



PARKS, ARTS, RECREATION & CULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

September 15, 2026 - 6:30 PM
Los Altos Community Center - Sequoia Room
97 Hillview Ave, Los Altos, CA 94022

PARTICIPATION: Members of the public may participate by being present at the Los Altos Community Center, Sequoia Room, 97 Hillview Ave, Los Altos, CA 94022. Public comment is accepted in person at the physical meeting location, or via email to PARCPublicComment@losaltosca.gov.

RULES FOR CONDUCT: Pursuant to Los Altos Municipal Code, Section 2.05.010 "Interruptions and rules for conduct": Understanding that the purpose of the city council meetings is to conduct the people's business for the benefit of all the people, in the event that any meeting of the city council is willfully interrupted by a person or group of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting impossible, the mayor, mayor pro tem, or any other member of the city council acting as the chair may order the removal of the person or persons responsible for the disruption and bar them from further attendance at the council meeting, or otherwise proceed pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.0 or any applicable penal statute or city ordinance.

REMOTE MEETING OBSERVATION: Members of the public may view the meeting via the link below, but will not be permitted to provide public comment via Zoom or telephone. Public comment will be taken in-person, and members of the public may provide written public comment by following the instructions below.

<https://losaltosca-gov.zoom.us/j/82872609477?pwd=xrLTvKXWk0JnPDJGt6cJtxo26NmJrs.1>

Telephone: 1-669-444-9171 / Webinar ID: 828 7260 9477 / Passcode: 096202

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS: Prior to the meeting, comments on matters listed on the agenda may be emailed to PARCpubliccomment@losaltosca.gov.

Please note: Personal information, such as e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, home addresses, and other contact information are not required to be included with your comments. If this information is included in your written comments, they will become part of the public record. Redactions and/or edits will not be made to public comments, and the comments will be posted as they are submitted. Please do not include any information in your communication that you do not want to be made public.

The Chair will open public comment and will announce the length of time provided for comments during each item.

ESTABLISH QUORUM

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Members of the audience may bring to the Commission's attention any item that is not on the agenda. Please complete a "Request to Speak" form and submit it to the Staff Liaison. Speakers are generally given two or three minutes, at the discretion of the Chair. Please be advised that, by law, the Commission is unable to discuss or take action on issues presented during the Public Comment Period. According to State Law (also known as "the Brown Act") items must first be noticed on the agenda before any discussion or action.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

1. **Minutes:** Approve minutes of the August 18, 2026 PARC regular meeting
2. **Playground surfacing:** Receive report from the Ad-Hoc Committee and provide a recommendation to staff
3. **Call for Art:** Receive an update and discuss the process for future calls for art

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Australian Cattle Dog statue relocation
- Halloween Movie Night — October 17
- Art Fund update

COMMISSION/SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mosaic bench working pair update

REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

SPECIAL NOTICES TO THE PUBLIC

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and California Law, it is the policy of the City of Los Altos to offer its programs, services and meetings in a manner that is readily accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability and require information or materials in an appropriate alternative format; or if you require any other accommodation, please contact department staff. Advance notification within this guideline will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility. The City ADA Coordinator can be reached at (650) 947-2607 or by email: ada@losaltosca.gov.

Casey Richardson

From: Joe Eyre <joe.eyre@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 5, 2026 11:20 AM
To: Public Comment; Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Playground Surfaces in Los Altos Parks

Dear Los Altos City Council Members and PARC Commissioners,

I believe that playground surfaces will be discussed during your meetings this month, particularly for Grant and Shoup Parks. I suggest that going forward you use natural products (such as Engineered Wood Fiber or wood chips) for the playground surfaces, rather than synthetic materials such as artificial turf or poured-in-place rubberized products (similar to what was just used at the exercise area near the Hillview baseball field).

I realize that synthetic surfaces appear to be safe and less expensive to maintain, but I really dislike the idea of propagating the use of artificial materials that age over time to be unattractive, unrepairable, and eventually a huge amount of landfill waste. Playgrounds have been fine with wood chips for decades and to suddenly start using synthetic surfaces seems unnecessary and unsustainable.

Thank you,
Joe Eyre
390 E. Edith Ave.
Los Altos
joe.eyre@gmail.com

Casey Richardson

From: Pat Marriott <patmarriott@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Saturday, September 5, 2026 1:22 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Fw: PUBLIC COMMENT SEPT 15, 2026 PLAYGROUND SURFACE UPGRADE

Commissioners:



Please watch this short video before you decide to use PIP on our playgrounds: [CBS News Report](#)

It should convince you that replacing the natural playground surfaces at Shoup and Grant Parks with Poured-In-Place rubber (PIP) would be a terrible idea.

