

Belle Haven: A Community Overview

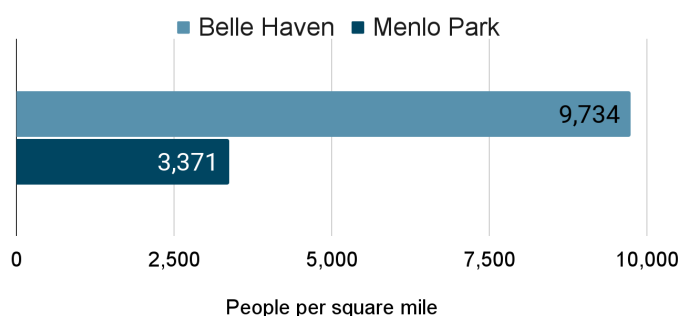
General Info

Belle Haven is a small neighborhood on the Bayside of Menlo Park that has long been underserved compared to other Menlo Park and Silicon Valley neighborhoods. It is a highly diverse and connected community that works hard to make sure its infrastructure and people are not forgotten by the rest of the city. Belle Haven has grown considerably over recent decades; current development projects and related issues around the area will give residents the chance to have their voices heard.

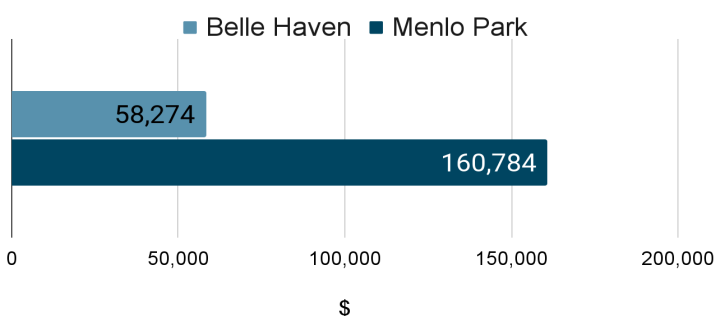
Belle Haven Demographics & Housing Statistics

Over 34,000 people live in Menlo Park, and 16% (5,500) of those people live in the Belle Haven neighborhood.¹

Population Density



Median Household Income



- Menlo Park has 13,857 total housing units;² Belle Haven makes up 1,440 (~10%) of those units.
- In Belle Haven, 4% of the housing stock is high-density housing (>20 units).
- In Menlo Park, 77% of the housing stock is worth over a million dollars (much larger than the county average of 42%), but only 16% of Belle Haven residences are worth as much.
- 60% of Belle Haven renters spend at least 35% or more of their income on rent, and the median gross rent in Belle Haven is \$1,656.

Racial Breakdown³

In Belle Haven, the population has increased by about 8%. Yet, the Black population has declined by 63% between 2010 and 2020; in the same timeframe, the Latino population declined 12%, the white population declined 35% and the Asian population increased by five-fold.

2020 - Belle Haven in comparison to the whole of Menlo Park			
Ethnicity	Menlo Park	Belle Haven	% residing in Belle Haven
White	18575	827	4%
Black	1,001	714	71%
Native American	26	9	35%
Asian	5,764	864	15%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	364	212	58%
Latino	5,989	3,604	60%
Other race	156	31	20%
Two or more races	1,905	176	9%
Total Population	33,780	6437	19%

¹ <https://www.menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/25939/Housing-Inventory-and-Supply-Study>

² <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?q=1600000US0646870>

³ [2020 Census Data](#) (Credit: Juanita Croft)

Tree Cover

Belle Haven has disproportionately less tree cover (~7%) than neighboring areas. In comparison, neighboring Atherton has 42% to 89% of the town blanketed by tree canopy, and the portion of Menlo Park west of U.S. 101 has a tree cover of 23% to 41% of the area.⁴

Pollution & Health Impacts

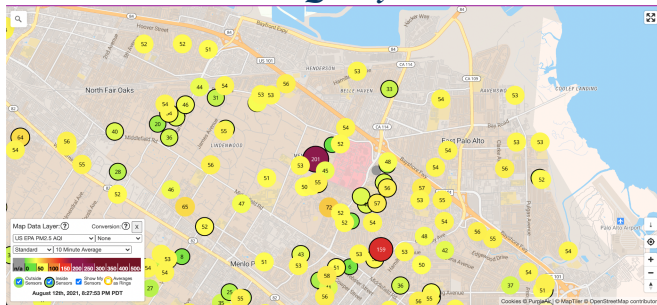
Air quality is likely worse in Belle Haven since it is ringed by busy freeways. Yet, there are only 3 Air Quality monitors⁵ in Belle Haven, while there are dozens across the rest of Menlo Park. In fact, diesel particulate matter⁶ in Belle Haven is in the highest 88% of census tracts in California compared to the rest of Menlo Park, which ranges from 41% to 88% (being the highest in Belle Haven).

