

Shoreline West

Once considered part of downtown, Shoreline West became its own designated neighborhood in the mid-1990s. Over the years, the neighborhood has morphed from an older neighborhood with mostly single-family homes built in the first half of the 20th century into a mixed-density area that's in high demand due to redevelopment and its proximity to downtown and many of the city's recreational areas. Residents describe the area as diverse, yet close-knit.

Location

Bounded by Shoreline Boulevard, El Camino Real, Escuela Avenue and Villa Street.

Nearby shopping

Downtown Mountain View; California Street Market, El Monte Avenue at El Camino Real.

Who lives here

Diverse mix: young, old, single, married, families.

Housing stock

Mix of old and new single-family homes: Victorians, Craftsman, many larger homes built in the 1990s; multi-family units.

Median sales price

\$1.9 million.*

Most common neighborhood sight

People testing self-driving cars; people walking their dogs.

What was here before

Pacific Press, the Seventh-day Adventist publishing house, which was said to be the largest printing company west of Chicago. The homes that these families built were among the first in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood in one sentence

"Tight-knit without being oppressive." — Mary Henry.

Biggest change

"When my mother bought here in '75, this was a somewhat deteriorated neighborhood." — Doug McIlwraith.

Reasons why people move here

"We wanted a place where we could have a dog. I've (been to) other neighborhoods in Mountain View, and this place feels a little friendlier." — Pam Warrior.

Neighborhood association

Shoreline West Association of Neighbors (SWAN), shorelinewestmv@gmail.com, shorelinewestmv.com.

Parks

Castro Park, Mariposa Park, Eagle Park and Pool, Rengstorff Park (nearby).

Private schools

Khan Lab School, Mountain View Academy.

Public schools

Mountain View Whisman School District — Bubb and Landels elementary schools, Graham Middle School; Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District — Los Altos High School.

Sources: *Zillow.com, October 2019.

Responses compiled from survey and past interviews with former and current residents.

— Compiled by Linda Taaffe



Margali Gauthier

Anne Cohen and her son, Zylar, play at Rengstorff Park, where a Magical Bridge Playground designed for all ages and abilities is set to open in 2021.

Building bridges

Every time Anne Cohen would take her son to the playground at their neighborhood park, it became an outing that left the Shoreline West mom feeling exhausted and unnerved.

Cohen, who has a form of Muscular Dystrophy that makes it difficult to move, said trying to navigate the playground with her son was nearly impossible: The sand made it difficult to walk, the stairs on the play equipment were hard to climb and the wide open spaces made it easier for her to lose track of her young son.

"It's hard to keep up like an average mom with an active 6-year-old," Cohen said. "By the time I would get back in the car, I would feel demoralized."

Cohen's park experience changed after she discovered the Magical Bridge Playground in Palo Alto, which is designed with play zones for people of all ages and abilities. It's a playground that has garnered national attention for its inclusive design, including features such as disc swings that make it easy for parents with mobility issues to transfer themselves onto the play structure alongside their child.

"I was delighted," she said. "I didn't feel excluded anymore. ... My son, he just absolutely gets so excited and can't wait to go back the next time."

Cohen is part of a large volunteer group that has been working to bring a Magical Bridge Playground, modeled after the one in Palo Alto, next to the new community center at Mountain View's Rengstorff Park, which happens to border her neighborhood.

She sits on the Magical Bridge Foundation's advisory board and has been a key player in educating the community about the nonprofit group and its playgrounds.

"We wanted to promote change in the community and make it welcoming for all," she said. "This really resonated with the folks of Mountain View."

The playground, now in the design phase, has already pulled the community together. About \$4.3 million for the project has been raised over the past 18 months through coin drives at local elementary schools, private and corporate donations and grants from the city of Mountain View and Santa Clara County. The playground is slated to open in 2021.

Cohen said she believes the playground is going to transform the neighborhood.

"It's not just a playground," Cohen explained. Magical Bridge playgrounds are gathering places intended to engage the entire community — from toddlers to seniors — through ongoing programs hosted at the sites. Besides facilitating the construction of new playgrounds, the Palo Alto-based nonprofit foundation recruits volunteer Kindness Ambassadors from local schools to promote inclusive activities on and off the playground, including free, staged performances.

"I think given the fact that so many apartments are close to the park, the playground is even more apt to draw people together," Cohen said. "I think this can lead to a model of community of living." ■

— Linda Taaffe, 2019