

# ROSS COMMON

## LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT & REHABILITATION PLAN



## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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A **special thanks** to all those who shared their input on the landscape improvement and rehabilitation recommendations for the Ross Common.

# ROSS COMMON

## LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT & REHABILITATION PLAN

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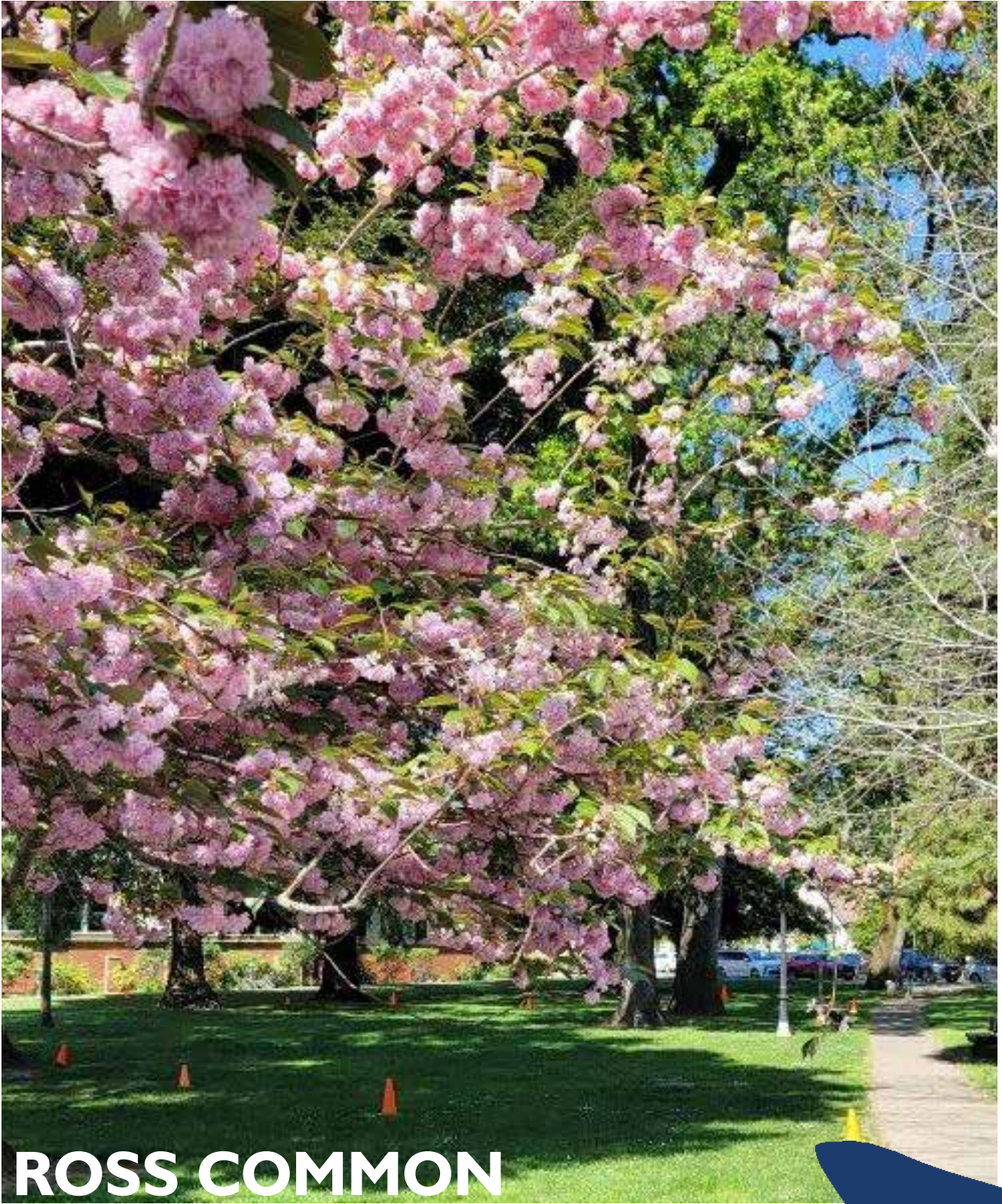


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**ROSS COMMON**  
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT  
& REHABILITATION PLAN



Image ES-1: Bufano Bear



Image ES-2: Bridges of Ross



Image ES-3: Town Hall



Figure ES-1: Ross Common within the Town of Ross



Ross Common is the heart of the community and jewel of the Town of Ross. As the preeminent public space, the Common serves as a park, a social gathering place, a recreation resource, and a community hub.

Founded in 1908, the Town of Ross is nestled in the valleys of Marin County in the Bay Area of northern California. Home to 2,547 residents, Ross is a small-town community with approximately 25% of the population under 18 years old and approximately 30% over 60 years old. Ross residents are civic-minded and generous. The Common was a gift from one such resident, Annie Ross Worn – whose parents gave their name to the Town – donated the land to the Town in 1911. For 110 years, the Common has been the heart of the community and jewel of the Town.

Maintaining the Common as a high-quality public space is imperative to the Town. The paths and main lawn turf are degraded and require intensive repair. The purpose of the Ross Common Landscape Improvement & Rehabilitation Plan is to “determine a plan for improvements in Ross Common that creates a public gathering space and gateway that is integrated with the community.”



Figure ES-2: Ross Common Site Map



The Plan's objectives are:

- inclusive of **all user** groups
- enhances **adaptability**
- creates **connectivity between people and places** within and around the Common
- Incorporates **environmental stewardship** in organic ways with longevity beyond the project lifespan
- **Utilizes the open space** near the post office
  - Fosters a sense of **community character** and continues to be a **focal point** of the community

Image ES-4: The Common



The Common is a 4.36-acre park surrounded by the Town Hall, Ross School, and the downtown commercial area. The Town of Ross is unique in many ways – no direct home mail delivery being one of them. All residents must visit the US Post Office – located in the Common – to get their mail, thereby activating the Common with visitors. The Ross School abuts the Common and activates the space with student drop-off and pick-up, and during physical education classes. The Town programs the Common with recreation for youth, hosting practice and games in the Main Lawn and classes in the Grove. The Town and civic organizations host events that bring out a handful to a hundred.

The areas of the Common are the Main Lawn, the Grove, and the Post Office and adjacent grass area.

Image ES-5: Main Lawn



The Main Lawn (Image ES-5) is the largest area of the Common. It occupies the southern portion of the Common, and is a large, natural turf area with two ballfields. The Main Lawn is surrounded by a paved, walking path and trees line the perimeter of the majority of the space. Separating the Main Lawn from the street is a continuous hedge that acts as a protective edge for children playing within the Main Lawn and a visual barrier blocking the view of cars to maintain the natural ambiance inside the Common.

Near the corner of the Common closest to downtown, there are is a small gathering area with benches, trash and recycle receptacles,



Image ES-6: Corner Landing



signage, five picnic tables, and the bleachers and backstop for one of the baseball fields (Image ES-6).

The Grove (Image ES-7), at the north end of the Common, is populated by a variety of trees, a limited quantity of benches, and paved paths.

The US Post Office (Image ES-8) is located within the Common. The Post Office fronts onto Ross Common (street) and is separated from the Main Lawn and Grove areas. There is a crosswalk connecting the Post Office to the Common, and parking behind and around the Post Office. North of the Post Office is the Post Office Green (Image ES-9).

Walking paths traverse around the perimeter of the Common with some meandering connections across the site. The paths are paved asphalt, varying in width from approximately four feet to six feet and in poor condition.

The community was an active participant in the creation of the plan's recommendations. The community voice was gathered through stakeholder interviews and conversations with focus groups, a town-wide community questionnaire hosted online, and emails sent

Image ES-7: Grove



Image ES-8: Post Office



Image ES-9: Post Office Green



to Town staff and Council members. The recommendations were presented to the Advisory Design Review and Town Council, with comments and direction from these public meetings guiding the final recommendations.

The Common is beloved as-is, and the majority of recommendations are rehabilitation projects, intended to polish the jewel of the Common. The final Landscape Plan, vetted by the community, includes repaving all existing pathways, reconstruction of the main lawn turf, slight reconfiguration of entry areas to better serve pedestrian access, and a minimal increase in seating opportunities.

**REHABILITATION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Connections: Repave all walking paths
- Main Lawn: Redesign/reconstruct turf
- Hedge Barrier: Replant

**IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Site: Succession tree planting
- Site: Replace site furnishings
- Site: Refresh planting areas
- Grove: Add (1) bench
- Connections: Align pedestrian entrance
- Post Office Green: Relocate dropbox & remove planter
- Post Office Green: Add (2) benches
- Corner Mini Plaza: Add (1) bench
- Corner Mini Plaza: Relocate trash receptacles
- Redwood Area: Screen storage and utilities

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



**ROSS COMMON**  
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT  
& REHABILITATION PLAN



## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Ross Common Landscape Improvement & Rehabilitation Plan is to determine a plan for improvements in Ross Common that creates a public gathering space and gateway that is integrated with the community.

## DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This Landscape Improvement & Rehabilitation Plan is organized into five chapters:

1. **Introduction & Background:** This chapter provides an introduction to the Town, the Common, and the Improvement and Rehabilitation Plan by providing context.
2. **Purpose & Objectives:** This chapter explains the purpose of this Plan and the objectives for the landscape design.
3. **Design Process:** This chapter describes the community engagement efforts that provided inputs for the design, and the response to the landscape design concepts presented to the Town Council and Advisory Design Review group.
4. **Landscape Plan:** This chapter contains the final landscape design recommended to improve and rehabilitate the Common.
5. **Implementation:** This chapter describes the prioritization, funding opportunities, and phasing for Plan implementation.

## TOWN CONTEXT

The Town of Ross is a small town (1.6 square miles) located in Marin County in the Bay Area of northern California. Founded in 1908, Ross is known for the historic character, small-town charm, tree-lined residential streets, excellent school, wooded hillsides, and meandering creeks.

Ross Common was created in 1911, when Annie Ross Worn, whose parents John and Annie Ross gave their name to the Town, deeded the land to the Town. Two additional residential properties - the structures have since been demolished - have increased the area of the Common beyond Worn's gift.

The Common is located in the Downtown sub-area, which includes the Ross school and the small commercial area. The Common is designated as Public Service (PS) land use



Image 1-1: Bridges of Ross

Figure 1-1: Ross Common within the Town of Ross



and immediately adjacent to the only area of Local Commercial Service (C) in Ross. Within Ross Common is an operating United States Post Office, where all Ross residents pick up their mail, as there is no mail delivery in the Town.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### POPULATION

Total Population	2,547
------------------	-------

Source: CA Dept of Finance Population Estimate, January 1, 2021

### AGE OF POPULATION

	% of Population
Under 18 years old	25.9%
Over 60 years old	31.2%
Median Age	48.3

Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

### RACE & ETHNICITY

	% of Population
White	90.6%
African American	3.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.0%
Asian	3.8%
Pacific Islander	0.0%
Some Other Race	0.2%
Two or More Races	2.4%
Hispanic	3.5%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

### HOUSING

	Quantity
Total Housing Units	906
Occupied Housing Units	812
Owner-occupied Housing Units	670 / 82.5%
Renter-occupied Housing Units	142 / 14.5%
Owner-occupied Housing Units Valued under \$500,000	0.0%
Owner-occupied Housing Units Valued \$500,000 to \$1,000,000	2.7%
Owner-occupied Housing Units Valued \$1,000,000+	97.3%
Median Owner-occupied Housing Value	\$2,000,000+

Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

The Town of Ross is home to 2,547 people (Table 1-1).

Ross' population is generally older than the state of California (Table 1-2). The percent of Ross' population over 60 years old (31.2%) is a third more percentage points than that of California's population (20.7%). California's median age is over a decade lower than Ross (37.0 years compared to 48.3 years).

The vast majority of the population identifies as White alone (90.6%) with Asian alone (3.8%) and Two or More Races (2.4%) as the top three races in Ross (Table 1-3).

There are 906 housing units within Ross. The percent of owner-occupied housing units has been decreasing since 2000, when 87.1% of units were owner-occupied. In 2010, it was 86.0% and by 2019 it dropped to 82.5%. All owner-occupied homes in Ross are valued over \$500,000, with the median owner-occupied housing unit valued over \$2,000,000. The median owner-occupied home value in Marin County is \$995,000.

At 1,024 acres, the town's density is 0.88 housing units per acre and 2.28 people per acre.

Table 1-1: Population

Table 1-2: Population Age

Table 1-3: Race & Ethnicity

Table 1-4: Housing

## PLANNING CONTEXT

### LAND USE AND ZONING

Ross is almost exclusively residential. In the 2007 General Plan, almost 70% of the town land was designated as residential, 17.8% as right-of-way, and the remaining 13.2% commercial, public park or service, quasi-public, or specialized recreational/cultural.

The Common is zoned Civic District (C-D) with a primary use of public or quasi-public. The Civic District permits uses for public purposes.

### GENERAL PLAN

The Town of Ross adopted their current General Plan in 2007. The plan continues the town's emphasis on stewardship and careful and responsible management. The General Plan contains eleven goals, to promote the relationship with the natural environment (goals 1 & 2), design excellence (goals 3 & 4), health and safety (goals 5 & 6), safe travel (goal 8), and maintaining the town's excellence and community into the future (goals 8, 9, 10, & 11).

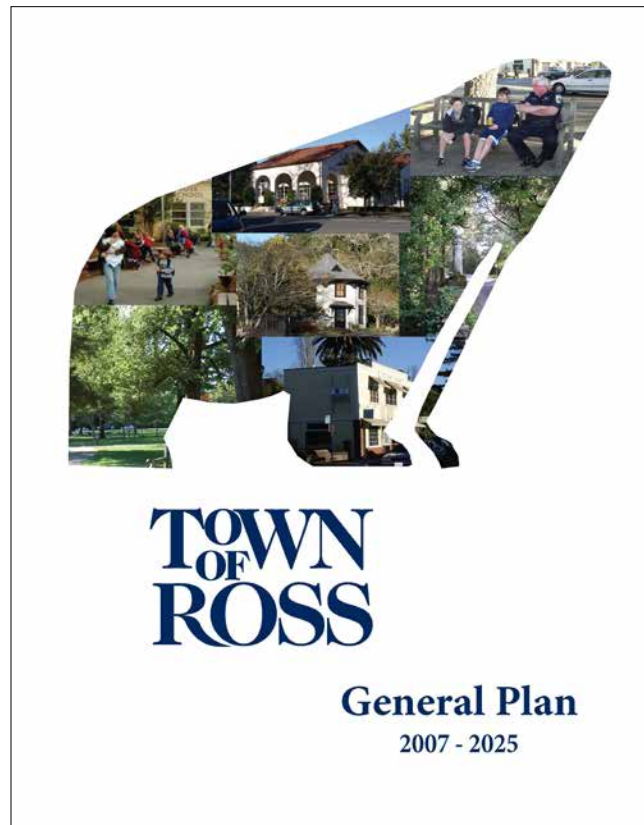
Each goal contains multiple policies. The policies that relate to the Common are:

**1.2 Tree Canopy Preservation:** Protect and expand the tree canopy of Ross to enhance the beauty of the natural landscape. Recognize that the tree canopy is critical to provide shade, reduce ambient temperatures, improve the uptake of carbon dioxide, prevent erosion and excess stormwater runoff, provide habitat for wildlife and birds, and protect the ecosystem of the under-story vegetation.

**1.3 Tree Maintenance and Replacement:** Assure proper tree maintenance and replacement.

**3.2 Landscape Design:** Where appropriate, encourage landscape designs that incorporate existing native vegetation, enhance the cohesiveness of the Town's lush, organic landscape and integrate new planting with existing site features. Plans shall recognize the importance of open space on a lot and shall address the look and feel of the space between structures so as to avoid overbuilding.

**4.1 Historic Heritage:** Maintain the historic feel of Ross by preserving and maintaining historic buildings, resources and areas



with recognized historic or aesthetic value that serve as significant reminders of the past.

**6.5 Permeable Surfaces:** To the greatest extent possible, development should use permeable surfaces and other techniques to minimize runoff into underground drain systems and to allow water to percolate into the ground. Landscaped areas should be designed to provide potential runoff absorption and infiltration.

**8.4 Downtown and Ross Common:** Maintain the Town-owned Ross Common areas linked to uses and activities at Ross School, and linked to the Town's downtown area as the central recreation, gathering and local shopping area of Ross. Maintain the downtown area as an attractive, pedestrian-friendly, small retail/business area. Encourage smaller-scale housing units mixed with commercial uses.

**8.6 Gathering Places:** Encourage and enhance community gathering places such as downtown, the Ross Common and the post office. Support the activities of Ross Recreation, Ross School, and the Marin Art & Garden Center.

**9.4 Coordination with Schools:** Maintain a close, collaborative relationship with the Ross School and other educational programs in Ross to maintain the excellence of the education programs offered and to plan for future needs. Use all direct and indirect means available to the Town of Ross to ensure that the modification, operation and maintenance of Ross School is consistent with the goals and aspirations of the Ross General Plan.

Each Goals also has recommended actions, to implement the General Plan. Actions are categorized as Near-Term (to accomplish in 1 to 3 years) or Medium-Term (3 to 8 years). The actions that relate to the Common are:

**3.B Require Design Review for Larger Landscape Projects (Near-Term Action):** Require design review for large landscape projects that include significant hardscape, retaining walls, vegetation modifications, modification of topography, additional impervious surfaces, alterations of drainage patterns and other site modifications that could affect the visual and/or physical character of the site and neighborhood. Ensure that larger landscape projects include water efficient plant materials and efficient irrigation design.

**8.A Prepare a Downtown Area Plan (Near-Term Action):** Develop a plan for the Downtown area as a "Special Planning Area" (see Land Use Plan) to include the Downtown commercial area, parking area through the post office to Lagunitas Avenue, and Ross Common. The plan would include: (1) street design improvements; (2) parking; (3) potential uses, including opportunities for limited



housing; (4) design guidelines; (5) pedestrian and bicycle access — including access to Frederick Allen Park and Kentfield Rehabilitation Hospital; and, (6) outdoor gathering areas.

## OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

### BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was adopted in 2010 to improve bicycle transportation and recreation in Ross by providing direction for future bikeway improvements. The Plan's goals are to increase bicycle and pedestrian access, bicycle transportation, and pedestrian transportation.

There is an existing bicycle route (Class III) on Ross Common/ Poplar Avenue and through Ross's downtown commercial area. Additionally, along Corte Madera Creek, there is an existing regional bike trail. The Common and commercial areas are considered destinations, and are prioritized for bicycle and pedestrian connections, and increased bike parking facilities.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES

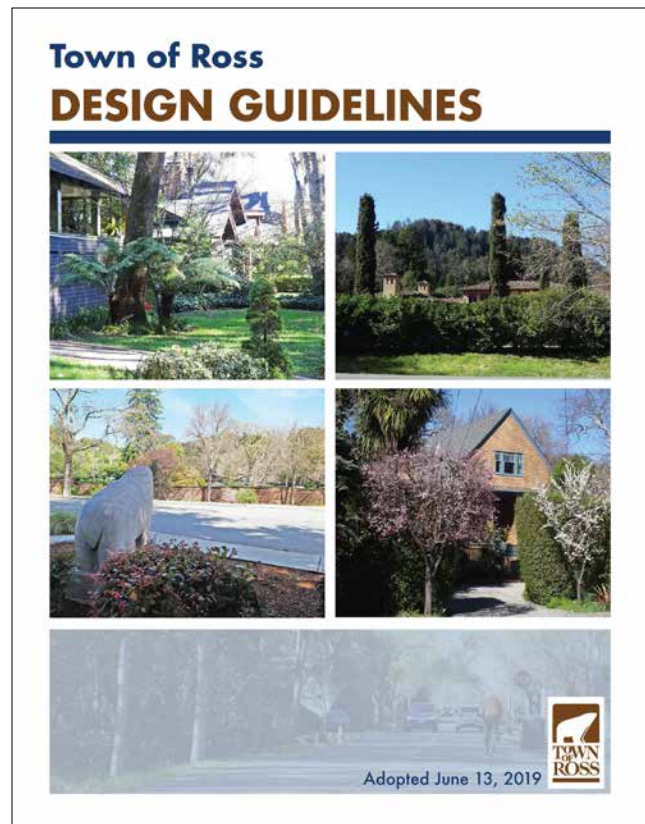
The Town adopted Design Guidelines in 2019. The Guidelines are oriented to maintain Ross's character by ten overarching design principles. There are design guidelines for a site, a building, and the treatment of heritage resources.

### CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The Town's Climate Action Plan, adopted in 2010, sets recommended actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the Town. The Mitigation Measure 3.2.C1 recommends an Increase Trees and Vegetation to Achieve a Net Gain of 100 Trees, implemented by multiple recommended actions.

### DOWNTOWN TREE & LANDSCAPE PLAN

The Downtown Tree and Landscape Plan is designed to increase the tree canopy and upgrade the appearance of downtown.



## SITE CONTEXT

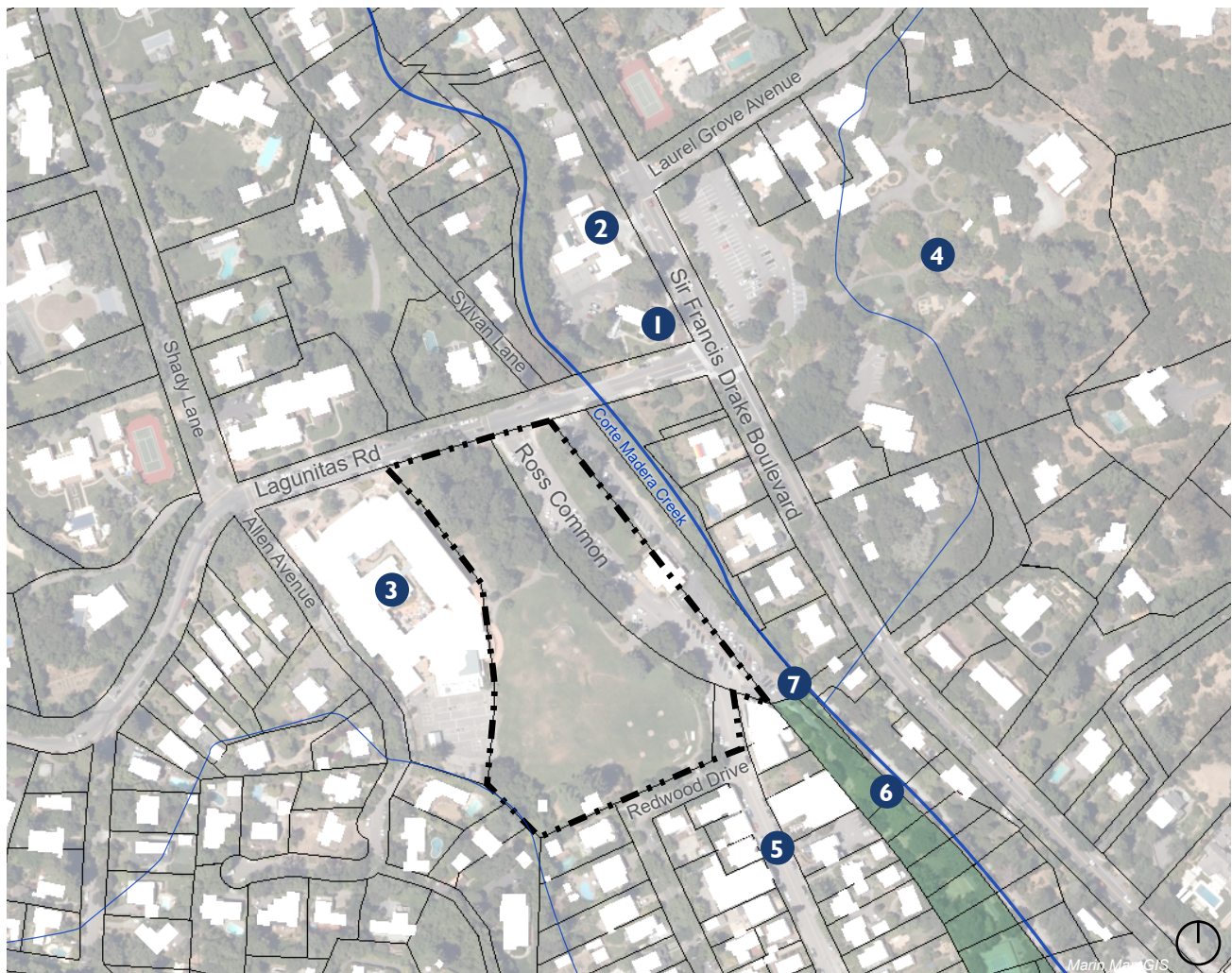
Surrounding the Common are the Town of Ross's municipal buildings, cultural resources, and commercial area. The Town Hall (Image 1-2) and Fire and Police Department (Image 1-3) are located northeast of the Common across Lagunitas Road. The Marin Art and Garden Center (Image 1-4) is located diagonally to the northeast across Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

The areas immediately adjacent to the Common include the Ross School, Downtown Commercial Area, and Frederick Allen Park. The Ross School (Image 1-5) abuts the Common along the western property line. The Town's commercial area (Image 1-6 and Image 1-7) is directly southeast of the Common. Along the eastern edge of the Common runs the Corte Madera Creek, with a regional bike trail connecting Ross to other areas of Marin County. Along the creek is Frederick Allen Park (Image 1-8). There is a publically-accessible restroom at the entrance to the park and regional trail behind the commercial area (Image 1-9).

### ROSS COMMON CONTEXT

- 1 Town Hall
- 2 Fire & Police Department
- 3 Ross School
- 4 Marin Art & Garden Center
- 5 Downtown Commercial Area
- 6 Frederick Allen Park
- 7 Public Restroom

Figure 1-3: Ross Common Context Map



The Ross School, Post Office - located in the Common along the eastern edge - and commercial area activate the Common with Ross residents. During school drop-off and pick-up, the Common is alive with students. The school has minimal street frontage on Lagunitas Road, and takes full advantage of its proximity to Ross Common to increase the amount of space available for school children to access the school. The Post Office is a daily stop for Ross residents to get their mail, as there is no mail delivery within the Town. Every resident must visit the Post Office within the Common to pick-up their mail, and so the Common is activated. The commercial area has multiple restaurants that encourage people to get their food to-go and consume it in the Common.



Image 1-2: Town Hall



Image 1-3: Fire & Police Dept



Image 1-4: Marin Art & Garden



Image 1-5: Ross School



Image 1-6: Commercial Area



Image 1-7: Commercial Area



Image 1-8: Public Restroom



Image 1-9: Public Restroom

Google Earth, 2020

Town of Ross Website

Google Earth, 2021

Google Earth, 2021

Google Earth, 2020

Google Earth, 2020

## EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

The Common is considered the focal point of the town and a gateway to the modest downtown commercial area. At approximately 4.36 acres, the Common is composed of multiple areas: the Main Lawn, the Grove, the Post Office and the Post Office Green, and the Redwood Area. The Connections within the park are walking paths and sidewalks, with crosswalks to adjacent areas.

### AREAS OF THE COMMON

#### MAIN LAWN

The Main Lawn (Image 1-10) is the largest area at approximately 2.5 acres. It occupies the southern portion of the Common, and is a large, natural turf area with two ballfields, including a backstop, bases, and bleachers for each. The only side of the Main Lawn left open - meaning there are no trees to create enclosure of the space - is along the Ross School playground.

The turf of the Main Lawn is closed for the winter months (mid-December to mid-March) and fenced while maintenance and repair work is done to refresh the grass with minimally-invasive measures. In 2018, the Town had the turf evaluated (Report in Appendix, for reference only). The Turfgrass Report concluded the turfgrass condition is poor, the irrigation uniformity is poor, the soil is very hard, and the

field surface is uneven. The Report includes recommendations to resolve the identified issues in order to create a lush Main Lawn.

The Main Lawn is heavily programmed. The Town and civic organizations run recreation sports teams for youth, which all use the Main Lawn for practice and weekend games. Additionally, the Main Lawn is used for community events, such as the Town Dinner, Easter Egg Hunt, and Fourth of July Picnic (Image 1-11).

Throughout the school year, the Ross School uses the Common intermittently for outdoor physical education. The school has a stage facing onto the Common at the northern end of the Main Lawn. The stage protrudes slightly into the grass. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Common was used to facilitate social distancing for the school, with restriction placed on public-access during school hours.

Image 1-10: Main Lawn



Image 1-11: 2021 Town Dinner



Town of Ross Website

Figure 1-4: Ross Common Site Areas Map



100ft

Google Earth, 2021 and Marin Map GIS

- 1 Main Lawn
- 3 Post Office
- 5 Redwood Area
- 2 Grove
- 4 Post Office Green
- 6 Crosswalks

Image 1-12: Barrier Hedge



### **BARRIER HEDGE**

Separating the Main Lawn from the street is an almost continuous hedge (Image 1-12). The hedge acts not only as a protective edge for children playing within the Main Lawn, but also as a visual barrier blocking the view of cars on the street to maintain the natural ambiance inside the Common. The plants that create the hedge are aging, and overall the hedge is losing it's robust character as an edge barrier.

Dogs are not allowed in the Main Lawn area of the Common, per municipal code 8.04.161. During the planning process for this Landscape Improvement & Rehabilitation Plan, the Town Council was discussing potential changes to dog access on the Common. This Plan does not address dog access policies.

### **GROVE**

The Grove (Image 1-13) is at the north end of the Common. Sandwiched between the Ross School to the west and Ross Common (street) to the east, the Grove is populated by a variety of trees with a limited quantity of benches and paved paths traversing.

Image 1-13: Grove



Dogs are allowed in the Grove, per municipal code 8.04.161. During portions of the COVID-19 pandemic, dogs were prohibited from the Common for the Ross School to accommodate social distancing. Dogs were restricted from

the entire Common, excepting certain times of the day and week, by Town Council Resolution No. 2170 passed at the July 9, 2020 meeting and amended with Resolution No. 2177 at the August 13, 2020 meeting. The temporary ban on dogs in the Common remained in effect until August 12, 2021 (repealed with Resolution No. 2214). The Council is considering potential rules, regulations, and amenities pertaining to dogs on the Common in Fall 2021.

### **POST OFFICE & POST OFFICE GREEN**

The US Post Office (Image 1-14) fronts onto Ross Common (street) and is separated from the Main Lawn and Grove areas by this street. There is parking behind and around the Post Office, accessible from the entrance on Lagunitas Road to the north and off Ross Common (street) near the downtown area. There is only one exist to the split parking lot,

Image 1-14: US Post Office



which is located immediately adjacent to the southern edge of the Post Office building. There are three 15-minute parking areas on the street in front of the Post Office. A mail drop box is located on the northern edge of the landing at the base of the Post Office stairs (Image 1-15).

There is no mail delivery to residences in Ross, so all residents must visit the Post Office to retrieve their mail. The Post Office is a popular destination, and activates the Common.

North of the Post Office is an area called the Post Office Green (Image 1-16). At approximately 60 feet wide and 290 feet long, the area is bracketed by Ross Common (street) to the west, part of the split parking lot behind the Post Office to the east, with Lagunitas Road and the Post Office structure bookending the north and south. The Post Office Green is mostly lawn area with trees along the north and east sides. There is a low, solid hedge along the eastern edge of the lawn to delineate from parking, while the western edge has no barrier from the sidewalk to the grass. At the southern edge of the lawn is a planting barrier that limits access from the base of the Post Office stairs (Image 1-15).

### REDWOOD AREA

The portion of the Common known as the Redwood Area, in the southwest corner of the Common behind the Main Lawn, was previously a private residence at 6 Redwood Drive (Image 1-17). The house has been demolished and the area is minimally landscaped with three large redwood trees dominating a mulched area.

The rear of this area, in the most southwest portion of the Common, is currently used for storage (Image 1-18). Nestled at the far edge of the Main Lawn - the utility area abuts the Ross School playground - the area also contains a black holding tank for well water. There is limited access to the area, which is delineated by a chain link fence. The area detracts from the rustic aesthetic and natural environment due to its visual dissonance with rest of the Common.



Image 1-15: Mailbox & Planter



Image 1-16: Post Office Green



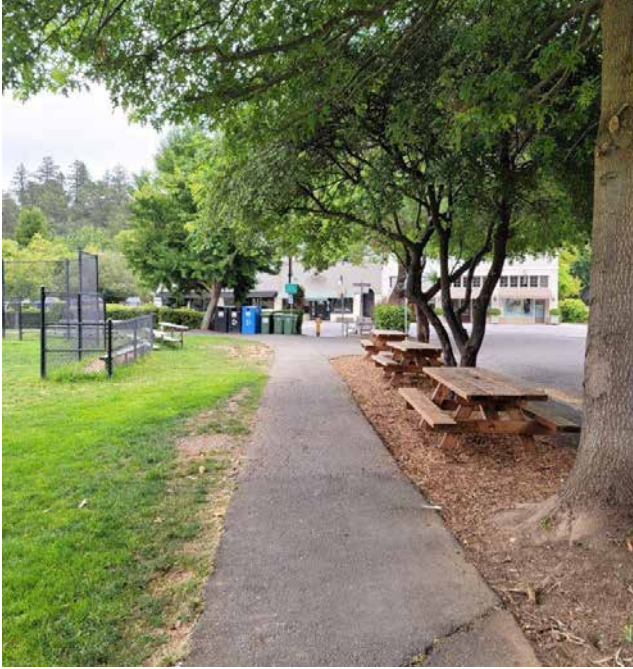
Image 1-17: Redwood Area



Image 1-18: Storage Area

Source: Barbara Call

Image 1-19: Commercial Crosswalks Corner Landing



### CORNER LANDING NEAR DOWNTOWN AREA

Near the southeast corner of the Common near downtown, there are trash and recycle receptacles, signage, five picnic tables, a bench, as well as the bleachers and backstop for one of the baseball fields (Image 1-19). The paved walking path around the Main Lawn connects into the corner landing. The picnic tables along Redwood Drive are commonly used by people with take-out food from the local restaurants. The abundance of trash, recycling, and green waste receptacles detract from the atmosphere of the space.

### CONNECTIONS

#### LOOPED WALKING PATHS

The walking paths traverse the perimeter of the Common, with some meandering connections through the site. The Main Lawn is surrounded by an almost continuous, paved, walking path around the majority of the perimeter. The paths are paved asphalt, varying in width from approximately four feet to six feet (Image 1-20).

The paths' condition is generally poor, providing limited accessibility due to the uneven surfaces and potential trip hazards (Image 1-21).

The sidewalk along Ross Common (street) is either concrete or paved asphalt. The sidewalk along Lagunitas Road is concrete at the corner of Ross Common (street) with some concrete sidewalk turning the corner along the Common onto Ross Common (street). The sidewalk along the Post Office-side of Ross Common (street) is concrete. Along the Common, the sidewalks are almost universally asphalt. The sidewalk width varies, with a thin point occurring north of the Post Office Crosswalk on the Common side.

Image 1-20: Walking Paths



Image 1-21: Path Condition



#### CROSSWALKS

The Common, as the heart of Ross, is connected by crosswalks to other notable areas of Town. Working north to south, the first set of crosswalks are at the intersection with Lagunitas Road, the middle crosswalk connects the Post Office across Ross Common (street), and the southern crosswalk set is at the



intersection of Redwood Drive and connects to the downtown commercial area.

The northern-most crosswalks, near the Grove, are located at the intersection of Lagunitas Road and Ross Common (street) (Image 1-13). There are crosswalks on both streets, allowing pedestrians to go either north across Lagunitas Road or east across Ross Common (street) towards Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Approximately midway along the Common is the crosswalk connecting the Post Office (Image 1-22) across Ross Common (street). This is a heavily-used crosswalk, as the Post Office is a popular destination for residents. The crosswalk is signified with yellow ground markings and a single vertical sign in the middle of the street.

The Post Office crosswalk connects at the front entrance of the Post Office (Image 1-14) with an adequate sidewalk width for the volume of pedestrian traffic. On the other side of the road, at the Common, the crosswalk connects without an arrival zone, landing on a narrow asphalt sidewalk and leading straight into the Common's barrier hedge (Image 1-23).

At the southern edge of the Main Lawn area are the crosswalks connecting to the downtown commercial area (Image 1-24). There is a single crosswalk leading from the Common south across Redwood Drive, where pedestrians can then cross Ross Common (street) to access commercial on both sides of the street.

## OVERALL SITE ELEMENTS

### TREES

The Town of Ross is proud and protective of the mature and dense tree canopy. The Town has restrictions on removing any trees on public or private property.

The Common is characterized by mature trees that define different areas either by their abundance - the Grove - or the space they enclose - the Main Lawn. For the majority of the Common, the trees are diverse, mature, and provide abundant shade. Trees populate and define the Grove, are clustered in the southwest corner of the Common, and planted along the roads that border to the east and



Image 1-22: Post Office Crosswalk to Common



Image 1-23: Crosswalk into hedge



Image 1-24: Commercial Crosswalks

Image 1-25: Trees



Image 1-26: Street trees



Image 1-27: Wood Bench



Image 1-28: Planting Areas



Image 1-29: Full Trash Cans



south (Image 1-25). The trees parallel to Ross Common (street) are majestic (Image 1-26), although there are some areas noticeable for the gaps in the almost-continuous tree wall curtaining the eastern edge of the Main Lawn.

### SITE FURNISHINGS

The site furnishings in the Common are mismatched.

The picnic tables, a more recent addition to the Common, are located along Redwood Drive (Image 1-19). They are typical, wood picnic tables that are unfinished and showing wear.

The benches placed throughout the Common are not matching, made of either wood or metal slats (Image 1-27). The benches include backrests and armrests, and are large enough to accommodate at least two people. Benches are not paired or grouped, instead distributed as individual elements across the site.

The trash receptacles are inconsistent throughout the site, with metal receptacles in the Common, brown concrete receptacles at the Post Office, and Marin Sanitary Services trash carts at the corner near downtown and along the perimeter path (Image 1-19 and Image 1-29).

### PLANTING AREAS

While the majority of the Common is either turf (Main Lawn) or trees (the Grove), there are areas of planting beds located along the street or edge of the Common (Image 1-28). Planting areas exist around the base of the Post Office stairs and parking lot, along the Ross School, near the Common-side landing of the Post Office Crosswalk, and near the Corner Landing. Some planting areas throughout the Common are showing signs of decline which may be from a lack of maintenance or the plants may simply be reaching the end of their viable life span.

