Communication from Public

Name:	Valeria Serna
Date Submitted:	06/26/2024 10:59 PM
Council File No:	24-0602
Comments for Public Posting:	Please see enclosed letter.

The Impact of Artificial Turf on Health and the Environment

Dear Los Angeles City Council

I am writing with a heavy heart to express my deep concern about the use of artificial turf in our beloved community of Los Angeles. As someone who cares deeply about the health and well-being of Angelenos, especially our children and youth, I feel compelled to address the serious implications of artificial turf on both our health and the environment.

Reasons to Halt the Use of Artificial Turf

Artificial turf is not only environmentally harmful but also poses significant human health concerns. The typical lifespan of an artificial turf field is 8 to 15 years, but in areas like Pacific Palisades, exposure to marine salinity and sun deterioration may significantly reduce this lifespan. This introduces natural budgetary cycle considerations.

Flood Mitigation Considerations

Artificial turf is considered an impervious surface, meaning it prevents or significantly impedes the infiltration of water into the underlying soil- recharging the aquifer . The installation of artificial turf can lead to increased stormwater runoff and associated flooding risks. For example, just this year, the Palisades received 12 inches of rain in less than 24 hours. According to Penn State Extension, one inch of rainfall on an acre of impervious surfaces produces 27,000 gallons of stormwater to manage. Stormwater runoff from one acre of impervious surface is equivalent to the runoff from 20 acres of grassland. A properly designed and maintained grass field would eliminate approximately 30:1 ratio of stormwater management, reducing millions of gallons of stormwater runoff per year.

Impact on Soil Health

Soil are an ecosystem of microorganism- bacteria, fungi, and other microscopic organisms that break down "waste" and (re) cycle it into nutrients for vegetation= (soil food web -Nature based solutions/compost). Artificial turf, being an impermeable surface, seals off the soil, preventing these communities from performing their essential functions such as evapotranspiration and water retention.

Given the current arid environment due to climate challenge and the city's efforts to cool communities, it seems incomprehensible to install artificial turf. It produces

more heat, does not allow water retention, and off-gases significantly more than methane. Additionally, it increases biodiversity loss, kills trees, and significantly harms the environment, air, and water quality, not to mention the devastating human health concerns.

In coastal communities such as Pacific Palisades, we are additionally subject to marine environments and flood protocols. The California Coastal Commission conditioned a 3-acre baseball field at UCSB for natural grass only, citing concerns about microplastics (Dec 13, 2023). Fields with natural turf grass managed organically can actually collect, filter, and store stormwater, serving as a piece of stormwater management.https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2023/12/W13.1a/W13.1a-12-2023-report.pdf

Microplastics and Water Contamination

Artificial turf is made from plastics, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a class of thousands of synthetic forever chemicals that are not easily broken down and are known carcinogens. Over time, artificial turf breaks down into microplastics, which then enter our air and water cycles. Current water filtration systems, whether municipal or home-based, struggle to filter these particles out of our drinking water. Recent EPA findings state that no levels of PFAS are safe. Estimates suggest that, between our water and the food we eat, each of us consumes between 0.1 to 5 grams of plastic per week—roughly the volume of a credit card. Filtered water is a privilege that not all Southern California or Los Angeles communities have. CA's biodiversity, in one of the five worldwide biodiversity hotspots, we should take all measures to protect this significant flora, funga and fauna not harm it by reducing its viability and our own. AT our municipal water (Hyperion Water Reclamation) doesn't have the ability to filter PFAS see green tip a few months back) These microplastics will persist in our waterways for generations without solid science leading the way all astroturf fields tested have found PFAS- even the ones that stated they had none.

Artificial turf has been shown to cause more injuries to recreational users, including leg, ankle, and foot injuries, as well as burns. The surface of artificial turf can be up to 37 degrees hotter than asphalt and 86.5 degrees hotter than natural turf grass. Anything over 120 degrees Fahrenheit can cause skin burns/ infections within 2 seconds of contact. Without regular watering, the soil beneath artificial turf becomes compacted and as hard as concrete, increasing the risk of injuries for users of these fields raising liabitly concerns. In addition having to cool a plastic carpet and then clean with potable water does not seem cost effective given all the

ecological negative impacts. I hope LA city council will move to halt the use os Astroturf in LA and beyond!

