SOIL SAMPLING IN DISCOVERY PARK: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW OUR SOILS
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The purpose of this study was to learn if there was any heavy metal contamination in the soils of Discovery Park. For my research outside of my internship, I was looking at how to improve the quality of soils after they had been degraded from anthropogenic causes, like lead paint on surrounding buildings, and possibly heavy pollution. For my internship with Friends of Discovery Park (FoDP) I was taking soil samples from around the park, having them analyzed and then plotting the analysis on a map using ArcGIS Online. This is important work, as we are becoming a more and more populated society the easiest way for people to have access to green spaces is going to overwhelmingly be through urban parks. If these parks are unsafe for people to be going to the entire point of having them is going to become pointless. Which brings me to the results of my project. During my internship, I found that generally soil levels are healthy in Discovery Park except for one area called the Historic District which had elevated levels of lead. In my research, I found that most of the reasons for that soil in parks can be unsafe urban parks is from heavy metals in the soil. This shows that areas we think are perfectly healthy could be a somewhat toxic area that you don’t want to be sticking your hands in. In the future, we need to learn more about our soils and their health.