### TRASH RECEPTACLES

Trash receptacles are placed throughout the site and were noted by many Ross Residents

in community outreach efforts as often overflowing with refuse (Image 1-29).

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

The scope of this Landscape Improvement & Rehabilitation Plan considered topography and flood zone in the landscape concept.

**TOPOGRAPHY**

The Town of Ross is located within a valley and extends someways up the valley walls. The Common is located on the floor of the valley (Image 1-30). There is minimal topographical changes across the site with a fall of less than ten feet north to south or east to west across the Common. The terrain slopes from the highpoint at the northeast corner (26 feet) down to the low point at the southwest corner (18 feet).

**FLOOD ZONE**

The majority of the Common is within the Floodway, and the entire site is within the Zone AE Floodplain (Figure 1-5). The AE Floodway is the channel of a watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. The Zone AE Floodplain is a Special Floor Hazard Area.

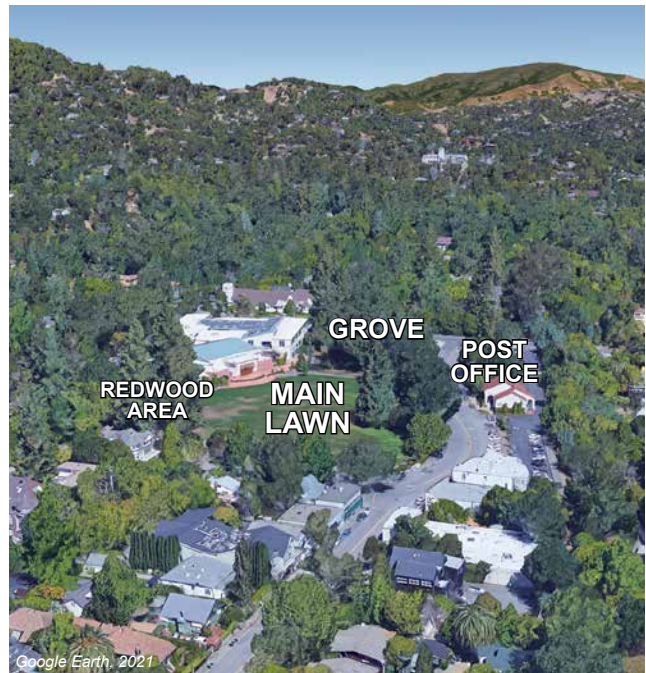


Image 1-30: Town of Ross topography

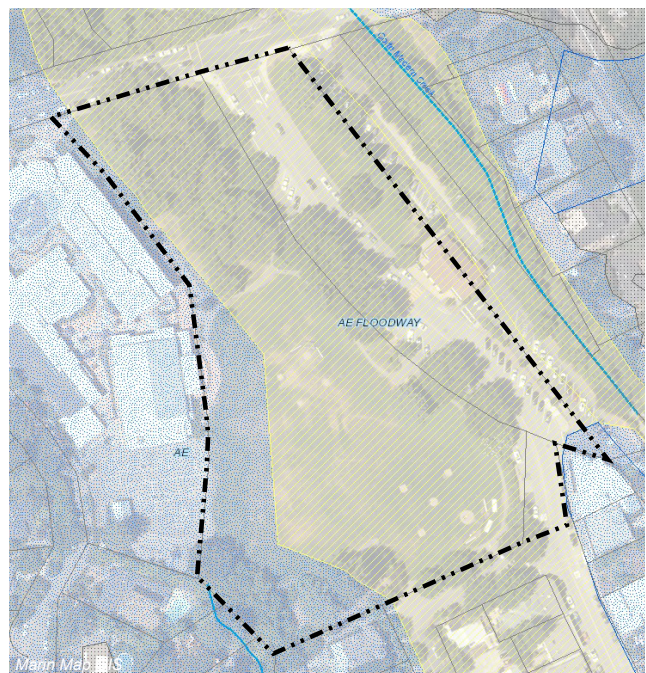


Figure 1-5: Flood Zone Map

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: blue;">—</span> Stream - Perennial (NHD)</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">—</span> Stream - Intermittent (NHD)</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">—</span> Stream - Ephemeral (NHD)</li> </ul> | <p>Flood Hazard Zone,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> AE</li> <li><span style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> AE, FLOODWAY</li> <li><span style="background-color: lightgray; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> X</li> </ul> |
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PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES



**ROSS COMMON**  
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT  
& REHABILITATION PLAN



## PLAN PURPOSE

Determine a plan for improvements in Ross Common that creates a public gathering space and gateway that is integrated with the community.

## OBJECTIVES

### A SUCCESSFUL PLAN:

#### INCLUSIVE OF ALL USERS

Ross is home to families and seniors - the Commons should be designed for all user groups to enjoy. Seating should incorporate elements of comfort and ease of use, such as backrests and armrests. The Common should foster use by young and old, such as play fields and passive recreation opportunities for different abilities.

#### ADAPTABILITY

The strength of the Common is its adaptability and flexibility. The Main Lawn can host sports games or the Town Dinner. The Grove can be a relaxing stroll through the trees or an adventurous game of tag. Maintaining the adaptability of use is paramount to the character of the Common.

#### CONNECTIVITY OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

The Common serves as the heart of the Town. The Common's adjacency to the Post Office, Ross School, and downtown commercial area is a strength to capitalize on. Emphasizing the Common as a public space well-connected to the adjacent and nearby destinations can draw users from those areas into the Common.

**ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

The Town of Ross has prioritized the environment since its inception, evident from the tree protection actions of the early Town Council. The Town's environmental stewardship of the Common not only aligns with the Town's values, but is responsible management of a beloved, public, open space.

**UTILIZE THE OPEN SPACE**

The Town of Ross has limited land opportunity for additional public open space beyond the extents of the Common. The available open space should be utilized to maximum public benefit.

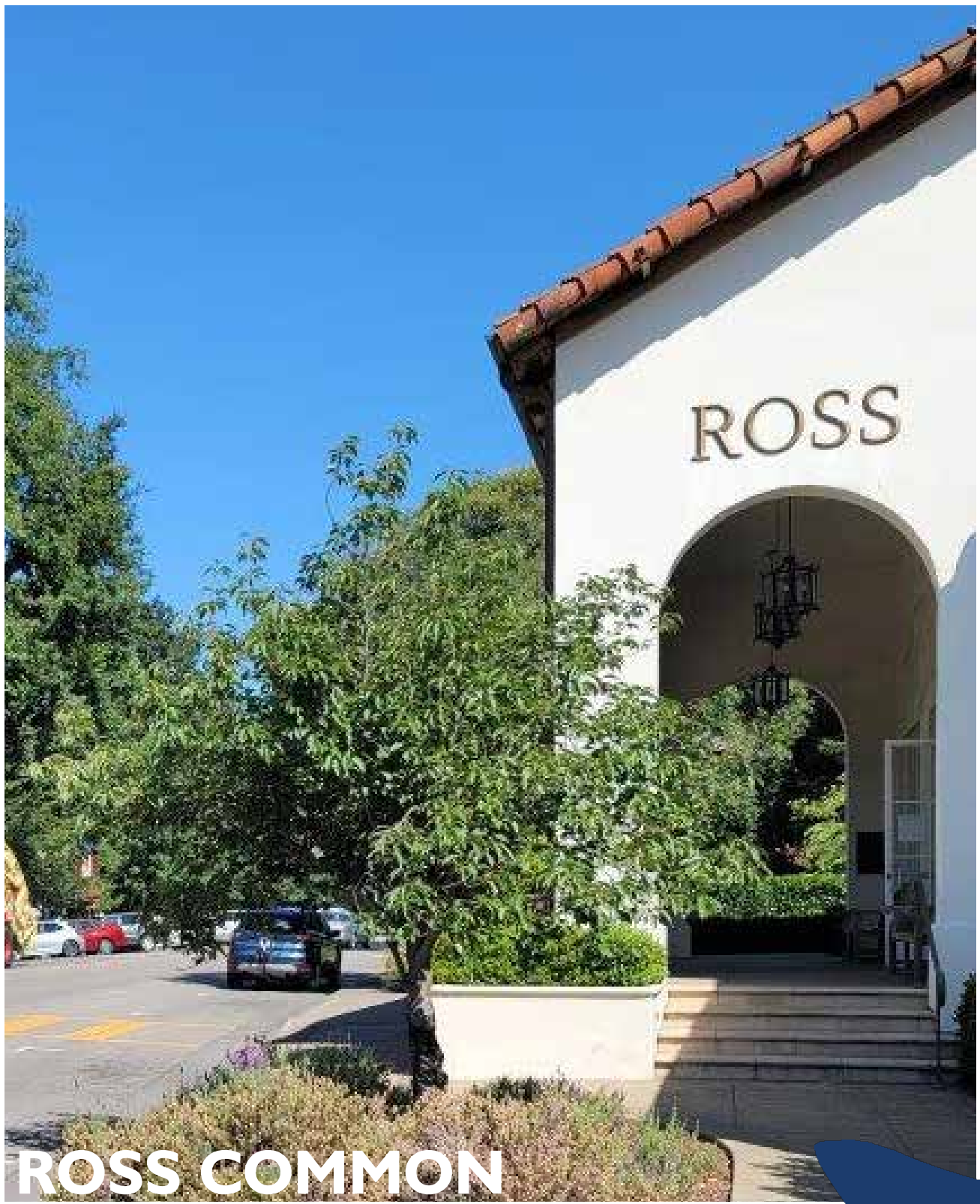
**REFLECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER & A FOCAL POINT**

The Town of Ross is characterized by the lush tree cover and pervasive greenery. The Common reflects the Town character and is defined by the rustic aesthetic and natural beauty of the landscape.

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DESIGN PROCESS



**ROSS COMMON**  
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT  
& REHABILITATION PLAN



The Design Process responds to the findings of the existing conditions, using Community Outreach to understand how the Common is used and beloved by Ross residents, and as the foundation to generate concepts for the improvement and rehabilitation of the space. The Concepts were taken to Town Council for their direction, and presented to the Advisory Design Review for their comments. The landscape concepts presented were refined into a single landscape concept for approval by the Town Council.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH METHODS

The community engagement effort undertaken for the Ross Common Landscape Improvement & Rehabilitation Plan was multi-pronged. Almost all engagement was conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- A project webpage was added to the Town's website, to keep the public abreast of the Plan's intent and status.
- Six focus groups were interviewed to initiate the community input process.
- An online questionnaire was distributed to capture resident input on potential issues and improvement opportunities identified by Town staff, focus groups, and from site visits.
- The Advisory Design Review group provided comments on landscape improvement and rehabilitation concepts.
- The Town Council provided direction on the initial concept plan and final concept plan.

## SUMMARY OF OUTREACH EFFORTS

All outreach materials are included in the Appendix.

### PROJECT WEBPAGE

The Town of Ross created a webpage for the project on the Town's website. The page provided an introduction to the project, identified the site, outlines ways for the public to participate, explained the project process, and provided a means to contact the staff and project consultant with comments.

The facsimile of the webpage is included in the Appendix.

### FOCUS GROUPS

Six focus group conversations occurred in June and July 2021. These conversations provided insight into the use and conditions of the Common, discussed why the Common is the heart of the Town, and brainstormed improvement and rehabilitation ideas.

### **ROSS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (RPOA)**

The Ross Property Owners Association focus group was conducted virtually on June 28, 2021.

The discussion about the existing condition of the Common focused on the limited seating opportunities, underutilized Grove, underutilized Post Office Green, lack of permanent restroom, lack of youth-focused gathering space, bike lane on Ross Common (street), peak usage times, and lack of a water fountain.

Future improvement and rehabilitation ideas for the Common included an emphasis on safe street crossings and connections to the Post Office and downtown commercial area, continuous bike lane and other bike facilities, addition of a youth-focused gathering space, increasing seating opportunities, addition of a restroom, locating dog amenities, and addition of a water fountain.

### **ROSS SCHOOL**

The Ross School focus group was conducted virtually on July 7, 2021.

The discussion about the existing condition of the Common focused on off-leash dogs, school use of the Common for drop-off and pick-up activities, picnicking, the barrier hedge, the annual closure of the Main Lawn for maintenance and repair of the turf, low use of Post Office Green, Grove use, connection to the downtown commercial area, new school playgrounds, outdoor stage use, lack of a public restroom, and the opportunity for sun or shade within the park.

Future improvement and rehabilitation ideas for the Common included a fenced dog-use area, electric car charging, traffic calming, prioritization of pedestrians, creating an eating and gathering space, and further integration of the outdoor stage.

### **LOCAL MERCHANTS**

The Local Merchants focus group was conducted virtually on July 8, 2021.

The discussion about the existing condition of the Common focused on the limited parking opportunities in the area, bikes, Ross Common (street) disconnecting the many park areas, and the barrier hedge.

Future improvement and rehabilitation ideas for the Common included on-street bike lane and bike facilities, dedicated dog area, garden-like setting in the park, playground area, wayfinding signage, improved pedestrian connections to adjacent areas, traffic calming, potential plaza areas for eating, electric outlets for events, permanent restroom, increased sidewalk width, parking

maximization, Ross School stage integration, and additional seating opportunities.

### **YOUTH SPORTS**

The Youth Sports focus group was conducted virtually on July 8, 2021.

The discussion about the existing condition of the Common focused on recreation programming and scheduling, sports use on the Main Lawn, class programs in the Grove, picnic table use, dogs in the Common, the need for a public restroom, Main Lawn closure in the winter for turf maintenance and repair, drinking fountain, shade, and bike racks.

Future improvement and rehabilitation ideas for the Common included supplementing seating opportunities, age-friendly seating, potential fenced-dog area, connecting uses, permanent restroom, potential for artificial turf, drinking fountain, native planting, and increasing the pedestrian orientation.

### **ROSS AUXILIARY**

The Ross Auxiliary focus groups was conducted virtually on July 13, 2021.

The discussion about the existing condition of the Common focused on events Ross Auxiliary hosts on the Common, lack of public restroom, dog use, Redwood Area underutilized, lack of soccer infrastructure, and park edge barriers.

Future improvement and rehabilitation ideas for the Common included adding a permanent restroom, programming the Redwood Area, play area, programming the Post Office Green, potential artificial turf area, and the flow through and around the Common.

### **AGE FRIENDLY ROSS**

The Age Friendly Ross focus group occurred on July 16, 2021.

The discussion about the existing condition of the Common focused on the status as a community hub, poor state of the hardscape, poor drainage, shabby hedge, limited number of benches, usage by dog-owners, use by seniors, unsafe use of bikes on sidewalks, and the social interaction that occurs in the Common.

Future improvement and rehabilitation ideas for the Common included replacement and increased quantity of seating, amenities for those without younger kids, focus on local residents, entrance from the Post Office, benches for two with handrails, accessible pathways, power outlets, bocce ball, and fitness equipment.

Table 3-1: Online Questionnaire

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

An online questionnaire was available from July 22 to August 5, 2021. The full summary of results is available in the Appendix.

In total, the questionnaire received 383 responses, of which 350 were from Ross residents (91% of all responses). The questionnaire consisted of eleven questions asking for input on the existing conditions, issues, uses, and access, as well as desire future improvements and rehabilitation to the Common (Table 3-1).

Overall, the Common is meeting users needs and is beloved by the Community. A multitude of respondents said the Commons is great as it is, and little to no change is necessary. The Common was described by multiple write-in responses as...

- ... a great way to enhance the community and connect
- ... contributing to the small town, relaxed atmosphere
- ... a wonderful space for families to gather
- ... a lovely, green space
- ... loved as is
- ... a centerpiece for the community
- ... a vital place to meet
- ... a place for kids to play
- ... a special place
- ... adored
- ... functional and free-form
- ... classic and serene
- ... wonderful asset
- ... hugely important to the Town
- ... a place the town can gather
- ... the heart of the community
- ... central to the Ross community
- ... a community hub
- ... a beautiful space
- ... a very nice green area
- ... a wonderful asset

To improve and rehabilitate the Common landscape, this Plan looked at the existing ways people are using the Common to identify supporting elements to maintain or enhance. The top four uses of the Common are:

67%	55%	52%	46%
Walking Paths	Lingering before/after Mail	Community Events	Social Meeting Space

*% of responses from Ross residents to Question 4*

## QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1 Are you a **Ross resident**?
- 2 How **often** do you use the Common?
- 3 How do you **get** to the Common? Select all that apply.
- 4 How do you **use** the Common? Select all that apply. Or write in the unique way you use the Common in 'Other.'
- 5 What do you **like** about the Common? Select all that apply. If you don't see something you like about the Common, please share by writing in 'Other.'
- 6 What are **issues you've noticed** in the Common? Select all that apply and/or write in issues you've noticed in 'Other.'
- 7 What **park amenities would improve** the Common? Select all that apply and/or share any additional ideas you have by writing them in 'Other.'
- 8 Please select your age group:
- 9 Please identify your household composition:
- 10 Anything else to tell us about the Common?
- 11 Thank you for your time! Please provide your email if you'd like updates on the Ross Common Improvement Plan or visit [www.townofross.org/planning/page/ross-common-landscape-improvement-rehabilitation-plan.com](http://www.townofross.org/planning/page/ross-common-landscape-improvement-rehabilitation-plan.com).

The most liked existing amenities are:

<b>88%</b>	<b>69%</b>
Lawn Space for Informal Use	Benches
<i>% of responses from Ross residents to Question 5</i>	

Around half the respondents (40% - 60%) like the oak grove, sports fields, picnic tables, recreation space adjacent to the school and/or mail pick-up, access to Ross School facilities, proximity to places visited, and dog recreation opportunity the Common provides.

The top three noticed issues in the Common are:

<b>55%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34%</b>
No Restroom	Unsanitary Grass from Dog Waste	Limited Seating
<i>% of responses from Ross residents to Question 6</i>		

The most desired amenities to consider in the Common are:

<b>53%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Public Restroom	Seating with Shade	Dedicated Dog Area	Dog Waste Station
<i>% of responses from Ross residents to Question 7</i>			

Ross residents do not want the Common to change, like the existing uses possible and amenities provided, and have few desires for changes to the space. In light of this, the concept plan for the landscape improvement and rehabilitation was created as standalone recommendations that support each other, but can be implemented as an individual project, for direction from the Town Council.

### EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

Throughout the planning process, Ross residents emailed their comments to the Town. All received emails are included in the Appendix. Emails included comments about the poor state of planting and picnic tables, as well as overflowing and ill-sized trash receptacles.

## LANDSCAPE CONCEPT

The landscape improvement and rehabilitation concept for the Common is an aggregation of multiple recommended elements that could be implemented independently as funding became available. The concept includes a response to all noticed issues, existing uses and liked amenities, and desired amenities that were identified by the community. The recommended elements were identified for specific areas of the Common - the Main Lawn,

Figure 3-1: Initial Landscape Concept



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Grove, and Post Office & Post Office Green, and Redwood Area. This chapter includes all proposed concept elements that were provided to the Town Council for direction.

## MAIN LAWN

The Landscape Concept promotes redesign and reconstruction of the Main Lawn turf. There are visible issues with the existing lawn. The Town has been doing all possible “band-aid” solutions to remediate the issues, but a full reconstruction of the lawn is recommended.

Currently, the walking paths do not connect all the way around the Main Lawn, leaving walkers to traverse the grass or walk along the edge of the playground to loop around the Main Lawn. Completing the walking path to create a loop around the Main Lawn is recommended.



Image 3-1: Concept, Restroom

## RESTROOM

In response to multiple focus group conversation and half of the questionnaire respondents, a public restroom on the Common was proposed in the Redwoods Area. Existing utilities are located near this area of the Common, and by placing the restroom at the edge of the Main Lawn, the sports recreation users would have easy access. Additionally, the restroom would not be visually intrusive in this location.

Alternatively, Ross School restroom facilities are sometimes made available for public use. Instead of a permanent restroom in the Common, the Town could pursue an agreement with the Ross School to extend public access to the school’s restroom facilities.

## PROMENADE

Along the street edge of the Main Lawn are two paths for pedestrians - the sidewalk and a walking path - separated by the barrier hedge. The Landscape Concept proposes a more formalized promenade to replace the paired paths, maintaining the same intent as current but increasing the walking area width, expanding the planting area between paths, and incorporating seating opportunities along the interior path. The planter would serve the same purpose as the current barrier hedge to shelter and divide the Common from the street.



Image 3-2: Concept, Promenade



Image 3-3: Concept, Pavilion Plaza

### PAVILION PLAZA

The Pavilion Plaza is located immediately across Ross Common (street) from the Post Office, and would serve as a landing experience for the crosswalk.

The proposed Pavilion Plaza would be an expanded paved area along the interior path of the Promenade, with a potential gazebo-like structure on the plaza edge facing into the Main Lawn. The Pavilion Plaza would be oriented towards the interior of the Common, with new trees planted around the plaza area to act as an edge buffer to create a sense of enclosure. The Pavilion Plaza would be an ideal location for movable furniture, such as bistro tables and chairs.

### GROVE

Proposed for the Grove is a slight increase in the existing path width, an additional diagonal walking path (to better connect the School path into the area), and the addition of seating opportunities in the shaded space.

Image 3-4: Concept, Game Area



Image 3-5: Concept, Dog Area



### POST OFFICE

There are no recommended changes for the Post Office.

### POST OFFICE GREEN

#### POST OFFICE GREEN

There are two alternatives proposed for the Post Office Green: a game area or a dog-oriented area. The options are either/or, as both cannot be accommodated in the space.

A game area (Image 3-4), could include a game court area, such as bocce ball court, and/or game tables, such as chess tables or ping pong tables. Seating opportunities for gathering should be provided in the area, for spectators or players to use. To create enclosure of the space, planting trees along the street is recommended.

To create a dog-oriented area (Image 3-5), the area would require a fenced barrier because of the narrowness and proximity to vehicular traffic. The dog area would be minimally improved.

### REDWOOD AREA

#### STORAGE AND UTILITY AREA

In the southwest corner of the Common, tucked under the trees behind the Main Lawn, is an area used for storage and utilities.

To maintain the usability of the space and eliminate the disruption of the chain link fence to the natural aesthetic of the Common, the area should be shrouded with vegetative screening.

### CORNER MINI PLAZA

Adjacent to the Common is the downtown commercial area, but the two areas have minimal engagement between them. In recent years, the Town has begun to respond to the adjacency and added picnic tables along Redwood Drive for gathering and eating outside during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Landscape Concept furthers this connection by highlighting the corner of the Common closest to the downtown commercial area as a Corner Mini Plaza. The concept includes increasing the paved area at the corner to create a small plaza, adding seating and eating spaces, and incorporating a small vertical element as a landmark.



Image 3-6: Concept, Mini Plaza

### CONNECTIONS

#### LOOP WALKING PATH(S)

Throughout the Common, the walking paths are the most liked existing park amenity. They provide exercise opportunities, socializing experiences, and generally activate the space with park visitors. The quantity of the walking paths should not dominate the Common, as the space is revered for its natural aesthetic.



Image 3-7: Concept, Walking Path

The condition of the asphalt-paved paths is poor. The paths are cracking, uneven, and a potential tripping hazard. All paths are in need of a complete reconstruction, as they are unsafe.

Paths with a higher potential for use were identified to be reconstructed slightly wider than their current widths, all path widths are recommended to be standardized based on level of usage. This recommendation would create a slight increase in the total quantity of impervious surface.

#### POST OFFICE CROSSWALK

Recommendation for the Post Office Crossing promote pedestrian safety. Raising the crosswalk to create a speed table not only increases visibility of the pedestrian while they



Image 3-8: Concept, Raised

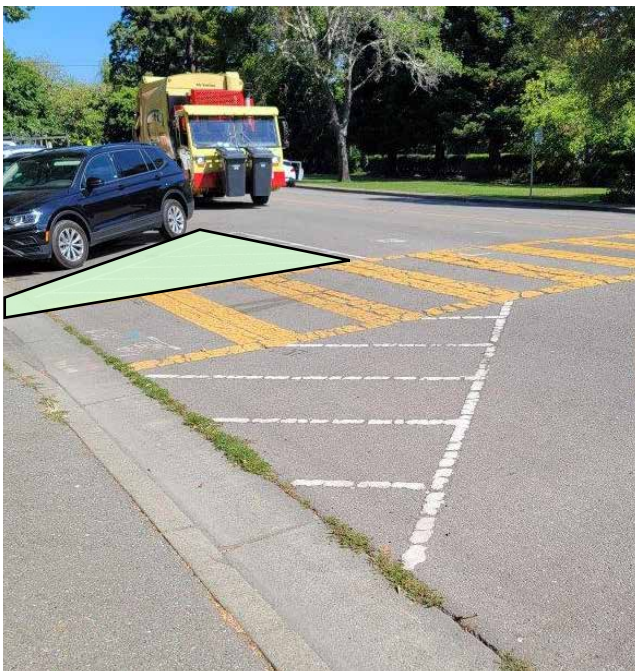
Image 3-9: Mid-block Bulbout



Figure 3-2: Concept, East Bulbout



Figure 3-3: Concept, West Bulbout



are in the crosswalk, but also changes the experience for the driver to draw attention to the crosswalk (Image 3-8). Pairing a material change, or color, into the crosswalk further increases crosswalk visibility. Crosswalks with materiality or color can provide character to a space.

To complement an enhanced crosswalk, bulbouts are proposed to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance, increase the visibility of a pedestrian about to cross the street, and looks to visually reduce the street width to slow travel speeds without impacting the actual travel lane width.. Bulbouts are a curb extensions (Image 3-9), typically located at intersections, used to narrow the curb-to-curb crossing distance. Bulbouts are a pedestrian safety streetscape element and a traffic calming technique.

On the east side of the street, the recommended bulbout (Figure 3-2) would extend the sidewalk at the base of the Post Office entrance stair and replace the on-street parking. In doing so, the short-term on-street parking would be relocated.

The bulbout proposed for the west side of the street (Figure 3-3), would be located in the area currently striped for the on-street parking and would not decrease the quantity of parking spaces available. The on-street parking configuration along the southbound lane is front-in angled parking, into which the Post Office crosswalk lands on the Common. The currently striped area is two triangles generated on either side of the crosswalk at it bisects the parking (see Image 1-23). The bulbouts can be planted and are commonly used for stormwater infrastructure.

## OVERALL SITE ELEMENTS

### TREES

The trees are mature and full. Succession trees should be planted over the next few years to establish younger trees to maintain the tree canopy and coverage when the currently mature trees reach the end of the life and must be

removed. Additionally, succession tree planting fulfills multiple General Plan policies (1.2 Tree Canopy Preservation, 1.3 Tree Maintenance and Replacement, 3.2 Landscape Design, and 4.1 Historic Heritage), a Climate Action Plan mitigation measure (3.2.C1), and the Downtown Tree & Landscape Plan.

### SITE FURNISHINGS

The site furnishings should be coordinated and consistent as they are replaced due to age and wear. Wooden furniture, to match the rustic aesthetic of the site, is recommended. Benches should be able to seat at least two, with armrests and backrests. To facilitate social interactions, clustered seating with benches paired and placed at angles to each other for group seating and conversation is best.



Image 3-10: Concept, Benches



Image 3-11: Concept, Plantings

### PLANTING AREAS

The planting areas should be refreshed with native and drought-tolerant species.

### TRASH RECEPTACLES

The trash receptacles should be coordinated and consistent across the Common. Trash service should be increased after a high-use gathering event, weekend, program, or any other time the trash is full.

## RESPONSES TO CONCEPT

The Initial Landscape Concept was presented to the Town Council for comments and direction. From this input, the Revised Landscape Concept was generated and presented to the Advisory Design Review. The third iteration, the Preferred Landscape Concept, was presented to the Town Council for the final review of the landscape concept.

### INITIAL CONCEPT

The Initial Landscape Plan (Figure 3-1) was presented at the August 12, 2021 Town Council meeting for direction. The full presentation is included in the Appendix.

### GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Overall, the direction provided by the council was to limit the scope of improvements, as the Common is beloved as it is and not in need of any change.

**Hardscape increases:** There was no support for increasing width of the walking paths or plaza gathering areas.

**Hedge Barrier:** Current condition of the hedge is unsatisfactory. The hedge should be replaced and it should meet the same intent as the current barrier and be of the same height.

**Public Restroom:** There was no support for a permanent public restroom in the Common. The Council would prefer to reach an agreement with the Ross School to use their facilities.

**Walking Paths:** General consensus supported repaving of all existing walking paths, as they are in poor condition and no longer safe. There was no support to widen any paths.

**Seating, Generally:** There was minimal support for additional seating placed throughout the Common. Improved seating, especially with regards to seating designed for the older population to include backrests, armrests, and accommodate at least two people, was supported by three of the council members.

**Crosswalk Landing:** Two council members and the mayor liked the idea of a seating area in the Common near in the crosswalk landing from the Post Office.

**Main Lawn Turf:** The Mayor was concerned with redoing the turf while in a drought. There was no direction to dismiss the proposed reconstruction of the turf, just current considerations to determine scheduling.

**Equipment Screening:** There was general consensus to incorporate vegetative shielding of the utilities and storage area in the southwest corner of the Main Lawn.

**Grove:** Dog access was a main component of the discussion about the Grove. The Initial Landscape Concept does not include any policy direction about dog access.

**Traffic Safety Components:** The council members were in support of the idea of a safer pedestrian experience, but did not support bulbouts to decrease the street crossing distance and were minimally supportive of creating an enhanced crosswalk. In particular, the loss of the short-term parking spaces was opposed.

**Pavilion Plaza:** There was little to no support for many elements proposed as part of the Pavilion Plaza. There was no support for a pavilion structure or hardscape plaza.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Four people commented on the Initial Landscape Concept during the public comment period. The comments concerned the

Figure 3-4: Revised Landscape Concept



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continued use of the site as a park; dogs in the Common; crosswalk improvements, Post Office Green programming, pathways improvements, and lack of support for hardscape and a public restroom; and designing for older Ross residents in the concept.

## REVISED CONCEPT

The Revised Landscape Concept (Figure 3-4) was presented to the Advisory Design Review (ADR) group, as requested by the Town Council and recommended in GP Action 3.B 'Require Design Review for Larger Landscape Projects,' on September 21, 2021 for comments. The full Revised Landscape Concept presented to the ADR group is included in the Appendix.

The Revised Landscape Concept incorporated direction from the Town Council presentation of the Initial Landscape Concept. The ADR group members were provided the questionnaire results and the Initial Landscape Concept presentation given to Town Council as background for their review of the Revised Landscape Concept.

Overall, the response from the ADR group members was positive and supportive of the Revised Landscape Concept. The group members did not recommend a public restroom on the Common. They were in support of additional seating opportunities, rethinking the Post Office crosswalk to enhance pedestrian safety, revitalization of the existing barrier hedge, a slight widening of walking paths when they are redone, and the integration of gathering spaces at the Post Office Landing and Corner Mini Spot.

## PREFERRED CONCEPT

The Preferred Landscape Concept (Figure 3-5) was presented at the October 14, 2021 Town Council meeting. The Preferred Landscape Concept presented to the Town Council is included in the Appendix.

## GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Similar to the first presentation of the Initial Landscape Concept, the Council directed minimal to no change to the Common. No additional hardscape, no additional tables, and only minor increases in seating opportunities were supported.

**Hedge Barrier:** Any replanting of the hedge must meet the same intent as the existing hedge, as a physical and visual barrier around the Common. Layered planting, as proposed, was not supported. Replanting during a drought was not supported.

**Tables, Generally:** There was no support for additional tables in the Common, in any location.

**Grove:** The Council directed no change to occur in the Grove. One

additional bench along the path, similar to the existing benches in the area, was discussed.

**Crosswalk Landing:** The Council supported the idea to align a pedestrian entrance into the Common with the Post Office Crosswalk. There was no support for the landing as a mini plaza, with hardscape surrounded by the hedge, populated with two tables and two benches. At most, a bench or two, located inside the hedge and facing the Common, were acceptable.

**Crosswalk Entrance to the Common:** The Council supported aligning the entrance to the Common with the Crosswalk. This requires adjusting the walking path location and the barrier hedge access opening to coordinate with the landing of the crosswalk from the Post Office.

**Succession Trees:** All council members supported succession planting of trees along the Common's edge.

**Post Office Green:** The Council supported opening the access to the lawn area from the base of the Post Office entrance stairs by removing an existing planting area and relocating the Post Office mail dropbox. At most, a bench in the lawn area was supported. The Council consensus was to maintain the lawn, without change beyond the access widening.

**Corner Mini Spot:** Additional tables were not supported in this area. At most, a bench added to this area was supported. No increase to hardscape. The Council directed the trashcans to be relocated.

**Redwood Area:** The Council unanimously directed no more tables.

**Crosswalk:** The Council was not unanimous on direction about the crosswalk bulbout on the Common-side of the street. Two council members supported raising the striped area that brackets the crosswalk on the park-side of the street to the height of the curb, while three council members deemed the existing white stripes sufficient. No bulbout is recommended for the crosswalk.

**Public Restroom:** The Council reiterated their direction for no public restroom in the Common and their support of working with Ross School for access to their existing facilities.

**Storage and Utility Area:** The area used for storage and utilities should be screened with a planted fence.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The one public comment received at the meeting was concerning the drought conditions and the impact it has on plants.

Figure 3-5: Preferred Landscape Concept



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LANDSCAPE CONCEPT



**ROSS COMMON**  
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT  
& REHABILITATION PLAN



## RECOMMENDATIONS OVERALL

The Landscape Concept (Figure 4-1) is focused on restoring the Common for Ross' enjoyment, with a focus on rehabilitating the beloved existing design. There are fourteen recommendations to improve or rehabilitate the Common, numbered for the area they impact (such as Connections-1 for all walking paths).

**Connections-1** Repave all walking paths

**Connections-2** Align pedestrian entrance

**Site-1** Succession tree planting

**Site-2** Refresh planting areas

**Site-3** Replace site furnishings

**Main Lawn-1** Reconstruct turf

**Grove-1** Add (1) bench

**Hedge Barrier-1** Replant Barrier Hedge

**Post Office Green-1** Relocate dropbox & remove planter

**Post Office Green-2** Add (2) benches

**Corner Mini Plaza-1** Add (1) bench

**Corner Mini Plaza-2** Relocate trash receptacles

**Redwood Area-1** Screen storage & utilities

## PUBLIC RESTROOM

There is no recommendation for a public restroom to be constructed in the Common. The Town should work with the Ross School to coordinate public access to the school's restroom facilities.

## INCREASED MAINTENANCE

As the beloved heart of the community, maintenance of the Common is a critical component for enjoyable use of the space. From multiple outreach avenues, residents expressed a desire for increased maintenance, gardening, and trash collection.

## WALKING PATHS

There is one rehabilitation and one improvement recommendation each for the walking paths throughout the Common.

**Connections-1:** The existing paths shall be repaved in the existing location with minimal adjustments in path width in order to maintain the rustic nature of the Common. The standardized path widths (Table 4-1) are consistent across the site (Figure 4-2).

Figure 4-1: Landscape Concept



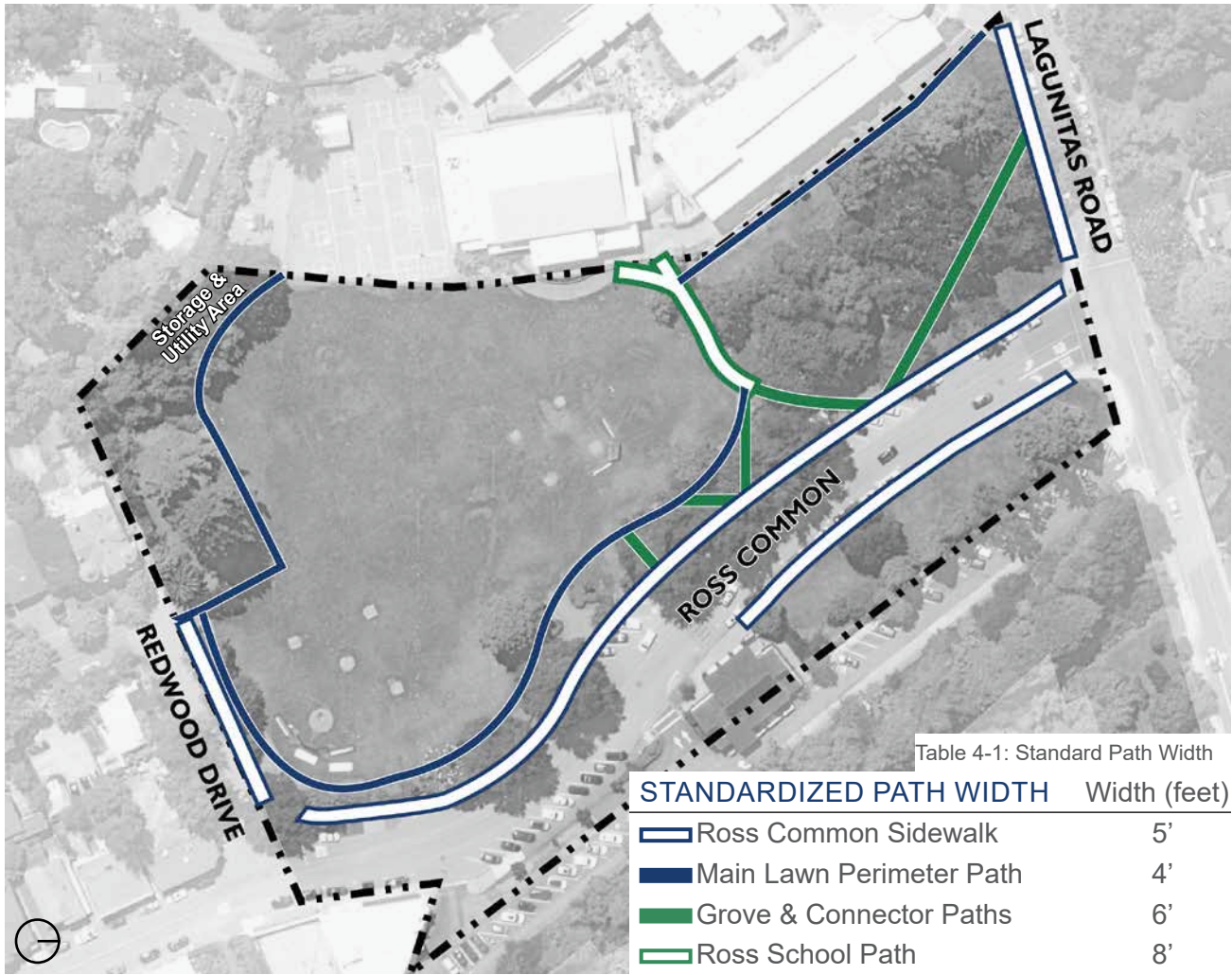
- A** Grove recommendation
- B** Connections recommendation
- C** Post Office Green recommendations
- D** Corner Mini Plaza recommendations
- E** Redwood Area recommendation







Figure 4-2: Standard Walking Paths



Realignment of the pathway near storage and utility space in the Redwood Area should allow for screening planting to occur between the edge of the pathway and the adjacent chain link fence.

