of the landscape itself should also be significant. And, the park should be designed in a way that elegantly makes commonplace experiences and activities memorable.

Goal Two: Dramatize Memorial Park's natural features.

Memorial Park's strong natural features should be made even more powerful, thus connecting Pasadenans to a piece of nature. Memorial Park is distinctive as part of the "second Pasadena ridge". This topographic feature defines the park and should be worked with as an opportunity for views and spatial interest. The park's trees also provide a rich basis for creating an urban sanctuary. The historic Legee orange grove and the palm walk set a precedent for significant trees in the park. Today the park's mature camphors and oaks, palm edge and forest, memorial Montezuma cypress, and other trees provide shade and visual relief from the urban surrounds.

Goal Three: Make Memorial Park accessible.

Presently, Memorial Park is blocked visually, physically and psychologically. In order to create an alive, cared-for park, these barriers must be altered and connections made between the park and its potential constituents.

June 12, 1995

Views into the park are blocked by the parking lot and Senior Center on the south end, the railroad retaining wall on the east side, and by the steep grade along the Walnut Street edge. The topography of the park precludes seeing the whole park from any one view point.

It is also difficult to enter the park physically. The light rail wall precludes any entry from the east. Entry from the north requires mounting several sets of stairs, and the most used entrance is via the Senior Center parking lot. People are able to filter into the park along Raymond Avenue, but there is no transition from the city to the park and no invitation to enter. Few entrances are accessible to the elderly and wheel-chair bound.

The primary psychological barrier to entry is the perceived lack of safety. The sparse use of the park coupled with limited visual access invites illicit activity. Increased use of the park by new residents and renewed interest will make the park safer and more inviting.

Goal Four: Give the park's history and memorials a role that will serve the community today and in the future.

As indicated by its name, Memorial Park has been at least partly devoted to retaining some of Pasadena's history and memories. This role should be preserved, but updated so that the memorials and other park elements are not merely lost objects but functional and meaningful artifacts. Any new memorials should be carefully considered to avoid creating new clutter or crowding out existing memorials.

Goal Five: Make Memorial Park a flexible space.

The park should be a neighborhood amenity, a place to meet and linger, a community gathering place, a host to art education, a lunch break for area employees. No single user group should dominate. Activities that can be enjoyed by all of these groups and that require little in the way of special equipment or facilities should be given priority.

June 12, 1995

An action that is done to achieve one goal should reinforce others. For example, lighting that is primarily installed for security should also dramatize the site's natural features and call attention to a focal point.

~~Goal Six: Determine the appropriate relationship between the Senior Center and Memorial Park.~~

~~Seniors can be important park constituents, yet members of the Pasadena Senior Center don't use Memorial Park beyond the limits of the Center for a variety of reasons. The two functions Senior Center and Park - must be integrated for the park to achieve the goal of flexibility.~~

Creating an Urban Sanctuary

There are two primary social patterns associated directly with the "natural" urban sanctuary: retreat and recreation. These are largely satisfied by making the landscape elements simple and large enough to be experienced as a natural landscape.

Hillock

The hill in Memorial Park is one of its most distinctive characteristics and can serve a central role in making the park an urban sanctuary. It is an archetypal mount, a place to climb and reach the summit, a place to feel the wind, a place to view the park, the Civic Center and the mountains. The hill is also a place for creative play; a place to climb, race, lie down, roll down, catch, play tag or games of the imagination.

i The area to the north of the Gold Shell should be modified to accommodate a sloped viewing terrace, increasing the height of it's north end by approximately seven feet to make it a more inviting summit, and to provide a better view of the park and performances. The ground surface should be mown grass. Also refer to the section on the Gold Shell, see page 32.

A line of trees should edge the hill with views directed north to the mountains from under the high canopy of trees. From the top of the hill a thirty degree view corridor should be kept to allow views to the mountains. On site, any trees planted in this corridor should be of sufficient stature to allow 'limbing-up' to allow views under the canopy to the mountains. Off-site, building height and planting restrictions should be established to protect the view corridor.