Health outcomes are worse, likely as a result of the pollution. In Belle Haven, the life expectancy is more than seven years lower than the San Mateo County average, according to the United States Small-Area Life Expectancy Project.⁷ Asthma rates in Belle Haven are more than four times higher than other neighborhoods in Menlo Park:

- Belle Haven: higher than 18% of the census tracts in California
- Menlo Park ranges from 4% - 18%, being the highest in Belle Haven

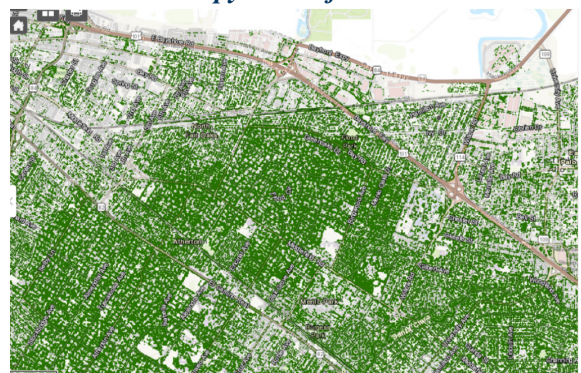
Lead is a toxic metal and there is no known safe level of exposure. When exposed, children can become susceptible to adverse effects in the brain and nervous system. Even at low levels of exposure to children, it can lead to higher likelihood of lower IQ and symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). In Belle Haven, children's lead risk from housing is higher than 97% of the census tract in California compared to the rest of Menlo Park, which ranges from 38% to 97%.

Air Quality Monitors



The colored dots represent the different Air Quality monitors across Menlo Park, with the northeast region (north side of the freeway) covering Belle Haven having significantly less monitors than the rest of the city.

Tree Canopy Cover for Menlo Park



Tree canopy cover for Menlo Park, also shows a large difference between Belle Haven and the rest of the city.

⁴ https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd645759.html

⁵ <https://map.purpleair.com/1/mAQI/a10/p604800/cC0#15/37.47689/-122.15665>

⁶ <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>

⁷ <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/interactives/whereyouliveaffectshowlongyoulive.html>

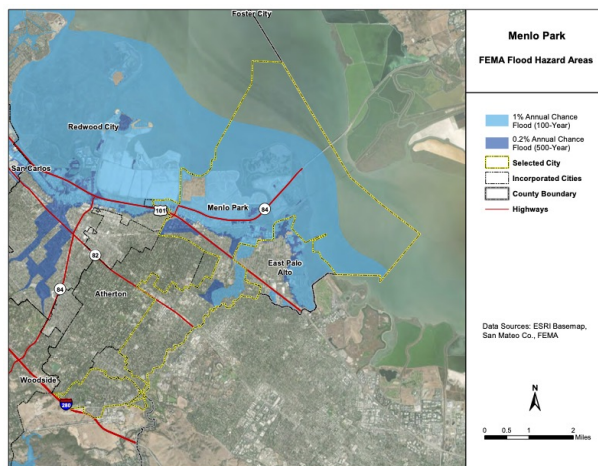
Flooding Risks

Our region could experience up to 10 feet of sea level rise by the end of this century.⁸ Already, in Menlo Park, 37% of properties are at risk of flood damage, largely in Belle Haven and along San Francisquito Creek. In fact, \$1.9 million in property damage occurred this year due to flooding in the area.⁹ Recent data shows that along San Francisquito Creek there will be an increased risk of flooding, largely affecting the majority of Belle Haven. FEMA Flood Hazard Areas cover a large portion of Belle Haven (below). The City of Menlo Park has been recognized by FEMA for its floodplain management¹⁰ and residents within the selected flood zones now qualify for a 10% or 5%¹¹ reduction in the mandatory flood insurance costs (max of \$250,000).

There are many public facilities that are located in either flood hazard areas, along the fault lines, high liquefaction areas, and/or sea-level rise areas, including: The Menlo Park Community Center, Belle Haven Library, VA Medical Center, and Belle Haven Child Development Center.

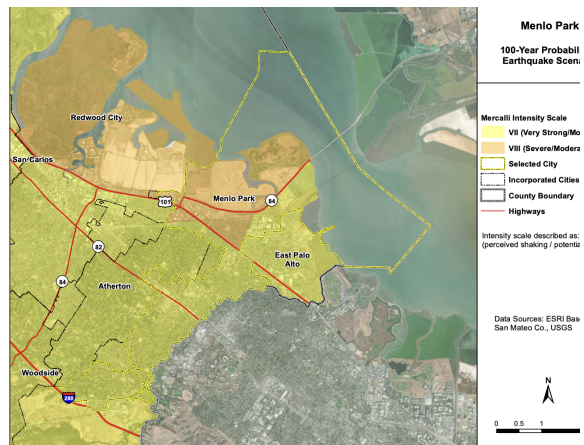
Menlo Park has made provisions to protect people and businesses.¹² A stormwater master plan is underway to model the entire City storm drain network, identify vulnerable areas, and capital projects to mitigate flooding in these areas.