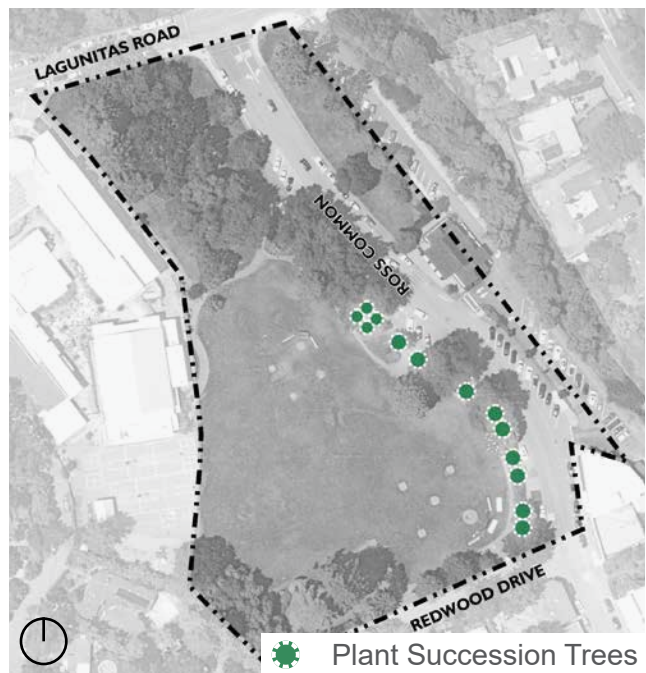
**SUCCESSION TREES**

There is one future-oriented rehabilitation recommendation for trees (Figure 4-3).

**Site-1:** To maintain the abundant quantity of trees, the tree wall creating enclosure of the Common, and the extensive tree canopy, succession tree planting is recommended.

Along Ross Common (street), succession trees should be planted in the immediate to near time frame. The trees bordering the road are currently mature and generally healthy. By

Figure 4-3: Succession Tree Planting Locations



planting succession trees before the existing trees are nearing the end of their usable life, the newer trees will become established before the existing trees are removed, thereby reducing the aesthetic and environmental impact during the removal of the current trees transition.

## PLANTING AREAS REFRESH

**Site-2:** Planting areas should be refreshed to maintain vitality and the Common's aesthetic appeal (Figure 4-4).

The areas identified should be replanted with species that are low maintenance, durable, drought tolerant and, preferably, native.

## SITE FURNISHINGS

There is one improvement recommendation for the multiple planting areas in the Common.

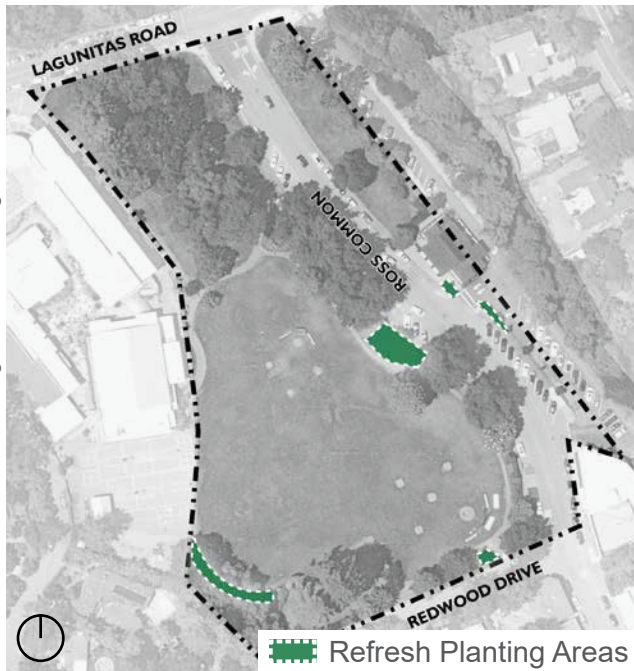
**Site-3:** The site furnishings should be consistent in character and accessibility across the site.

New and replaced benches should include armrest and backrests. The preferred material is wood, or a visually similar material, as the dominant visual element to match and encourage the rustic aesthetic of the Common.

Trash enclosures should have consistent character across the site. Trash receptacles in the Mini Corner Plaza should have openings large enough to accommodate pizza boxes.

Recycling receptacles should be paired with trash in select locations across the site.

Figure 4-4: Planting Refresh Locations



## RECOMMENDATIONS PER AREA

### MAIN LAWN

There is one rehabilitation recommendation for the Main Lawn (Figure 4-5).

**Main Lawn-1:** The Main Lawn recommendation is for rehabilitation of the entire central turf area. The entire Main Lawn turf area shall be redesigned and reconstructed per option “Remedy A” in the 2018 *Town of Ross Common Turfgrass Improvement/Renovation* report (included in the Appendix for reference).

### GROVE

The Grove is beloved in its current form, and no rehabilitation is necessary beyond repaving the existing paths (Figure 4-6).

**Grove-1:** The one improvement proposed for the area is the addition of one bench to increase seating opportunities within the Common while allowing minimal change to the Grove’s character. The additional bench shall align with the site furnishings character and promote accessibility for all ages.

### HEDGE BARRIER

The Hedge Barrier has one rehabilitation project proposed (Figure 4-7).

**Hedge Barrier-1:** To maintain the benefits provided by the existing hedge barrier, replanting is recommended. The recommended plant to replace the hedge should be evergreen, drought-tolerant, low-maintenance, fast-growing, and durable. Timing of the replanting will be guided by the deterioration of the existing hedge, the season when the replanting will happen, and the drought status of the state.



Figure 4-5: Main Lawn Turf Reconstruction

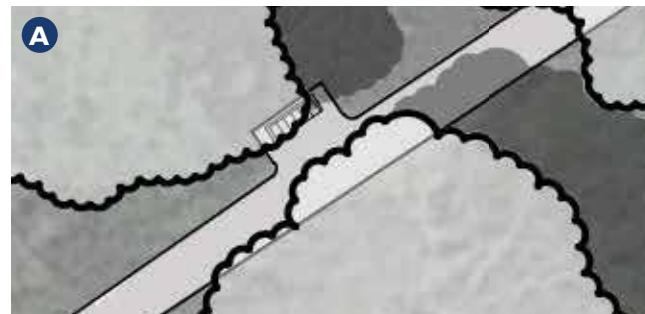


Figure 4-6: Grove

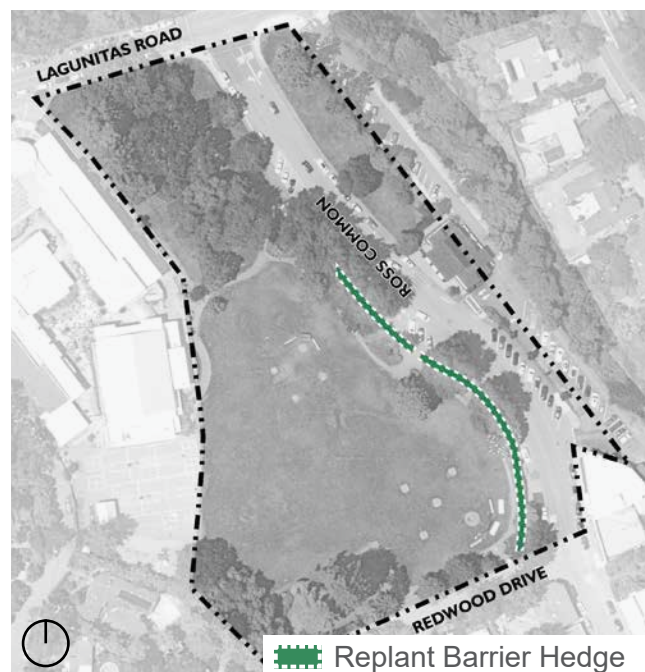


Figure 4-7: Barrier Hedge Replanting Location

Figure 4-8: Post Office Crosswalk Landing on Common

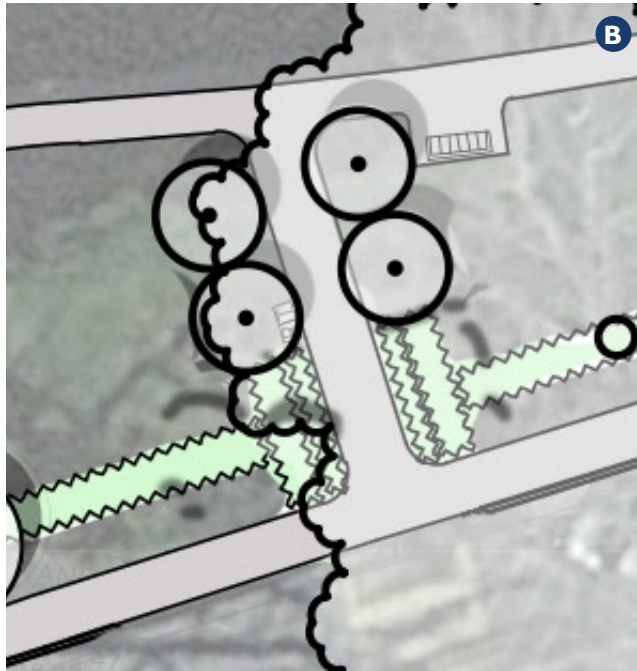
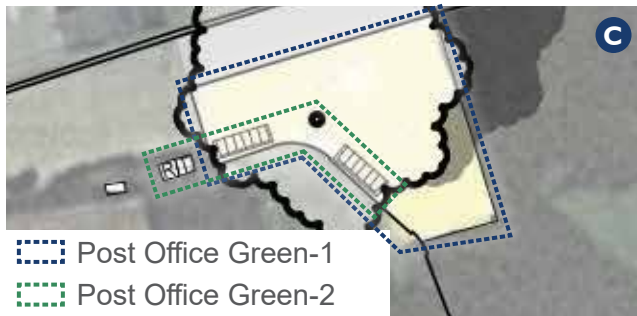
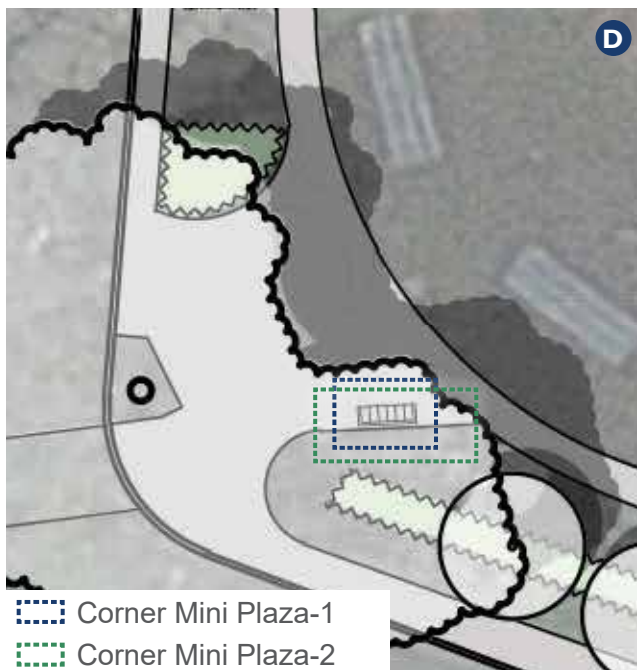


Figure 4-9: Post Office Green



- Post Office Green-1
- Post Office Green-2

Figure 4-10: Corner Mini Plaza



- Corner Mini Plaza-1
- Corner Mini Plaza-2

## CONNECTIONS

Beyond the rehabilitation recommendation to repave all walking paths (Connections-1), there are two improvement recommendations for pedestrian connections (Figure 4-8).

**Connections-2:** At the time of the hedge replanting, the pedestrian entrance to the Common should be aligned with the landing location of the crosswalk from the Post Office. The new hedge plants should fill in the current pedestrian entrance to maintain only a single pedestrian entrance.

## POST OFFICE GREEN

There are two improvement recommendations for the Post Office Green (Figure 4-9).

**Post Office Green-1:** First, increase access to the adjacent grass area by relocating the mail drop box to another location in front of the Post Office and remove the existing planting immediately behind the box. Decomposed granite will be used to create a small usable space as well as access to the great grass area.

**Post Office Green-2:** Second, add two benches at the perimeter of the decomposed granite area to encourage use of the grass area. Provide an additional trash and recycling receptacle near the relocated mail drop box. The additional benches shall align with the site furnishings character and promote accessibility.

## CORNER MINI PLAZA

The Corner Mini Plaza requires minimal rehabilitation and has two proposed improvements. The existing paving shall be included in the scope of repaving of the existing walking paths (Figure 4-10).

**Corner Mini Plaza-1:** A second bench to complement the memorial bench along Redwood Drive is proposed along Ross Common (street). The second bench should match the existing bench, if not exactly, then in intent and materiality.

**Corner Mini Plaza-2:** The largest change recommended for this area is the relocation of the trash receptacles. The trash receptacles should be relocated to reduce their visual intrusion into the bucolic nature of the Common without impairing use and access.

## REDWOOD AREA

The Redwood Area requires improvement (Figure 4-11).

**Redwood Area-1:** The storage and utilities in the southwest corner of the Common located at the edge of the Main Lawn shall be screened with plantings without restricting the ability to store items used for recreation on the Main Lawn. The realignment of the pathway should allow for screening planting to occur between the edge of the pathway and the adjacent chain link fence.

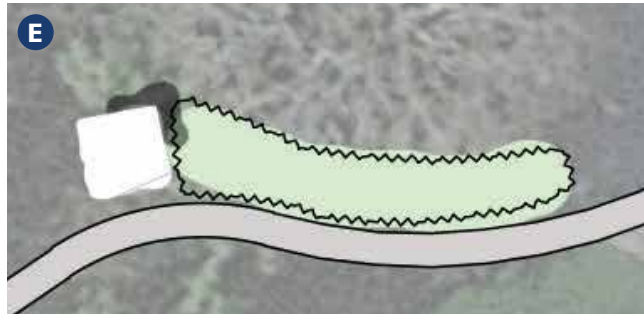
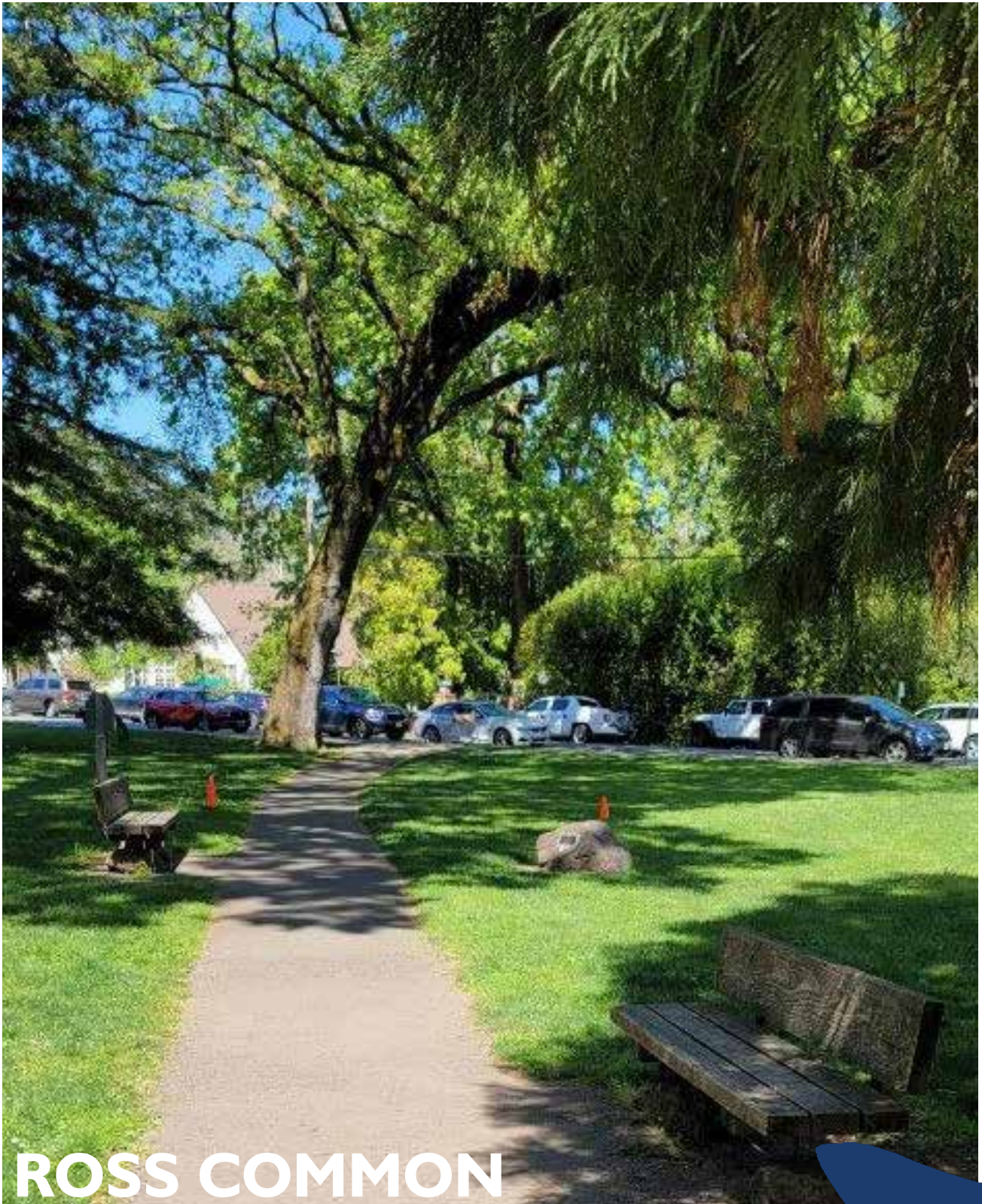


Figure 4-11: Redwood Area

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**ROSS COMMON**  
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT  
& REHABILITATION PLAN



The implementation of the Ross Common Landscape Improvement & Rehabilitation Plan has been an important consideration throughout the design process. The design was structured to create independent improvement and rehabilitation projects to create flexibility in the implementation: piece-by-piece, all at once, or in any project combination. The description of projects assumes standalone implementation.

## PRIORITIZATION & PHASING

The recommended prioritization and phasing of projects is based on the quality of the existing conditions, community support and/or desire for the element, project complexity, and potential cost.

### PRIORITIZATION

The project's type, either to rehabilitate or to improve, is incorporated into the prioritization rankings. Rehabilitation projects are assigned one point, whereas improvement projects are assigned no points.

The existing condition of elements prioritize those in need of repair or replacement for more immediate rehabilitation. Existing conditions that are unsafe are assigned the highest amount of points, to increase their prioritization ranking. Existing elements in poor condition are allocated one point. Elements considered decent and new recommended elements are assigned no points.

The amount of community support and/or desire for an element increase a project's standing in the prioritization. Elements that were requested or identified as important in multiple outreach efforts are ranked high and assigned one point. For example, the repaving of the walking paths had a high volume of online questionnaire responses that identified walking paths as their highest use of the Common and from focus group discussions.

The complexity of a project is used as a criteria to increase the ranking of recommendations that can be considered an "easy win" to make improvements. Projects with low complexity are awarded one point for faster implementation.

The probable cost of a project assists in prioritizing minor projects for quick implementation. Projects are deemed low cost if the estimate of probable construction cost is under \$25,000. Inversely, projects over this amount are scored as high cost.

The Prioritization Matrix (Table 5-1) consolidates all prioritization criteria to generate project rankings.



Table 5-1: Prioritization Matrix

## PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS	PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA		EXISTING CONDITION			COMMUNITY SUPPORT		PROJECT COMPLEXITY		PROBABLE COST		POINTS	RANK
	Rehabilitation	Improvement	Unsafe	Poor	Decent or N/A	High	Low	Low	High	Low	High		
<b>Connections-1</b> Repave all walking paths	■ ■		■ ■			■			□		□	5	1
<b>Hedge Barrier-1</b> Replant Barrier Hedge	■ ■			■		■		■			□	5	1
<b>Corner Mini Plaza-2</b> Relocate trash receptacles		□		■		■		■		■		4	2
<b>Main Lawn-1</b> Reconstruct turf	■ ■			■		■			□		□	4	2
<b>Site-2</b> Refresh planting areas		□		■		■		■			□	3	3
<b>Grove-1</b> Add (1) bench		□			□	■		■		■		3	3
<b>Post Office Green-2</b> Add (2) benches		□			□	■		■		■		3	3
<b>Corner Mini Plaza-1</b> Add (1) bench		□			□	■		■		■		3	3
<b>Site-3</b> Replace site furnishings		□			□	■		■			□	2	4
<b>Post Office Green-1</b> Relocate dropbox & remove planter		□		■			□		□	■		2	4
<b>Site-1</b> Succession tree planting		□			□		□	■		■		2	4
<b>Redwood Area-1</b> Screen storage & utilities		□		■			□		□	■		2	4
<b>Connections-2</b> Align pedestrian entrance		□			□	■			□		□	1	5

## PHASED IMPLEMENTATION

The phased implementation of the recommendations is informed by the Prioritization Matrix. The proposed phases are: ongoing maintenance, immediate repairs, short term projects, and longer term projects.

### ONGOING MAINTENANCE

Not included in the Prioritization Matrix is Ongoing Maintenance. In order to continue to be the jewel of Ross, the Common must be maintained to a standard that supports the community's use. This includes:

1. High-quality gardening to sustain the lawn, hedge, and trees in good condition;
2. Timely and responsive trash collection; and
3. Periodic deep cleaning and refinishing of the benches and picnic tables.

### IMMEDIATE REPAIRS

Immediate Repair have no defined time frame for implementation, but should be done as early as reasonably possible to maintain the Common as the heart of the Ross community.

The most immediate repair project recommended is to repave the cracked walking paths (Connections-1, ranked first). The paths are an unsafe walking environment full of potential tripping hazards. This project should be undertaken in the immediate future to remedy the potentially unsafe existing condition.

The barrier hedge is in need of replacement (Hedge Barrier-1, ranked first), as a highly-regarded element of the Common for the safety barrier and visual screen it provides, is identified as an Immediate Repair.

### SHORT TERM PROJECTS

Short Term Projects are recommended to occur within five years.

Relocation of the trash receptacles requires little to no construction and is therefore a low complexity project (Corner Mini Plaza-2, ranked second). Relocation should be completed in the Short Term.

Reconstruction of the Main Lawn (Main Lawn-1, ranked second) is identified in the short term, as the space is heavily used for formal and informal gathering such as recreation programming and play. The space is the only area of the Common closed for a season every year (winter) for maintenance and repair. Redesign and

reconstruction of the turf should alleviate the duration of seasonal closure, thereby increasing the usable time annually.

Refresh of the planting areas (Site-2, ranked second) is identified in the short term because of the many comments from the community about the maintenance and appearance of the plantings and the lower cost to implement.

### **LONGER TERM PROJECTS**

Longer Term Projects are recommended to occur within ten years.

As the site furnishings deteriorate over time and require replacement, they should be replaced with furnishings of a matched character (Site-3, ranked third). Wooden park furnishings require replacement every 10-15 years, depending on environmental conditions. The existing site furnishings are expected to require replacement within the Longer Term time frame.

One additional bench is recommended to be placed in the Grove (Grove-1, ranked third) in the Longer Term.

Two additional benches are recommended to be placed in the Post Office Green (Post Office Green-2, ranked third) in the Longer Term.

One additional bench is recommended to be placed in the Corner Mini Plaza (Corner Mini Plaza-1, ranked third) in the Longer Term.

Access to the Post Office Green by relocating the Post Office mail dropbox and removal of the planted behind (Post Office Green-1, ranked fourth) it is identified to occur in the Longer Term. The project increases usability of the space.

Maintaining the natural aesthetic of the Common through Succession tree planting (Site-1, ranked fourth) is recommended to occur as an on-going effort that should be completed within the long term. This project can be undertaken all at once, meaning every recommended tree planted at the same time, or broken out into individual or a groupings of trees.

Planting to screen the storage and utilities located in the Redwood Area (Redwood Area-1, ranked fourth) is recommended to occur in the Longer Term. The project does not impact the function or use of the Common, and is therefore a lower priority project.

The alignment of the pedestrian entrance to the Common near the Post Office (Connections-2, ranked fifth) is best implemented with the repaving of the asphalt path and barrier hedge replanting. As a standalone project, this recommendation is ranked last.

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### GRANTS

The Town is pursuing grant funding for rehabilitation of the Common from the State of California Per Capita Grant Program. The grant originated from Proposition 68, which authorized \$4 billion in general obligation bonds for state and local parks, environmental protection and restoration projects, water infrastructure projects, and flood protection, in addition to providing approximately \$650 million in competitive grants statewide for park-related projects. Of the funding available, approximately \$185 million in Per Capita Funding grants will be available, of which each municipality is entitled to \$177,000 in funding. The Town of Ross will be pursuing funding for recommendations in this Plan, as the grant can be used to fund the development of new park space, expansion of existing park space, and the renovation of existing park space that creates new recreational opportunities. At minimum, all eligible projects must have a recreational feature for public use.

The Town should continue to pursue all possible grants to assist in funding the landscape improvement and rehabilitation recommendations for the Common.

### PARTNERSHIPS

The Town of Ross have active auxiliary organizations that support Town activities and spaces. Two such organizations, the Ross Property Owners Association and Ross Auxiliary, have a history of donating funds to enhance public spaces. Partnerships are an avenue to maintain and enhance the beloved Common.

The Ross School utilizes the Common for their daily activities. A majority of student drop-off and pick-up is done through the Common. The school's physical education classes run laps around the Main Lawn. The school allows their playgrounds to be used by the public outside school hours while the gates remain unlocked. The restroom facilities are, at times, available for public use outside school hours. Continuing the partnership by reaching an agreement for public access to the restroom facilities outside of school hours is recommended.

The residents of Ross have donated funds and land to create the Common as it is today. In fact, the Common only exists because Annie Ross Worn dedicated the land to the Town. Continuing this tradition of resident support is an option for project implementation.

### ALTERNATIVE & UNNAMED FUNDING SOURCES

If and when alternative funding sources not identified in this

Plan are available, the Town should pursue any and all funding opportunities to implement Plan recommendations.

## PROBABLE COSTS

The Opinion of Probable Construction Costs (Table 5-2) included in this Plan is intended to assist the Town in implementation of the recommended rehabilitation and improvement projects.

These construction costs are rough estimates only. The twenty percent (20%) contingency is assumed to cover the staff administration time for project pursuit, designer contract costs, and bidding administration.

To implement all improvement and rehabilitation projects recommended in this Plan, the total opinion of probable construction cost is \$ 941,490.

The full Opinion of Probable Construction Cost is included in Appendix C.

### OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST + 20% CONTINGENCY
<b>Connections-1</b> Repave all walking paths	\$ 156,240
<b>Connections-2</b> Align pedestrian entrance	\$ 33,180
<b>Site-1</b> Succession tree planting	\$ 5,400
<b>Site-2</b> Refresh planting areas	\$ 56,100
<b>Site-3</b> Replace site furnishings	\$ 37,320
<b>Main Lawn-1</b> Reconstruct turf	\$ 600,480
<b>Grove-1</b> Add (1) bench	\$ 2,160
<b>Hedge Barrier-1</b> Replant Barrier Hedge	\$ 33,000
<b>Post Office Green-1</b> Relocate dropbox & remove planter	\$ 9,480
<b>Post Office Green-2</b> Add (2) benches	\$ 4,320
<b>Corner Mini Plaza-1</b> Add (1) bench	\$ 2,160
<b>Corner Mini Plaza-2</b> Relocate trash receptacles	<i>No Construction Cost</i>
<b>Redwood Area-1</b> Screen storage & utilities	\$ 1,650
	<b>\$ 941,490</b>

Table 5-2: Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

*The full Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is Appendix C.*

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# APPENDICES

A	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>	63
B	<b>SITE ASSESSMENT PHOTOS</b>	171
C	<b>OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS</b>	187
D	<b>2018 TURFGRASS REPORT</b> <i>(REFERENCE)</i>	189



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**PROJECT WEBPAGE**

**FOCUS GROUPS**

**ROSS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (RPOA)**

June 28, 2021

**ROSS SCHOOL**

July 7, 2021

**LOCAL MERCHANTS**

July 8, 2021

**YOUTH SPORTS**

July 8, 2021

**ROSS AUXILIARY**

July 13, 2021

**AGE FRIENDLY ROSS**

July 16, 2021

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

**TOWN COUNCIL**

Initial Landscape Plan: August 12, 2021

Preferred Landscape Plan: October 14, 2021

**ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP**

Revised Landscape Plan: September 21, 2021

**EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL**



## PROJECT WEBPAGE

<https://www.townofross.org/planning/page/ross-common-landscape-improvement-rehabilitation-plan>

The screenshot shows the Town of Ross website with a navigation menu (Community, Government, Services, Resources) and a 'Planning' sidebar. The main content area features a photograph of a park building, a map of Ross Common, and detailed project information.

### Ross Common Landscape Improvement Rehabilitation Plan

**Polishing the Jewel of Ross**

The Ross Common is the green heart of our community. The Town of Ross is preparing a plan to rehabilitate and improve the landscaping and connectivity of the park. The plan will take into account the various users of the space, the relationship to adjacent places (Downtown, the Post Office, pedestrian routes and bikeways, and Ross School), and the Common's connection to the greater community. The plan will include actionable and implementable improvements for the immediate term as well as ideas that can be phased over time. The purpose of the plan will be to identify repairs and improvements that can be made right away and with community input, guide future improvements as additional funding sources become available.

**Ways to Participate:**

- Online Questionnaire - Click [here](#) to see the results
- Ross Town Council Meetings
- Email, phone calls, and or meetings with planning department staff

**Project Process**

- Perform Existing Conditions Analysis
- Community Outreach and Engagement
- Preliminary Site Design
- Final Improvement Plan

Questions and comments may be directed to Patrick Streeter, Planning and Building Director, [pstreeter@townofross.org](mailto:pstreeter@townofross.org), 415 453-1453 x121.

**Reference Documents**

**Planning**

Search

- Advisory Design Review Group
- Climate Action Plan
- Design Guidelines
- Fees Schedule
- General Plan
- Planning Applications, Forms & Guides
- Planning Documents
- Planning Projects

**Contact Information**

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 Planning & Building Director  
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Matthew Weintraub, Planner  
[mweintraub@townofross.org](mailto:mweintraub@townofross.org)

Eric Robbe, Senior Bldg Inspector  
[erobbe@townofross.org](mailto:erobbe@townofross.org)

Barbara Reher, Permit Technician  
[breher@townofross.org](mailto:breher@townofross.org)

**Phone:** (415) 453-1453 ext. 116  
**Fax:** (415) 453-1950

9:00 am to 12:00 noon  
 Monday-Thursday  
 Afternoon by appointment

**Form of Payment accepted:**  
 Check  
 Credit Card - Visa/Mastercard  
 (up to \$10,000)

[View Full Contact Details](#)

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (RPOA)

June 28, 2021

#### Attendees:

Jeff Koblick (RPOA President)

Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

# ROSS COMMONS LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Stakeholder Meeting  
Ross Property Owner Association  
June 28, 2021



1



## AGENDA

1. **Introductions and Roles**
2. **Defining a Successful Project**
3. **Project Vision & Goals**
4. **Discussion**

2

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (RPOA)

June 28, 2021

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Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

## INTRODUCTIONS



3

## ROSS COMMON



4

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June 28, 2021

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## DEFINING SUCCESS

### How will we know the project is successful?

- The plan:
  - considers all users groups
  - enhances adaptability
  - creates **connectivity** of people and places within and around the Common
  - Incorporates **environmental stewardship** in organic ways with longevity beyond the project lifespan
  - Utilizes the open space near the post office and Frederick Allen Park
  - Fosters a sense of community character and continues to be a focal point of the community

5

## VISION AND GOALS/ PURPOSE

Determine a **plan for improvements** in **Ross Common** that creates a **public gathering space** and **gateway** that is integrated with the community.

