



# SIERRA CLUB

## LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER

SAN MATEO, SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

February 26, 2024

Mountain View City Hall  
500 Castro St  
Mountain View, CA 94041

Dear Mayor Showalter, Vice Mayor Matichak, and Councilmembers,

As the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter's Chair for Plastic Pollution Prevention efforts, I encourage Mountain View to join the cities of [Millbrae](#) and San Marino, to add either a ban or long term moratorium on artificial turf within Mountain View's jurisdictional boundaries.

I understand this year's work plan is nearing finalization, so perhaps the above-mentioned ban or moratorium can become part of the work plan.

- Artificial turf is a plastic petroleum product, and [its manufacture and entire lifecycle pollutes our air and water](#).
- Unlike [plants](#), it cuts off air and light from the soil, therefore it doesn't sequester carbon.
- As plastics degrade, [microplastics](#) permeate the air and soil and wash into our watersheds. Microplastics are now found in the [food we eat and even in newborns](#)
- The turf industry admits turf is [not recyclable](#); it's comprised of layers of different petroleum products that can't be separated. After its 10-year lifespan, it's buried in a [landfill or incinerated](#), releasing CO2 into the atmosphere. Even the most "advanced" "chemical" recycling causes more pollution than was caused during the plastic's original production.
- Plastic in sunlight heats up, causing heat islands that can be seen from satellites in space. The San Francisco Estuary Institute's [Moffett Park Specific Plan Urban Ecology](#) satellite images (p. 16-17) show the urban heat island effect causing "synthetic turf fields at Twin Creeks Sports Complex <to have> the highest surface temperatures" seen in the area on September 2, 2017
- The heat island effect, in turn, causes [our kids to overheat on hot days](#) while playing on the artificial turf.
- Artificial turf surfaces are harder than natural grass or even dirt, and when our kids fall on it [they are more likely to have lower limb injuries](#), and those injuries, overall, are likely to be more severe than similar injuries on a grass field.
- Artificial turf plastics are mixed with specialized, proprietary chemicals, like PFAS, that come with their own set of public health harms. The [EPA has taken notice](#), and

water intended for drinking will now need new methods for removing PFAS and other chemicals.

In short, artificial turf has no place in [our landscapes or on our playgrounds](#). There are drought tolerant plants and high traffic, long-playing natural sports-grasses available.

I urge the Council to join the cities of Millbrae and San Marino in banning or placing a long-term moratorium on artificial turf in Mountain View. Given the reputation of Mountain View as a leader in environmental protection, we are confident it will lead among Bay Area cities, becoming the next city after Millbrae to ban this toxic substance.

Sincerely,  
Susan Hinton  
Chair, Plastic Pollution Prevention Team  
Environmental Stewardship Program  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

## McGill, Pam

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**From:** Matichak, Lisa  
**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 3:35 PM  
**To:** Glaser, Heather; Monlux, Merry  
**Subject:** Fw: SCLP letter to Mountain View City Council Feb 26 2024  
**Attachments:** SCLP Letter to Mountain View City Council Feb 26 2024.pdf

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**From:** Dashiell Leeds [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 12:19 PM  
**To:** Showalter, Pat <Pat.Showalter@mountainview.gov>; Matichak, Lisa <Lisa.Matichak@mountainview.gov>; Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov <Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov>; Hicks, Alison <Alison.Hicks@mountainview.gov>; Kamei, Ellen <Ellen.Kamei@mountainview.gov>; Ramirez, Lucas <Lucas.Ramirez@mountainview.gov>; Ramos, Emily Ann <Emily.Ramos@mountainview.gov>; Sustainability <sustainability@mountainview.gov>  
**Cc:** James Eggers [REDACTED]; Mike Ferreira [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Wils Cain [REDACTED]; Barbara Muir [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** SCLP letter to Mountain View City Council Feb 26 2024

**CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Dear Mayor Showalter, Vice Mayor Matichak, and Councilmembers,

As the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter's Chair for Plastic Pollution Prevention efforts, I encourage Mountain View to join the cities of Millbrae and San Marino, to add either a ban or long term moratorium on artificial turf within Mountain View's jurisdictional boundaries.