Communication from Public

Name: Ron Askeland

Date Submitted: 06/27/2024 02:53 PM

Council File No: 24-0602

Comments for Public Posting: I strongly support the motion to transition away from synthetic turf. Don't risk our children's health by exposing them to the toxic effects of synthetic turf. Synthetic turf is a petrochemical plastic product. Throughout its toxic lifecycle, from fossil fuel extraction through production and disposal, disproportionately impact environmental justice communities. These areas face health disparities, emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, and hazardous air pollutants. Residents living in sacrifice zones near petrochemical extraction and refining sites and plastic turf production facilities are especially affected. When in use, synthetic turf exposes humans to toxic materials including PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), UV stabilizers, heavy metals, plasticizers, and microplastics via inhalation, ingestion or direct contact. These materials are linked to cancers, endocrine disruption, organ damage and other serious health problems. On sunny days, synthetic turf reaches temperatures that are 40 F - 70 F above ambient temperature, leading to heatstroke, dehydration and thermal burns. Independent, peer reviewed research, has found that synthetic turf has a higher incidence of sports injuries compared to natural grass and poses an increased risk of Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus infection. At the end of its useful life (8-10 years), synthetic turf ends up in landfills or improperly disposed of, often near low-income communities and people of color. This toxic waste emits methane and other GHGs for up to conceivably 1000 years. Additionally, PFAS, UV stabilizers, heavy metals, plasticizers, and microplastics from synthetic turf harm ecosystems and wildlife. Runoff from synthetic turf fields contaminates rivers, lakes and oceans and is especially toxic to many aquatic species. Review Article: An excellent review of the negative environmental and health impacts of synthetic turf can be found in a letter from officers of the Santa Clara County Medical Association opposing the use of synthetic turf in Sunnyvale: https://www.sccma.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=cDXbFWx_3Dw%3d&portalid=19. I've attached a Score Card that provides an overview of the pros and cons of synthetic turf vs. natural grass playing fields.

Score Card: Synthetic Turf vs. Natural Grass Playing Fields

Impact	Synthetic Turf	Natural Grass	Comments
Oil extraction/fracking	**Yes**	**No**	Emissions of GHG, particulate matter, VOC's and hazardous air pollutants in sacrifice zones [1] Source: Sierra Magazine 9/15/22
Petrochemical refining	**Yes**	**No**	
Manufacturing synthetic turf & underlayment pads	**Yes**	**No**	
Field Temperature - heatstroke, dehydration and thermal burns	**Temperature is 40-70 F above ambient air**	**Temperature is equal to ambient air**	Measured on warm sunny days
Release of PFAS, UV stabilizers, heavy metals, plasticizers …	**Yes**	**No**	Natural grass fields need to avoid synthetic pesticides and fertilizers
Release of microplastics	**Yes**	**No**	Inhaled/ingested/released to env.
Infection risk - MSRA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus)	**Pathogens survive on plastic surface**	**No**	Synthetic turf fields require bactericidal chemical treatment
Sports injuries	**Higher incidence**	**Absorbs impacts better**	
Robustness to intense use	**Yes**	**Yes**	Both require maintenance
Water use	**Manufacturing process Cooling and cleaning**	**Drought tolerant turf grass**	
Installation and maintenance cost	**$1.2M/field; 8-10 yr life**	**Lower installation cost**	Maintenance costs ~equal [2]
Climate change	**Methane from mfg. End of life off gassing for 450 years**	**Carbon sequestration**	
Soil biome health	**Baked/compacted soil**	**Maintains healthy soil**	
Hazardous waste disposal of at end of life (8-10 years)	**Yes, 50 tons/acre**	**No, composted**	