6

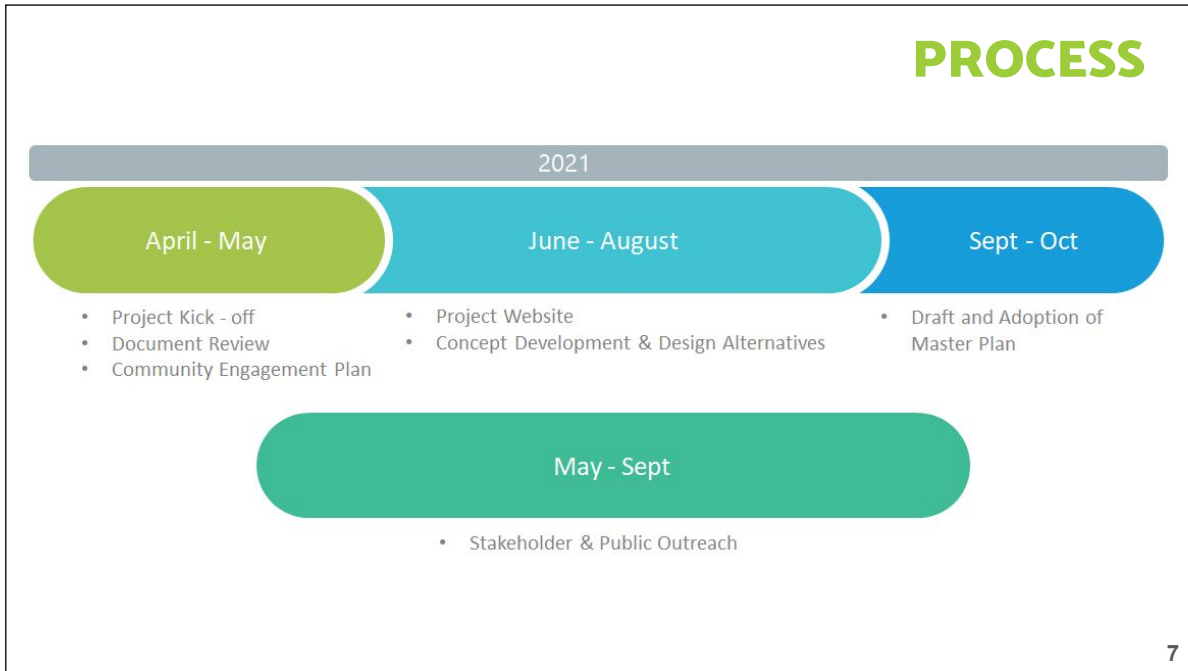
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## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (RPOA)

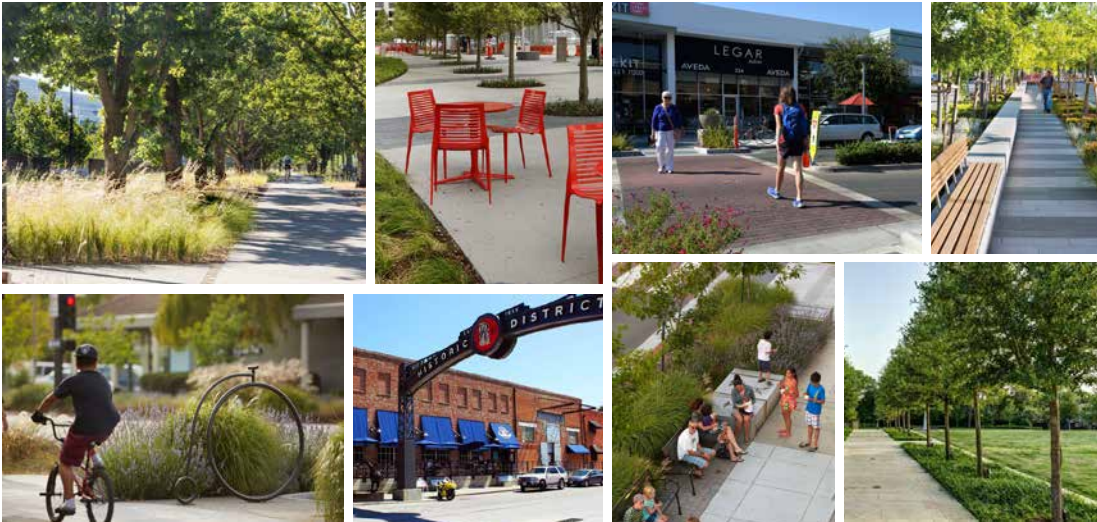
June 28, 2021

#### Attendees:

Jeff Koblick (RPOA President)

Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

## POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS



9

## THANK YOU



10

**FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION****ROSS SCHOOL**

July 7, 2021

## Attendees:

Michael McDowell (Superintendent)

**ROSS COMMONS LANDSCAPE  
IMPROVEMENT PLAN****Ross School**

July 7, 2021



1

**AGENDA**

1. **Introductions and Roles**
2. **Defining a Successful Project**
3. **Project Vision & Goals**
4. **Discussion**

2



## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS SCHOOL

July 7, 2021

#### Attendees:

Michael McDowell (Superintendent)

## INTRODUCTIONS



3

## ROSS COMMON



4

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS SCHOOL

July 7, 2021

#### Attendees:

Michael McDowell (Superintendent)

## DEFINING SUCCESS

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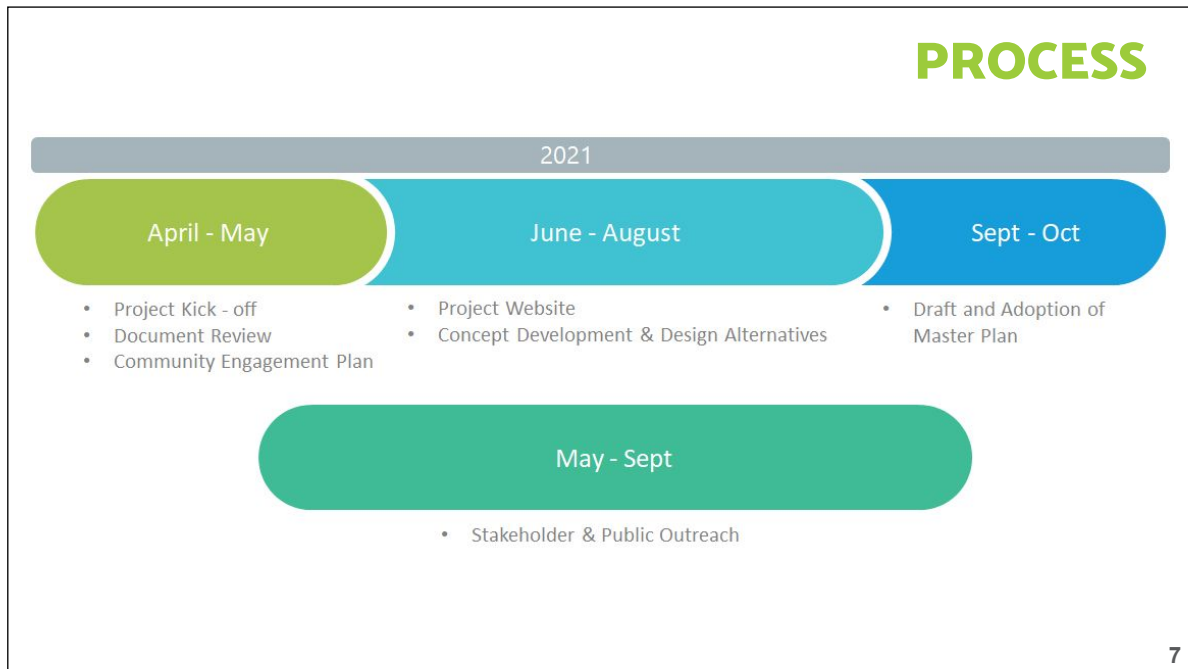
## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS SCHOOL

July 7, 2021

#### Attendees:

Michael McDowell (Superintendent)



### FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

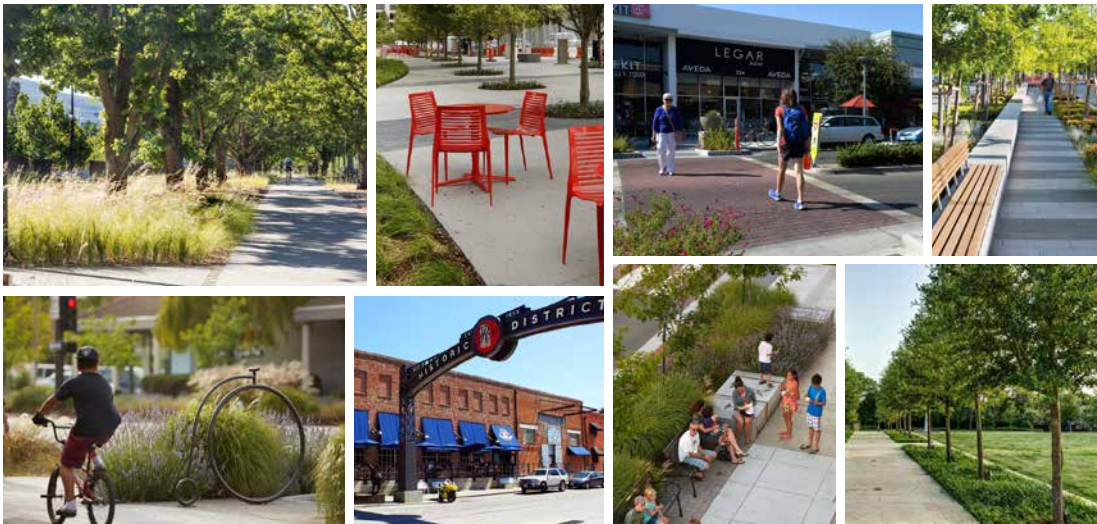
#### ROSS SCHOOL

July 7, 2021

Attendees:

Michael McDowell (Superintendent)

## POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS



9

## THANK YOU



10

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### LOCAL MERCHANTS

July 8, 2021

#### Attendees:

Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

Mat Salter (Ross Bridges proprietor)

Amy Dean (Crown and Crumpet proprietor)

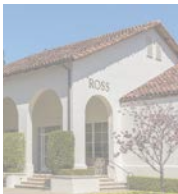
# ROSS COMMONS LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## Local Merchants

July 8, 2021



1



- ## AGENDA
1. **Introductions and Roles**
  2. **Defining a Successful Project**
  3. **Project Vision & Goals**
  4. **Discussion**



2

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### LOCAL MERCHANTS

July 8, 2021

#### Attendees:

Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

Mat Salter (Ross Bridges proprietor)

Amy Dean (Crown and Crumpet proprietor)

## INTRODUCTIONS



3

## ROSS COMMON



4

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### LOCAL MERCHANTS

July 8, 2021

#### Attendees:

Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

Mat Salter (Ross Bridges proprietor)

Amy Dean (Crown and Crumpet proprietor)

## DEFINING SUCCESS

### How will we know the project is successful?

- The plan:
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  - creates **connectivity** of people and places within and around the Common
  - Incorporates **environmental stewardship** in organic ways with longevity beyond the project lifespan
  - Utilizes the open space near the post office and Frederick Allen Park
  - Fosters a sense of community character and continues to be a focal point of the community

5

## VISION AND GOALS/ PURPOSE

Determine a **plan for improvements** in **Ross Common** that creates a **public gathering space** and **gateway** that is integrated with the community.

6

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### LOCAL MERCHANTS

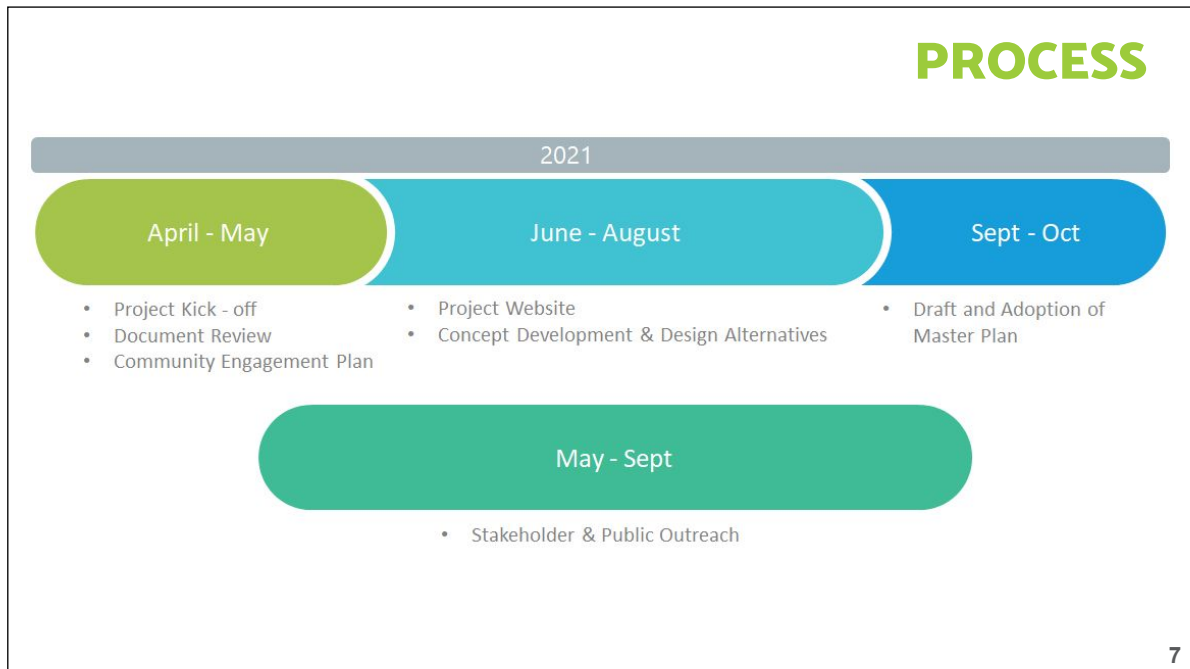
July 8, 2021

#### Attendees:

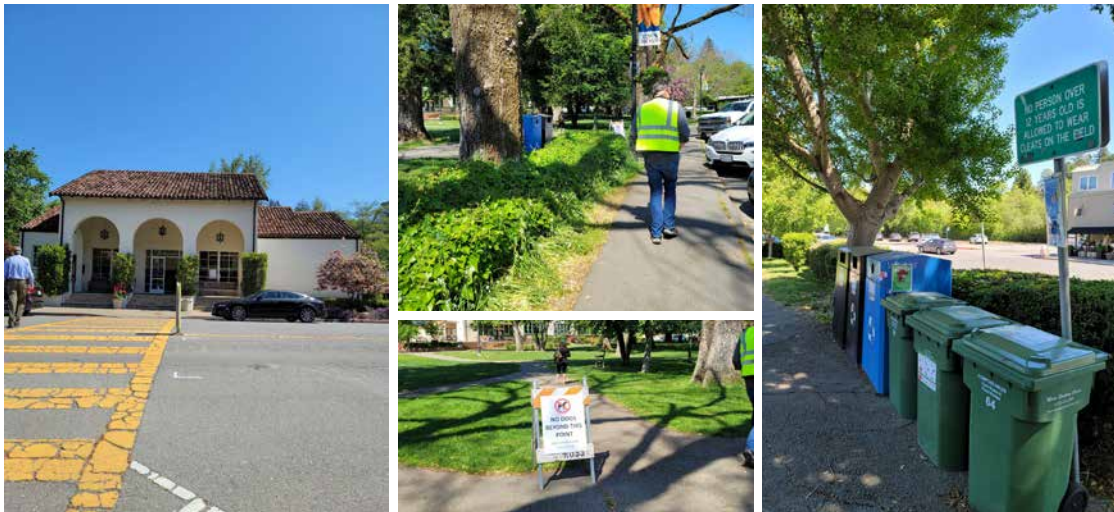
Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

Mat Salter (Ross Bridges proprietor)

Amy Dean (Crown and Crumpet proprietor)



## EXISTING LIKES & CHALLENGES





## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### LOCAL MERCHANTS

July 8, 2021

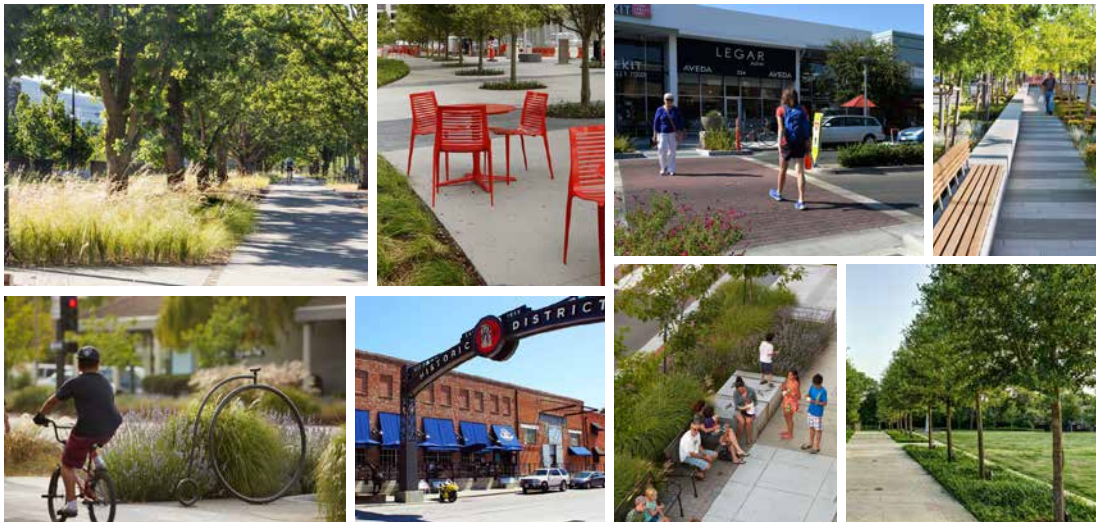
#### Attendees:

Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

Mat Salter (Ross Bridges proprietor)

Amy Dean (Crown and Crumpet proprietor)

## POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS



9

## POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Lighting
  - Historic lamp posts - maintenance, tree trimming, add hanging flower baskets or banners/flags
  - Additional pedestrian lighting
- Update planter boxes in downtown
- Provide additional seating options
- Maintain and improve landscape
- Trash can policy

10

**FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION****LOCAL MERCHANTS**

July 8, 2021

**Attendees:**

Sally Newson (Village Corner proprietor)

Mat Salter (Ross Bridges proprietor)

Amy Dean (Crown and Crumpet proprietor)

**THANK YOU**

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### YOUTH SPORTS

July 8, 2021

#### Attendees:

Gretchen Castets (Recreation Manager)

# ROSS COMMONS LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Recreation / Youth Sports

July 8, 2021



1



- ## AGENDA
1. **Introductions and Roles**
  2. **Defining a Successful Project**
  3. **Project Vision & Goals**
  4. **Discussion**



2

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### YOUTH SPORTS

July 8, 2021

#### Attendees:

Gretchen Castets (Recreation Manager)

## INTRODUCTIONS



3

## ROSS COMMON



4

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### YOUTH SPORTS

July 8, 2021

Attendees:

Gretchen Castets (Recreation Manager)

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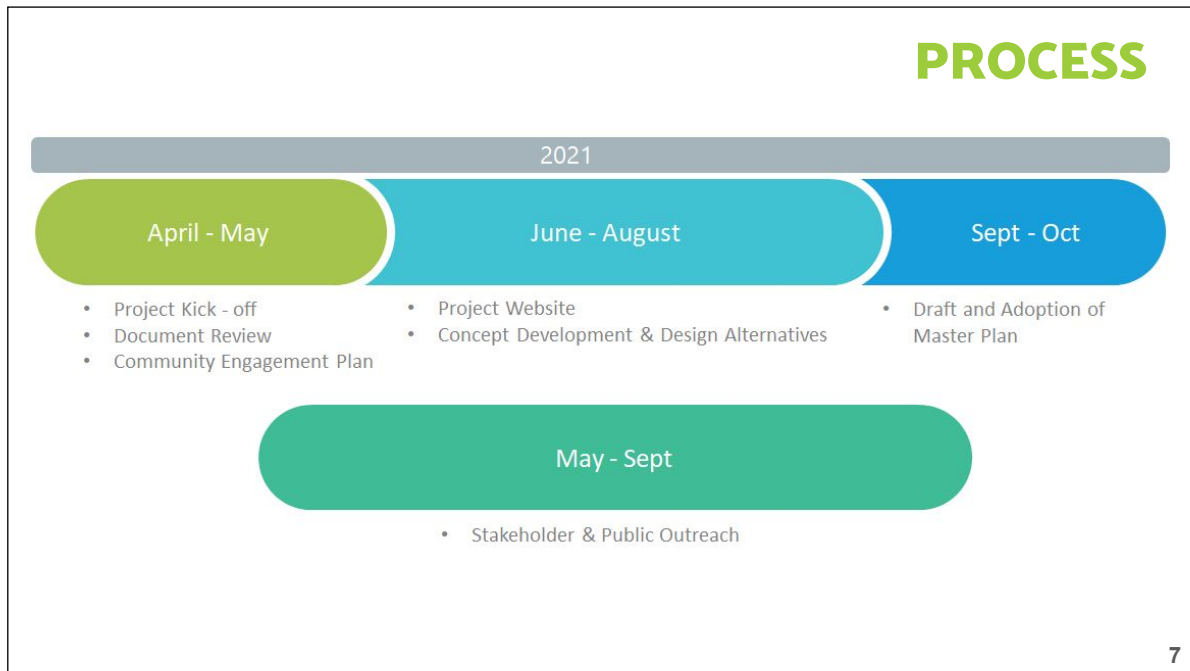
## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### YOUTH SPORTS

July 8, 2021

Attendees:

Gretchen Castets (Recreation Manager)



## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

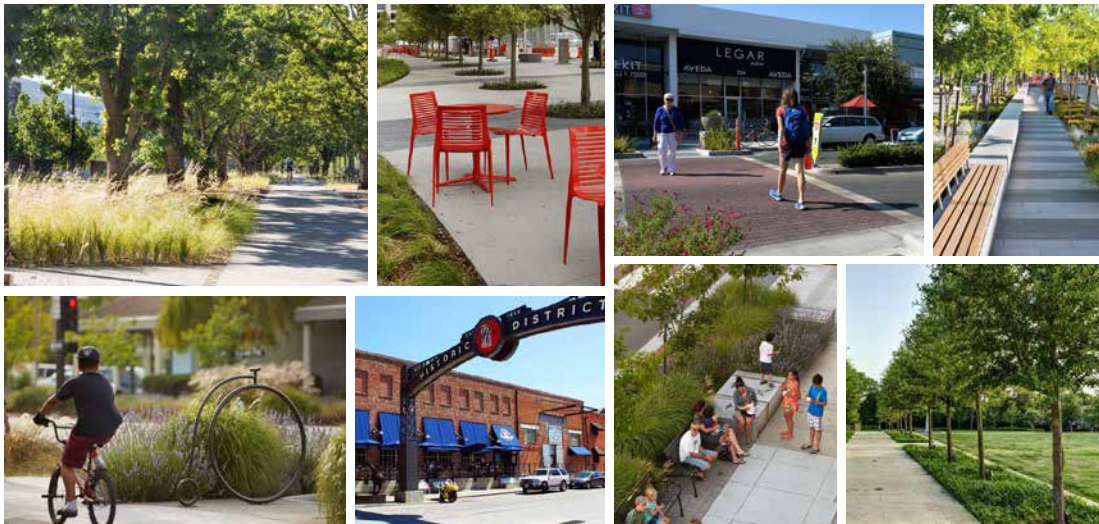
### YOUTH SPORTS

July 8, 2021

Attendees:

Gretchen Castets (Recreation Manager)

## POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS



9

## THANK YOU



10

**FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION****ROSS AUXILIARY**

July 13, 2021

**Attendees:**

Adrienne Liggett(Co-President)

Elena Batalla (Co-President)

**ROSS COMMONS LANDSCAPE  
IMPROVEMENT PLAN****Ross Auxiliary**

July 13, 2021



1

**AGENDA**

1. **Introductions and Roles**
2. **Defining a Successful Project**
3. **Project Vision & Goals**
4. **Discussion**

2



## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS AUXILIARY

July 13, 2021

#### Attendees:

Adrienne Liggett(Co-President)

Elena Batalla (Co-President)

## INTRODUCTIONS



3

## ROSS COMMON



4

## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS AUXILIARY

July 13, 2021

#### Attendees:

Adrienne Liggett (Co-President)

Elena Batalla (Co-President)

## DEFINING SUCCESS

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## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

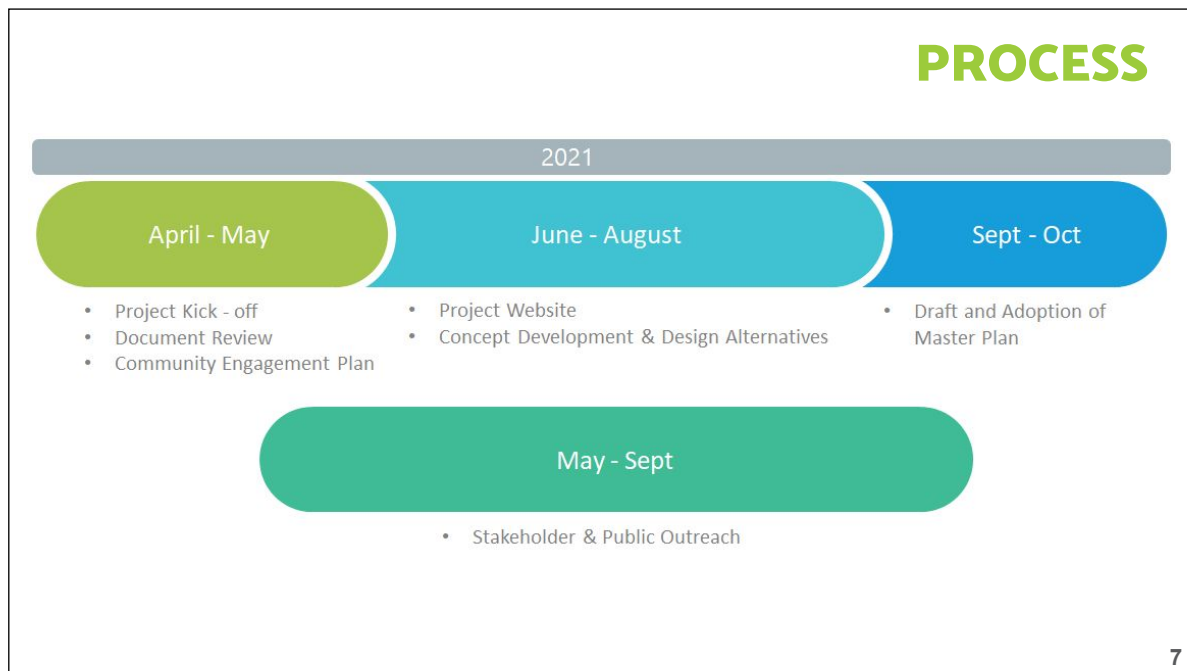
### ROSS AUXILIARY

July 13, 2021

#### Attendees:

Adrienne Liggett (Co-President)

Elena Batalla (Co-President)



## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS AUXILIARY

July 13, 2021

#### Attendees:

Adrienne Liggett (Co-President)

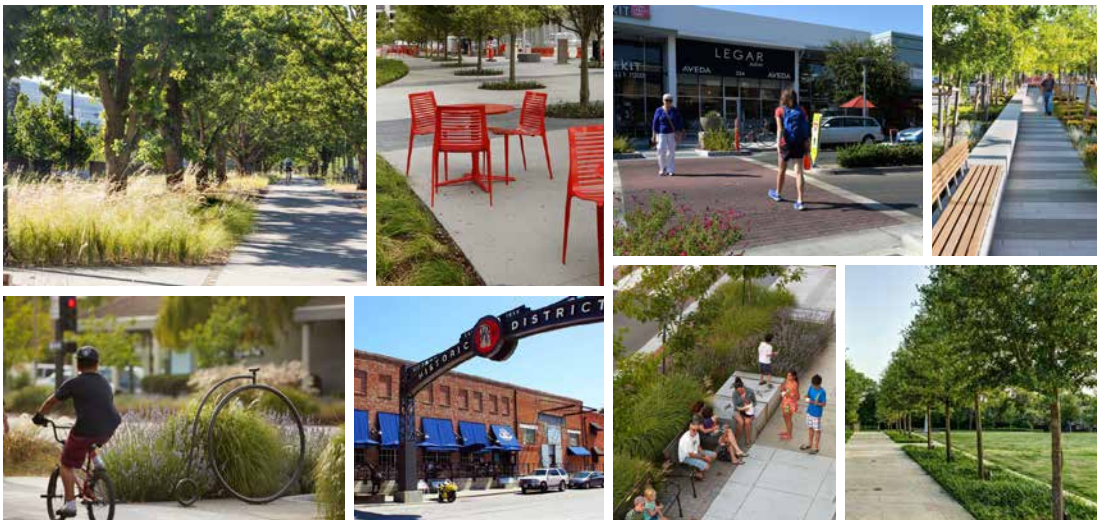
Elena Batalla (Co-President)

## POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Public restroom
- Garden
- Water fountain
- Electrical outlets for events
- Updated benches
- Picnic tables
- Drought-resistant landscape
- Redesign 'wood chip area'
- Play area for younger children
- Improvements to baseball fields
- Dog parks/run/area
- Trash receptacles

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1EiEoLIM6WJvAx6CavBNOJf9kxftuZUBLZ\\_-vxGGRE/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1EiEoLIM6WJvAx6CavBNOJf9kxftuZUBLZ_-vxGGRE/edit?usp=sharing) 9

## POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS



## FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

### ROSS AUXILIARY

July 13, 2021

#### Attendees:

Adrienne Liggett(Co-President)

Elena Batalla (Co-President)

**THANK YOU**



**FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION****AGE FRIENDLY ROSS**

July 16, 2021

**Attendees:**

Teri Dowling

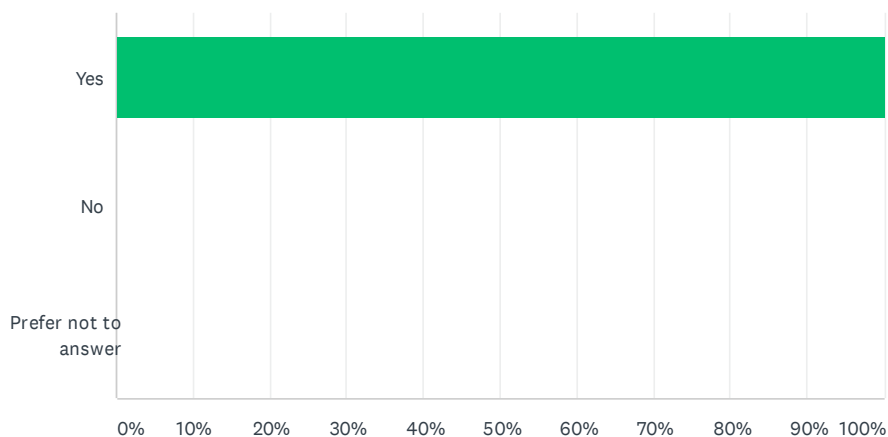
The focus group discussion was held during the July 2021 Age Friendly Ross group meeting at the Crown and Crumpet Cafe (22 Ross Common).

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

### Q1 Are you a Ross resident?

Answered: 350 Skipped: 0



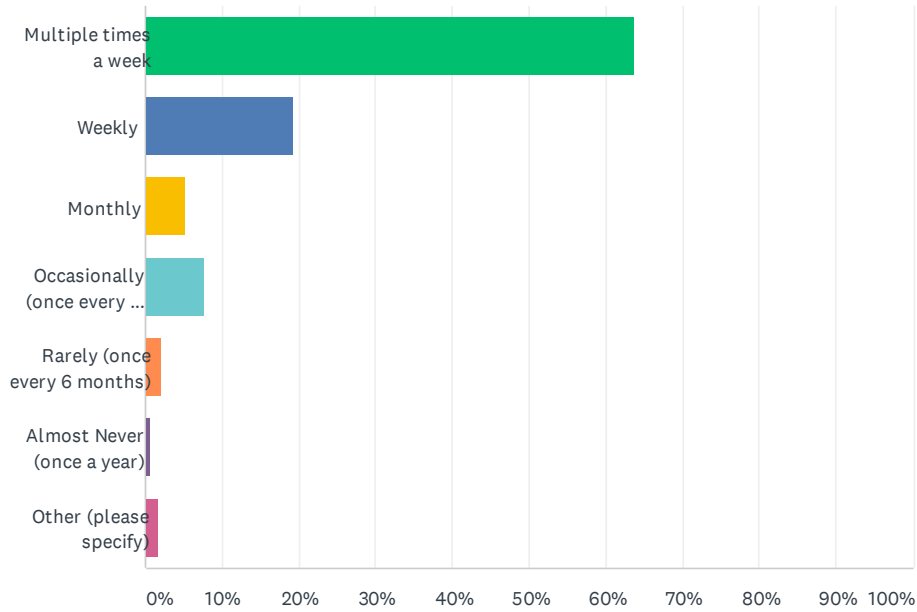
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	350
No	0.00%	0
Prefer not to answer	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>350</b>

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

### Q2 How often do you visit the Common?

Answered: 350 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Multiple times a week	63.71%	223
Weekly	19.14%	67
Monthly	5.14%	18
Occasionally (once every 3 months)	7.71%	27
Rarely (once every 6 months)	2.00%	7
Almost Never (once a year)	0.57%	2
Other (please specify)	1.71%	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>350</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	When larger green near school was open to dogs I frequented much more often	8/3/2021 1:32 PM
2	drive by or ride bicycle by daily	7/29/2021 5:06 PM
3	used to go often with dog before pandemic but not so much now...such a lovely place	7/23/2021 5:15 PM
4	Every day!	7/23/2021 11:27 AM
5	Daily	7/22/2021 11:24 AM
6	Walk through many times weekly, on my way to post office	7/22/2021 11:17 AM

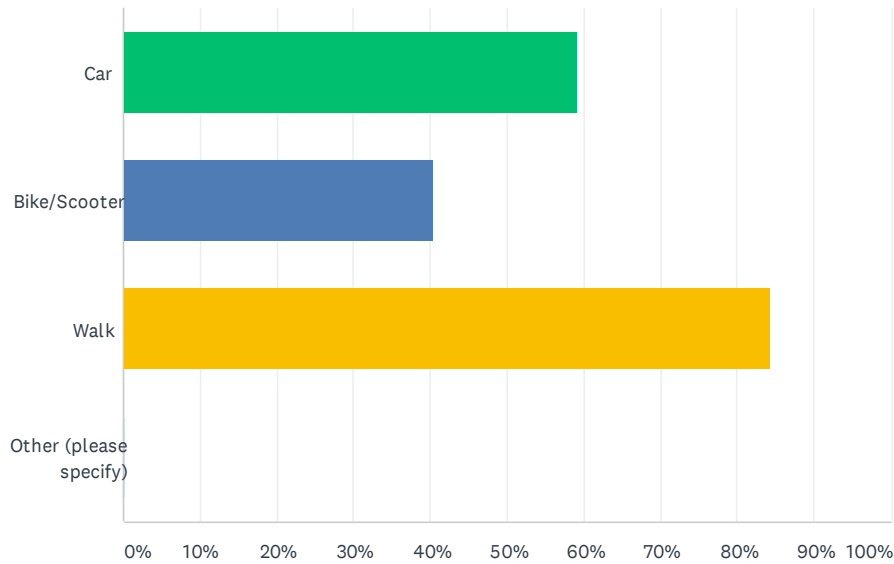


**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

**Q3 How do you get to the Common? Select all that apply.**

Answered: 350 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Car	59.14% 207
Bike/Scooter	40.29% 141
Walk	84.29% 295
Other (please specify)	0.29% 1
Total Respondents: 350	

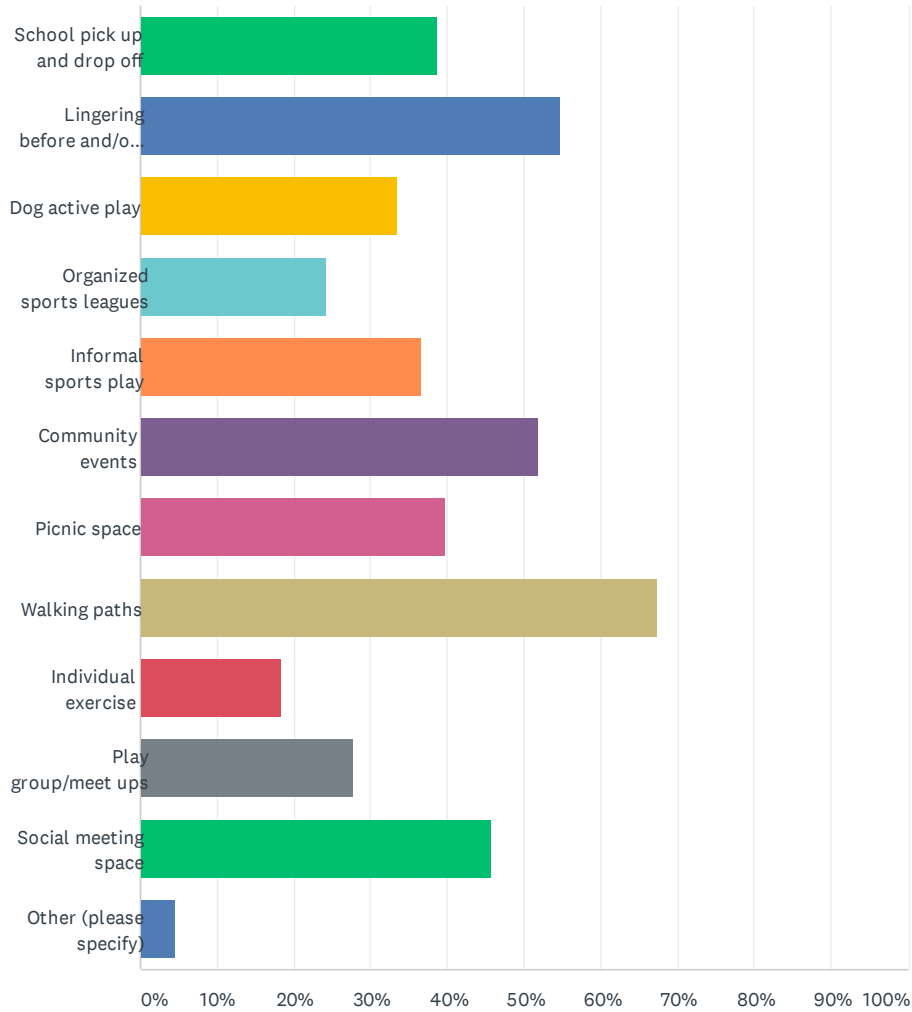
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Skateboarding	7/27/2021 2:33 PM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

Q4 How do you use the Common? Select all that apply. Or write in the unique way you use the Common in 'Other.'

Answered: 349 Skipped: 1



**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
School pick up and drop off	38.68%	135
Lingering before and/or after mail pick up	54.73%	191
Dog active play	33.52%	117
Organized sports leagues	24.36%	85
Informal sports play	36.68%	128
Community events	51.86%	181
Picnic space	39.83%	139
Walking paths	67.34%	235
Individual exercise	18.34%	64
Play group/meet ups	27.79%	97
Social meeting space	45.85%	160
Other (please specify)	4.58%	16
Total Respondents: 349		

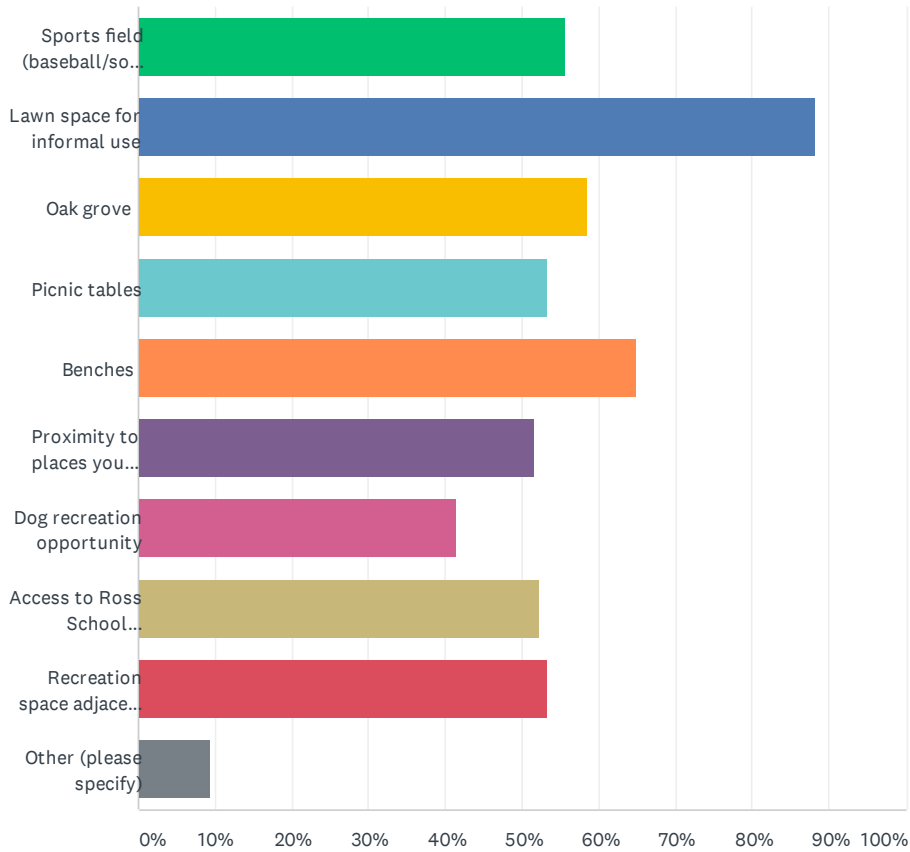
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Letting my babies/toddlers run around	8/4/2021 8:13 PM
2	attend birthday parties	8/4/2021 3:40 PM
3	playground	8/4/2021 1:09 PM
4	Walk dog (when it was open for that)	7/28/2021 11:32 AM
5	Place to have my coffee on a bench.	7/27/2021 2:28 PM
6	Play with grandchildren. Walk the dog.	7/27/2021 1:47 PM
7	Flying kites	7/27/2021 12:51 PM
8	watching grandchild play sports	7/27/2021 12:43 PM
9	I live next door.	7/23/2021 11:27 AM
10	Playground	7/22/2021 6:59 PM
11	taking visiting grandchildren to play	7/22/2021 4:01 PM
12	when going to Post Office, linger there	7/22/2021 2:01 PM
13	Wallball on the blacktop	7/22/2021 12:19 PM
14	Playground	7/22/2021 12:05 PM
15	Post office	7/22/2021 11:33 AM
16	Running around with grand kids.	7/22/2021 11:29 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

Q5 What do you like about the Common? Select all that apply. If you don't see something you like about the Common, please share by writing in 'Other.'

