

# A Bay-Friendly Rated Landscape: A Case Study

## WILLOW PARK

### Pocket Park Showcases Remarkable Array of Bay-Friendly Landscape Practices



PHOTO: ROBERT MOWAT ASSOCIATES

Willow Park, a new half-acre public park in Union City, California, may be small in size. But thanks to committed City leadership and creative design, this pocket park is packed with community amenities and Bay-Friendly Landscape features.

“Willow Park serves a lot of functions,” said Robert Mowat, whose landscape architecture firm designed the park. “There are picnic tables and barbecue grills, spaces for sitting, a play structure for children, and a lot of habitat” for birds and beneficial insects.

It has also achieved the highest Bay-Friendly Rated Landscape score to date, earning points for features such as waste reduction, onsite composting, a diverse selection of plants, a no-mow alternative to turf, and a variety of recycled-content products. Union City received a \$25,000 grant from StopWaste.Org to help fund some of these features.

The park, which is located in the midst of a residential neighborhood, gives local children a place to play while adults enjoy walking paths and benches situated among beautiful landscaping. “What underlies the beauty are almost all of the Bay-Friendly Landscaping techniques,” said Mowat.

For Union City, which was the first of Alameda County’s cities to adopt

Bay-Friendly Landscaping as a requirement for civic projects, Willow Park provided an opportunity to try many Bay-Friendly techniques on a small scale. “It’s our responsibility to educate the public and have demonstration gardens to learn from,” said grounds supervisor Nelson Kirk, with the City’s public works department. “This park will be a good indicator for Bay-Friendly practices.” Other Bay-Friendly landscapes in Union City include street medians, a fire station, and the front yards of eight city-owned affordable homes built across the street from Willow Park.



### FAST FACTS

**TOTAL PROJECT COST**  
\$307,000

**LOCATION**  
120 Blue Spruce Lane  
Union City, California

**PARCEL SIZE**  
23,277 sq. ft.

**LANDSCAPED AREA SIZE**  
13,505 sq. ft.

**LANDSCAPE TYPE**  
Public park

**COMPLETION DATE**  
October 2008

**OWNER/DEVELOPER**  
City of Union City

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**  
Robert Mowat Associates  
San Francisco, California

**LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR**  
McNabb  
Construction, Inc.  
Lafayette, California

**BAY-FRIENDLY RATER**  
Design, Community and  
Environment Berkeley, CA

**CONTACT FOR MORE INFO**  
Nelson Kirk  
City of Union City  
TEL 510-675-5422