



Mountain View
Historical Association

P.O. Box 252, Mountain View CA 94042

March 27, 2023

Dear Faryal,

The Mountain View Historical Association (MVHA) is pleased to support either of the proposed names for the new mini-park to be built at 1280 Villa Street:

Estrella Park: "Estrella" in Spanish means "star" and symbolizes light, guidance, and hope. The name "Estrella Park" would honor Mountain View's early 20th Century Mexican-American community and the dozens of families displaced or affected by the nearby widening of Bailey Avenue (now Shoreline Boulevard) in 1969. In 1948, members of the Mountain View's Mexican-American community founded Club Estrella, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the needy and sharing and preserving Mexican culture. Although their neighborhood was destroyed by road widening projects, the community survived through Club Estrella, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and continues to serve the community by offering college scholarships to local youth.

Villa Park: "Villa" in Spanish means "Town" or "Country Estate." In the case of Villa Street in Mountain View, it most likely refers to "town" as the street is one of the oldest in Mountain View, first laid out in 1865 as part of the original "Villa Lands" subdivision of the town of Mountain View Station, also known as New Mountain View (now Downtown Mountain View). Maps from 1876 show Villa Street extending from View Street to Oak Street. It was later extended west and east as the city grew in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Regardless of the name chosen, the MVHA offers its support in researching and creating any features which interpret the history of the site and/or name.

If "Estrella Park" is not chosen as the name for the new Villa Street mini-park, the MVHA encourages the City to consider other ways of honoring the history the proposed name represents. Either through renaming and/or interpretive signage, the existing Jackson Park built in 1990 on Jackson Street offers another excellent location to honor Club Estrella and the historic Mexican-American community of Mountain View. Jackson Street and neighboring Washington Street was the heart of Mountain View's early 20th century Hispanic community; first home to immigrants from Spain and then immigrants from Mexico and Mexican-American migrants from the Southwest who built deep roots in Mountain View. By the 1950s, the neighborhood was home to a flourishing Mexican-American community where organizations like Club Estrella and the Guadalupe Federal Credit Union helped residents pursue the American dream. More than half of the neighborhood was destroyed, and dozens of predominantly Hispanic families were forced to relocate, when eminent domain was used to construct Central Expressway and the aforementioned Bailey Avenue widening project. Today, there is little recognition of this historic community and the role it played in the city's history. The MVHA supports honoring and interpreting our history in public settings like our parks, and is at-the-ready to assist with such efforts.

We thank the City for inviting the MVHA to share our input.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Perry

On behalf of the Mountain View Historical Association Board of Directors