Answered: 350 Skipped: 0



## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sports field (baseball/softball diamonds, soccer/lacrosse field)	55.71%	195
Lawn space for informal use	88.29%	309
Oak grove	58.57%	205
Picnic tables	53.43%	187
Benches	64.86%	227
Proximity to places you visit	51.71%	181
Dog recreation opportunity	41.43%	145
Access to Ross School facilities (playground, restroom)	52.29%	183
Recreation space adjacent to school and/or mail pick up	53.43%	187
Other (please specify)	9.43%	33
Total Respondents: 350		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	It was the only outdoor area for socializing that felt safe during COVID	8/5/2021 5:57 AM
2	Super easy place for play dates / after school running around	8/4/2021 8:13 PM
3	Natural space	8/4/2021 7:02 AM
4	It is a beautiful part of Ross.	8/3/2021 4:38 PM
5	Wonderful place to congregate, to run into friends and to run the dog!	8/3/2021 1:32 PM
6	nice open space in middle of Ross	7/29/2021 5:06 PM
7	Christmas tree, flower baskets	7/28/2021 1:18 PM
8	Christmas Tree	7/28/2021 1:12 PM
9	community gathering space	7/28/2021 12:11 PM
10	I don't recall picnic tables outside of school one but would love them	7/28/2021 11:32 AM
11	Beautiful mature trees	7/27/2021 7:42 PM
12	Fun, central hub of town	7/27/2021 5:48 PM
13	I like the fact that the Common is informal. Baseball and soccer and after school sports are fine. The Common does NOT need any more structures. There are plenty of benches and picnic tables. Tearing down the covered bike rack that was on the Common for years was a good thing. Not building the gazebo/bandstand that was proposed years ago was a good thing. The informality is charming. We don't need to build things. We don't need a water feature.	7/27/2021 2:43 PM
14	It's open views to the hills and mountains around us.	7/27/2021 2:28 PM
15	Redwood grove	7/27/2021 12:30 PM
16	The view of trees and lawn. It imparts a spacious feeling, also peaceful. I like seeing people enjoying the area.	7/25/2021 12:59 PM
17	Casual park; not completely planned and manicured	7/24/2021 1:10 PM
18	it is nice to look at as I walk by	7/24/2021 7:16 AM
19	It is the historic heart of Ross and offers many of the above mentioned items.	7/23/2021 11:27 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

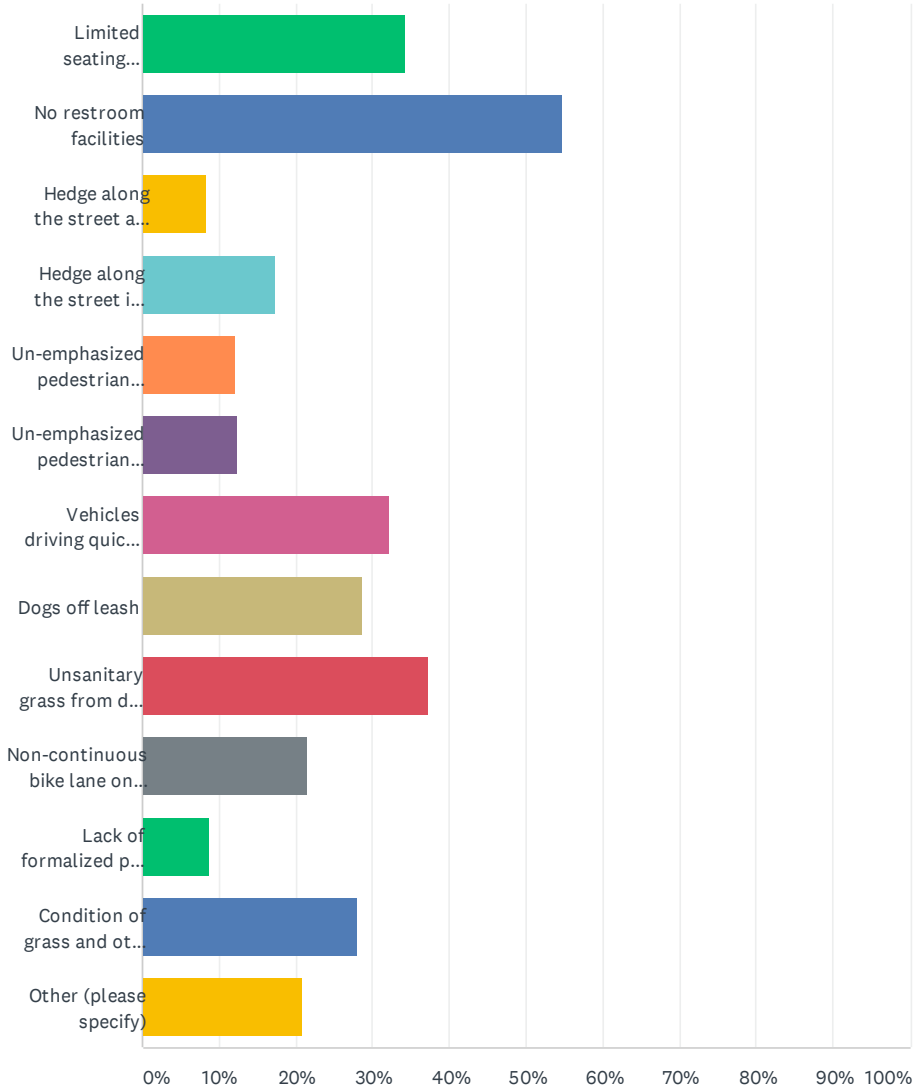
20	Very angry dogs are still prohibited on the main space. It is long and overdue to take down the offensive signs and share the space with ALL residents. Ross Common does not belong to Ross Rec - it belongs to the residents.	7/23/2021 8:12 AM
21	Big shady trees	7/22/2021 10:38 PM
22	The stage should be used - could be great for events!	7/22/2021 7:32 PM
23	Trees / Landscape	7/22/2021 6:11 PM
24	Attractive visually	7/22/2021 2:51 PM
25	expansive lawn, redwood trees	7/22/2021 1:58 PM
26	Open space	7/22/2021 1:41 PM
27	all of the above	7/22/2021 1:27 PM
28	the mature trees, the general atmosphere of the open spaces	7/22/2021 12:58 PM
29	It is a pleasant place to have lunch and enjoy the view.	7/22/2021 12:50 PM
30	Pathway loop for kids and adults to bike on	7/22/2021 12:23 PM
31	Just a beautiful space to sit in or walk through as I get my exercise. Also, many fond memories of our children' years at Ross School.	7/22/2021 11:34 AM
32	The front school playground should be more accessible.	7/22/2021 11:29 AM
33	a shady area- keep or add trees.	7/22/2021 11:12 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

**Q6 What are issues you've noticed in the Common? Select all that apply and/or write in issues you've noticed in 'Other.'**

Answered: 338 Skipped: 12



## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Limited seating opportunities	34.32%	116
No restroom facilities	54.73%	185
Hedge along the street acts as an access barrier	8.28%	28
Hedge along the street is unsightly	17.46%	59
Un-emphasized pedestrian connection to Post Office	12.13%	41
Un-emphasized pedestrian connection to Downtown	12.43%	42
Vehicles driving quickly on Ross Common	32.25%	109
Dogs off leash	28.70%	97
Unsanitary grass from dog waste	37.28%	126
Non-continuous bike lane on Ross Common	21.60%	73
Lack of formalized play opportunities	8.88%	30
Condition of grass and other vegetation	28.11%	95
Other (please specify)	21.01%	71
Total Respondents: 338		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Crowding; oftentimes multiple sports activities take over all the space such that residents can't use it. It'd be great to have certain hours of the day (or days of the week) preserved for adults or socializing only (no sports). ALSO: there is no real seating for adults during these sports activities. No one uses the bleachers and sitting on the grass is always wet/dirty; can we replace with alternative options?	8/5/2021 5:57 AM
2	Could use better trash receptacles by playground - it's always overflowing	8/4/2021 8:13 PM
3	closing the grass area during rainy season	8/4/2021 3:40 PM
4	Too occupied by team sports too much of the time	8/4/2021 7:02 AM
5	The Common needs a complete overhaul that is becoming of the community. Connectivity and thoughtful circulation needs to be incorporated. Walking paths not safe, quality of benches inexcusable.	8/3/2021 7:48 PM
6	This has improved since "No Dogs" sign	8/3/2021 4:38 PM
7	Detest current prohibition of dogs; hedges have not been properly maintained; hedges keep the kids from running into the streets	8/3/2021 3:16 PM
8	No I turn signs would be helpful by PO as numerous people make u turns over crosswalk! Attractive recycling and garbage on PO side would be useful. Hedge is good barrier for school activities but could have an additional path through to sidewalk.	8/3/2021 1:32 PM
9	Cycles riding quickly and going through cross walk without stopping	8/3/2021 1:08 PM
10	Idiots riding their bikes on the grass	8/3/2021 12:51 PM
11	The commons is the center for so much of Ross, I'd love to see the grass/baseball field and areas enhanced with better grass and vegetation, flowers, etc. Spiff it up since it used so often by majority of residents.	8/3/2021 12:33 PM
12	no barrier in grove to keep dogs in park. lack of dog access during pandemic	8/3/2021 11:54 AM
13	current restrictions on dogs	8/2/2021 2:13 PM



**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

14	current prohibition against dogs	7/30/2021 10:40 PM
15	Insufficient trash capacity at times	7/29/2021 9:23 PM
16	Uneven paved paths	7/29/2021 1:28 PM
17	Ross School and Ross Rec now determine the use of the Common, not our residents.	7/29/2021 12:52 PM
18	Playground area can be accessed by off leash dogs	7/29/2021 10:58 AM
19	Anti dog signs that need to be removed	7/29/2021 10:21 AM
20	Drainage issues and mushy muddy grass in grove and on parts of field	7/29/2021 10:21 AM
21	1. Lacking a play area for young children -- there is not a public park for young children in Ross (a town with so many young children). 2. There aren't any programs/opportunities for young children (ie: baby music class, under 3 sports). 3.. The new area on Redwood Drive - isn't great for kids/families. The wood chips are very hard to work on / play on, and is a missed opportunity / wasted space.	7/28/2021 12:11 PM
22	How lawn can't be used in winter due	7/28/2021 6:25 AM
23	Lack of benches in shade	7/28/2021 5:48 AM
24	Non working water fountain / trash can area can be dirty and unsanitary	7/27/2021 8:45 PM
25	Cyclists often ride side-by-side in the middle of the street instead of using the bike path	7/27/2021 7:42 PM
26	A dedicated off leash dog park is needed	7/27/2021 6:48 PM
27	Trash from lunches and old clothing etc left around	7/27/2021 3:26 PM
28	Sometimes, overflowing garbage bins.	7/27/2021 2:28 PM
29	No complaints	7/27/2021 2:02 PM
30	Be thoughtful about adding restroom facilities. May leading to problems.	7/27/2021 2:01 PM
31	None of the above	7/27/2021 1:25 PM
32	better maintenance and upkeep of baseball diamonds and backstops (fence wiring is heavily worn and broken, especially on smaller baseball diamond)	7/27/2021 1:10 PM
33	Not enough exercise area for dogs (The above selectively picked "issues" created a bias against dogs	7/27/2021 12:40 PM
34	Dogs playing joyfully. This seems like a biased survey.	7/27/2021 12:40 PM
35	The oak area is pretty but a bit of a waste of space.	7/27/2021 9:26 AM
36	It is wonderful as is	7/27/2021 8:09 AM
37	I love dogs playing on the Common and the unstructured nature of the park. The school playgrounds are plenty of structure. Ross has a special character of relaxed, neighborly, interaction. Please don't "fix" problems that aren't there.	7/24/2021 1:10 PM
38	The Redwood Grove has terrible wood chips which make it hard and dangerous to walk on and play for the children. Also, this area would be ideal for picnic tables	7/24/2021 9:44 AM
39	hedge at street also is a good thing in that it keeps kids and dogs inside space	7/24/2021 7:16 AM
40	Formalized dog play area (fenced in) would be helpful	7/23/2021 3:48 PM
41	cant access the play area in front of the school as its locked	7/23/2021 3:35 PM
42	Love the hedge barrier - please keep!	7/23/2021 2:41 PM
43	The hedge acts as a protective barrier for children and their balls going into the street. Any idea of removing the hedge is misguided. The hedge needs to be cleaned up and maintained, but it's better than looking at a bunch of parked cars and traffic! If also absorbs the car exhaust and dirt and noise. Anyone who suggests removing it has big thought the issue through carefully. Clean up the hedge and fertilize it and maintain it. The grass is full of weeds and foxtails. Never been properly maintained.	7/23/2021 11:27 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

44	Ridiculous and pejorative anti dog sentiment by the town. What about excrement from squirrels, skunks, other wildlife. Dog owners are being unfairly penalized	7/23/2021 8:12 AM
45	Baseball diamond os blocking the view. It should be on the opposite side of the common.	7/22/2021 11:12 PM
46	Lack of dog park	7/22/2021 6:59 PM
47	Could have more attention to upkeep of all plants. Looks a bit unkempt lawn area to side of PO is under used..a meandering path and a bench or two would be attractive	7/22/2021 2:51 PM
48	dogs no longer allowed to walk through or play in the Common area	7/22/2021 2:18 PM
49	there should be some barrier to street, even if just bushes	7/22/2021 2:01 PM
50	think we need to plant a few more redwoods, take better care of the grass and hedges (keep hedges, maybe add some!)	7/22/2021 1:58 PM
51	Seems fine way it is....	7/22/2021 1:41 PM
52	Lack of shade structure	7/22/2021 1:38 PM
53	unsupervised sprinkles that waste water by watering non-vegetation	7/22/2021 12:58 PM
54	Dogs are a big issue. They should not be allowed. They are always off leash and no one enforces. Secondly dog waste is an issue - no one cleans up after their dogs. DON'T ALLOW DOGS - preserve the grass, avoid the waste, and unruly dog behavior - it will be a better place with out them.	7/22/2021 12:58 PM
55	I am not allowed to bring my dog to the common. Important to have an open space in community for no leash dog play. This brings community together more than any other Riss town feature	7/22/2021 12:53 PM
56	Love pets but keep them away from this small area we need for recreation and picnics. There are plenty of places for dogs to use the bathroom away from Ross Common. I recommend a dog potty area behind the post office or something similar for pet owners to take their pets. The pet defecation is out of control and unsanitary for children and all humans.	7/22/2021 12:23 PM
57	Bicyclists running stop signs (a violation of traffic laws), riding two- and three-abreast (a violation of California law) and dogs on school grounds part of the Common (a violation of Marin County law) is rarely enforced--in my 22 years residing here, almost never.	7/22/2021 12:20 PM
58	Dog ban, huge bark in new extension on Redwood side makes it totally inhospitable, storage area where soccer goals live is rather unsightly, roots pushing up walking path in many areas	7/22/2021 12:19 PM
59	No issues	7/22/2021 11:58 AM
60	Lack of proper dog play areas	7/22/2021 11:48 AM
61	Lots of trash! and lost kid sweatshirts, etc. Makes it look junky.	7/22/2021 11:41 AM
62	none - it's great as it is. Keep it simple and it doesn't have to be perfect.	7/22/2021 11:37 AM
63	This seems to be true of the planning of all public spaces everywhere: why not make the paths in the instinctual (shortest distance between two points) ways people actually walk? (Within reason, of course, and with aesthetics definitely in mind as well.)	7/22/2021 11:34 AM
64	No formalized separation of Common area and school-unsafe for children during school hours	7/22/2021 11:32 AM
65	No dogs allowed signs are unsightly and inappropriate. Dogs should be allowed and owners are responsible for picking up their poop, just like anywhere outdoors. Also, the redwood grove is unused and would be a great area for a public playground	7/22/2021 11:30 AM
66	The low hedge while it does need some maintenance, it does act as a ball stop and keeps kids from running into the street. It works well to define the edge in an informal way.	7/22/2021 11:29 AM
67	Insufficient Dog off Leash Opportunity	7/22/2021 11:28 AM
68	Sidewalk cracks	7/22/2021 11:25 AM
69	Needs better landscaping	7/22/2021 11:25 AM
70	Traffic congestion due to cars parking in pickup/drop off areas around school.	7/22/2021 11:23 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

71

please - we need drought tolerant plants/grass/trees. Please do not plant or use water during the drought.

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7/22/2021 11:12 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

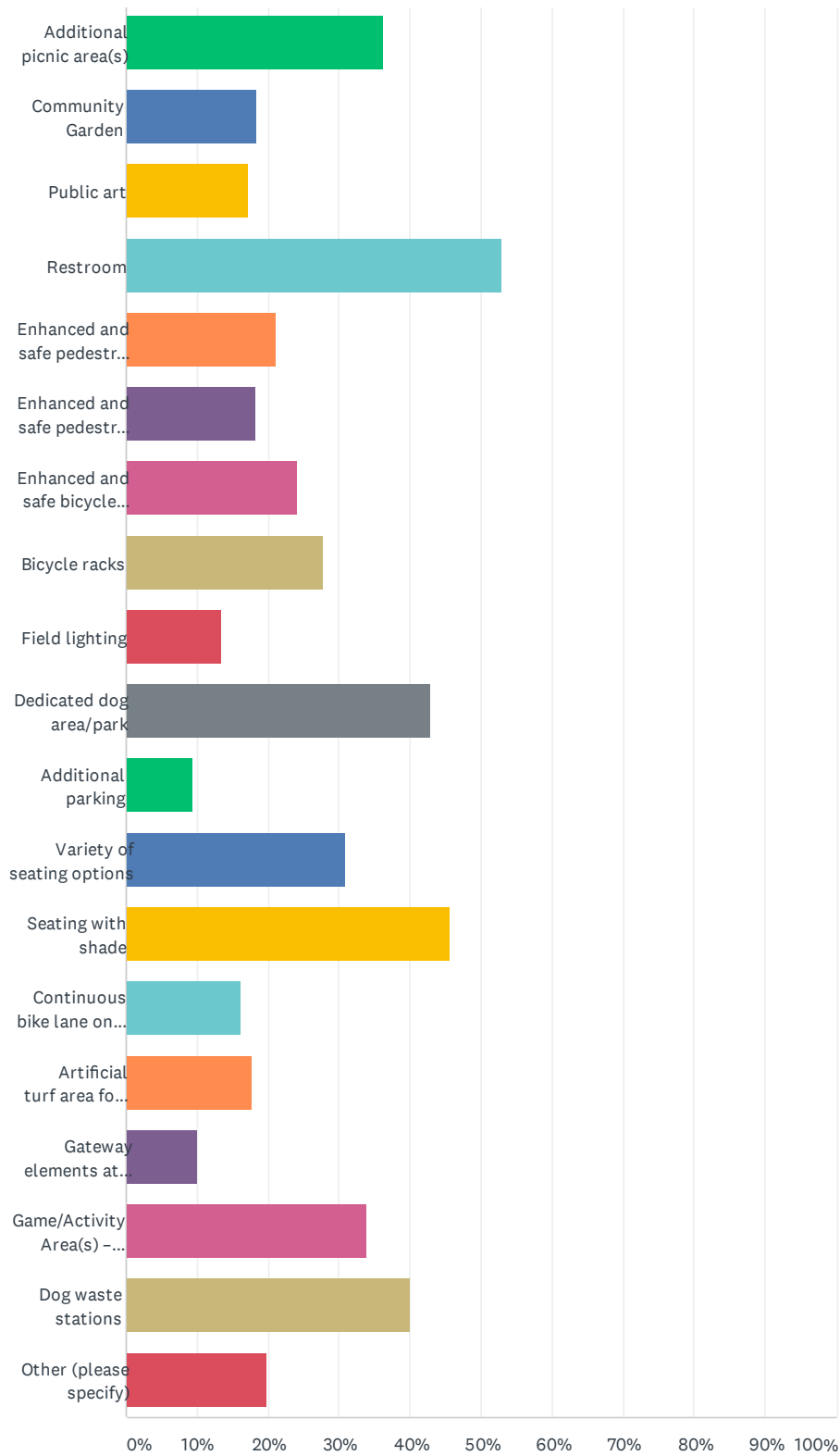
July 22 to August 5, 2021

Q7 What park amenities would improve the Common? Select all that apply and/or share any additional ideas you have by writing them in 'Other.'

Answered: 342 Skipped: 8

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021



**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Additional picnic area(s)	36.26%	124
Community Garden	18.42%	63
Public art	17.25%	59
Restroom	52.92%	181
Enhanced and safe pedestrian crosswalk to Post Office	21.05%	72
Enhanced and safe pedestrian crosswalk to downtown shops	18.13%	62
Enhanced and safe bicycle connection to bike trail(s)	23.98%	82
Bicycle racks	27.78%	95
Field lighting	13.45%	46
Dedicated dog area/park	42.98%	147
Additional parking	9.36%	32
Variety of seating options	30.99%	106
Seating with shade	45.61%	156
Continuous bike lane on Ross Common	16.08%	55
Artificial turf area for year-round sports play area	17.84%	61
Gateway elements at intersection of Ross Common and Lagunitas Road and/or Redwood Drive	9.94%	34
Game/Activity Area(s) – bocce, horseshoe, cornhole, table tennis, chess, etc.	33.92%	116
Dog waste stations	40.06%	137
Other (please specify)	19.88%	68
Total Respondents: 342		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Seating would be nice but would not want it to take away from the big open grass space which is such a unique, great asset to the town	8/4/2021 8:13 PM
2	soccer goals	8/4/2021 3:40 PM
3	Contemplation quiet space set aside for this purpose	8/4/2021 7:02 AM
4	public restroom would just increase non-residents using park	8/3/2021 9:45 PM
5	"The Common" is lovely the way it is!	8/3/2021 4:38 PM
6	Lawn adjacent to PO is too close to the street, too small, and has no shade to be a dedicated dog park	8/3/2021 3:16 PM
7	Water fountains	8/3/2021 1:36 PM
8	Love idea of bocce court! In new wood chipped park area would be amazing.	8/3/2021 1:32 PM
9	No dogs allowed on ross common	8/3/2021 12:51 PM
10	Dog play should be on a dedicated area only. More shade would be great, a garden / more trees planted would be beautiful. WE'd love to see this already great area enhanced.	8/3/2021 12:33 PM
11	Toddler playground for younger children, available during school hours	8/3/2021 12:07 PM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

12	water fountain for people and dogs	8/3/2021 11:54 AM
13	a stage for live music in the summer	7/29/2021 9:24 PM
14	Dedicated dog area should not be in the "grove" next to the school, but should be next to the post office	7/29/2021 2:58 PM
15	NO MORE DOGS PERIOD	7/29/2021 1:10 PM
16	Another water fountain	7/29/2021 10:45 AM
17	additional new, more attractive benches	7/28/2021 1:18 PM
18	Like it as it is. Just has to be well taken care of. Do not want field lighting or restrooms.	7/28/2021 1:12 PM
19	Play area designed for very young children & programming/activities/classes via Ross Rec for babies/young children	7/28/2021 12:11 PM
20	traffic circles on lagunitas and poplar / mail drop from car	7/28/2021 6:33 AM
21	What ever turf (grass or fake turf) would allow for year round play on the Ross Common	7/28/2021 6:25 AM
22	Cleaner / contained trash areas.	7/27/2021 8:45 PM
23	Please - no! None of the above! It's charm is it's informality. Please do not start building and adding.	7/27/2021 2:43 PM
24	Emphasis on connecting Commons to our dear little "downtown"	7/27/2021 2:28 PM
25	No additional park amenities	7/27/2021 2:02 PM
26	Be thoughtful. Let's not overdo a nice understated area. Less is better than too much.	7/27/2021 2:01 PM
27	more maturing trees (oaks, elms, redwoods	7/27/2021 1:57 PM
28	None of the above	7/27/2021 1:25 PM
29	No artificial turf-enviromental disaster- <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-artificial-grass/">https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-artificial-grass/</a>	7/27/2021 12:40 PM
30	no artificial turf!	7/27/2021 12:40 PM
31	Additional trash receptacles	7/27/2021 9:26 AM
32	Recycled water play area that gets reused for irrigation. Or turf.	7/27/2021 9:26 AM
33	it is fine as is	7/27/2021 8:09 AM
34	Water bottle filling	7/27/2021 5:49 AM
35	Keep dogs off	7/26/2021 2:44 PM
36	Not exactly related to the common, but what about a UPS Access point or Amazon locker at the PO to cut down on delivery trucks, road wear and tear and traffic on our streets? TY	7/25/2021 3:13 PM
37	Restroom!!!!!!	7/25/2021 7:05 AM
38	Please DON'T over plan. Keep it natural and casual. Also, what's a dog waste station? We already have waste bags available and trash cans; isn't that enough?	7/24/2021 1:10 PM
39	I like the common the way it is but the redwood grove wood chips are dangerous and hard to walk on - would be nice if they were smaller/finer	7/24/2021 9:44 AM
40	Dedicated dog area should NOT be in the grove area.	7/23/2021 7:07 PM
41	less development	7/23/2021 4:08 PM
42	Mailbox	7/23/2021 2:41 PM
43	drive up post office box	7/23/2021 11:30 AM
44	My goodness! How much do you plan on spending and have you thought this through? Do you ever actually come to the Common? Anything you add will need to be maintained and you do not have the staff. Just picking up debris is s challenge for staff. Look at the debris under the	7/23/2021 11:27 AM

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

	bushes. Everything needs constant maintenance. The more people you bring to this Town park, the more maintenance you perpetuate. With regards to a restroom, there is one across the street. The school yard has restrooms. If they use the Town's park, why can't we use their restrooms? Two suggestions, install attractive user friendly garbage cans with appropriately sized holes for depositing garbage. Install dome wooden trellis in front of that area where the pump is sitting. Trim the dead wood from the trees and shape the trees. I could make more suggestions....	
45	The area next to the post office is not sufficient for dogs.	7/23/2021 8:12 AM
46	Keep those fabulous trees healthy and reduce the risk of injury from falling branches	7/23/2021 7:08 AM
47	Repaved walking paths throughout- tripping hazards for kids and adults, kid scooters	7/22/2021 4:36 PM
48	General upkeep for starters. A bench or picnic table in newly developed area under redwoods ( where house was removed)	7/22/2021 2:51 PM
49	The fact that the lawn is closed did part of the year is very frustrating for kids who just want to play with friends on the Common	7/22/2021 2:32 PM
50	against adding a lot of park like items that will bring in too many people and create safety issues and sanitation issues and messes. The open area is nice. More picnic benches and ball fields will open the town to more and more traffic and parking issues and policing	7/22/2021 2:01 PM
51	more quality landscaping enhancements. Natural beauty should be emphasized - less is more, but high quality. Definitely No 'public art'.	7/22/2021 1:58 PM
52	Seems fine way it is.....	7/22/2021 1:41 PM
53	Picnic tables with outdoor lighting in the redwood grove area for general use and school can also use for outdoor classes.	7/22/2021 12:58 PM
54	Playground - we need one for younger kids when school is in session	7/22/2021 12:51 PM
55	We don't need all theses suggestions. Keep it well groomed and peaceful!!!!	7/22/2021 12:29 PM
56	Definitely outdoor art!!	7/22/2021 12:23 PM
57	Consistent enforcement of current and applicable laws.	7/22/2021 12:20 PM
58	better grass field that is open year round for children to play	7/22/2021 12:06 PM
59	PLEASE do not add any of these things. It's simplicity is what gives it its charm. It's worked the way it is all these years. No gateways please. It has seating options on the grass on the playground and on the bleachers. if the drought keeps getting worse then artificial turf for sports would be good.	7/22/2021 11:37 AM
60	Not sure what "Gateway elements" are, but I wouldn't want them to call attention to themselves; the charm of the Ross Commons (to ALL its users, both residents and not) is very much in its modesty and feeling of being "like things used to be".	7/22/2021 11:34 AM
61	Sand volleyball court	7/22/2021 11:33 AM
62	Public playground with toddler features. There are many small children in Ross and Pixie Park is separated from the Common. Ross should welcome all children with a public playground on the Common	7/22/2021 11:30 AM
63	It's very special the way it is, just more maintenance.	7/22/2021 11:29 AM
64	Dog use area in shady grove was fine	7/22/2021 11:28 AM
65	NO ARTIFICIAL TURF	7/22/2021 11:28 AM
66	New drinking water fountains	7/22/2021 11:25 AM
67	Enforcement of not parking in drop off/pickup areas and expand hours of not parking in those areas.	7/22/2021 11:23 AM
68	please no artificial turf. Is there another surface for sports? I'm not knowledgeable about this but still would not like to see artificial turf on the common	7/22/2021 11:12 AM



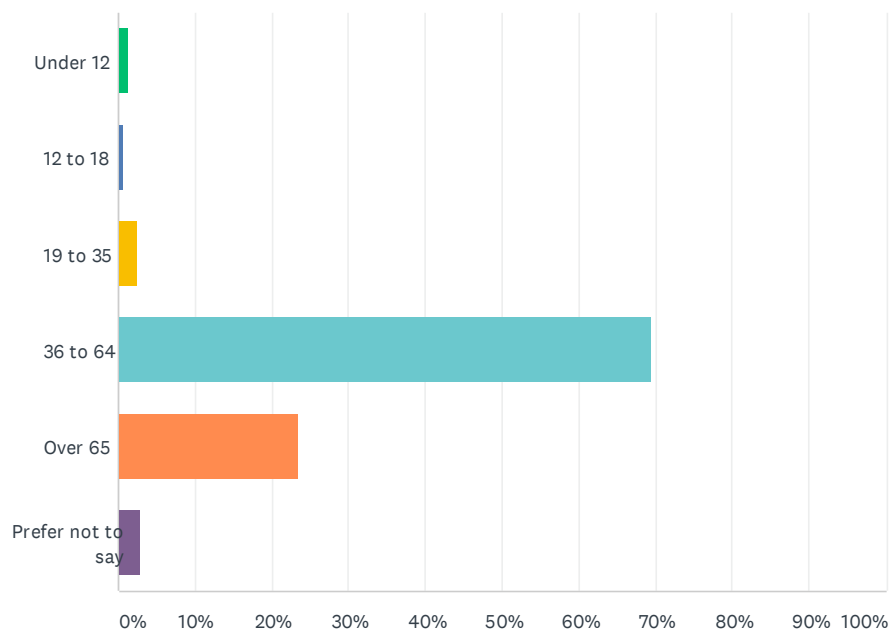


# ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

## Q8 Please select your age group:

Answered: 347 Skipped: 3



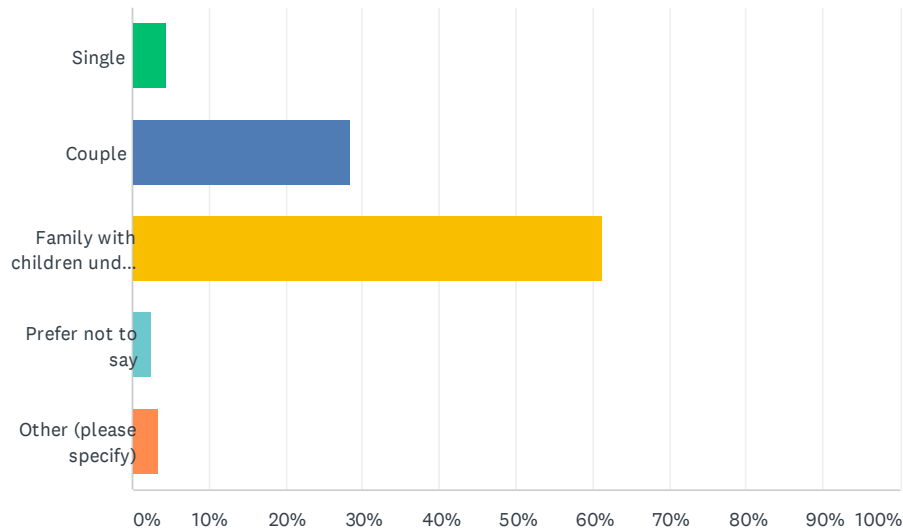
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 12	1.15%	4
12 to 18	0.58%	2
19 to 35	2.59%	9
36 to 64	69.45%	241
Over 65	23.34%	81
Prefer not to say	2.88%	10
TOTAL		347

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

**Q9 Please identify your household composition:**

Answered: 348 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Single	4.31% 15
Couple	28.45% 99
Family with children under 18 years old	61.21% 213
Prefer not to say	2.59% 9
Other (please specify)	3.45% 12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Family with adult child	8/4/2021 2:19 PM
2	Parent with older child & own aged parent	8/4/2021 7:02 AM
3	Couple with young adult "child"	8/3/2021 10:57 PM
4	Family with young adult children in early 20s. Kids were raised in Ross.	8/3/2021 10:17 PM
5	Restore dog park to common	8/3/2021 9:46 PM
6	Family with grandchildren under 18	7/24/2021 1:10 PM
7	Family with 2 children, 19 & 22	7/22/2021 2:56 PM
8	Family	7/22/2021 1:41 PM
9	Family with child 18 years old	7/22/2021 12:20 PM
10	Couple with grandkids who love to play down at the Commons.	7/22/2021 11:29 AM
11	Family with children above 18 years old	7/22/2021 11:17 AM
12	Couple Children over 18	7/22/2021 11:17 AM

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

### Q10 Anything else to tell us about the Common?

Answered: 156 Skipped: 194

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	the common would benefit from a more robust downtown. the dining under the lights was a good start. things like this that encourage supporting the businesses while also using the great informal space of the commons.	8/5/2021 1:57 PM
2	I enjoy the current minimal natural aesthetic and would be nervous that employing a number of these suggestions would clutter the commons	8/5/2021 1:56 PM
3	If picnic and seating areas are increased, please also increase the number of garbage cans commensurately.	8/4/2021 9:21 PM
4	-	8/4/2021 8:59 PM
5	Our family loves the Common as is and with the exception of the few things answered above, doesn't think it needs much improvement.	8/4/2021 8:13 PM
6	No	8/4/2021 5:51 PM
7	No	8/4/2021 5:33 PM
8	Not having restrooms is a huge problem. Having soccer goals would make it a lot more fun and something that people of multiple generations can use.	8/4/2021 3:40 PM
9	Would like to see the dog park restored at the grove.	8/4/2021 2:19 PM
10	A dedicated dog area would be very useful or atleast the ability to have the dogs back in the space they were allowed in before Covid	8/4/2021 12:55 PM
11	Better condition of natural areas — sequestering of dogs to a dog area so lawns, etc aren't gross. Limit team sports as there are other places for this & they exclude others	8/4/2021 7:02 AM
12	I love that it is open space which allows for all sorts of activities, it is a community hub and Marin landmark.	8/3/2021 10:17 PM
13	The common is a wonderful space for families to gather with kids of all ages. Please don't add any elements that would make it difficult to keep an eye on the kids as they run around the field. The hedges serve as nice barriers to the street and traffic. It's been such a lovely place for us to meet friends and play with our young sons. A restroom and some more benches for kids to sit and do homework or have a snack would be great!	8/3/2021 10:01 PM
14	Concerned that only a few people use the dog park to the detriment of the other residents. Concerned that an unfenced dog park is adjacent to a public school. Kids walk through that area every day. There should never be an unfenced dog park adjacent to a school. Ross Common also needs 1 or 2 EV charging stations. Also, could we get a human being to manage the post office?	8/3/2021 8:58 PM
15	It's about time we start thinking about reinvestment and upgrading the common. The common is embarrassing in its current state. Sports Fields are in dire need of upgrading, walking path unsafe for children, tree maintenance unacceptable, and lacking the right amenities to increase community connectivity.	8/3/2021 7:48 PM
16	it's so nice to have a place the town can gather that is kid and adult friendly	8/3/2021 3:12 PM
17	I love the Commons; sometimes pick up grandkids but not on a regular basis. Mostly I walk through on way to PO	8/3/2021 1:50 PM
18	The Common appealed to us when we moved here 30 years ago and it still does. It is a very nice green area in our small downtown area that, in my view, contributes to our small town, relaxed atmosphere.	8/3/2021 1:41 PM
19	Thanks for survey. Happy children playing sports, families picnicing and community gatherings	8/3/2021 1:32 PM

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

	help give our town it's special small town feeling and energy.	
20	It's not a dog run. People with dogs should have them on a leash at all times and certainly never allow their dogs to use the playing field as a bathroom.	8/3/2021 1:25 PM
21	When my son was in grade school my needs and uses of the Commons were different from my needs and uses today. I answered the questions relative to my current needs and uses.	8/3/2021 1:24 PM
22	I am concerned about adding a bathroom. We have seen an increase in homeless people and it will attract even more out of town visitors on weekends.	8/3/2021 12:59 PM
23	The police should enforce the laws as they pertain to bicycles being prohibited on the grass and enforce speed limits and illegal u turns in front of the post office	8/3/2021 12:51 PM
24	Na	8/3/2021 12:37 PM
25	Thanks for all you do and caring about our community!	8/3/2021 12:33 PM
26	Needs to be kept clean and trash cans emptied often. Hedges, etc., need to be better maintained. What a wonderful asset we have.	8/3/2021 12:31 PM
27	The Common and the Town of Ross should have a public playground, comparable to Peri Park in Fairfax, Memorial Park in San Anselmo, Hal Brown Park in Kentfield, or Piper Park in Larkspur. The Ross School playgrounds are not available (kindergarten playground is locked at all times, and both playgrounds are for students only during school hours) or appropriate (new big kid playground doesn't have any features for small kids). Ross has the opportunity to be inclusive and foster community with a public toddler/all-ages playground at the center of town. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity and create a space for the littlest people in our community to gather, play, learn, and connect.	8/3/2021 12:07 PM
28	Bathroom!!!	8/3/2021 11:56 AM
29	The ability to have dogs play in the common is very unique and should be retained	8/3/2021 11:54 AM
30	We need to create a space that can capture the weekend biking and running community where they want to spend time and \$ in our town. Right now they park, run/bike, and leave our town. This means more customers for our merchants.	8/3/2021 11:48 AM
31	there seems to be more cars than in past years - seems like many non town people park around common to bike somewhere else. How about Ross resident parking stickers?	8/3/2021 11:42 AM
32	reopen to dogs	8/2/2021 2:13 PM
33	More senior citizen activities to bring the senior citizens of Ross to stay connected with each other!	8/1/2021 9:55 PM
34	watching the sports is great to see, we need a UPS access to the Post Office. If we get our mail there, seems smart to add Amazon and UPS to Post Office. It is very dark at night and some lighting and shade for seating would be great!	8/1/2021 8:39 PM
35	We love the Common but would love to have a restroom and better flow for walkers/bikers from the common to the bike path and downtown to make it more open and inviting with more sitting room and things for kids and young children, especially while events are happening on the common.	7/31/2021 4:26 PM
36	no	7/31/2021 3:28 PM
37	The historic dog park in the grove is a wonderful gathering spot for owners as well as their dogs. The PO grass strip is too small and is unsafe as dogs can easily run into the street.	7/30/2021 10:40 PM
38	Great space	7/30/2021 4:58 PM
39	so much better without the dogs! no more poop! kids use that area all of the time now, without fear of dogs. we can actually picnic without the dogs. we use it much more often as a family and for social gatherings and it has been a vital place for us to meet and feel like a community	7/30/2021 9:15 AM
40	It is a special place and we are lucky to have it in our community.	7/29/2021 9:23 PM
41	As a long time resident, it has always been comforting to see the general use of the Common, and would like to see it remain much the same. I'd say there isn't much that needs improvement == leave it as it is.	7/29/2021 5:06 PM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