[1] These Are the New Titans of Plastic: Pennsylvania is just the latest sacrifice zone for the plastics industry https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2022-3-fall/feature/these-are-new-titans-plastic-shell-pennsylvania-fracking

[2] Costs: Grass vs. Synthetic Turf https://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/cost-grass-vs-synthetic-turf

Communication from Public

Name: Melanie Taylor
Date Submitted: 06/27/2024 03:55 PM
Council File No: 24-0602
Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), I am writing in regard to the Energy and Environment Committee's recent motion on synthetic turf. As the trade association representing the synthetic turf industry, we strongly believe in the importance of bringing diverse perspectives to the table in the policymaking process, including that of the thousands of individuals working in our industry and the many more who utilize the benefits of our products in communities in Los Angeles and across California and the nation. Public-private collaboration is one of the most important ways to drive the policymaking process and we are committed to playing our part. To that end, STC would like to be a resource and partner to the Committee in this process. On STC: The Synthetic Turf Council (STC) is a 501(c)6 non-profit trade association serving the synthetic turf industry. Its mission is to lead, educate and advocate for the synthetic turf industry. Founded in 2003, the STC assists buyers and end users with the selection, use and maintenance of synthetic turf systems in sports fields, golf, municipal parks, airports, landscape and residential applications. It is a resource for current, credible, and independent research on the safety and environmental impact of synthetic turf, as well as technical guidance on the selection, installation, maintenance, and environmentally responsible disposal of synthetic turf. Membership includes builders, landscape architects, testing labs, maintenance providers, manufacturers, suppliers, installation contractors, infill material suppliers and other specialty service companies. On synthetic turf safety: Synthetic turf is a highly researched and safe product that gives tens of millions of people additional access to various forms of recreation. Synthetic turf fields, including their components such as recycled rubber and alternative infills, have been reviewed by independent experts and government bodies to ensure synthetic turf’s safety and viability as an option in addition to grass. Recently, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted a multi-agency report and the largest research effort on crumb rubber ever conducted in the United States, in which it reaffirmed synthetic turf's safety. "In general, the findings from the entire playing fields portion of the FRAP activities (both the Tire Crumb Characterization Part 1 and the Tire Crumb Exposure Characterization Part 2 combined) support the conclusion that

although chemicals are present (as expected) in the tire crumb rubber and exposures can occur, they are likely limited." On the manufacturing front, STC has worked with its members to ensure their products contain no intentionally-added PFAS constituents. STC members are committed to finding a standardized testing method to confirm that their products contain no intentionally-added PFAS constituents. As an example, STC member Tencate announced it removed even trace amounts of PFAS from its products. - On a standardized testing method: STC members are working through ASTM International in formalizing a testing process to confirm that our members' products do not contain intentionally-added PFAS. On synthetic turf's benefits: There are significant advantages to using synthetic turf, which is why schools, families, and communities across the nation are choosing to utilize it. - Turf expands year-round access while increasing access. This is especially critical in urban areas where, typically, there is less space available to promote year-round enjoyment and activity for children of all ages. A typical synthetic turf field can be used three times as much as a comparably sized grass field. A grass field simply cannot remain lush if it is used more than three to four days a week, or in the rain. In such conditions, a field may become rock-hard and unsafe for play. Since synthetic turf is built to last and can withstand so much wear and tear, many schools can even rent their synthetic turf fields to local sports teams and organizations to bring in extra funding. This frees up new funds for the classroom. - Of particular importance to California, synthetic turf requires much less water to maintain compared to grass systems. One full-size synthetic turf sports field can save over 1 million gallons of water each season. Synthetic turf also offers a number of other environmental benefits, including eliminating the need for chemical pesticides and fertilizers that might runoff into communities' water systems.

