



KEEP FENCING WHERE IT BELONGS - AROUND THE SCHOOL, NOT THE PARK

The Monta Loma neighborhood community overwhelmingly opposes the installation of a fence around Monta Loma Park. The community is seeking consultation, collaboration, and compromise with the Mountain View Whisman School District to modify the fencing proposal to factor in community input. This will preserve the only open greenspace in the neighborhood and help us feel proud of our neighborhood school. The Community supports the school district's efforts to ensure the safety of the staff and students. MVWSD's current fencing proposals: Proposal 1 - tinyurl.com/yyzko7b7, Proposal 2 - tinyurl.com/y4cmvjww

ABOUT MONTA LOMA PARK

Monta Loma Park has been at the center of our Community since the neighborhood's inception. Adjacent to Monta Loma Elementary, the park has symbiotically co-existed with the school for the entirety of this time.

- The Monta Loma park is the only open greenspace in the neighborhood. Monta Loma neighborhood has a park acreage per 1,000 resident ratio of:
 - 2.56 Including ML Park
 - 0.33 Excluding ML Park (Due to Fencing)
 - 3.0 California Quimby Act specification
- The entire campus including the park is owned by the Mountain View Whisman School District, a fact not widely known in the City and the neighborhood.
- The City pays for maintenance of the Park and has made many facilities improvements.
- The Park has two primary areas of greenspace, both consistently leased to organized youth sports activities in the spring and fall.
 - Regulation Little League Field (approx. 1.5 acres)
 - Open soccer field (approx. 2.5 acres)
- The park also contains three children's play structures, two basketball courts, exercise bars, and picnic tables.

The Park is used extensively by the Community in many capacities, from sunup to sun down.

Frisbee **"Casual" Sports** **Organized Youth Sports**
 Playing "Catch" MVLA Soccer MLN Ice Cream Social **Soccer**
 Socialization **Walking** **Picnicking** Toddler Play Area Basketball
 Community CERT Training Little League Baseball Kite Flying
 Exercise **Dog Walking** Community Events **Volleyball**

MONTA LOMA PARK QUICK FACTS

- > 0.33 Quimby Act Ratio excl ML Park (3.0 specification)
- > 5.67 Acres on Thompson Ave, abutting the school
- > 1950's Park Established
- > 2,000+ Monta Loma neighborhood population

FENCING PROPOSAL BLINDSIDE

On September 29th, the MVWSD announced to the Community its intention to fence the entire school district parcel, including the Park. The 6ft high chain link fencing was to include locked gates, with controlled access to the school grounds outside of school hours. Construction was scheduled to begin in three weeks.

This plan was met by an overwhelmingly negative response from all sectors of the Community, with 85% of the 1,000 member neighborhood opposed. Opposition includes:

- Seniors, who would lose their "walking loop"
- Parents, children and caregivers who would lose access to the playground and picnic benches
- ML Elementary Parents, Grandparents and children from the neighborhood
- Team sports players and coaches where the fence would make using these fields more difficult
- "Casual" field users who would need to contend with a fence while exercising, socializing or playing
- Dog walkers who would be "locked out" of their morning walks

Fencing will negatively affect the open and welcoming character of the neighborhood.

DISTRICT RATIONALE & REBUTTAL

1. Increasing student and teacher safety, and property security

Rebuttal: *Student and teacher safety can be achieved by fencing in the school campus and not the park. The District has been unable to cite a single specific incident of outsider intrusion or perpetrated violence, dog bites, or bike theft at Monta Loma Park during its 60 year history.*

2. Reducing unauthorized access to campus

Rebuttal: *The school does not currently have a fence around the perimeter of the school facilities itself. The District was unable to articulate how using the fence around the Park helped it achieve its objectives.*

3. Combating the threat of student shootings

Rebuttal: *At the 9/29 Community Meeting, the District's Chief Business Officer, Dr. Rebecca Westover, stated that a fence would do nothing to deter a shooter as many of the schools that experienced shootings were already fenced.*

4. Mitigating the risk of infection from outside the school during COVID-19

Rebuttal: *In order to facilitate reopening, the Community is not opposed to temporary measures that would mitigate COVID-19 risks. A permanent fence will no doubt outlive COVID-19, and would hamper the ability of many in the Community, especially the elderly and young families who increasingly rely on the park to cope with the pandemic.*

WHY WE ARE OPPOSED

The District has not clearly articulated objectives for diminishing the park, how its proposal will address school security concerns that cannot be effectively addressed by other means, and has not made any effort to constructively balance with needs of the Community and other Park users.

Fencing around the core school campus and playgrounds would be much less expensive, easier to monitor, and would not impinge on the current and future users of the park.

Fencing the Park could leave the neighborhood effectively without any greenspace as the Park would be inaccessible during school hours, and leased to team sports on evenings and weekends. This is a change in existing Park Access and

new limitation to the Mountain View Community based on current park signage and usage.

The District's assertion of dominion over park space could lead to a situation where it someday unilaterally decides to use this land for school expansion, teacher housing, or to lease to a charter or private school.

COMMUNITY ASK

- **MVWSD ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY:** For the MVWSD to constructively engage the Community and that the two parties work together in good faith to find solutions that best serve all Park users and students.
- **CITY ENGAGEMENT:** For the City of Mountain View to assist in opening a public dialogue between itself, the MVWSD, and the Community that addresses school's safety, the Community's access, and the City's Parks and Open Space Planning needs, to ensure long term community access to Monta Loma park.
- **LONG TERM ACCESS AGREEMENTS:** For the City and the MVWSD to work together to clarify and create a more permanent agreement to ensure long term Community access to Monta Loma Park and other school district open space.

We have an opportunity to create a win-win for all. Let's work together to accomplish these goals!

CONCERNED? HERE'S HOW TO GET ENGAGED

1. **IMMEDIATE:** Join the Email Discussion Group for updates. groups.google.com/g/fencing-monta-loma
2. **IMMEDIATE:** Sign up to volunteer time / skills (time commitment flexible). forms.gle/csQs7vhY18ViBXi87
3. **NEAR TERM:** Email your City Council members and MVWSD Board members with your feedback on fencing.
4. **FUTURE:** Details on future actions (examples below) will be provided through the Email Discussion Group in #1.
 - Attend City Council & MVWSD Board Meetings (Zoom)
 - Sign a petition

Monta Loma Neighbors for
Preserving Our Park
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