42	The people who want to keep dogs in the "grove" area are very outspoken and organized, but they do not represent most Ross families. But many Ross families are uncomfortable speaking out publicly. A dog park next to the post office would be ideal. It's unsanitary to have dogs on the Common, where children play and families picnic. No other town combines a dog area with a play/picnic area.	7/29/2021 2:58 PM
43	Works well in current form.	7/29/2021 2:29 PM
44	No	7/29/2021 1:28 PM
45	Increase or add more staff for maintenance and trash service along the playground and commons. The nature park needs picnic benches as there is no real use for it and it's a big space. The dog park should be next to post office. The oak grove could use some grass maintenance or evening out of area.	7/29/2021 1:17 PM
46	A common without dogs would be a cleaner, safer, more enjoyable common. The poop covered grass is a real buzz kill. Thank you.	7/29/2021 1:10 PM
47	We hope this survey provides evidence of the needs of ALL residents/taxpayers of the town, not just, as it has been recently, Ross School and participants (often not residents) of Ross Rec.	7/29/2021 12:52 PM
48	A bathroom would be great!	7/29/2021 11:14 AM
49	Social life at the park has revolved around sports and dogs. The dog aspect got severely curtailed, and as one the biggest taxpayers in the town we are pissed off and will do our level best to drive any dog hating politicians out of office	7/29/2021 10:21 AM
50	The new picnic tables on the far east side of the common across from Tony Tutto's are unfinished wood. They are already stained, greasy and unsightly. There is no way to clean unfinished wood. They should be sanded and stained and have a polyurethane finish or be made of metal like the ones used at lunch at Ross School. To be hygienic (especially during a pandemic) you need a finish that can be easily wiped and cleaned.	7/28/2021 3:38 PM
51	I live across the street from the common at 2 Lagunitas Road. We enjoy the Common and it's natural and informal space where neighbors can gather, kids play sports and have other outdoor activities. Appreciate your ideation and getting community input. But quite honestly, we like it the way it is. Open and not chopped up with activity areas. We're not supportive of field lighting, which could encourage evening gatherings and noise, and we also oppose public restrooms. Finally, not on the facility side, but programming....the outdoor dining evenings were great, the schools are enjoying using the space, and the stage has community potential as well.	7/28/2021 1:18 PM
52	We live across the street. We enjoy it pretty much as it is. It should be for humans, not dogs. It should not be a dog park. Restrooms could attract the homeless. Field lighting will disturb the night skies. Please don't overthink it. It is a place for kids to play and families to lay in the grass.	7/28/2021 1:12 PM
53	Love that it is the community hub! Playgrounds, town dinner, town picnics, dog friendly - all a great way to enhance the community and connect us. Would love some additional play courts like bocce. We'd hang out even more at the commons.	7/28/2021 11:32 AM
54	It is essential to return our dogs to the Common- great way to encourage multi generational contact and for new and old neighbors to get to know one another	7/28/2021 9:34 AM
55	We need traffic circles to keep the traffic flowing & to turn around at both ends of town. We need picnic tables in the shade by the new redwood tree space.	7/28/2021 6:33 AM
56	A fenced in dog park across the the street closer to Post Office would be a great addition, vs the old dog park.	7/28/2021 6:25 AM
57	Pls do not put turf on the common!!	7/28/2021 5:48 AM
58	We love Ross Common. It is the heart of our community and truly the sweetest family play space.	7/27/2021 8:45 PM
59	Love when flowers are updated/planted. Color would be great.	7/27/2021 7:23 PM
60	no dogs except on PO side	7/27/2021 7:13 PM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

61	Thank you for your work, and for asking us!	7/27/2021 5:48 PM
62	Please do not consider installing public restrooms. The Ross Common is not meant as a place for people to "camp out" all day (or night). Public restrooms would lead to a number of major concerns. We do not need more picnic areas. The Common is a perfect, understated neighborhood Common for locals use. Increasing the infrastructure would make it more of a "destination" for bloggers to geotag and have their followers come to picnic and leave waste. (Every Sunday night, the Common waste bins are already overflowing.) We do need to reopen the dog recreation area, which operated for at least four decades with no hygienic or safety issues. The area near the post office is not safe for dogs or cars. And the signs on the Common are unsightly. Open the dog park.	7/27/2021 3:44 PM
63	Can we have food trucks that come Friday or Saturday evenings?	7/27/2021 3:43 PM
64	No, thank you!	7/27/2021 3:08 PM
65	Nope	7/27/2021 2:33 PM
66	It's pretty nice "as is", but can use some more seating options and connection to the downtown and/or Post Office. I'd ask that you try to minimize lots of signage and markings, to the extent feasible (and legal).	7/27/2021 2:28 PM
67	I thought property belonged to the school,	7/27/2021 2:02 PM
68	Keep open space and plant more trees. Ross School managed to kill all of its mature oak trees (at least 8)	7/27/2021 1:57 PM
69	It's a beautiful area and central to the Ross community. Many of us would like to see more gardening, more seating areas and places to meet and socialize. Thanks for the survey!	7/27/2021 1:43 PM
70	The Redwood Grove is underutilized area that could really turn into something great! Also we NEED BATHROOM! Is there a way for the Town to partner with the school tooter to maintain them in off hours to keep them open. Otherwise would be great to build	7/27/2021 1:37 PM
71	Ross Common is a great centerpiece for our community. I think the town has done a great job maintaining it over the years and keeping it as a functional and freeform location. I do look forward to reestablishing the dog section of the common. It was nice to see the older members of the community gather there in years past.	7/27/2021 1:34 PM
72	Otherwise very happy with the Commons. My eldest of three is in 2nd grade at Ross School, so we have many years ahead of us for utilizing that great space!	7/27/2021 1:10 PM
73	Keep it simple. I'm not interested in seeing it become an amusement park. Fewer sign and less pavement the better.	7/27/2021 1:04 PM
74	We love it!	7/27/2021 12:51 PM
75	Na	7/27/2021 12:42 PM
76	How about fixing up the area across from the Town Hall at the corner of SFD and Lagunitas.	7/27/2021 12:41 PM
77	Don't fix what is not broken.	7/27/2021 12:40 PM
78	Generally like the current situation.	7/27/2021 12:30 PM
79	More sanitary drinking fountains (to refill water bottles) and a separate dog drinking fountain.	7/27/2021 9:26 AM
80	No	7/27/2021 5:49 AM
81	I would absolutely not change much. Turf and lights would be awful! The Common's classic and serene style is the cornerstone to the town's bucolic charm - not something to be changed after 100 years of consistency, any big change proposed as such would cause an absolute uproar and hysteria.	7/26/2021 9:51 PM
82	We'd love to see more community events on the common -- maybe close off the main street to cars for an evening, encourage people to bike/walk, have live music and and bring in some food trucks. Thanks!	7/26/2021 4:06 PM
83	We love the Common and use everyday. Dog waste and unleashed dogs are our biggest concerns. The outer edges, hedges seem poorly maintained given that the Town pays for landscape services.	7/26/2021 2:44 PM

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

84	same note as above: Not exactly related to the common, but what about a UPS Access point or Amazon locker at the PO to cut down on delivery trucks, road wear and tear and traffic on our streets? TY	7/25/2021 3:13 PM
85	Np	7/25/2021 12:59 PM
86	The benches need to be level, with arms and suitable for seniors	7/24/2021 9:18 PM
87	Thank you for asking for input, and for your service to the town. My advice is to make as few changes as possible.	7/24/2021 1:10 PM
88	With COVID coming to an end soon (hopefully) it would be nice if there were a few more community events on the stage with music, etc. Seems like that is rarely used and would be a wonderful community builder! Also, I think the common should be open to dogs.	7/24/2021 9:44 AM
89	There are no dog parks anywhere that double as picnic/play areas; it's neither safe nor sanitary. "Shared use" (dog park plus picnic/play area) isn't possible. Please find a separate place for dogs, such as next to the post office.	7/23/2021 7:07 PM
90	LEAVE IT ALONE!!!!	7/23/2021 6:27 PM
91	It should retain a simple, unfussy character. Should not be developed for many more uses.	7/23/2021 4:08 PM
92	A drive by mailbox so you don't have to park to mail a letter	7/23/2021 2:41 PM
93	Regular live music would be fun	7/23/2021 1:57 PM
94	We love walking to the Common and love to see families using the grass area for picnics. Though we had a dog we felt the area used as a dog park was not monitored and dog owners did not pick up after their dogs therefore making it a dog bathroom, not useable by families or Ross School students. It is much better now that dogs are not allowed there.	7/23/2021 12:12 PM
95	wish we had a drive up mail box so we could drop letters without getting out of car or parking.	7/23/2021 11:30 AM
96	Yes, I'm the 21 years I have lived next door, there has never been enough maintenance... trash, dying greenery, overuse for the size of the area, etc. Dog debris is not the huge problem you would like to make it seem, but I guess you would like to blame the weeds, garbage, dying grass, fallen leaves in the "grove" that are not picked up on dogs. BTW...motorized scooters should NOT be allowed on the pathway. They go to fast and are dangerous.	7/23/2021 11:27 AM
97	We would love access to restrooms on weekends and after school - eliminating having to go to tony tuttos or coffee shop.	7/23/2021 11:02 AM
98	Love it!	7/23/2021 10:42 AM
99	Looking forward to seeing the plans!	7/23/2021 9:45 AM
100	I hope you will listen to ALL residents and not continue to penalize residents in favor of a money making entity that brings in many non-residents. The arguments against sharing the space with dogs and ALL residents are thin. Why couldn't we share the space - give RESIDENTS access to their Common in the evenings and on weekends. The council and town are not representing all residents in allowing access to the Common. And the ridiculous number of large signs posted everywhere are offensive.	7/23/2021 8:12 AM
101	The history of the commons is cool. I recall that Annie Worn, Ross's daughter, sold it to the town. It would be nice if that was made a part of any changes, even if just with naming any new features.	7/23/2021 7:08 AM
102	It's hugely important to the town and should be better maintained.	7/22/2021 11:12 PM
103	Disappointed question 6 is so obviously designed to be anti-dog. Why wasn't the dog prohibition listed?	7/22/2021 11:07 PM
104	It's pretty nice as it is.	7/22/2021 10:38 PM
105	Love Ross Common! Love being able to bring my dog up to run around (we have missed this during COVID but understand and happy Ross School could use it!) and we have loved playing on the fields both in organized sports and pick up.	7/22/2021 8:53 PM
106	We love Ross Commons! We think the mulch area in the SW corner is underutilized and more seating should be there or a dog play area. This space is not included in the map, does it	7/22/2021 6:59 PM

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

	belong to the Common? In our view, the biggest problem in the Common is the unsightly trash cans that are often overflowing and the rodents that it attracts. We would like to see more trash receptacles. Adding character with art to the space would be fantastic.	
107	Please don't overthink or overplan this and turn it into something different. The common is wonderful and always has been. It's fine to freshen up the plantings but please don't let newcomers turn it into an inauthentic, plastic turf playground. Keep it simple and save the town resources for something more necessary.	7/22/2021 6:55 PM
108	The heart of the community.	7/22/2021 6:11 PM
109	Less is more. Please don't change much.	7/22/2021 5:31 PM
110	Would be great to have playground for preschool aged kids - or why can't the town of ross own / maintain Pixie?	7/22/2021 5:01 PM
111	Although our children grew up in Ross and used the Common in the 1980's and early 1990's, we only spend time there with visiting grandchildren these days.	7/22/2021 4:01 PM
112	It's a lovely green space in the middle of town, really gives Ross its small town character !	7/22/2021 2:56 PM
113	Thanks for asking! Await interesting changes!	7/22/2021 2:51 PM
114	We love it and we love our town!	7/22/2021 2:32 PM
115	One of the charms of Ross is coming over the bridge and having the "green space" as you enter the town. It's charming now, but can use a refresh. It would be nice to be able to have a space dedicated for dogs or at least be able to walk dogs through the area rather than around the edges.	7/22/2021 2:18 PM
116	Appreciate you considering improvements!	7/22/2021 2:09 PM
117	It is adjacent to the Ross School, and that should be another focus. Do not add things that will decrease safety for the children and have some sort of perimeter that will show children NOT to run into the side streets and maybe get injured. Do not add much to this nice open area. If you have community gardens, who will be the community? Only Ross residents and children for learning purposes and use? Who gets the produce? Do not set up something that will require policing, issues, conflicts, and costs to taxpayers in the long run. A big open space in the midst of Town is the best option and leaves open area for the school children. There are other open areas at MAGC for use by the general public.	7/22/2021 2:01 PM
118	Love the move to coordinate enhancement ideas. Bravo. Please let's keep it natural. the more man-made stuff the more it takes away from the beautiful nature that we have arounds us. Manicured, well-kept, but natural.	7/22/2021 1:58 PM
119	The space has much potential. With more infrastructure and design, it could be so much more useful to the community.	7/22/2021 1:38 PM
120	I like its openness. Carving out specific use spaces would be at the expense of other uses. But kids need restrooms. Picnic tables /seating along south end was great. There was unused street side space that is now used more often, but please be thoughtful on future additions that would be limiting	7/22/2021 1:30 PM
121	No thanks	7/22/2021 1:22 PM
122	It's great. Hope any "additions" don't make it worse. Also, I think the hedge protects the kids who are playing on the lawn from the street	7/22/2021 1:15 PM
123	The common seems pretty nice to me. It's our main corridor through Ross, Sir Francis Drake Blvd., t, ehat needs beautifying, especially the entrances to Ross at either end. How about a Welcome To Ross sign and flowers?	7/22/2021 1:14 PM
124	Ross Common is a great asset to our community, serving as a center of community events and a lovely, peaceful space to spend time. It reflects the spirit of Ross as a place for kids and dogs to play, and for others to watch and enjoy them. Please don't inhibit this by over-thinking and tearing it apart in the interest of "improving" it!	7/22/2021 12:58 PM
125	Restrict dogs. Let them use that grass area east, north of Post office but not on Common. Owners let them run wild and they ruin picnics and jump on kids playing. It's unfortunate, but dog owners these days don't control their pets and it's time the town steps up and says No	7/22/2021 12:58 PM



## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

July 22 to August 5, 2021

	more. Adding long picnic tables with lights under the redwood grove that recently opened up with wood chips would be a great addition and bring the community better together for picnic dinners etc...	
126	A bathroom would be really really nice	7/22/2021 12:56 PM
127	Since the beginning of time dogs have been allowed unleashed to play. Why has this changed? Please bring dogs back to the common	7/22/2021 12:53 PM
128	Please, please, please keep the ability for kids sports teams to practice there - it is in my mind the best attribute of the Common and gathers families together in the best way! Would also love to see additional playground equipment for younger kids to use when school is in session (and therefore school playground can't be used). The area where the redwoods are with wood chips could use benches; there isn't anyway to sit currently - also picnic tables in that area would be awesome since it's shaded. Love the Common, don't chance too much! :)	7/22/2021 12:51 PM
129	As a mother of a 5 year old AND a dog owner, I would like to have an opportunity to spend time and socialize in Ross common with both of them. With that said, because not all dog owners pick up after their dogs, a designated dog area vs "dogs allowed everywhere/nowhere" it is what I envision as a preferable solution for ross commons.	7/22/2021 12:31 PM
130	Why invest \$ in improvements. Just maintain it!!!!	7/22/2021 12:29 PM
131	We love the common and look forward to seeing a much-needed upgrade and renovation come to fruition for everyone to enjoy.	7/22/2021 12:23 PM
132	Keep amendments to a minimum and simple, reflecting the natural and old-time feel of the town.	7/22/2021 12:20 PM
133	The Common does not need major changes. It is beautiful. It just needs some TLC to improve the quality of the grass and landscaping, and improved connection to the bike path for cyclists, runners, and walkers. The addition of a restroom and/or dog waste bins would be terrible, as it will stink! I understand that little kids play there and runners and cyclists meet up there, all of whom need the occasional restroom - but is there a way to do this without having an unsanitary/smelly bathroom? Also I do not want to attract homeless people to the Common with a public restroom. While I do think the addition of a turf area could be nice for sports, I would NOT AT ALL like to have the entire Common be turf. Lastly, FREE the DOGS! It has been way too long that the Common has been a dog-free area...ridiculous!	7/22/2021 12:19 PM
134	Love the common	7/22/2021 11:58 AM
135	LOVE the group activities idea (eg cornhole, bocce, etc). Would love to see trash picked up more often as well. Perhaps community pickup days (as it is the community that is leaving it there).	7/22/2021 11:41 AM
136	We have loved it as it is for years. Our children played on it, both for school and off hours, I've taken my dogs over the years. The hedge along the road is good - it gives the children a boundary, it's green. Do not add anymore concrete or other hard material. We need all the dirt and drainage we have to keep water going in the ground. The only possible addition would be more trees. Some that are there are older and you want replacements coming up.	7/22/2021 11:37 AM
137	I know the grass is doomed because of the drought, but counsel caution on use of artificial turf (which we have in our yard and are pleased with): it gets incredibly hot in the sun - so hot it is impossible to stand on, barefooted, and might be equally hot for children to play on/fall down on. Plus it's super-expensive to install, and doesn't last forever. Better, perhaps, to play in the dust/dirt until the rains return.	7/22/2021 11:34 AM
138	nope	7/22/2021 11:33 AM
139	To be welcoming and inclusive, the Common should incorporate areas for children of all ages, including a public playground	7/22/2021 11:30 AM
140	We are excited about this initiative. We have 3 young children who play at Ross Commons daily. A huge problem is a lack of restrooms. Due to this, our children and their friends often pee in the bushes, which is very unfortunate.	7/22/2021 11:30 AM
141	Covid was used as an opportunity to eliminate dog owner use of the dog park. While the pretense was that the dog ban was temporary it has been enacted as a permanent ban. The community benefits from a dog exercise area. Without it dog owners use the sporting fields to	7/22/2021 11:28 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

	exercise their dogs, leaving mess, damage, and undesired interactions between animals and field users. Any Common repurposing must encompass a dog area.	
142	Bathroom is the highest priority. We use the are daily and love everything about it but often find it difficult with no bathroom available.	7/22/2021 11:28 AM
143	Less dogs please. It's annoying to see them off leash at the post office and surrounding area.	7/22/2021 11:28 AM
144	NO ARTIFICIAL TURF. Natural trees are always needed and welcome	7/22/2021 11:28 AM
145	No	7/22/2021 11:27 AM
146	We've got a big dog problem in Ross. I don't walk my dog on-leash anywhere near the Common as we so often are charged by off-leash dogs. Keep the dogs off the grass and on the pavement only	7/22/2021 11:25 AM
147	It's a beautiful spot that feel under utilized	7/22/2021 11:24 AM
148	.	7/22/2021 11:23 AM
149	We love having recreational space. Dogs off leash are stressful to all!	7/22/2021 11:20 AM
150	Shaded seating would be our top priority.	7/22/2021 11:20 AM
151	No need to spend money on improving Commons. Current rules about dogs exist, but are not respected or enforced.	7/22/2021 11:17 AM
152	It could be beautiful I have donated much of my time making suggestions about how to replant	7/22/2021 11:17 AM
153	so glad we have it!	7/22/2021 11:12 AM
154	Keep it pleasant and attractive.	7/22/2021 11:11 AM
155	Please no artificial turf on the common	7/22/2021 11:10 AM
156	Like the grass. Like that it is a community gathering place.	7/22/2021 11:07 AM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

**Q11 Thank you for your time! Please provide your email if you'd like updates on the Ross Common Improvement Plan or visit [www.townofross.org/planning/page/ross-common-landscape-improvement-rehabilitation-plan](http://www.townofross.org/planning/page/ross-common-landscape-improvement-rehabilitation-plan).**

Answered: 88 Skipped: 262

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	joanna.dachs@gmail.com	8/5/2021 1:57 PM
2	ssutro@sutroarchitects.com	8/5/2021 1:56 PM
3	paigeabou@gmail.com	8/4/2021 11:52 PM
4	kimkieckhefer@gmail.com	8/4/2021 9:21 PM
5	N/a	8/4/2021 5:51 PM
6	littlebatalla@gmail.com	8/4/2021 3:40 PM
7	caitlinc@luminare.com	8/4/2021 7:02 AM
8	amielkort@gmail.com	8/3/2021 10:17 PM
9	ericaashleybell@gmail.com	8/3/2021 10:01 PM
10	terry@pickett2.com	8/3/2021 9:46 PM
11	gcanori@gmail.com	8/3/2021 7:48 PM
12	susansch27@yahoo.com	8/3/2021 2:11 PM
13	jawillcox@comcast.net	8/3/2021 1:41 PM
14	danr100@comcast.net	8/3/2021 1:24 PM
15	skawaja@gmail.com	8/3/2021 12:38 PM
16	wthomp139@aol.com	8/3/2021 12:05 PM
17	joe@zepponi.com	8/3/2021 11:56 AM
18	kirstenpolsky@gmail.com	8/3/2021 11:42 AM
19	Konakelley25@gmail.com	8/1/2021 9:55 PM
20	Matt@soldo.org	8/1/2021 10:21 AM
21	paintert@gmail.com	7/31/2021 4:26 PM
22	craig_mccarty@msn.com	7/30/2021 10:40 PM
23	Bobberry@bobberry.net	7/30/2021 4:58 PM
24	rgtorney@aol.com	7/29/2021 5:06 PM
25	Adriana.ruhl@gmail.com	7/29/2021 1:17 PM
26	caroline.gee@gmail.com	7/29/2021 1:10 PM
27	mhoutzager@yahoo.com	7/29/2021 10:21 AM
28	nancybranigan1@gmail.com	7/28/2021 1:18 PM
29	craigbranigan@gmail.com	7/28/2021 1:12 PM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

30	Mtedford110@gmail.com	7/28/2021 11:32 AM
31	kayleevc75@gmail.com	7/28/2021 9:34 AM
32	megforman11@gmail.com	7/28/2021 6:33 AM
33	lesliebergholt@yahoo.com	7/28/2021 5:48 AM
34	Johncoan@me.com	7/27/2021 9:52 PM
35	laurencmuller@gmail.com	7/27/2021 8:45 PM
36	kristinhklein@gmail.com	7/27/2021 5:48 PM
37	Kim.m.lewandowski@gmail.com	7/27/2021 3:43 PM
38	caitlin.geier@gmail.com	7/27/2021 3:08 PM
39	Fleitas@mac.com	7/27/2021 2:28 PM
40	ciwollam@aol.com	7/27/2021 2:22 PM
41	S.petrilla@btinternet.com	7/27/2021 2:15 PM
42	brian46388@gmail.com	7/27/2021 2:09 PM
43	kenpetrilla@gmail.com	7/27/2021 2:01 PM
44	moxtail@yahoo.com	7/27/2021 1:37 PM
45	henryhagenbuch@gmail.com	7/27/2021 1:10 PM
46	moniehussain@me.com	7/27/2021 12:51 PM
47	N/a	7/27/2021 12:42 PM
48	Ksosteraas@aol.com	7/27/2021 12:30 PM
49	Eringrace11@gmail.com	7/27/2021 9:26 AM
50	Csmiechowski@yahoo.com	7/27/2021 5:49 AM
51	jamiefgray@gmail.com	7/26/2021 9:51 PM
52	nadinebecker@gmail.com	7/26/2021 7:07 AM
53	loladewar@gmail.com	7/24/2021 10:10 PM
54	MARKRNICHOL@GMAIL.COM	7/24/2021 9:44 AM
55	sarah_swain@sbcglobal.net	7/23/2021 3:48 PM
56	annielongley@mac.com	7/23/2021 11:30 AM
57	melissa@quotedpr.com	7/23/2021 9:45 AM
58	suzisalmen@comcast.net	7/23/2021 7:10 AM
59	Sean@svend.us	7/22/2021 11:07 PM
60	willere@aol.com	7/22/2021 8:34 PM
61	alea.stein@gmail.com	7/22/2021 6:59 PM
62	shohenrieder@gmail.com	7/22/2021 6:55 PM
63	abbybrown13@gmail.com	7/22/2021 5:01 PM
64	akadavy@gmail.com	7/22/2021 4:36 PM
65	Susanskinnersf@gmail.com	7/22/2021 3:05 PM
66	sarahkruttschnitt@gmail.com	7/22/2021 2:53 PM
67	barbaragaffney8@gmail.com	7/22/2021 2:51 PM

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

July 22 to August 5, 2021

68	jeanneljc@gmail.com	7/22/2021 2:19 PM
69	cecilia.sf@att.net	7/22/2021 2:18 PM
70	bendewar@gmail.com	7/22/2021 1:38 PM
71	rog.dickerson@gmail.com	7/22/2021 1:30 PM
72	frittsmeyer@sbcglobal.net	7/22/2021 1:14 PM
73	thank you	7/22/2021 12:58 PM
74	lzabela.sujeta@yahoo.com	7/22/2021 12:31 PM
75	clret@comcast.net	7/22/2021 12:29 PM
76	Preserve natural beauty and small town character of the Common	7/22/2021 11:51 AM
77	winshipave@aol.com	7/22/2021 11:37 AM
78	ken@cattondesign.com	7/22/2021 11:33 AM
79	crystal@crystalpalecek.com	7/22/2021 11:30 AM
80	linsey.perlov@gmail.com	7/22/2021 11:28 AM
81	jmattwebster@gmail.com	7/22/2021 11:24 AM
82	nu_zebuaktu@yahoo.com	7/22/2021 11:23 AM
83	jillgisvoldbaker@gmail.com	7/22/2021 11:20 AM
84	elizabeth.breitner@yahoo.com	7/22/2021 11:18 AM
85	janell@denlerhobartgardens.com	7/22/2021 11:17 AM
86	mmpartlow@gmail.com	7/22/2021 11:12 AM
87	nicholsonhome@aol.com	7/22/2021 11:11 AM
88	Nanfoster l@comcast.net	7/22/2021 11:07 AM

**TOWN COUNCIL**

**INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN**

August 12, 2021

# ROSS COMMON LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

**Town Council**

August 12, 2021



## AGENDA

1. **Project: Vision & Goals, Purpose, Process**
2. **Community Input Highlights**
3. **Improvement Concepts**
4. **Prioritization Discussion**

## TOWN COUNCIL

### INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021



3

## VISION AND GOALS/ PURPOSE

Determine a **plan for improvements** in **Ross Common** that creates a **public gathering space** and **gateway** that is integrated with the community.

4

## TOWN COUNCIL

## INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021

## DEFINING SUCCESS

## How will we know the project is successful?

- The plan:
  - considers all users groups
  - enhances adaptability
  - creates **connectivity** of people and places within and around the Common
  - Incorporates **environmental stewardship** in organic ways with longevity beyond the project lifespan
  - Utilizes the open space near the post office
  - Fosters a sense of community character and continues to be a focal point of the community

5

## PROCESS



6



TOWN COUNCIL

INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021

## COMMUNITY INPUT

### Focus Groups

6

groups

- RPOA
- Ross Auxiliary
- Age Friendly Ross
- Ross School
- Local Merchants
- Youth Sports

### Questionnaire

383

responses

Questionnaire open July 22 to August 5

- How do you **get to** the Common?
- How do you **use** the Common?
- What do you **like** about the Common?
- What are **issues you've noticed** in the Common?
- What park **amenities would improve** the Common?

# 91%

of responses from  
**Ross Residents**

7

## COMMUNITY INPUT TAKEAWAYS

### The Common is...

...a **centerpiece** for the community

...loved as is

...a **vital place** to meet

...the **heart** of the community

...**charming**

...**central** to the Ross community

...a **wonderful space** for families to gather

...a place for **kids to play**

...**hugely important** to the Town

...a **community hub**

...a **beautiful** space

...contributes to the **small town**, relaxed atmosphere

...a **special** place

...**classic** and serene

...a place the town can **gather**

...a very **nice green area**

...a **lovely, green space**

...functional and freeform

...**wonderful asset**

...a great way to **enhance the community** and connect

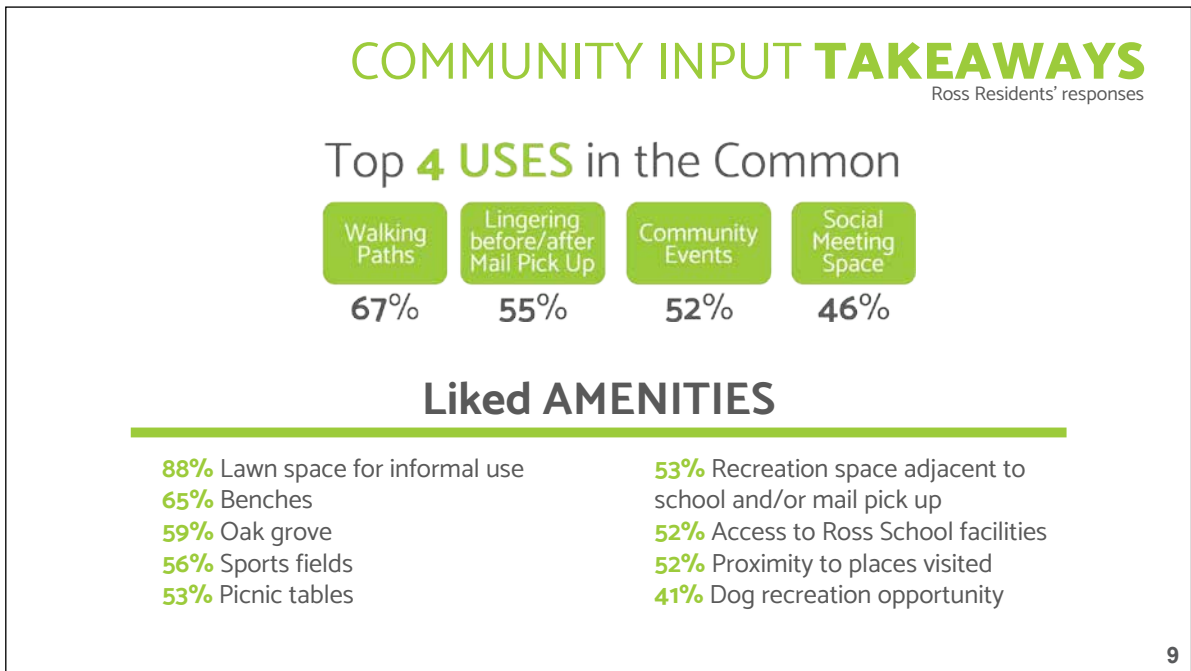
...a **great space**

8

TOWN COUNCIL

INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

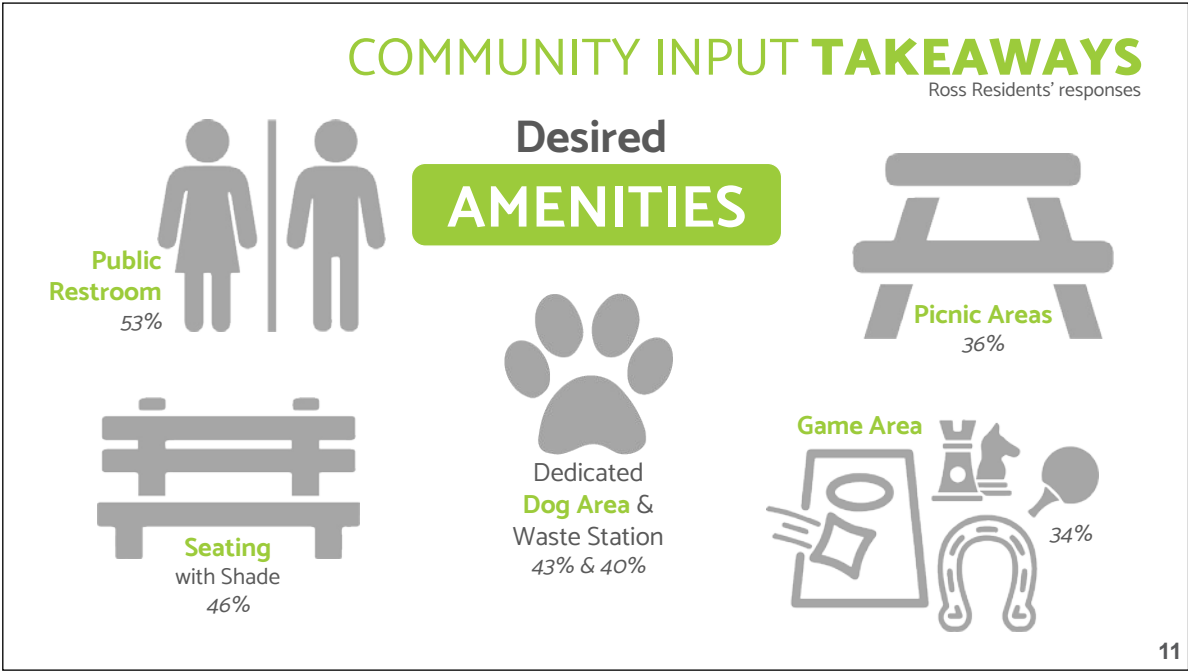
August 12, 2021



TOWN COUNCIL

INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021



11



12

# TOWN COUNCIL

## INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021



TOWN COUNCIL

INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021



TOWN COUNCIL  
INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN  
August 12, 2021



PROMENADE

17



PAVILION PLAZA

18

TOWN COUNCIL

INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021



# TOWN COUNCIL

## INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021





TOWN COUNCIL

INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

August 12, 2021

CONCEPT ELEMENTS

- Improved Loop Trail
- Corner Mini Plaza
- Promenade with Seating
- Green Edge
- Perimeter Walk
- Bulb-Out Crossing
- Enhanced Crossing
- Pavilion & Flexible Plaza
- Repeatable Vertical Element
- Additional Trail
- Seating Nodes Along Trail
- Picnic Seating
- Game Tables
- Bocce / Horseshoes
- Fenced Dog Area
- Restroom

23

OVERALL CONCEPT



- |                             |                               |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 Improved Loop Trail       | 8 Repeatable Vertical Element | 15 Restroom |
| 2 Corner Mini Plaza         | 9 Additional Trail            |             |
| 3 Promenade with Seating    | 10 Seating Nodes Along Trail  |             |
| 4 Green Edge                | 11 Picnic Seating             |             |
| 5 Perimeter Walk            | 12 Game Tables                |             |
| 6 Enhanced Crossing         | 13 Bocce/ Horseshoes          |             |
| 7 Pavilion & Flexible Plaza | 14 Fenced Dog Area            |             |

24

**TOWN COUNCIL**

**INITIAL LANDSCAPE PLAN**

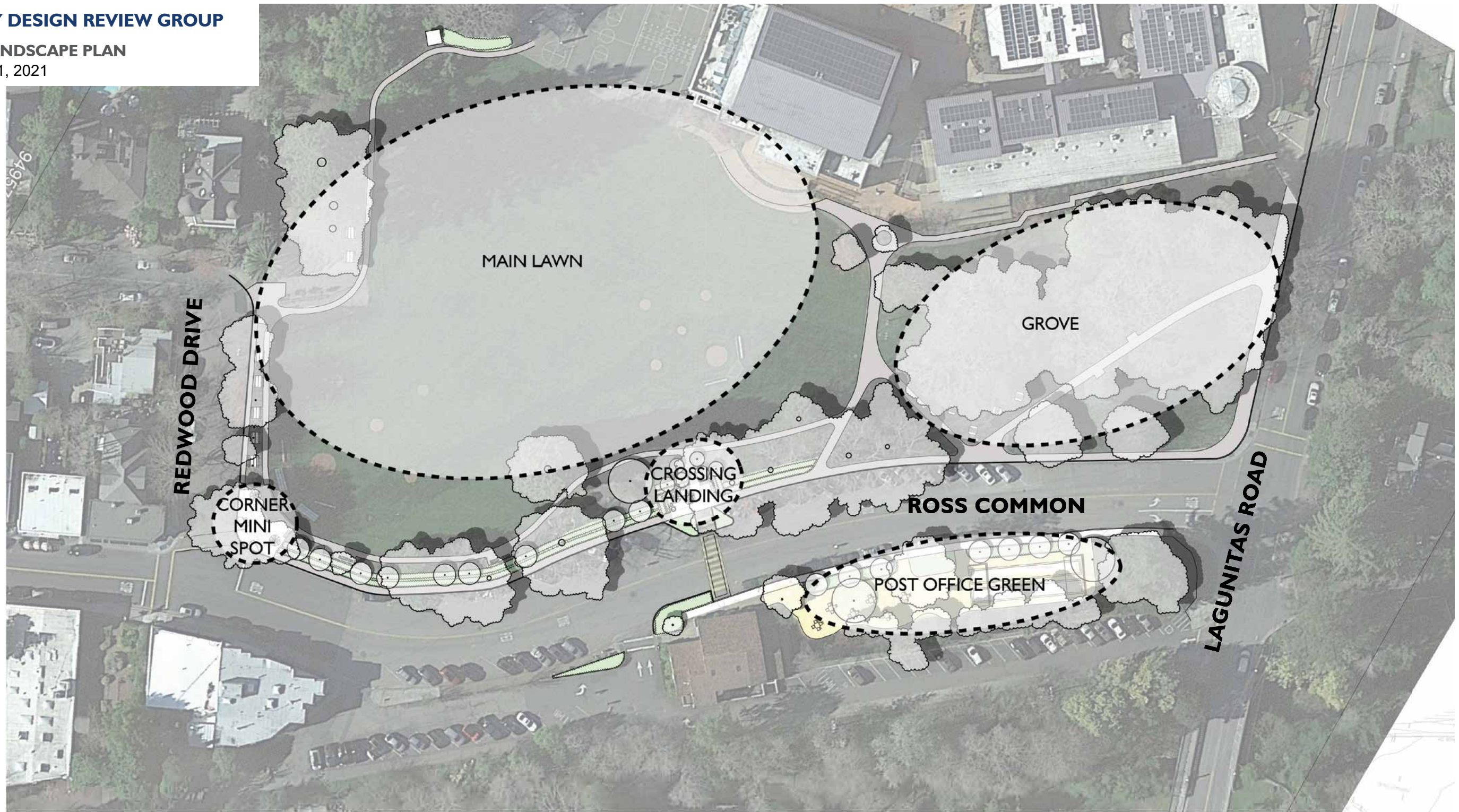
August 12, 2021

**THANK YOU**

**ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP**

**REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN**

September 21, 2021



**ROSS COMMON**  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

**LANDSCAPE CONCEPT**  
SEPTEMBER 2021

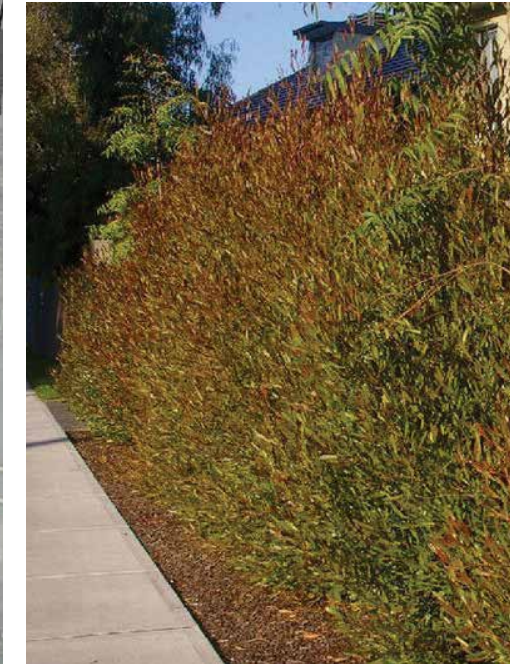
ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP

REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN

September 21, 2021



Utility Screening



ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - MAIN LAWN  
SEPTEMBER 2021

ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP

REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN

September 21, 2021



ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - PLANTING SCREEN

SEPTEMBER 2021

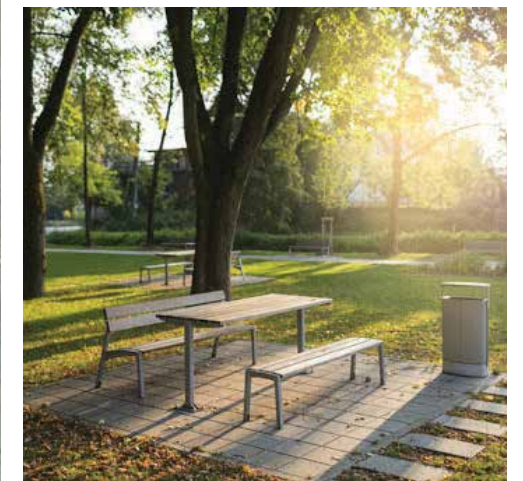
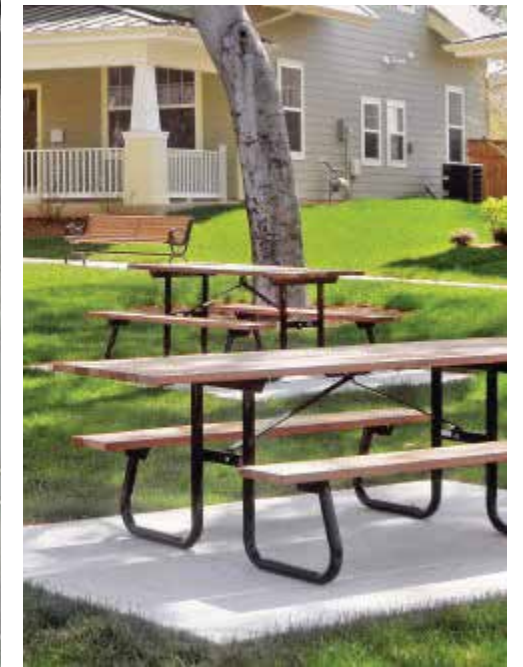
ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP

REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN

September 21, 2021



ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA



LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - THE GROVE  
SEPTEMBER 2021

**ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP**

**REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN**

September 21, 2021



**ROSS COMMON**  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

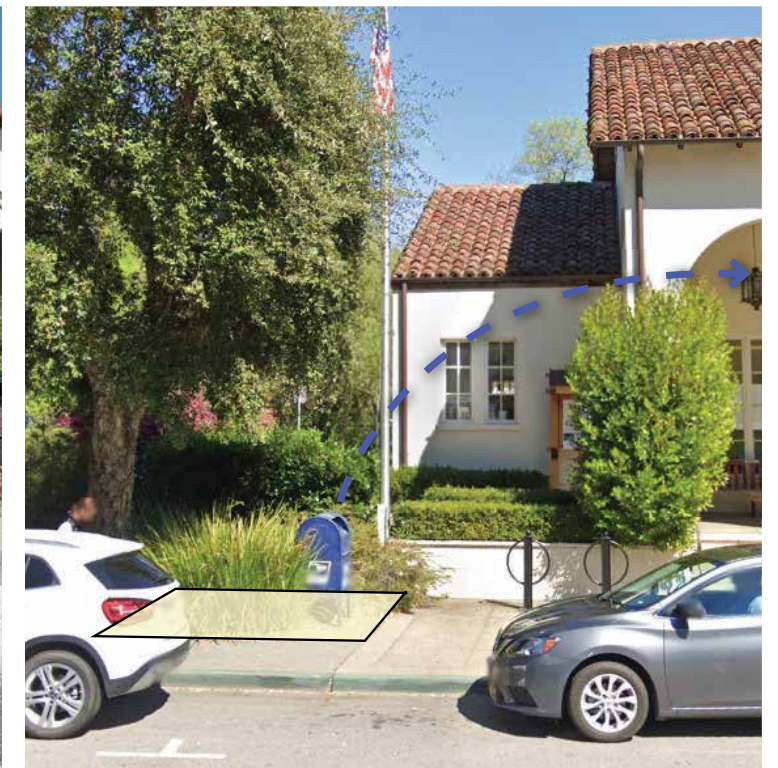
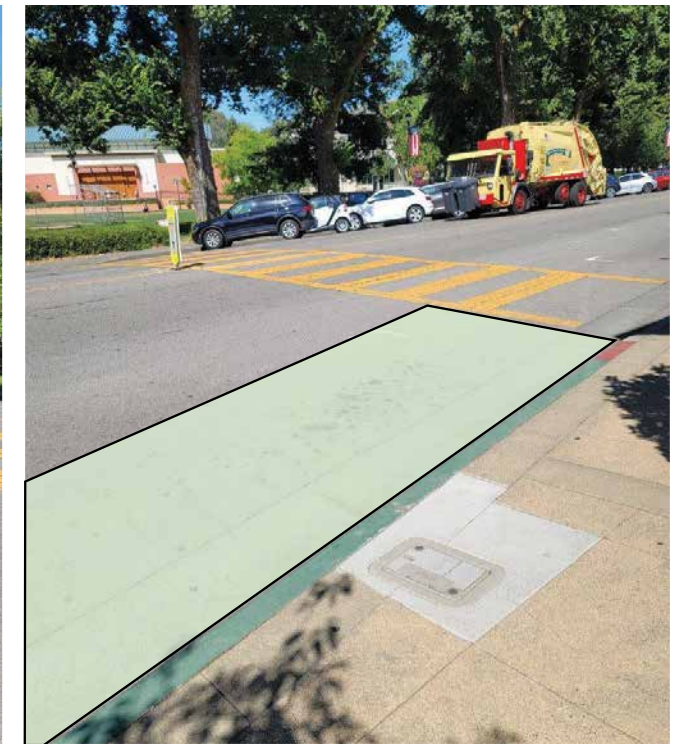
**LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - THE CROSSING**

SEPTEMBER 2021

ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP

REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN

September 21, 2021



\* Change one 3-hour stall to one 15-minute stall



ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - THE CROSSING AND POST OFFICE

SEPTEMBER 2021



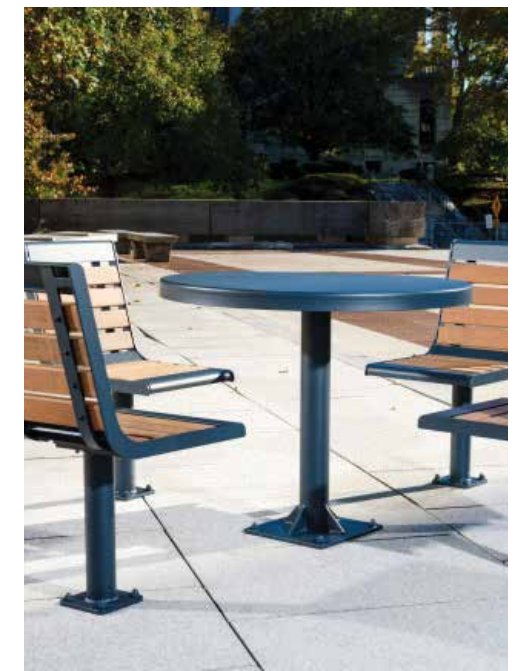
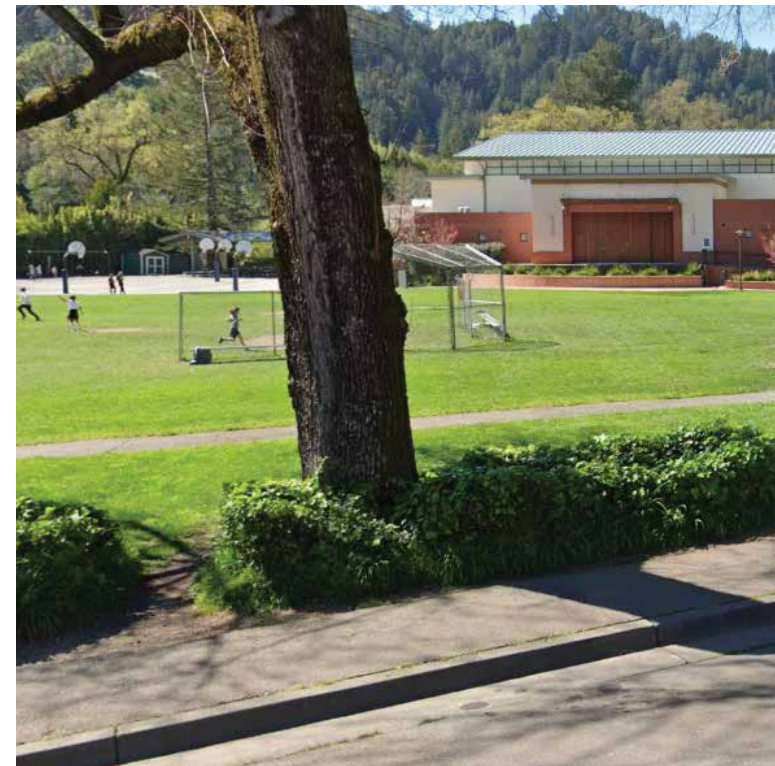
**ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP**

**REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN**

September 21, 2021



**ROSS COMMON**  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA



ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP

REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN

September 21, 2021



ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA



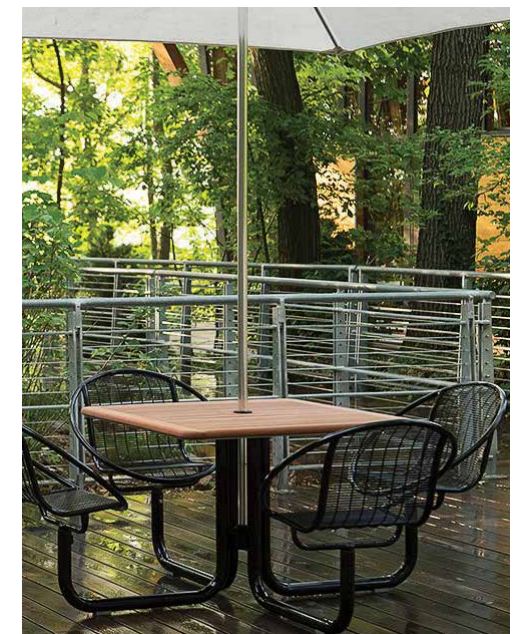
LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - POST OFFICE GREEN

SEPTEMBER 2021

ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP  
REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN  
September 21, 2021



ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

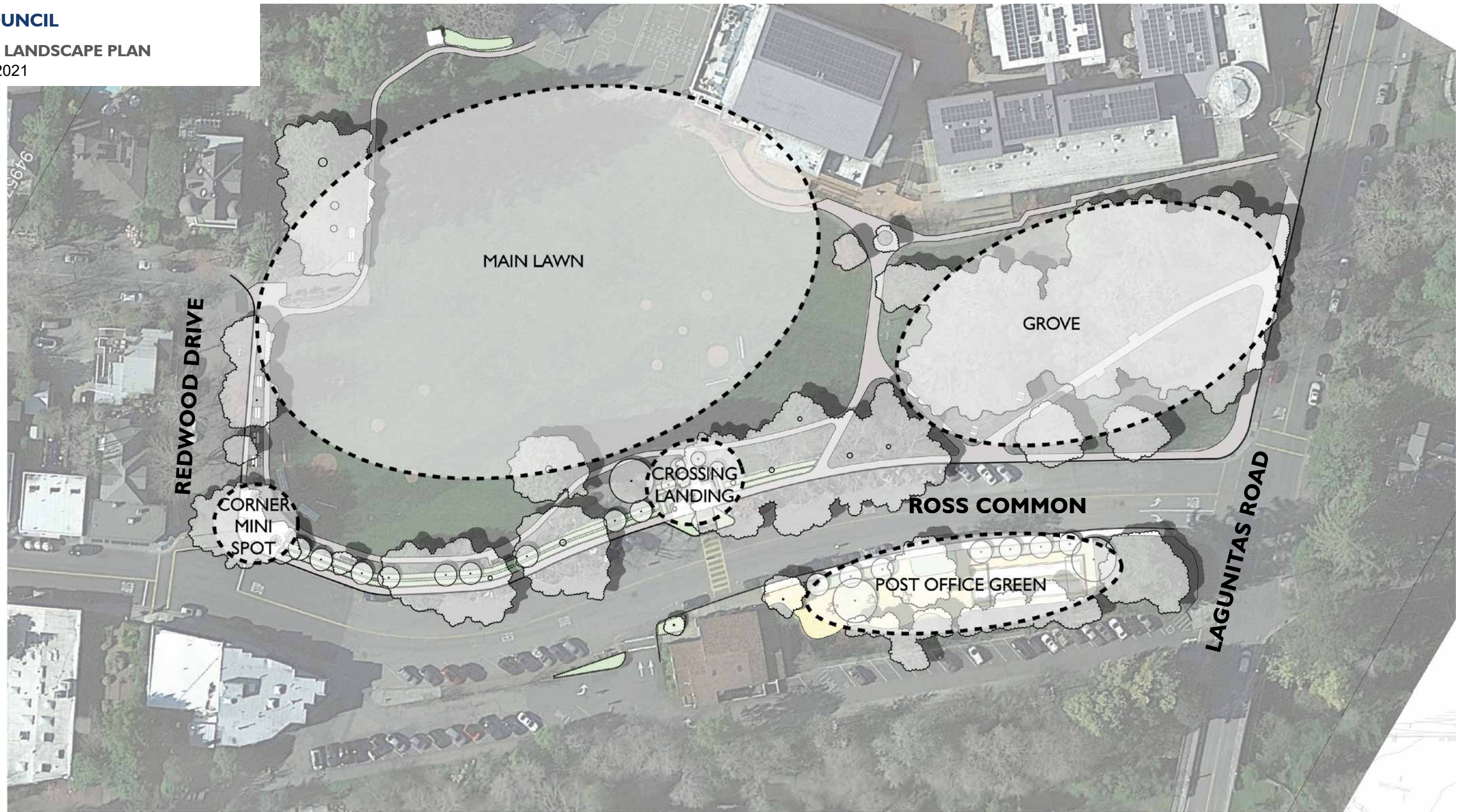


LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - CORNER MINI SPOT  
SEPTEMBER 2021

TOWN COUNCIL

PREFERRED LANDSCAPE PLAN

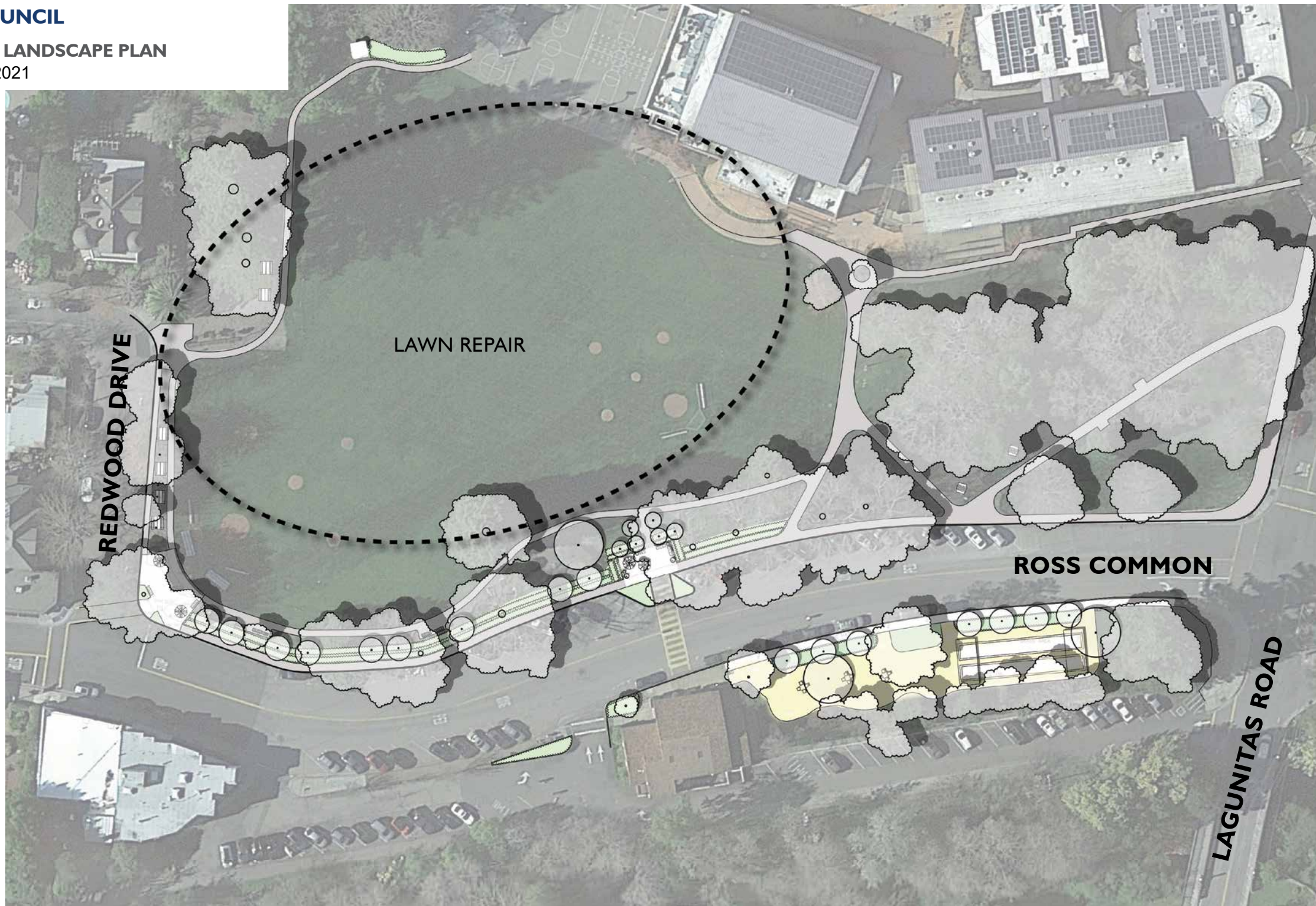
October 14, 2021



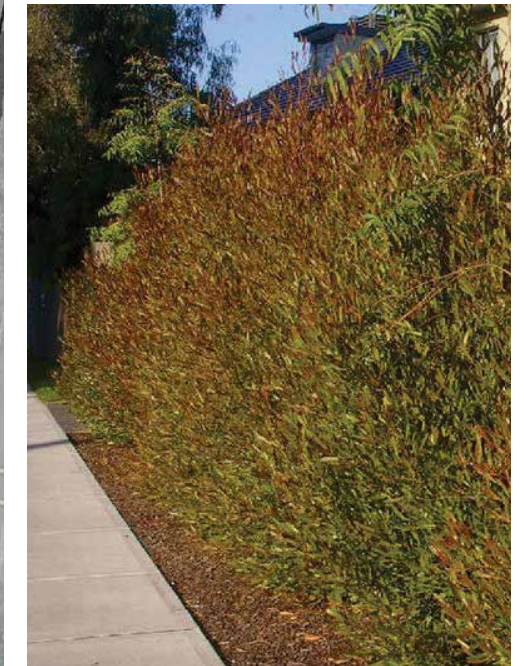
TOWN COUNCIL

PREFERRED LANDSCAPE PLAN

October 14, 2021



Utility Screening



TOWN COUNCIL

PREFERRED LANDSCAPE PLAN

October 14, 2021

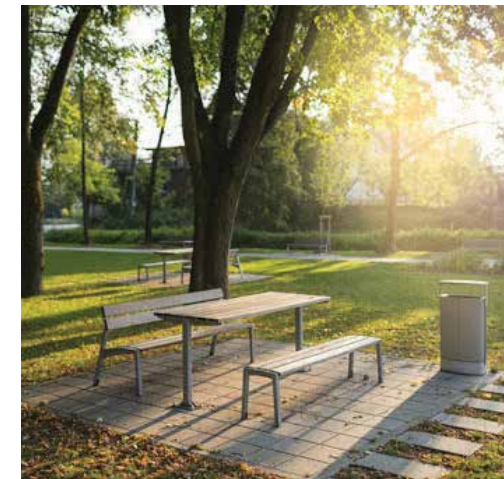


**ROSS COMMON**  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

**LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - PLANTING HEDGE BUFFER**

OCTOBER 2021

**TOWN COUNCIL**  
**PREFERRED LANDSCAPE PLAN**  
October 14, 2021



TOWN COUNCIL  
PREFERRED LANDSCAPE PLAN  
October 14, 2021

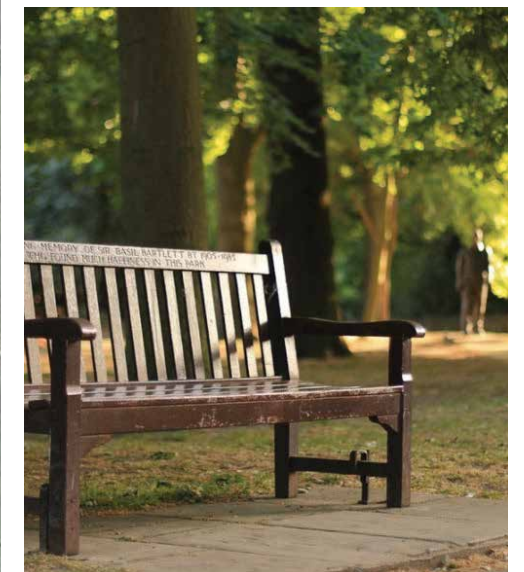
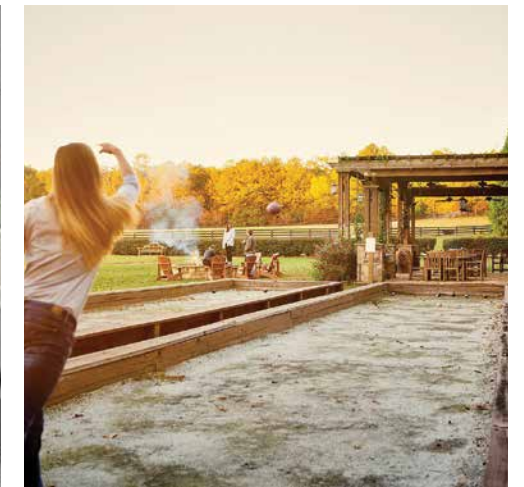


ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - CROSSING LANDING  
OCTOBER 2021



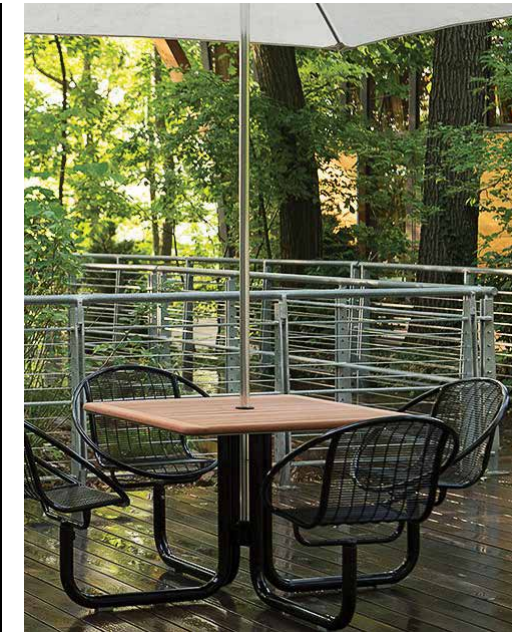
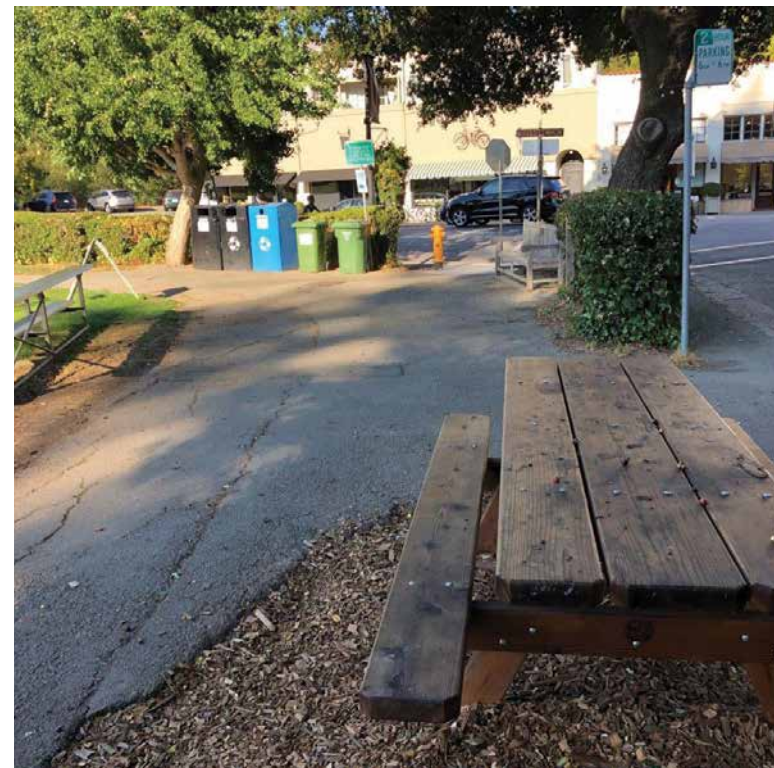
**TOWN COUNCIL**  
**PREFERRED LANDSCAPE PLAN**  
October 14, 2021



**ROSS COMMON**  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

**LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - POST OFFICE GREEN**  
OCTOBER 2021

TOWN COUNCIL  
PREFERRED LANDSCAPE PLAN  
October 14, 2021



ROSS COMMON  
ROSS, CALIFORNIA

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT - CORNER MINI SPOT  
OCTOBER 2021

## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

From: Barbara Call <barbcall@sbcglobal.net>  
 Sent: Sunday, August 1, 2021 9:00 PM  
 To: Elizabeth Robbins <eliz.robbsins@gmail.com>; Elizabeth Brekhus <elizabethb@brekhus.com>; Beach Kuhl <beachkuhl35@gmail.com>; Julie McMillan <juliemcmillan@comcast.net>; Bill Kircher <cwkmisc@gmail.com>  
 Cc: Joe Chinn - Town Manager <jchinn@townofross.org>  
 Subject: Ross Common

Dear Mayor and Council,

I did complete your questionnaire, but feel compelled to send this email as well inasmuch as I am somewhat of an expert when it comes to the number of times I have traversed the Common. You guys could become experts as well by circling the area in excess of 10,000 times.

I honestly don't know why you need a questionnaire in order to know how to improve the Common. I would suggest you walk the perimeter a few times and actually look at what needs improvement.

Really look at the grass which is not only dying in many areas, but also filled with weeds and foxtails and debris. Look at the area referred to as the Grove. There is no grass under many of the trees. There are way too many leaves and other types of debris that should be cleaned up and removed rather than just blown into the flower beds. And look at all the flower beds. They are filled with leaves and weeds and trash. Why are they never maintained? They should be weeded and nourished and composted. They look terrible.

Look at the ivy over by the tank storage area. So much trash and weeds and leaves. Why is this area never cleaned up? My gardeners clean up the leaves and debris rather than just blowing it around.

The storage area could be cleaned up and hidden by fencing similar to what is currently being used around the playground under construction. Or, some wooden lattice could be installed to hide the area from view.

Look at the trash receptacles. It would be difficult to find anything more ugly and less functional than the tall blue and black ones. The openings do not even accommodate a pizza box! And the new round black ones do not hold squat and won't accommodate pizza boxes. There is a pizza restaurant on the corner and people need to dispose of their trash after they eat here on the Common. Mind boggling how such inappropriate trash receptacles could have been purchased. I will send a photo of a really handsome looking and functional trash container that I saw. Handsome and rugged with appropriately sized openings. Ironically, it looks very similar to the previous containers that were replaced by the horrendous black and blue ones which were supposed to be an "improvement."

Also note the picnic tables which are already stained and not attractive. In addition, the picnic people prefer to sit on the grass or on blankets and folding chairs rather than at the tables. There are three groups on the grass now and no one at the tables.

Yet, you appear to be adding a couple of additional tables. It would have made sense to actually check the usage out before destroying the hedge and installing more tables.

And speaking of the hedge...it is very important! It should be improved, but even in its current condition, it is vital as a safety feature for the children. It would be a huge mistake to remove it...The children playing ball on that corner need to be protected from running out into the street after balls.

I have seen soccer balls and baseballs fly into the street and the hedge prevents the kids from rushing out after them and getting hit by cars.

When the "Grove" area was opened up to recess play time this Spring, I witnessed three almost accidents involving kids chasing a ball into the street. The "Grove" area has no protective hedge. And don't say it could never happen because kids do get hit by cars and a kid chasing after a ball is not going to be paying attention! And the street is very busy...more cars and trucks than ever.

And it would be tragic to have a child injured or killed by a car just cause someone did not like the condition of the protective hedge. In addition, an area used as a school yard should not be entirely open to people driving by...for obvious reasons.

## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

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Plus, who wants to be on the Common looking out at a bunch of parked cars and traffic and a parking lot? How would that be an improvement? The hedge hides the cars and the traffic. The hedge also absorbs some of the noise and exhaust fumes from the traffic. It needs to be restored, but not destroyed. Hire a crew to clean out the years of debris around the roots. Use a rake!

Cut back the dead branches. Remove the weeds. Do a really good job of pruning. Fertilize and water the hedge. It will look really good after some extensive rehab work.

Rehab and consistent maintenance will make the Common much more attractive. That and some pruning of some of the trees that are in desperate need of pruning. Look at that oak tree by the stage area. It needs to be pruned and shaped. I realize you prefer to let branches break off trees and fall to the ground before doing any pruning, but trees need maintenance.

I hope you do walk the Common and look at the photos I will be sending in addition to considering what I have said. It should be noted that the Common is the people's park and not just a playing field for the school and Ross Rec....People of all ages should be able to walk there without fear of being run over by cyclists and other vehicles. Motorized scooters should not be allowed...Sorry, but they are really dangerous. There are many old people who like to walk there as well as toddlers and people pushing babies in strollers and tykes just learning to ride a bike.

If this email seems negative, it's because I do not want to see the Common destroyed. It is what makes the heart of Ross so appealing...you should not destroy something that is one of the things that entices people to pay huge prices to live here. And you have that power. And the current condition of the Common in the areas I have mention seems to reflect an attitude of not caring about the Common for years. So I wonder if that questionnaire is designed to further some agenda you want to enact down the line. Why else would you need a questionnaire when the improvements that need to be made are so obvious?

Photos to follow.

Regards,

Barbara Call

Sent from my iPhone

## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

**From:** Barbara Call <[barbcall@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barbcall@sbcglobal.net)>

**Sent:** Sunday, August 1, 2021 9:15 PM

**To:** Elizabeth Robbins <[eliz.robbins@gmail.com](mailto:eliz.robbins@gmail.com)>; Elizabeth Brekhus <[elizabethb@brekhus.com](mailto:elizabethb@brekhus.com)>; Beach Kuhl <[beachkuhl35@gmail.com](mailto:beachkuhl35@gmail.com)>; Julie McMillan <[juliemcmillan@comcast.net](mailto:juliemcmillan@comcast.net)>; Bill Kircher <[cwkmisc@gmail.com](mailto:cwkmisc@gmail.com)>

**Cc:** Joe Chinn - Town Manager <[jchinn@townofross.org](mailto:jchinn@townofross.org)>

**Subject:** Photos



EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL



EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL



EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL





EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL



EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL



EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL



EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL



**EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL**



## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

**From:** Tony Tutto <tony@tonytuttopizza.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 3, 2021 1:45 PM  
**To:** Patrick Streeter <pstreeter@townofross.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Last Chance to Complete Ross Common Improvement Plan Questionnaire

Hi Patrick,

I love the fact that you & the Town are open the exploring ideas.  
So here are mine to consider and or add on to the pile:

**1) A Ross Pavilion!**

To be used for a multitude of purposes from music to live plays to poetry reading etc. (With electricity/lights/sound options)

**2) A Couple of Trellised Areas!**

With living Vines & Solar or Timer Lights & Picnic Tables & Stone flooring:

**3) Up Lighting The Larger Trees Around the Commons!**

With Flood Lights To give a Magical & Beautiful & Glorious appearance!!!!

**4) Classic Street Lamps!!!**

These would make a world of difference in the charm department. If you simply google "Classic Street Lamps" you'll get the idea! Charming, Classy & Historic all at the same time. They use them in historic downtown Annapolis, Maryland.

Okay, I'll stop there!!!  
Best Wishes,  
Tony Tutto

## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

**From:** Dana Lee <[dcmlee@gmail.com](mailto:dcmlee@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** August 12, 2021 at 11:49:03 PM PDT  
**To:** CouncilAll <[towncouncil@townofross.org](mailto:towncouncil@townofross.org)>  
**Subject:** Feedback from tonight's meeting

Dear Council members,

I wanted to offer some thoughts for your consideration, following tonight's Town Council meeting and as you continue your discussions about improvements to the Common.

I was a few minutes late getting on the call, so perhaps I missed something, but it seemed like a significant amount of time was spent discussing various "improvements", while council members alluded to survey results indicating that most residents did not want them. Will the results of the survey be made public? I was also wondering why a consultant was hired to draw up a plan before the survey was completed?

My family lives directly across the street from the Common, and we are daily users of it. I would like to see the condition of the playing field and hedges improved, and the pathways repaired. Perhaps a few more benches, seating options that are more comfortable than picnic tables, would be nice. But beyond that, I do not see any real need for anything else. I absolutely hate the idea of a plaza, pavilion, public restrooms, wider multi-use pathways, etc. I do not know anyone who uses the Common who would want any of that.

It seems to me that a recurring theme is that everyone needs to use the shady part of the Common sometimes. The school, seniors, Ross Recreation, people going to and from the post office, and dog owners all enjoy the shade that the grove provides. Perhaps a forward thinking move would be to plant more trees around the perimeter and wherever feasible around the Common. There were once several large, very old and beautiful oak trees on the playground that were removed because they were apparently diseased, and they were never replaced. I am not sure how that happened, since Town code requires replacing removed trees with sufficiently mature new ones. The sole remaining tree on the playground, the large Redwood, does not look healthy either. I believe it would be prudent to add some

## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

more trees (species that grow large) to the Common since it seems it is only getting hotter year after year, and then we won't all be fighting over the grove.

I think the area formerly known as 6 Redwood could be better utilized. The extra large bark in that area makes it difficult to even walk in. With a friendlier ground covering, perhaps it could be a good location for the aforementioned benches. And with a few more large trees in that area, it could be a nice second shady area on the Common.

Lastly, I thought the temporary ban on dogs was going to be lifted at tonight's meeting, but I didn't hear anything about it and I have just heard that it was not approved? If that is correct, I am disappointed. The "no dog" signs are very unwelcoming and I feel this policy has taken away a bit of the Town's charm. That Ross families can no longer stroll or play on the Common together with their pets is a shame. I have lived in Ross for over 7 years (still a relative newcomer, I know), but I have never seen or heard of anyone who wanted the Ross Common to be a dog-free zone. I have never observed that dog poop was a problem, and I have always observed responsible dog owners.

I supported the school's request to temporarily reserve the space for its use, but must admit now that I don't really understand it. Is the worry that a student might sit in dog poop at recess? Is that different from the chance that a bird might poop on them while they are eating? Banning dogs on the entire Common just in case a child might encounter some poop in the grass is nonsense! Surely in that unlikely scenario, a little soap and water would do the trick? And perhaps simply asking Common users to be extra vigilant about cleaning up after their pets since it is a space shared with picnickers would go a long way.

By the way, I saw a goose on the Common the other day and thought...if he tells his thousands of friends about this big, awesome, dog-free field he just found in Ross, we're in trouble. Might as well go ahead and put the goose poop problem on the next agenda.

Sincerely,  
Dana Lee  
22 Allen Ave.



## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

**From:** Barbara Call <[barbcall@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barbcall@sbcglobal.net)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 15, 2021 2:57 PM  
**To:** Elizabeth Robbins <[eliz.robbins@gmail.com](mailto:eliz.robbins@gmail.com)>; Elizabeth Brekhus <[elizabethb@brekhus.com](mailto:elizabethb@brekhus.com)>; Beach Kuhl <[beachkuhl35@gmail.com](mailto:beachkuhl35@gmail.com)>; Bill Kircher <[cwkmisc@gmail.com](mailto:cwkmisc@gmail.com)>; Julie McMillan <[juliemcmillan@comcast.net](mailto:juliemcmillan@comcast.net)>  
**Cc:** Joe Chinn - Town Manager <[jchinn@townofross.org](mailto:jchinn@townofross.org)>  
**Subject:** Improvements

Hello All,  
Perhaps you should hire an engineer or an entire engineering firm to help you figure out why this trash receptacle does not work properly.  
Hahahahaha.....



## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

Seriously, if most respondents were satisfied with the Common, why not just clean up the areas? Why waste thousands of dollars? There are restrooms already! There are plenty of seating areas plus most people bring blankets and lawn chairs because they prefer sitting on the lawn. It would help if you all had a clue as to who uses the park and when. And the statement that the dogs trample the grass in the Grove area is absolutely false! Dogs have not been in that area in more than a year. The "grass" looks worse than ever. It's the hordes of children playing there during recess and lunch who have killed the grass. Tons of kids playing volleyball and soccer and just running around trampling the ground. And that area is not heavily used on a regular basis by anyone else. The debris on the Common is mostly just trash! The fact that the Common is a town PARK and not a school yard needs to be recognized. Most schools have their own property. To infer that the Common belongs to the school is just plain wrong! The school is allowed to use it but not to own it and control it.

You made a statement that schools don't have dog parks next to school entrances or classrooms. That area has been functioning for years without problems. And why is the school entrance now across the Town park rather than on Lagunitas where it should be?

I believe you plan on ruining the Common! Rather than just cleaning all the debris and fixing what's broken, you won't be satisfied until the heart of Ross is ruined! The people who come here enjoy the open space that is peaceful and not too crowded. You plan on filling it up with so much crap! Games area! OMG! During the sports season there is no open space on the Common.

Change is not necessarily an improvement. Is the school yard improved or have you even looked at it? It's awful and that expensive climbing structure is seldom used. According to the kids, the metal is too hot and the rope hurts their hands! How do I know? The kids are constantly climbing the fences and I ask them why they aren't climbing on the new climbing structure. I also walk by or look out my windows, and the structure is not being used.

So who cares? Well, I care about bad decisions being made and feeling helpless to stop them without petitions, etc. I along with others would like to see the results of that survey. More to follow.

Barbara

Sent from my iPhone

## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

From: Barbara Call <barbcall@sbcglobal.net>  
 Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 10:01 PM  
 To: Elizabeth Robbins <eliz.robbins@gmail.com>; Elizabeth Brekhus <elizabethb@brekhus.com>; Beach Kuhl <beachkuhl35@gmail.com>; Bill Kircher <cwkmisc@gmail.com>; Julie McMillan <juliemcmillan@comcast.net>  
 Cc: Patrick Streeter <pstreeter@townofross.org>  
 Subject: Ross Common...Rehab or Ruin

Dear Mayor and Council:

As you know and as I keep reminding you in case you forget, I have lived on Ross Common for 21 years. I know what goes on there on a daily and seasonal basis. I spend hours there and can see all areas from my windows. I hope you will take what I have to say seriously and consider it with respect. I love the Common. I love the open and wonderful spacious natural area with its majestic trees and formerly beautiful green lawn. I love the quiet and reflective shady area now called the Grove.

I love to watch the children at play and to see families enjoying themselves. I love to walk on the pathway and meet up with my neighbors and friends. I occasionally sit on a bench and enjoy being there. I think most people who love Ross feel the way I do even if they only come to town to pick up their mail or to get a pizza.

No one wants to see the Common ruined by taking away its natural beauty and cluttering it with too many tables that are not necessary and are not a landscape improvement. I have read the plan as proposed and what jumps out is the number of tables that are being suggested in every location. Why? Why do we need all these tables and who are they for?

Fact is that there are 5 new picnic tables along Redwood and people come to picnic and they spread their blankets and sit on the lawn. There were 5 groups last weekend and they were all on the lawn whilst the tables were empty. I should have sent a photo, but you still would not believe probably because the consultants have suggested tables everywhere. I am not saying the tables are never used, but we certainly don't need more. Again, is it your goal to fill these tables with people from everywhere. With more people comes more cars and debris and garbage and more necessary maintenance.

Moving tables and adding tables to the wood chipped area, for example, would be a shame. That area is where the little kids run around and play hide and seek and other games with each other and with their parents. Tables would interfere with and would ruin their free running area and that is not an area that is needed for eating. I just don't know who is going to be doing all this eating everywhere anyway.

Not the Ross residents. So, again, is it your goal to bring more and more people from other areas to Ross Common? Because that's what has happened.

And they bring their dogs along with them, you should know, which is ironic since having the dogs on the Common is discouraged and yet there are more here now than ever before.

Two tables in the Grove? Why? The Grove does not need to be an eating area. It is lovely as a meditation area. People do Yoga there and sit and read and contemplate. Nannies push their prams and kids run around the trees and play. There are some dogs there in the evenings. That area is not heavily used. All the picnicking is down in my area or under the big redwood tree or by the playground where people spread their blankets.

I know somewhere someone has said more picnic areas and the consultants have really focused on that, but the facts show the current tables are not being used so why add more? The Grove is way too shady most of the year, anyway.

Corner mini spot! Omg! More tables there where there is tons of foot traffic and bike traffic and a fire hydrant and two big trees and the Officer Bob bench and 6 trash cans and benches for watching baseball not to mention all the kids and parents and sometimes lots of bikes. How would two tables complement anything? Are they going in the road or are they blocking the pathway?

Not a good plan.

## EMAILS TO TOWN STAFF AND TOWN COUNCIL

Two tables across from the post office are not needed. Why do we need all these tables? That area is fine except it needs to be weeded and maybe some decorative ground cover or mini redwood bark in the barren areas.

The post office area is lovely the way it is except it needs a whole bunch of tables! Hahaha. Seriously, what's wrong with having a nice grassy area?

I don't think it needs any more trees.

The hedge should be refurbished or at least try it rather than just tearing everything up.

Seriously, the very most important component of the Common...the playing field or PARK with its turf and topsoil and irrigation is to be POSTPONED when it is the most important feature and you are considering spending close to a million dollars on tables and other stuff that is not vital. Please don't waste money when so much is needed NOW for the restoration of the field. The pathway needs repair, I'll admit, but the other suggestions seem unnecessary and not improvements. I would bet that most residents believe you are going to be improving the field since it is in terrible shape. I think they would be shocked to learn all this money is to provide eating areas for outsiders. Maybe they should be told. Maybe there should be more notification.

The concept drawings always look nice; the reality will be a terrible ruination of our beautiful town center.

I would be happy to discuss my ideas in person or over the phone.

415-264-6862.

Sincerely,

Barbara

Sent from my iPhone

**INITIAL SITE WALK**

April 19, 2021

**FOLLOW-UP SITE WALK**

July 9, 2021

**ROSS SCHOOL NEW PLAYGROUND**

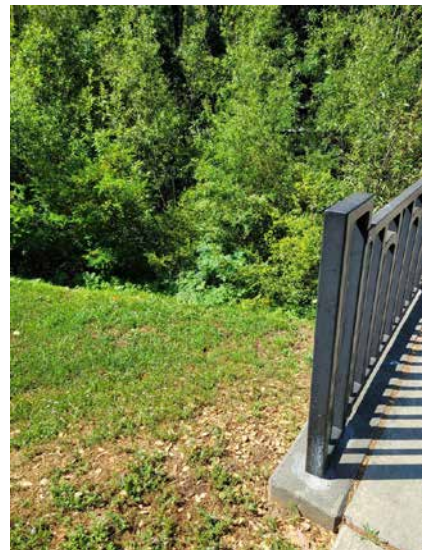
August 12, 2021

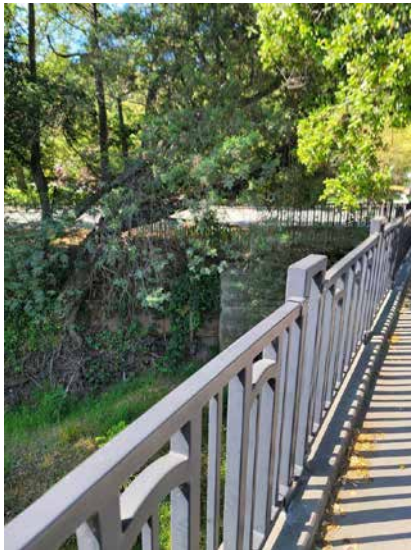
**CORNER MINI PLAZA**

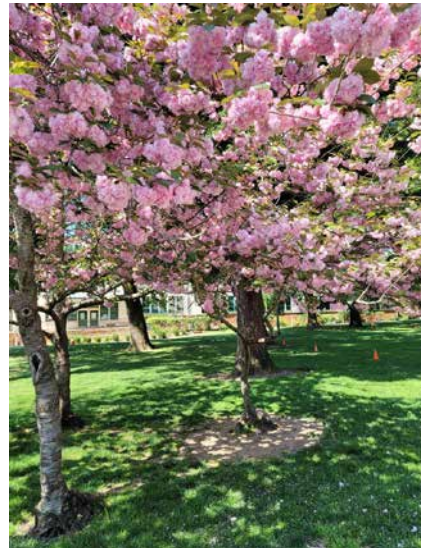
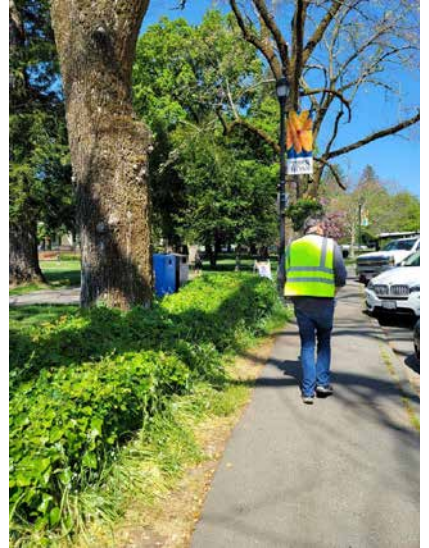
September 8, 2021



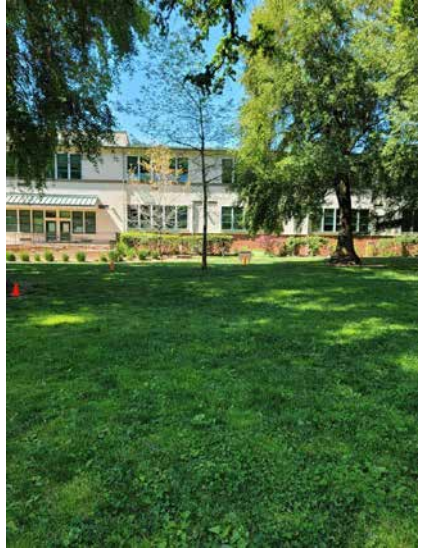
**INITIAL SITE WALK**  
April 19, 2021

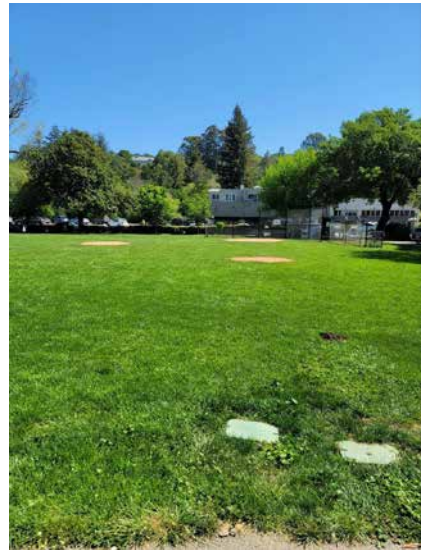
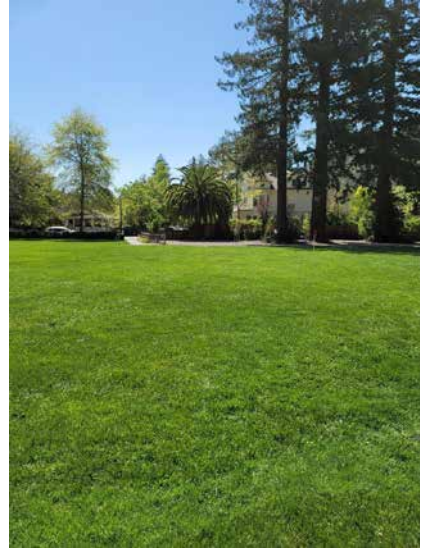
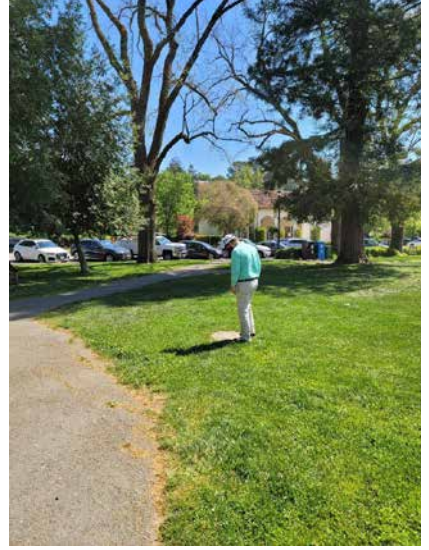






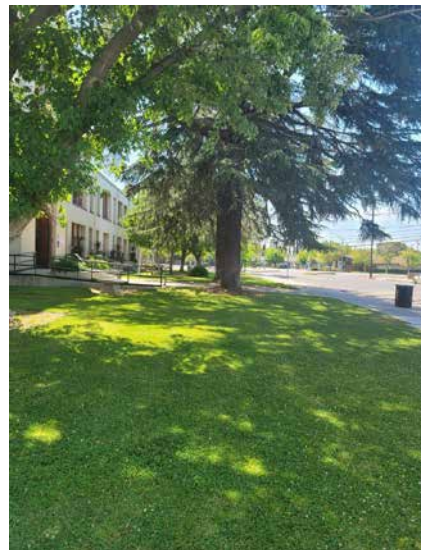
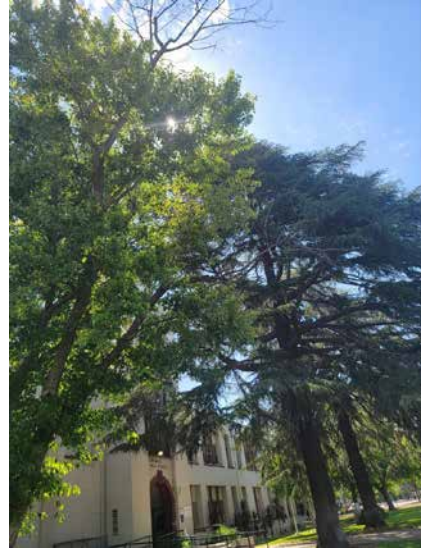






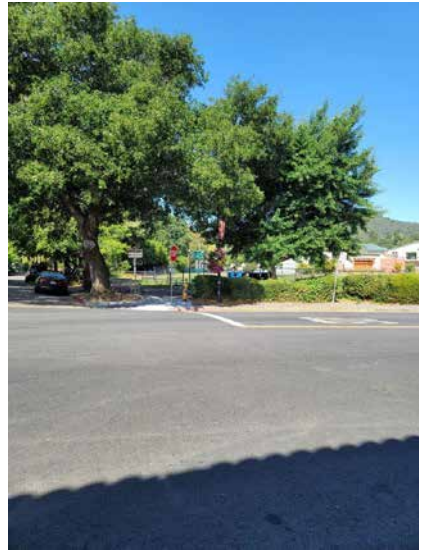


**FOLLOW-UP SITE WALK**  
July 9, 2021



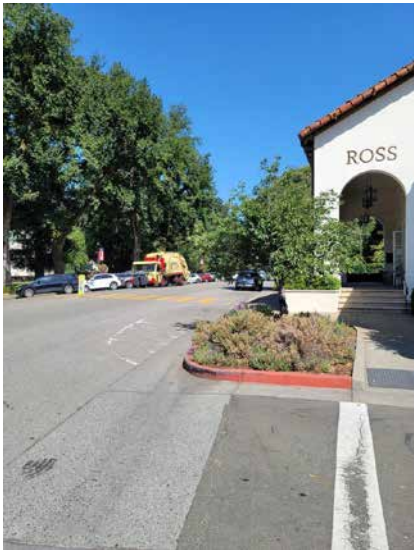












SITE ASSESSMENT PHOTOS



**ROSS SCHOOL NEW  
PLAYGROUND**  
August 12, 2021

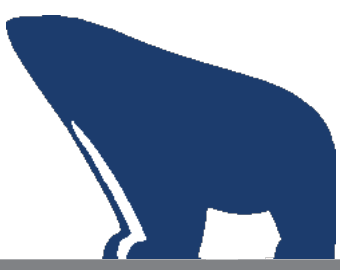



**CORNER MINI PLAZA**

September 8, 2021



# OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS



 <b>Gates + Associates</b> Landscape Architecture		Opinion of Probable Construction Costs				
ROSS COMMON		Nov-21				
Landscape Improvements						
Item	Quantity		Unit Cost	Item Cost	20% Contingency	Subtotal
<b>Repare All Walking Paths (Connections-1)</b>						
Asphalt Pathway Resurfacing	18,600	SF	\$7.00	\$130,200		
					\$26,040	\$156,240
<b>Align Pedestrian Entrance (Connections-2)</b>						
Demo Existing Park Entry	1,500	SF	\$2.50	\$3,750		
New Planting and Irrigation Retrofit	1,500	SF	\$12.00	\$18,000		
24" Box Trees and Bubblers	4	EA	\$500.00	\$2,000		
Asphalt Pathway	300	SF	\$7.00	\$2,100		
Bench	1	EA	\$1,800.00	\$1,800		
					\$5,530	\$33,180
<b>Succession Tree Planting (Site-1)</b>						
24" Box Trees and Bubblers	9	EA	\$500.00	\$4,500		
					\$900	\$5,400
<b>Refresh Planting Areas (Site-2)</b>						
Clear and Grub Planting Areas to be Refreshed	3,400	SF	\$1.75	\$5,950		
New Planting and Irrigation Retrofit	3,400	SF	\$12.00	\$40,800		
					\$9,350	\$56,100
<b>Replace Site Furnishings (Site-3)</b>						
Trash and Recycling Receptacles	8	EA	\$1,200.00	\$9,600		
Bench	5	EA	\$1,800.00	\$9,000		
Picnic Table	5	EA	\$2,500.00	\$12,500		
					\$6,220	\$37,320
<b>Main Lawn (Main Lawn-1)</b>						
Sodded Turf	83,400	SF	\$2.00	\$166,800		
Soil Mitigation	83,400	SF	\$1.00	\$83,400		
Irrigation Retrofit	83,400	SF	\$1.00	\$83,400		
Demolition and Grading	83,400	SF	\$2.00	\$166,800		
					\$100,080	\$600,480
<b>Add Bench (Grove-1)</b>						
Bench	1	EA	\$1,800.00	\$1,800		
					\$360	\$2,160
<b>Replant Barrier Hedge (Hedge Barrier-1)</b>						
Clear and Grub Existing Hedge Area	2,000	SF	\$1.75	\$3,500		
New Planting and Irrigation Retrofit	2,000	SF	\$12.00	\$24,000		
					\$5,500	\$33,000
<b>Relocate Dropbox &amp; Remove Planter (Post Office Green-1)</b>						
Clear and Grub Planting Zone Between Post Office and Green	400	SF	\$1.75	\$700		
Stabilized Decomposed Granite	400	SF	\$18.00	\$7,200		
					\$1,580	\$9,480
<b>Add Benches (Post Office Green-2)</b>						
Bench	2	EA	\$1,800.00	\$3,600		
					\$720	\$4,320
<b>Add Bench (Corner Mini Plaza-1)</b>						
Bench	1	EA	\$1,800.00	\$1,800		
					\$360	\$2,160
<b>Screen Storage and Utilities (Redwood Area-1)</b>						
Clear and Grub Existing Area	100	SF	\$1.75	\$175		
New Planting and Irrigation Retrofit	100	SF	\$12.00	\$1,200		
					\$275	\$1,650
<b>TOTAL</b>					\$156,915	\$941,490

The 2018 *Town of Ross Turfgrass Improvement/Renovation* report is included here as reference only.

**2018 TURFGRASS REPORT**



# Town of Ross Common Turfgrass Improvement/Renovation

August, 2018

*This report is produced by Turfgrass Culture LLC for the Town of Ross, Marin County, California. Publication or other distribution of any part or all of it requires the Town of Ross permission.*

## Abbreviations used

**Ross:** Town of Ross.

**Common:** Ross Common.

**Original field:** Portion of the Common not renovated after 2011 construction activities.

**Construction field:** The west, northwest side of the Common renovated after 2011 construction activities.

Town of Ross Common turfgrass field in Marin County, California hosts numerous youth baseball, soccer, and lacrosse games, as well as other community events throughout the year. Approximately, half of the field was renovated after construction of the Ross school in 2011. Currently, however, the renovated portion of Common is in poor condition, consisting of areas of bare soil and areas covered with a mix of weeds and several different grasses. As part of improvement efforts Mr. Mike Armstrong, Recreation Manager for the Town of Ross, requested that Turfgrass Culture LLC's agronomist, Dr. Ali Harivandi, evaluate turfgrass cover and field conditions and provide a written report with findings and suggestions for remedial actions.

## Review Process

This document reflects observations and conversations during an on-site visit, telephone conversations, and review of photos and correspondence:

- On-site conversation with Messrs. Mike Armstrong and Robert Maccario (Public Works Superintendent for the Town of Ross), and Mr. Larry Wei (Coast Landscape Management, the current contracted maintenance company). August 6, 2018
- Phone and email exchanges with Messrs. Mike Armstrong, Larry Wei and Cliff Low (Perry Lab.) July-August, 2018.
- Renovation topsoil test report by Sunland analytical. August 8, 2010.
- Aerial photos (Google Earth) of the Common dated 2008, 2011 and 2012.
- Construction and renovation drawings of Common field by Quattrochi Kwok Architects. June 30, 2011.
- Ross School Phase III—Gym, RFP, section 02950 Landscaping Plantings specifications. July 22, 2011.



- Notes from meetings related to field renovations. Undated.
- Ross School Rainwater Leaders Report by Brelje and Race consulting Civil Engineers. August 16, 2011.
- Ross School District 30 day project extension request to Town of Ross Public Works Department. September 16, 2011.
- Common well water chemical analysis report by Brelje and Racte Laboratories. July 2, 2018.
- Common field soil and water analysis by Perry Labs. August 10, 2018.
- Ross Common park estimated landscape budget for 2018-2019, by Coast Landscape management. August 2018.

## **Introduction**

The approximately 2.5 acre natural turf field in the center of Ross, known as Ross Common, is used for youth sports (baseball, soccer and lacrosse) and other community activities. It is the only large natural grass field within the Town proper, and thus is subject to significant human traffic. The field was originally built on native soil with both drainage and automatic irrigation systems and opened in 1992. The 2008 Google Earth aerial photo shows a uniformly green turfgrass cover on the entire field, suggesting that until that point the field was maintained and performed well for the purposes intended.

In 2011, during the Ross School remodel, almost half of the Common (west and north sides) was closed to accommodate temporary modular classrooms and a parking area for construction equipment and automobiles. These arrangements are visible in the 2011 Google Earth photo. The RFP for the construction project details instructions for landscape and turf restoration upon completion of construction and removal of the modular classrooms at the west side of the field, and the parking area at the northwest corner of the Common.

School construction extended a month past the scheduled completion date, and the site was renovated, leveled and sodded in October/November, 2011. The sod used contained a mixture of tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass. The 2012 Google Earth aerial photo reveals a clearly visible demarcation between the “original” grass field and the Construction field. Aside from a marked color difference between the two portions (the original portion is a darker green than the Construction portion, which may be explained by a difference in the mixture of grasses covering each), there is a significant difference in the condition of the turfgrass stands in the two areas. The Original half is uniformly green with almost total grass cover, while the Construction half show large patches of brown and yellow, indicating dead and dying turfgrass. The Common’s maintenance crew (personnel from both the Town of Ross and the maintenance contractor) has had difficulty maintaining healthy turfgrass growth and cover in the Construction portion of the field since 2012.

On August 6, 2018, Ali Harivandi met with Messrs Mike Armstrong, Robert Maccarios and Anthony Alcozer (Town of Ross), Mr. Larry Wei (Maintenance contractor, Coast

Landscape Management) and Mr. Cliff Low (Perry Soil Laboratory) to observe field conditions, review the maintenance program, and take soil and water samples for analysis to be performed by Perry Soil Laboratory.

### **Discussion**

During the August 6 site visit, we:

- Observed turfgrass growth and condition over the entire Common;
- With the assistance of Ross personnel, dug 1 ft<sup>2</sup> holes to a depth of 12-14 inches on both original and renovated halves of the field to observe root zone strata;
- Initiated soil and well-water sampling by Mr. Low (Perry Labs);
- Discussed field conditions with all parties present (see above.)

Overall turfgrass condition on the Common field is poor. That said, turfgrass cover on the Original half of the field is much better than cover on the Construction half which was renovated in 2011. Plant cover consists of a mixture of tall fescue, perennial ryegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, annual bluegrass, kikuyagrass and various broadleaf weeds. There are patches of dead plants scattered through the field; the majority of these patches (particularly the large ones) are on the portion of the field re-built in 2011. These patches do not appear to be new. Due to the Town policy of prohibiting herbicide use, weed invasion is rampant on the entire field. There are also many gopher and mole holes and mounds, primarily in the older half of the field.

Irrigation uniformity is poor throughout the field, but symptoms of moisture deficit are more severe on the Construction half of the field. Discussion revealed that irrigation uniformity is poorest when well-water stored in the tank is used: apparently, pressure within the irrigation system is inadequate for head-to-head sprinkler coverage. When irrigation comes from municipal (city) water, coverage is better due to the higher city water pressure; however, cost dictates the use of well-water as the primary irrigation source. It thus appears that reliance on water from the well/storage tank is partially responsible for the dry spots and the uneven donut-shaped dead patches around sprinkler heads. Again, this phenomenon is more pronounced on the Construction half of the field.

Soil on the Construction half of the field is very hard (i.e. dry.) I could not penetrate the soil more than a couple inches with a hand shovel; by contrast, I was able to insert a shovel more deeply on the Original half of the field.

The field surface throughout is uneven, sporting undulations, low spots, and high spots. The unevenness makes the field quite poor for sports activities, especially soccer.

As the sole open public space in Ross, the Common receives significant traffic. The only way to maintain healthy turfgrass and a decent playing surface to accommodate the level of sports activity (baseball, soccer, lacrosse) and public events held on the

Common, is to prevent compaction of the field's root zone. This requires turfgrass cultivation practices such as core aeration.

To observe the field root zone, we dug holes, approximately 1 ft<sup>2</sup> by 18 inches deep, one each on the Original and Construction portions of the field. Since, as noted above, it was very difficult to dig these holes by hand, Ross personnel used a power shovel. (It was notably easier to dig the hole on the Original half of the field.) On the Original portion of the field, below a 4 inch turfgrass thatch of organic matter and roots, the soil was friable and constant in texture to the 18 inch depth. By contrast, root zone soil on the Construction portion of the field was very hard and layered. On the Construction half, below 4 inches of grass roots, thatch and organic matter (the latter originating from organic matter topdressing since 2011), there was a 3-5 inch layer of hard, compacted, light orange substrate. Below that, we found gravelly soil to a depth of 18 inches. In addition to gravel of varying size, this layer contained chunks of asphalt, rocks, and what appeared to be crushed redbrick. Below the top 4 inches of this hole, the orange substrate was very dry, hard, and devoid of almost any organic matter, including plant roots.

Then, under the supervision of Mr. Low (Perry Lab), the Town of Ross staff dug new holes to collect composite soil samples for testing by Perry Labs. On each portion of the field (the Original and the 2011 Construction portion) 4 more holes of the same size as the observational holes were dug. For each half of the field, 2 composite samples were created: one from a depth of 4-8 inches and one from a depth of 8-14 inches. (In all cases, the top 3-4 inches, consisting primarily of turfgrass and other organic material, was discarded.) Each sample was a mixture of soil from the same depth in all four holes (e.g. soil taken from a depth of 4-8 inches in all four holes on a given field half were mixed together.) A water sample (from the well) was also taken to Perry Labs along with the four soil samples.

Test results reveal that soil on the two halves of Common at both sample depths are not significantly different "chemically", except for pH and nitrogen content. Soil pH on the Construction field is higher than soil pH on the Original portion. The Original field soil pH is 6.6 throughout strata, but on the Construction field soil pH on the top layer (4-8") is 7.1, while pH on the bottom layer (8-14") is 7.9.

Nitrogen is low in soil throughout the Common—a condition that can be corrected with an effective fertilizer regimen. All other chemical parameters on both sides are safe and adequate for turfgrass growth.

"Physical" characteristics of the two field portions differ considerably. All samples fall into the loam category. However, the 4-8 inch root zone of the Construction field portion is 22% clay by weight, compared to only 14% in the Original field. This higher clay content makes soil in the Construction field area more susceptible to compaction, and may explain the presence of the orange hard clay pan observed within that section's root zone.

Further, gravel content as a proportion of the soil is larger, and the gravel itself is much larger in diameter, in the Construction half of the field than in the Original area. Specifically: at 4-8 inches, soil from the Construction section contains 8.7% gravel of 2-5 mm diameter compared with 5.5% in the Original area; at a depth of 8-14 inches, soil from the Construction section is 14.8% gravel compared to 6.8% in the Original section. Furthermore, at the 8-14 inch level of the Construction section, 3% of its volume is gravel of 5-12 mm diameter and 2% rocks larger than 1 inch diameter. The Original section contains no rocks above 5 mm at any level.

Organic matter content is considerably higher on the Original field, ranging from 7.3% in the top layer and decreasing to 4.7% at the lower portion. The range on the Construction field is 5.6 % to 2.1%.

Tests of the well water indicate that it is chemically safe for plant irrigation. Its high manganese content (0.43 ppm) does not pose a danger for plants, but may affect the operation of irrigation valves.

Based on observation, tests and information provided orally or in written documents, I can narrow the cause of poor field conditions to 3 factors:

- Uneven Common field surface;
- Poor irrigation system and coverage;
- Poor root zone soil conditions within the Construction field which was renovated after the 2011 school remodel.

## **Remedies**

### **Uneven Field Surface**

The Common's uneven surface arose from years of use, shifting (baseball) field placement, poor irrigation, and gopher and mole activity. Although the unevenness may not affect all community activities, it is definitely a detriment for sports activities. The obvious solution to the problem is total field reconstruction/renovation. If complete renovation is too costly, then selective removal of grass from "high/low spots", followed by soil removal/replacement and re-sodding of these areas, is an option. This approach will, however, give a "patchy" appearance to the field. A longer term approach would be to aerate the entire field with hollow tines (the deeper the better), leaving cores on the field and dragging them around, which may move the soil cores from high areas to low ones. This could be coupled with over-seeding. This latter approach would take

several years and might not produce the evenness desired; on the other hand, additional aeration and over-seeding will benefit the field by reducing compaction and increasing turfgrass density.

### **Poor Irrigation Coverage**

The entire Common field's irrigation system needs a thorough audit by an irrigation consultant. A combination of inadequate system pressure and a possibly inadequate number of irrigation heads seems to be the problem. Poor irrigation coverage manifests as patches of dead grass and wet, but green and vigorously-growing, turfgrass and weeds near and around irrigation heads. These conditions are unsightly and negatively affect healthy turfgrass growth. Regardless of which remedial actions (see below) are taken to improve the condition of the Construction portion of the field, the irrigation system must be improved.

I was pleased to learn that a filter was recently installed to block silt and clay from the well water from entering the irrigation system. Apparently, this action along with the installation of larger nozzles on some irrigation heads has reduced nozzle clogging and improved the irrigation pattern. Addition of a booster pump to increase pressure when well water is used would almost certainly also improve the situation. A thorough audit by a qualified irrigation specialist will identify problems and suggest remedial actions. As a client of Marin Municipal Water District, the Town of Ross may have access to this service at no cost.

### **Poor Root Zone Soil on Construction Field**

As described earlier, the Construction field root zone soil is quite different than soil in the Original field. Layering, gravel, rocks and other debris within the Construction field soil make it unsuitable for healthy turfgrass growth on a field with year-round, heavy, human traffic. Unable to penetrate the compacted, clay layer, roots of both turfgrass and weeds are constricted to the top 3-4 inches of soil. It is likely that 3-4 inch layer consists of soil that came with the sod laid in 2011 plus compost added since then during over-seeding.

The noted soil layering, in addition to restricting root growth, significantly affects water movement into and through the soil. Irrigation applied 3-4 times per week is inadequate to penetrate the clay pan, and lack of moisture below the 4 inch depth encourages shallow root development which, in turn, leaves grasses more susceptible to traffic, drought and heat.

On my August 6 visit, I observed a green, dense patch of grass on the southwest corner of the Construction field, in the shadow of a couple of large conifers. Closer examination revealed the area was excessively wet and covered mostly with annual

bluegrass (*Poa annua*.) *Poa annua* is a heavy seed producer, shallow-rooted weed that often invades wet and waterlogged spots on lawns. It is prevalent throughout the Bay Area. Extra water (from either field irrigation runoff and/or an adjacent pathway) as well as reduced evapotranspiration due to shade creates an ideal spot for this weed to flourish.

There is, in fact, *Poa* infestation throughout the Construction field, even in the dead and dying patches. (Its presence on the Original field is less.) I suspect that in winter, rain and inadequate drainage create areas that remain waterlogged for extended periods, providing the suitable environment for *Poa* establishment. (This is typical of the entire Bay Area, where late fall, winter and early spring is the perfect time for *Poa* growth and seed production.) Turfgrasses such as fescue, rye and bluegrass do not do well in waterlogged conditions, especially when subjected to constant traffic. As these desirable grasses decline, *Poa* and other winter weeds take over. The field may appear green, but not with the “right” grasses. As summer approaches, heat, lack of moisture and human traffic eventually lead to the death of *Poa* and other winter weeds, leaving behind the dead patches visible on the Construction field. Comparison of the turfgrass and weed growth patterns on the Original and Construction fields leads me to believe that the underlying cause of the drastic decline of the Construction field is its poor and layered root zone.

I suggest the following remedies, listed from the most effective, long term approaches to the least effective:

#### A. All Common Field Renovation

The ideal solution is total redesign and reconstruction of the entire Common field. This should include a drainage system, the latest irrigation technology, a designated use pattern, a suitable root zone mix, and grasses. If Ross decides to do this, I recommend using a single firm to design, build and plant. Using a single firm makes one entity responsible for the success of the project.

Cost may prohibit this approach, despite its advantage of creating a great field for the long-term enjoyment and safety of the community.

If closing the Common for a large portion of one year in order to rebuild the field is unacceptable, the project could be done in 2 phases, leaving half the field open for use at all times.

#### B. Renovation of only Construction Field

Once overall irrigation problems are successfully addressed, if the unevenness of the original field is not a major concern, then the Construction field alone can be renovated, as described in item A above, Total Field Renovation. In my opinion, however, the

minimum requirements are removing as much soil as possible (no less than 12 inches), discarding and replacing it with acceptable topsoil plus compost, and re-sodding or re-seeding it. A drainage system should be installed and connected to the drainage system of the Original field (if present.) It is important to excavate as deep as possible, to remove all of the orange clay pan as well as the gravel and other construction debris from the site.

Needless to say, the irrigation system must also be upgraded if this option is chosen. If the area is sodded, I recommend a sod containing tall fescue and perennial ryegrass if available. Otherwise, use a tall fescue-bluegrass sod, but add perennial ryegrass to any subsequent over-seeding. If seeded, the seed mixture specified in item D below is recommended.

### C. “Experimental” Renovation of Construction field

There is another option to renovate the Construction field which, if successful, will reduce cost, and field closure (“down-time”) compared with the option B described above. *This option must be viewed as “experimental”, as the results are unpredictable and may not improve conditions adequately.*

In this abbreviated renovation, remove only the top 2-3 inches of plants/soil, and then till the soil thoroughly to a depth of 12 inches to break up the orange clay pan. A layer of 3-4” of compost would then be added and tilled as thoroughly and deeply as possible. The goal is uniform mixing of the soil and organic matter. Grading, levelling, and seeding or sodding, (as described for option B) would follow.

The irrigation system must be protected during this operation and updated if needed.

The objectives of this procedure would be to eliminate the clay pan, provide a uniform root-zone stratum, increase drainage and improve soil condition for turfgrass root growth. If results are still not satisfactory in couple of years, then option B above may be considered.

### D. Short-term, Temporary Renovation of Construction Field.

As soon as possible, and before the rain comes, aerate the site to a depth of 3-8 inches several times. Hollow tine aeration is more effective than solid tine. I recommend going over the site with aerators 3-4 times, punching as many holes as possible, as deeply as possible, to penetrate the clay pan. Shallower, hollow tine aerations (i.e. 3-4 inches deep) will turn over the top layer of the soil; I recommend a combination of various types and depths of aeration, with the goal of making the root zone more penetrable for both roots and water.

After aeration, over-seed with a mix of tall fescue, perennial ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass. Top-dress with not more than a half inch of well-decomposed compost, drag

the cores, seed and compost around, then fertilize with a complete fertilizer (containing nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium.) Begin irrigation immediately.

The best time for this practice is from September 15 to October 15, before the rain starts. The area should be closed to traffic for a couple of months, or until grass is well-established.

This renovation exercise will have a short-term effect, and must be done once a year in addition to the 3-4 shallow aerations already performed on this field.

**Disclaimer:** Turfgrass Culture, LLC and its Agronomist, Ali Harivandi, have used their best efforts to provide the Town of Ross with sound advice, based on their knowledge, expertise, and experience in the areas of turfgrass, soil, and water science and management, and based upon information that Town of Ross and its employees, agents, representatives, clients, consultants, and contractors provided us. We have no control over the climate; field use pattern and turfgrass management; irrigation water quality, delivery and irrigation practices; soil testing, preparation and management; the work of Ross Township employees, agents, representatives, clients, consultants, or contractors; or other such factors. It should be well understood by Town of Ross and its clients, therefore, that we do not guarantee, or warranty, the work we performed for this project in any way. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it should also be understood that our liability to Ross Township or any other person in connection with any alleged negligent or otherwise wrongful act of us, direct or indirect, active or passive, including but not limited to alleged professional errors or omissions shall not exceed the total compensation paid to us for the work performed by us in this project.

Respectfully submitted,

Ali Harivandi, Ph.D.  
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August 25, 2018