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MELANIE TAYLOR, CAE
President & CEO

CHELSEA DAVIDSON, QAS
Association Coordinator

June 27, 2024

Katy Yaroslavsky
Chair
City of Los Angeles
Energy and Environment Committee
200 N Spring St., Suite 440
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chair Yaroslavsky,

On behalf of the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), I am writing in regard to the Energy and Environment Committee's recent motion on synthetic turf. As the trade association representing the synthetic turf industry, we strongly believe in the importance of bringing diverse perspectives to the table in the policymaking process, including that of the thousands of individuals working in our industry and the many more who utilize the benefits of our products in communities in Los Angeles and across California and the nation. Public-private collaboration is one of the most important ways to drive the policymaking process and we are committed to playing our part. To that end, STC would like to be a resource and partner to the Committee in this process.

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- **On a standardized testing method:** STC members are working through ASTM International in formalizing a testing process to confirm that our members' products do not contain intentionally-added PFAS.

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There are significant advantages to using synthetic turf, which is why schools, families, and communities across the nation are choosing to utilize it.

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- **Of particular importance to California, synthetic turf requires much less water to maintain compared to grass systems.** One full-size synthetic turf sports field can save over 1 million gallons of water each season. Synthetic turf also offers a number of other environmental benefits, including eliminating the need for chemical pesticides and fertilizers that might runoff into communities' water systems.

The STC supports the continuous advancement of the safety, performance and growth of recycling opportunities of synthetic turf systems. The use of reclaimed and recycled materials from synthetic turf fields is growing. Our industry takes seriously our commitment to sustainable practices and is working hard toward more recycling and responsible end-of-life solutions. To that end, many of our members have already put in place recycling programs, while our industry is working together with regulators and lawmakers in states nationwide to align on the best practices for end-of-life processes. We are committed to continuing to move the industry toward a more sustainable future.

We value the role of the Energy and Environment Committee and other regulatory bodies in ensuring the safety of the surfaces we use, and the Synthetic Turf Council looks forward to partnering with the Committee on this and other related issues.

Sincerely,

Melanie Taylor, CAE
President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council (STC)

Communication from Public

Name:	Katie Tilford
Date Submitted:	06/28/2024 09:25 AM
Council File No:	24-0602
Comments for Public Posting:	Please accept the attached SUPPORT letter from Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants. - Katie Tilford, Interim Executive Director, Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants

THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

(818) 768-1802
10459 TUXFORD STREET
SUN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 91352
THEODOREPAYNE.ORG

June 28, 2024

Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky, Chair
Energy and Environment Committee
LA City Council c/o City Clerk
200 North Spring St, Room 395
Los Angeles CA 90012

RE: Support for Motion to Transition Away from Artificial Turf (CF 24-0602)

Honorable Councilmember Yaroslavsky and Energy and Environment committee members:

The Theodore Payne Foundation, whose mission is to inspire and educate Southern Californians about the beauty end ecological benefits of California native plant landscapes, strongly supports today's motion, authored by Councilmembers Blumenfield, Yaroslovsky and Hernandez, to transition the city away from the use of artificial turf on city property, and city wide. We now know the harms that synthetic turf causes—from damaging ecosystem health to increasing heat effects where this blanket of plastic is installed, and so we applaud efforts to cease installations, consider how to remove existing turf, and encourage residents and businesses city wide to make this switch.

Theodore Payne Foundation further suggests that the ideal replacement for artificial turf is California native plants. LA residents are increasingly affected by rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, and heightened wildfire risks. Our region needs more greenspaces not only to benefit residents' physical and mental well-being, but also for carbon sequestration, heat-island mitigation, wildfire defense, and natural resource conservation. Having adapted to our local climate over thousands of years, California native plants are drought-tolerant and beneficial to the local ecosystem, making them uniquely suited to the climate challenges Angelenos face. Following this motion, we encourage the city council to continue along the path of strengthening the city's commitment to protecting biodiversity and saving water, and consider strategies to convert city landscapes to California native plants.

Sincerely,

Katie Tilford

Katie Tilford, Interim Executive Director

Communication from Public

Name: Synthetic Turf Council
Date Submitted: 06/28/2024 12:15 PM
Council File No: 24-0602
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President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council (STC)