Please read the attached letter for our full comments.

Sincerely,  
Susan Hinton  
Chair, Plastic Pollution Prevention Team  
Environmental Stewardship Program  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

email sent from account of  
Dashiell Leeds  
Conservation Coordinator  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

## McGill, Pam

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**From:** Matichak, Lisa  
**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 3:37 PM  
**To:** Glaser, Heather; Monlux, Merry  
**Subject:** Fw: Upcoming Work Program meeting Tuesday night

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**From:** Andrea Wald [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 25, 2024 11:58 AM  
**To:** Showalter, Pat <Pat.Showalter@mountainview.gov>; Matichak, Lisa <Lisa.Matichak@mountainview.gov>; Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov <Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov>; Hicks, Alison <Alison.Hicks@mountainview.gov>; Kamei, Ellen <Ellen.Kamei@mountainview.gov>; Ramirez, Lucas <Lucas.Ramirez@mountainview.gov>; Ramos, Emily Ann <Emily.Ramos@mountainview.gov>; Sustainability <sustainability@mountainview.gov>  
**Subject:** Upcoming Work Program meeting Tuesday night

**CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.**

*Dear Mountain View City Council members and Sustainability Commission members,*

*I am writing to voice my concerns about discussions at this year's work program revolving around the installation of Artificial Turf. Although not a Mountain View resident (I live in Sunnyvale) I've frequented many Mountain View parks over the years and have enjoyed their lush green, natural open spaces.*

*The purpose of me writing is to strongly urge you to include a ban or at least a moratorium on artificial turf in this year's work program. I'm not sure how much you know about artificial turf but it is not good for the environment, nor the health and safety of those who play/lounge on it. It also has limitations in that one cannot put spikes or poles into it for volleyball, croquet or the like, one should not eat nor drink on it (not only does it get too hot but spilled food/drinks does not easily wash off and does not biodegrade (so picnics are out!), it wears down with time shedding microplastics and toxic chemicals into the nearby waterways and eventually into the water and aquatic life, and along with the microplastics are toxic (forever) chemicals, and needs to be replaced every 8-10 years. Its not recyclable so it ends up in landfill or incinerated. Plus, the top layer of (toxic) plastic kills all living organisms below it. Birds and other animals suffer because their food source (bugs, worms, etc) are non-existent. Lastly, the plastic surface emits CO2 and methane instead of absorbing CO2, like natural, green surfaces (plants, trees and grass). Definite negative impact to make global warming worse than it already is.*

*I'm aware of Mountain View's Sustainability Commission's mission statement to create "a thriving community where we work together to leave the world better than we found it" (it's a great mission, by the way).*

*To avoid pesticides and other harmful substances for maintaining natural grass, I suggest you look into an amazing program called: Beyond Pesticides. They have something called: "[Parks for a Sustainable Future](#)" program. I suggest you check them out.*

*Lastly, Mountain View has two incredible natural grass baseball fields at Mckelvey Park. I've spoken to the groundskeeper there - he actually let me onto the fields to show off how nicely he is able to maintain them. Very proud*

*of his hard work. What a unique individual - taking extreme pride in what he does. Why would you now want to start installing Artificial Turf?*

*Its important that we act now to limit the damage we have done and continue to do our best for the planet and leave the world a better place for future generations. Let's all strive to make the Sustainability Commission's vision a reality - please ban the installation of artificial turf in Mountain View (for city, residential, and commercial properties).*

*Thank you,*

*Andrea Wald*

*Advocate for a healthy planet!*

## McGill, Pam

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**From:** Matichak, Lisa  
**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 3:37 PM  
**To:** Glaser, Heather; Monlux, Merry  
**Subject:** Fw: Comments regarding 2/27/24 Council meeting agenda: work plan