On an 82°F day, PIP surfaces can hit 160°F or higher, hot enough to cause contact burns -- like those in the photo -- within seconds. That's a huge risk for young children, who may touch or walk barefoot or fall on playground surfaces.

Please say NO to PIP!

Thank you,
Pat Marriott

Casey Richardson

From: Brion LaPointe <brionlap@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 5, 2026 8:30 PM
To: Public Comment
Cc: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026 - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Subject: Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026 - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Dear Los Altos City Council members & cc: PARC Commissioners,

I am a longtime Los Altos resident and live just three house lots east of Grant Park on Holt Avenue. I use the park regularly and greatly value it, as do many of my neighbors. Grant Park is a beautiful community resource whose appeal comes in large part from its natural setting and well-maintained facilities, including its playgrounds.

This issue is also personal to my family. We are expecting two grandchildren who will live in San Mateo and San Francisco, and we look forward to having them use the Grant Park playground when they visit us. We want them—and all children who use Los Altos parks—to be able to play in an environment that minimizes unnecessary exposure to synthetic materials and chemicals.

For that reason, I was dismayed to learn that the City's preferred plan is to replace the existing Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) surfaces with poured-in-place rubber as playgrounds are upgraded. In my view, replacing EWF with PIP would be a significant step in the wrong direction.

PIP introduces legitimate health and environmental concerns that deserve careful consideration, particularly when the material will be installed in places specifically intended for young children. Natural playground surfacing alternatives are available that can provide appropriate fall protection and accessibility without introducing the same concerns associated with synthetic rubber surfaces.

When there are reasonable alternatives, I believe the City should apply a precautionary approach: choose the playground surface that minimizes potential exposure to synthetic chemicals, reduces environmental impacts, and preserves the natural character of our parks.

These playground improvements will remain in place for many years. The decision therefore affects not only today's children but future generations of Los Altos families. I believe the City Council has a responsibility to make the safest and most environmentally responsible choice available rather than unnecessarily introducing additional synthetic materials into our parks.

Please reject PIP rubber surfacing for Grant Park and other Los Altos playgrounds and direct City staff and the PARC Commission to evaluate and select natural surfacing alternatives.

Thank you for considering the long-term health of our children, our parks, and our community.

Sincerely,

Brion LaPointe
1621 Holt Ave
Los Altos, CA 94024

Casey Richardson

From: Laura Fay <fay.laura@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2026 3:34 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026 - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks
Attachments: PIP Objection Letters to Los Altos City Council.pdf

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers, cc: PARC Commissioners,

Please protect our children's health and reject Poured-in-Place playground surfaces as Los Altos playgrounds are upgraded. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces. PIP is a serious downgrade from the current Engineered-Wood-Fiber (EWF) playground surface, for numerous well documented short term harm, longer term health, heat and numerous other environmental considerations. Natural play surfaces should be maximized to avoid many of the health and environmental concerns associated with PIP.

The 64 people below wish to voice this same request to you. This is a representative sample of concerned parents and grandparent Los Altans from the Shoup and Grant park neighborhoods. Their individual letters are attached here.

First Name	Last Name	Time of Letter
Rahul	Bammi	2026-05-04 22:21:21 ET
Lynnn	Boucher	2026-05-02 14:03:25 ET
Allison	Brown	2026-05-05 00:11:30 ET
Katherine	Carpenter	2026-05-04 09:39:33 ET
Wan Ching	Chang	2026-05-02 14:30:58 ET
Emily	Chen	2026-05-02 14:16:18 ET
Mike and Pat	Cleary	2026-05-02 13:44:03 ET
E. Tracy	Cohan	2026-05-02 14:44:11 ET
Russell	Cohan	2026-05-02 14:39:40 ET
Jill	Curcio	2026-05-03 11:29:50 ET
Stephanie	Deck	2026-05-02 16:32:41 ET
Badreddin	Edris	2026-05-02 14:12:27 ET
Ingrid	Espinosa	2026-05-03 12:18:08 ET
Viviana	Espinosa	2026-05-03 22:23:11 ET
Nadia	Espinosa	2026-05-02 13:32:24 ET
Valeria	Faraci Sindra	2026-05-02 18:28:19 ET
Kathy	FitzGerald	2026-05-03 11:01:48 ET
Mattieu	Gamache-Asselin	2026-05-25 13:26:00 ET
Kinjal	Gavadiya	2026-05-02 17:12:29 ET
Annette	Graff	2026-05-02 19:15:40 ET
Douglas	Greiman	2026-05-03 13:09:24 ET
Robert	Hall	2026-05-01 20:58:48 ET