Meadow

Natural meadows are typically sunlit spots surrounded by woods and discovered after a hike through the forest. In Memorial Park the meadow

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Walks

Essential to the experience of nature or a "natural" urban sanctuary is walking through it, being an active participant in the unfolding sequence. There are several formal walkways and numerous to-be-discovered pathways in Memorial Park. An additional serpentine-shaped walk on the south east side of the park has been introduced to work around the existing trees' root systems, providing handicap access at a grade of 1: 20, or 5% or less, which does not presently require any curbs, handrails or landings.

The extent of the walkways makes the park seem larger than it is. The asphalt should be removed and the paths should be constructed of decomposed granite mixed with cement or organic tree resin for stabilizer, to give a natural looking but durable finish. All walking surfaces in the park shall be decomposed granite mixed with cement or organic tree resin for stabilizer.

Memorial Walk

One element that has been retained in each plan ever done for Memorial Park is the three quarters circular walk around the hillock. It affords a refreshing view out over the grass meadow.

This area is particularly in need of rehabilitation. Benches, paving, and edging are in disrepair. Shrubs are overgrown and trees are near the end of their lives. Granite blocks retain the grade for trees that have long since disappeared.

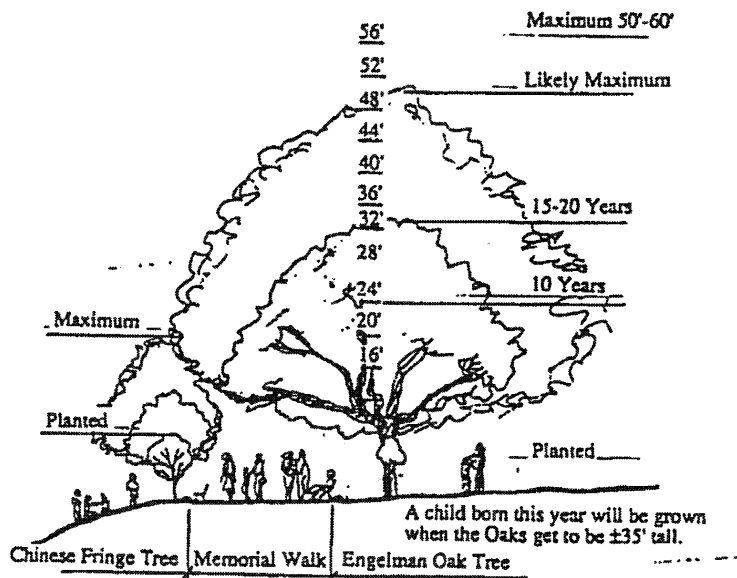
The plan calls for creating a refined Memorial Walk with new paving and edging, bench locations, lighting, memorials and new plantings. Engelmann oaks, an endemic and increasingly scarce species, will provide the structure for the Memorial Walk.

Available only in small containers, the Engelmann oaks should be planted as soon as possible from a minimum size of 15 gallon containers. They should be planted in decomposed granite (not lawn), and be drip irrigated.

The existing trees in the circle should be retained until the oaks have grown enough to provide the backbone for the walk. When the oaks have reached a competitive size, the adjacent Silver Maple trees should be removed, so they do not compete with the oaks for sunlight and moisture. Chinese fringe trees with showy flowers and more delicate structure, should be planted to define the walk on the low side, while framing the view out over the meadow. Engelmann oaks should be planted in the empty granite block alcoves on the north side of the Memorial Walk to help provide shade during amphitheater performances.

The wooden flagpole (the bottom half of which remains in the park) should be fully restored. A raised ornamental curb wall, similar to the original, should replace the existing, at grade curb. (The flagpole was a gift to the City in 1912 from veterans of the Civil War).

The Memorial Walk paving should be decomposed granite mixed with cement or organic tree resin for stability, as used elsewhere in the park, with concrete edges similar to the existing ones.



MEMORIAL WALK

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