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**From:** Pam Bond [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 25, 2024 8:43 AM  
**To:** Showalter, Pat <Pat.Showalter@mountainview.gov>; Matichak, Lisa <Lisa.Matichak@mountainview.gov>; Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov <Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov>; Hicks, Alison <Alison.Hicks@mountainview.gov>; Kamei, Ellen <Ellen.Kamei@mountainview.gov>; Ramirez, Lucas <Lucas.Ramirez@mountainview.gov>; Ramos, Emily Ann <Emily.Ramos@mountainview.gov>  
**Cc:** Sustainability <sustainability@mountainview.gov>  
**Subject:** Comments regarding 2/27/24 Council meeting agenda: work plan

**CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Dear Mayor Showalter, Vice Mayor Matichak, and Councilmembers,

I understand this year's work plan is nearing finalization, and believe that banning or placing a long moratorium on artificial turf in Mountain View should be added to the plan.

I have been researching and learning about artificial turf for a few years beginning with my own home landscaping decisions 10 years ago and more intensely a few years ago when Los Gatos elementary school fields risked conversion to artificial turf. I and a small group of dedicated parents poured many many hours into researching the pros and cons just to be sure we were even justified in our concerns. We talked to epidemiologists (from UCSF and Mt. Sinai in particular) and plastic researchers and environmental experts along with grass sports field managers, grass researchers and others. And since 2022 when the decision at LGUSD was to keep their natural grass fields, so much more information about plastic has come to light and environmental health testing is developing.

Below is a list of reasons why it would be wise to seriously discuss a ban or moratorium on artificial turf installations in Mountain View.

- Artificial turf is a plastic petroleum product, and its manufacture pollutes our air and water.
- Unlike plants it cuts off air and light from the soil, therefore it doesn't sequester carbon.
- As it wears it sheds plastic pieces that are blown or washed into storm drains. In the San Francisco Bay Area these bits wash into creeks which flow into the Bay, harming marine life.
- Artificial turf cannot be sustainably recycled, making it incompatible with the idea of zero waste. With artificial turf this is especially notable because the fields wear down and need to be replaced every 8-10 years.
- Even the most "advanced" "chemical" recycling causes more pollution than was caused during plastic's original production.
- Plastic in sunlight heats up - causing heat islands that can be seen from satellites in space.

- The heat island effect, in turn, causes our kids to overheat on hot days while playing on the artificial turf.
- Artificial turf surfaces are harder than natural grass or even dirt, and when our kids fall on it they are more likely to have lower limb injuries, and those injuries, overall, are likely to be more severe than similar injuries on a grass field.
- Artificial turf plastics are mixed with specialized, proprietary chemicals, like PFAS, that come with their own set of public health harms. The EPA has taken notice, and water intended for drinking will now need new methods for removing PFAS.

In short, artificial turf has no place in landscaping or on playing fields. There are drought tolerant plants and high traffic, long-playing natural sports-grasses available.

I urge the Council to join the cities of Millbrae and San Marino in banning or placing a long term moratorium on artificial turf in Mountain View. (There are other Bay Area cities currently considering a ban as well.)

Sincerely,  
Pam Bond

## McGill, Pam

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**From:** Matichak, Lisa  
**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 3:37 PM  
**To:** Glaser, Heather; Monlux, Merry  
**Subject:** Fw: Please ban artificial turf in Mountain View

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**From:** Cortney Jansen [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 24, 2024 10:23 PM  
**To:** Showalter, Pat <Pat.Showalter@mountainview.gov>; Matichak, Lisa <Lisa.Matichak@mountainview.gov>; Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov <Margaret.AbeKoga@mountainview.gov>; Hicks, Alison <Alison.Hicks@mountainview.gov>; Kamei, Ellen <Ellen.Kamei@mountainview.gov>; Ramirez, Lucas <Lucas.Ramirez@mountainview.gov>; Ramos, Emily Ann <Emily.Ramos@mountainview.gov>; Sustainability <sustainability@mountainview.gov>  
**Subject:** Please ban artificial turf in Mountain View

**CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Dear Mountain View City Council members and Sustainability Commission members,

I am writing to provide input on this year's work program. While I am not a Mountain View resident (I live in Sunnyvale), my kids and I spend many hours at parks in Mountain View. Our favorite is Cuesta Park.

