

TONGVA PARK + KEN GENSER SQUARE

Planting Design | James Corner Field Operations with Perry Associates + John Greenlee

The planting design for Tongva Park and Ken Genser Square was completed through collaboration between the offices of James Corner Field Operations, Perry Associates, and John Greenlee. It presents an innovative and diverse mix of native and appropriately adapted plants that provide remarkable seasonal variety in Santa Monica's Mediterranean climate.

Four distinct areas within the park each have unique features, qualities, and spatial characteristics:

Garden Hill features diverse and colorful plants with a seasonally changing palette of blooms and foliage.

Discovery Hill hosts more trees than any other part of the park. It combines native olives, oaks, pines, and sycamores for maximum shade.

Gathering Hill creates a gentle interior for the park. Its central meadow features native grasses, wild flowers, and Mediterranean bulbs.

Observation Hill which faces south to some of the toughest site conditions within the park features drought-tolerant succulents such as aloes, and agaves.

Existing trees form an important backbone for new plant material. "Morty," a large Moreton Bay Fig tree, fondly named by Santa Monica residents has been preserved in place and hosts a picnic grove near its impressive canopy. "The Three Amigos," three large caliper Ficus trees, have been successfully relocated close by to create a "Fig Grove" that dramatically buffers the freeway. Two Junipers that once flanked the entry to City Hall have also found a special place on top of Discovery Hill and numerous other trees and palms have found homes within the park.

A few of the newly planted trees, shrubs, grasses, perennials, succulents, aloes, agaves, and bulbs are listed below. Visitors throughout the year will always see something new.

Trees

Arbutus marina, Strawberry Tree, CA NATIVE
Olea europea, Olive Tree
Quercus suber, Cork Oak
Pinus torreyana, Torrey pine; CA NATIVE
Platanus racemosa, Western Sycamore; CA NATIVE
Umbellularia californica, California Bay; CA NATIVE

Grasses

Bouteloua gracilis, Blue Grama Grass; CA NATIVE
Calamagrostis nutkaensis, Pacific Reedgrass; CA NATIVE
Carex pansa, California Dune Sedge; CA NATIVE
Muhlenbergia 'Pink Flamingo', Pink Flamingo Muhly Grass; CA NATIVE
Sesleria autumnalis, Autumn moor grass

Succulents + Aloes + Agaves

Aloe plicatillis, Fan Aloe
Agave americana, Century Plant
Dasyliirion wheeleri, Desert Spoon, CA NATIVE
Hesperoyucca whipplei, Our Lord's Candle, CA NATIVE

Bulbs / Annuals

Amaryllis belladonna, Naked Lady
Clarkia amoena, Farewell to Spring; CA NATIVE

