



MAGICAL BRIDGE PLAYGROUND SANTA CLARA QUICK FACTS + TOUR TALKING POINTS

We thank you for taking time to learn about the many features and intentional design considerations that make up this very special Magical Bridge Playground. If we can answer any further questions, please email us at play4all@magicalbridge.org.

GETTING THERE

Directions: Central Park in Santa Clara, near the Arbor Center

Parking: The closest lot (called Central Park Santa Clara Parking Lot) is off Kiely, near the corner of Homestead and Kiely, across the street from Erik's Deli Cafe. Walk/roll toward the Pavillion and cross over the bridge on the left.

PLAYGROUND DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING LAUNCH

Playground Design — Magical Bridge Foundation

Construction Documentation — Peter Jensen

Construction — Robert A. Bothman Corporation

Wood Structures — Barbara Butler Artist-BUILDER (Playhouse, Hideaway Huts, Ava's Bridge)

Management — City of Santa Clara (Manager, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation)

Maintenance — City of Santa Clara (note: the playground will be closed Wednesday mornings from 8am - Noon for scheduled maintenance).

FUNDING AND SPONSORS

Magical Bridge Santa Clara was primarily funded by the City of Santa Clara, Santa Clara County, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisor's All Inclusive Playground Grant (AIPG), and Magical Bridge Foundation who proudly raised \$500,000 thanks to various local corporations, foundations, organizations, families, and individual donors. Larger donors are recognized on special plaques around the playground.

OVERVIEW

Opened: August 28, 2024

Design Layout: The playground is intentionally divided into 7 Play Zones™ which provide visitors the comfort of predictability, which is especially helpful for those who have autism or are blind. Each Play Zone is centered around a specific play or gathering experience: 1) Swing Zone, 2) Spin Zone, 3) Kindness Corner, 4) Innovation Zone, 5) Tot Zone, 6) Slide and Climb Zone, and 7) Playhouse and Stage. Space between the Play Zones provide opportunities for independent decision making and open play.

Surfaces and Walking Paths: All ground surfaces (turf, rubber, concrete, and bonded mulch) and pathways are smooth and wheelchair (and stroller) friendly, including paths to the top of the slides and to the second story of the playhouse. Transitions are marked with varying textures signaling change for those with low-vision using walking canes. The playground offers meandering pathways (in a loop) with a gentle grade for walks with the whole family.

Gathering / Picnic Areas: There are two picnic areas with accessible seating — one near the donor wall entrance and the other with game tables at the top level of the playground, near the climbing dome. Amphitheater seating around the Playhouse provides space for presentations and an “outdoor classroom.” Picnic benches are present throughout and the Kindness Corner seating wall provides a wonderful view of the playground.

Trees and Landscaping: A core tenant of Magical Bridge Playgrounds is to encourage outdoor activity and enjoyment of our natural environment. The playground was designed around the beautiful existing shade trees, boulders, and natural elevations of the area. The newly planted trees are fast growing varieties to provide more shade over the years. The plants are low-water and low-maintenance to enhance the space.

PLAY ZONES AND SPECIAL FEATURES

Note: listed in order of tour, starting at donor wall gate, walking to the left towards the Swing Zone. The tour ends coming down the ramp from the hammocks on the right side perimeter of the playground, ending at the water station near the backside of the Playhouse

Donor Wall — The entrance wall acknowledges the many donors who contributed to this free, public community playground. This is the 9th Magical Bridge Playground with other locations in Palo Alto, Redwood City, Sunnyvale, Morgan Hill, New Zealand, CuriOdyssey Museum in San Mateo, and Addison and El Carmelo Elementary Schools in Palo Alto.

Hideaway Hut — Our wooden huts (3 total) are wheelchair accessible and provide shady retreat spaces for visitors, including those with autism and nursing mothers, who need a break from play or a quiet place to observe the action.

Swing Zone — The Bucket Seat Swings accommodate all sizes (kids to adults), the wheelchair accessible We-Go-Swing sways back and forth, and Disk Swings allow individuals or groups to swing in different positions.

Adult Fitness: Just outside the gate between the Swing and Spin Zones is a collection of adult fitness equipment for outdoor workouts, promoting healthy muscle and cardio development for all ages.

Spin Zone — The wheelchair accessible Carousel is flush to the ground for wheelchair accessibility (the bars raise up and lower for safe spinning); the Climbing Net Spinner is at transfer height for people to easily sit on the platform; the Disk Spinner allows for multiple positions and challenge levels.

Kindness Corner — This reflective spot provides a resting or conversation space with messages of kindness; The wall features 7 pieces of original artwork created by disabled artists from the SF-based Creativity Explored art studio where 50% of art sales goes directly to the artist.

Innovation (Music) Zone — The 24-string Laser Harp, designed by artist Jen Lewin, is tuned to a pentatonic scale which is more soothing than a heptatonic (western) scale, especially to those with autism.

Tot Zone — This zone is designed for ages 2-5 but everyone is welcome. Smaller visitors enjoy rockers, pretend-play climbing house, tot-sized swings, and a mini-slide zone to practice skills like the big kids.

Slide and Climb Zone — The top of the Slide and Climb Zone is wheelchair accessible with transfer platforms for all to slides. Magical Bridge-patented Slide and Sit Landings™ at the bottom of the slides offer a place to wait for those needing additional time or help from a friend. Note: metal slides cool faster than plastic slides and accommodate those with cochlear implants who cannot slide on plastic slides due to static electricity. Another path leads visitors to the climbing dome with wheelchair accommodating game tables under a shady tree.

Playhouse and Stage — The custom and fully accessible two-story playhouse and community stage, designed and built by local artist Barbara Butler, is made from real wood and stained with natural, non-toxic tung-oil. The colors of the playhouse and treehouse walkways were chosen by the City of Santa Clara to honor the Spanish Missions historic to the area. The surrounding amphitheater seating logs are original to the playground (built in the 1950s) and renovated with added turf and bonded mulch to be more accessible. Inside the Playhouse are special areas dedicated to honor or in memory of local friends, including beloved granddaughter Abbygail, architect and Santa Clara High School Panther George Espinola, and Avery and her family.

Hammocks — The natural net hammocks are unique to Magical Bridge Santa Clara and provide a relaxing getaway at the top of the playground.

LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the Magical Bridge Santa Clara [website](#) for more information, including events and programs and how to sign up to be a Kindness Ambassador volunteer.

Go on a video [tour](#) of Magical Bridge Santa Clara with founder and CEO Olenka Villarreal, joined by UK friends Jackie and Tilly Grittiths.

For an overview of Magical Bridge Playgrounds and Programs, please watch our overview [video](#). Thank you!

ABOUT MAGICAL BRIDGE

Magical Bridge Foundation, a non-profit organization headquartered in Palo Alto, California, creates multigenerational playgrounds, parks, and programs for more inclusive communities. Drawing from over a decade of research-driven innovation, Magical Bridge designs playgrounds for all ages and abilities by removing the physical and social barriers of today's typical playgrounds to give everyone in the community a place to play, learn, and connect. With nine award-winning playgrounds currently open and many more in development around the world, Magical Bridge proudly collaborates with cities, developers, and landscape architects to bring inclusive play and companion programming to public and neighborhood parks, schools, zoos, and museums. In addition to a turnkey design-build model, licensing opportunities ensure the Magical Bridge brand, designs, and programs are catalysts for kinder and more inclusive societies everywhere. Magical Bridge invites you to join the movement toward a brighter future where inclusive means everyone. Visit magicalbridge.org and [subscribe](#) to our newsletter to stay updated.