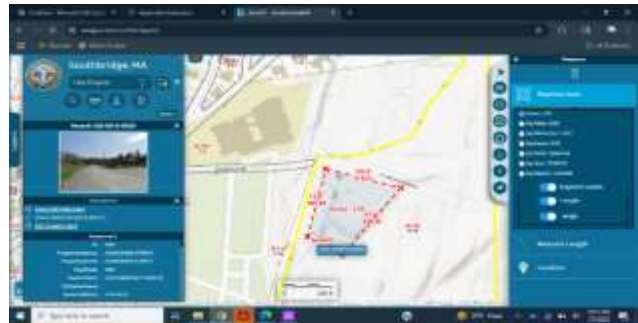


Marcos Rios Memorial Playground Renovation Project Description

Describe facilities being developed: This renovation project will enhance the existing Charlton Street Recreation Area located behind Charlton Street Elementary School, creating a toddler park adjacent to the existing gazebo with new playground features on a rubberized surface surrounded by a paved tike track to help honor the loss of Marcos Rios, who lived in this neighborhood as a child and recently passed away at age 48. The Rios's are a well-known Puerto Rican family and their son was a beloved member of the community. Town Officials welcomed the opportunity to dedicate a portion of the Charlton Street Recreation Area as the Marcos Rios Memorial Playground and are proud of the willingness of local contractors to dedicate their time, talent, and resources to this cause. Thanks to the generous donations for rough grading, the construction of a retaining wall, fine grading, plumbing and electrical upgrades to the bathrooms, and asphalt for a racetrack, the Town is able to minimize its scope for the PARC grant request to 1) playground equipment and 2) rubberized surface.

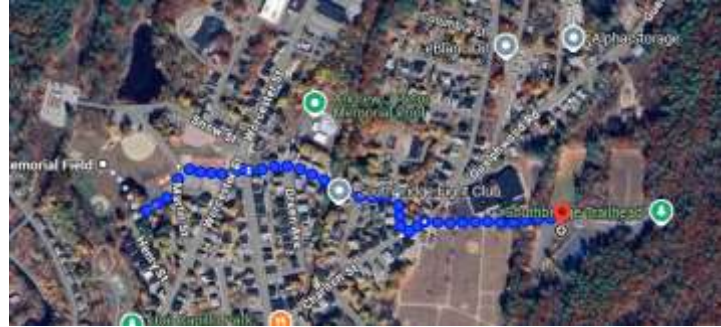
Describe community needs, including park equity/ need in this neighborhood: Families in this neighborhood earn a median income or less and often speak a language other than English in the home. A toddler park will serve the young families of the community, many who are renters with minimal yard space or outdoor amenities. These families deserve recreational opportunities within walking distance to their homes.



New acres dedicated to parkland: Already dedicated to parkland, this 19-acre site carves out approximately 1.79 acres for the Marcos Rios Memorial Playground.

Directly serves an Environmental Justice population or area of the community that lacks park resources (show on map) and how the project will increase recreational opportunities for residents in areas of the state that currently do not have sufficient park access: The Charlton Street Recreation Area and Marcos Rios Memorial Playground are located in an Environmental Justice Census Tract, 7571-1, based on minority and language. There is not sufficient toddler park access based on the existing recreation options. The closest most widely used recreation area in Southbridge is currently located at Capillo Park and McCann Fields, a park with significant upgrades thanks to a previous PARC grant that co-mingles CDBG and ARPA funds to add an ADA path between Capillo Park and McCann Fields, a skatepark, a handball court, basketball court and baseball field fence replacement, and playground structures

for 5-12 year olds. However, there is no area that is geared to strictly accommodate toddlers. This is a 13-minute walk from the Charlton Street neighborhood.



The next closest toddler park is located at Main Street in the highest percentage low- and median- income census tract, a 28-minute walk from the Charlton Street neighborhood. This park was damaged by fire and the Economic Development and Planning Department re-programmed CDBG funds to demo, furnish, and install new playground structures more geared towards toddlers.

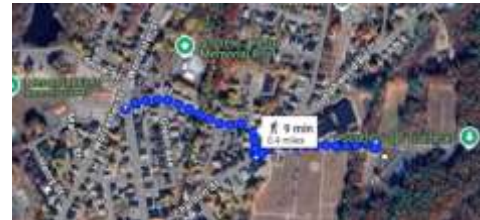


How the needs of people with disabilities have been incorporated into the project’s design:

Contractors volunteering to rough grade, construct a retaining wall, fine grade, and build a racetrack will be grading for ADA to then install concrete sidewalks to ensure ADA access from the parking lot to the racetrack, gazebo, and playground structures.

How the project’s design incorporates climate resiliency, including its location near public transit:

The Marcos Rios Memorial Playground will be designed with minimal additional impervious surface, grading and improved drainage, within walking distance of a neighborhood playground. The closest access to the WRTA is less than half a mile. See screenshot.



How the project’s design incorporates mitigation strategies to address its location in a Hot Spot if relevant?

The Marco Rios Memorial Playground is not located in a hot spot. Other mitigation strategies used in the design of the playground are drainage features, maintaining existing tree canopy, including minimal additional impervious surface, choosing an existing recreation area that is underutilized, and encouraging walkable access to a neighborhood playground reduces carbon emissions where families would otherwise drive to reach an age-appropriate recreational activity.

Fiscal or future maintenance cooperation with any other governmental agency: The Town of Southbridge Department of Public Works is responsible for park maintenance, which includes an annual budget appropriation. The Recreation Commission has also shown more interest in helping with the upkeep of our parks thanks to support from our Full-Time Recreation Director.