Risk of Flooding in Menlo Park



A map showing the areas most likely to be affected by flood damage in Menlo Park.

Probability of Severe earthquakes



A map showing how likely a very strong or severe earthquake will affect Menlo Park

Belle Haven is at moderate-high risk of liquefaction during an earthquake, and worsens the damage to properties and evacuation paths. Out of 25 natural hazards listed, residents expressed “extreme concern” for climate change, poor air quality, public health, and wildfire, and they were “very concerned” about earthquakes, droughts, power failure, flooding, and extreme heat. The most commonly experienced hazards in the last five years have been poor air quality due to nearby wildfire, extreme heat, drought, and public health (epidemic pandemic).

⁸ <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/prepare-for-10-feet-of-sea-level-rise-california-commission-tells-coastal-cities/>

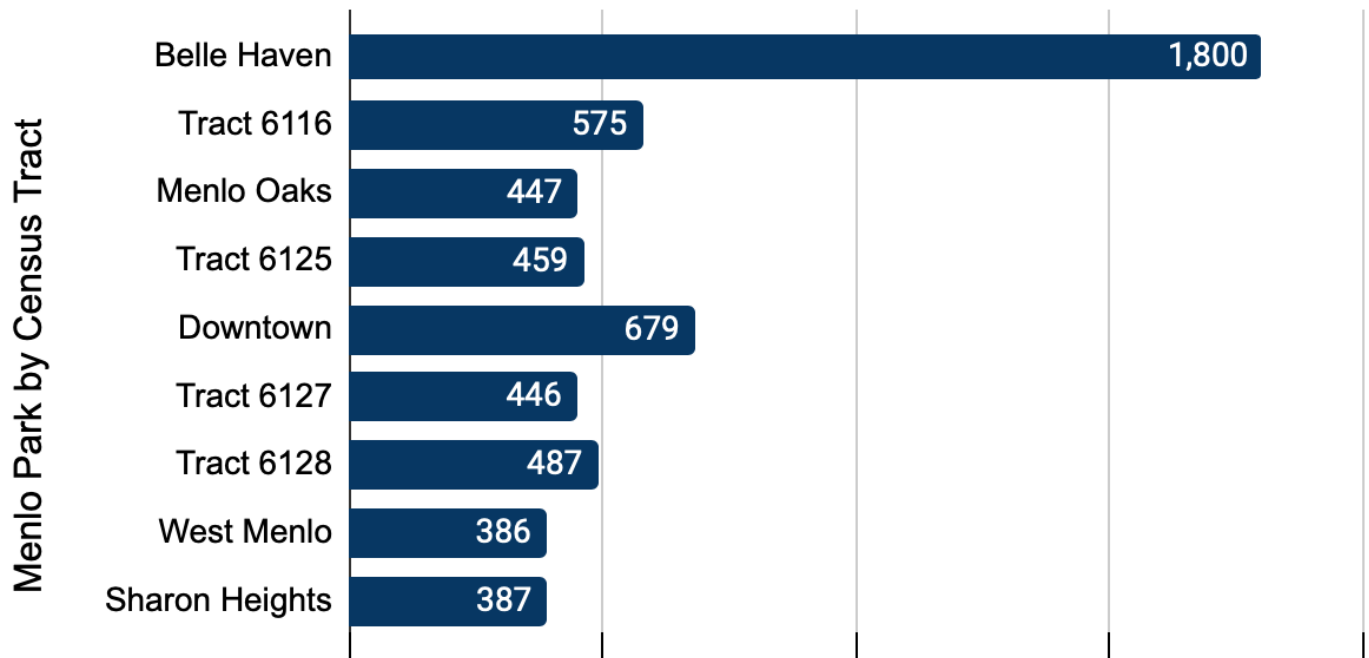
⁹ https://floodfactor.com/city/menlo-park-california/646870_fsid

¹⁰ <https://inmenlo.com/2020/11/11/discounts-available-to-eligible-menlo-park-residents-for-flood-insurance/>

¹¹ <https://www.menlopark.org/901/Flood-insurance>

¹² <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/MenloPark/html/MenloPark12/MenloPark1242.html> - (under Municipal Code Section 12.42.13)

COVID Information¹³



COVID-19 case rate per 10,000 population as of 12/30/2021

¹³ <https://www.smchealth.org/data-dashboard/cases-city>