Anyhow, I am writing to ask you to include a ban (or long term moratorium) on artificial turf on this year's work program. While there are many reasons why I'm opposed to the installation of artificial turf, the short answer is that artificial turf is not sustainable - in fact, installing artificial turf in Mountain View runs directly in contradiction to your Sustainability Commission's mission to create "a thriving community where we work together to leave the world better than we found it" (it's a great mission, by the way).

Natural grass has a lot of benefits to our residents and our planet. It absorbs carbon, it combats the urban heat island effect, it draws butterflies and other animals to our neighborhoods; it's a home for pollinators (which are responsible for every third bite we take). Yes, it can use pesticides and fertilizers, but those are heavily regulated by the government. Additionally, programs focused on organically managed natural grass fields help reduce this pesticide usage (see, for example, the Beyond Pesticides "[Parks for a Sustainable Future](#)" program).

Artificial turf does not have any ecosystem benefits. It is also not regulated by the US government. Our kids will remember us for the world that we leave them, and if we cover the world in plastic, we won't leave them much. Let's all strive to make the Sustainability Commission's vision a reality - please ban the installation of artificial turf in Mountain View (for city, residential, and commercial properties).

Thank you,  
Cortney Jansen  
Sunnyvale resident and common visitor to Mountain View parks



**McGill, Pam**

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**From:** Matichak, Lisa  
**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 3:38 PM  
**To:** Glaser, Heather; Monlux, Merry  
**Subject:** Fw: Problems with Plastic Grass (Artificial Turf)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 24, 2024 7:26 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Problems with Plastic Grass (Artificial Turf)

**CAUTION:** EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.

Dear Mayor Showalter, Vice Mayor Matichak, and Councilmembers:

As you decide upon adding Artificial Turf (plastic grass) to the Work Plan, please consider:

### **Background**

Plastic grass has been used as a landscaping method to reduce water consumption.

Scientists discovered plastic blades contain unsafe levels of carcinogenic forever chemicals.

There is now a movement to prohibit new installations of plastic grass:

- a) Governor Newsom signed Senate bill SB676 giving local jurisdictions authority to ban plastic grass installations.
- b) Valley Water advocates *against* plastic grass.

### **Problems with plastic grass**

1. Contains a class of chemicals called PFAS.

The F stands for fluorine. Fluorine atoms combine with carbon atoms in the polyethylene grass blades to create chemicals harmful to humans.

CDC found PFAS chemicals in the blood of 97% of Americans.

2. Negative health effects from PFAS chemicals (National Institutes of Health).

Epidemiological studies have revealed associations between exposure to specific PFAS and a variety of health effects, including:

- Liver disease
- Kidney disease
- Cancer

- Lipid and insulin dysregulation
- Adverse reproductive and developmental outcomes
- Altered immune and thyroid function.

3. Plastic grass carpets are hardscapes.

- Rainwater runs off and the biome in soil beneath dies.
- Do not sequester carbon like natural grass.
- Plastic 'blades' degrade into microplastics and get washed into San Francisco Bay

4. Emit climate warming gases methane and ethylene.

5. Cannot be recycled.

6. Expensive to replace every 10 years. The Fremont Union High School District is budgeting \$29 per square foot for new turf this summer (includes disposal).

### **Requests**

- Please vote against installations of artificial turf on city property, and
- Support a moratorium on new plastic grass installations on private property using authority under SB676.

Regards,  
Steve Hill