Sitara	Holla	2026-05-02 14:21:33 ET
Linda	Hutchins-Knowles	2026-05-03 20:30:00 ET
Theresa	lantosca	2026-05-02 14:15:59 ET
Theresa	lantosca	2026-05-02 14:40:02 ET
Theresa	lantosca	2026-05-02 18:55:50 ET
Sumia	Ibrahim	2026-05-02 14:16:39 ET
Padmini	Jaikumar	2026-05-04 23:47:15 ET
Kristin	Kado	2026-05-03 11:28:48 ET
Dhruva	Kashyap	2026-05-02 14:52:52 ET
Chitra	Kashyap	
Jennifer	Keller	2026-05-02 13:06:24 ET
Eduard	Keller	2026-05-02 13:07:32 ET
Inna	Kupershmidt	2026-05-02 15:44:10 ET
Florence	Lin	2026-05-09 13:50:59 ET
Jim	Loveland	2026-04-28 19:24:33 ET
Jim	Loveland	2026-04-28 19:24:33 ET
Tony	Lu	2026-05-04 22:25:34 ET
Kuo	Lu	2026-05-04 22:22:21 ET
Cindy	Lu	2026-05-04 22:23:46 ET
Ashley	Lu	2026-05-04 22:45:10 ET
Albert	Luo	2026-05-04 00:47:11 ET
Jessica	Lyall	2026-05-03 23:33:14 ET
John	McKenna	2026-05-02 02:49:32 ET
Jenna	Moore	2026-05-03 23:29:13 ET
David	Moore	2026-05-03 23:32:50 ET
Smidth	Panchamia	2026-05-04 09:44:56 ET
Vishal	Pandya	2026-05-02 12:47:05 ET
Bernard	Parente	2026-05-24 23:13:17 ET
Jarod	Partlo	2026-05-02 17:47:25 ET
Lisa	Paterson	2026-05-02 17:05:15 ET
Karen	Rizkalla	2026-05-08 21:50:03 ET
Michael	Rizkalla	2026-05-08 21:50:44 ET
Maitreyi	Roy	2026-05-02 14:07:21 ET
Daryl	Shafran	2026-05-04 15:35:03 ET
Mike	Shafran	2026-05-04 15:38:13 ET
Shimol	Shah	2026-05-03 21:05:53 ET
Shibani	Shah	2026-05-03 21:51:13 ET
Parth	Shah	2026-05-04 00:49:28 ET
Monica	T	2026-05-02 19:56:31 ET
Christa-Lynn	Vampola	2026-05-03 09:29:01 ET
Suparna	Vashisht	2026-05-02 12:42:55 ET
Cynthia	Verbitzky	2026-05-02 14:14:54 ET
ANDREA	WALD	2026-05-02 08:07:15 ET
Ken	Wang	2026-05-02 14:46:03 ET
Cheryl	Weiden	2026-05-02 22:00:46 ET

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Laura Fay

[\(650\) 776-4352](tel:(650)776-4352) | Fay.Laura@Gmail.com | [LinkedIn](#)

"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it" - Robert Swan

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 22:25:34 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short-term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Tony Lu

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 12:18:08 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Ingrid Espinosa

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 12:47:05 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Vishal Pandya

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 13:06:24 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Jennifer Keller

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 13:07:32 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I live right next to the park and my kids use it everyday. I DO NOT want my children exposed to forever chemicals.

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely,

Eduard Keller

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 13:32:24 ET

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Nadia Espinosa

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 13:44:03 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install/maintain natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park

We would prefer the current small wood chips or other natural materials be used at Grant Park and other parks within the City. Our kids and grandkids have used and enjoyed nearby Grant Park over the past 50 years through it's progressive changes which have utilized natural surfaces.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Mike and Pat Cleary

Mike and Pat Cleary

1501 Elnora Court

Los Altos

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:03:25 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Lynn Boucher

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:07:21 ET

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There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

I have lived in Los Altos for over 2 years now and my little kids use Grant Prank very regularly.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Maitreyi Roy

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:12:27 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I have two young children who love to go to both Grant and Shoup park – we go to each park several times per week.

As a Stanford-trained PhD in the biomedical sciences, I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely,

Dr. Badreddin Edris

1658 Ben Roe Drive, Los Altos

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:14:54 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Cynthia Verbitzky

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:15:59 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

We have lived in the Grant Park area since 1975. Our kids and grandkids grew up enjoying the park. Please don't ruin it by installing PIP playground material.

Sincerely,

Theresa lantosca

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:16:18 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Emily Chen

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:16:39 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

I'm a parent of a 2.5 year old that lives in the Grant Park neighborhood and we play there daily. I do not want him exposed to toxic chemicals at the neighborhood playground.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely,

Sumia Ibrahim

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:21:33 ET

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Sincerely,

Sitara Holla

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:30:58 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Wan Ching Chang

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:39:40 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Russell Cohan

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:40:02 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

We have lived in the Grant Park area since 1975. Our children and grandchildren have grown up using the park. Please don't ruin it by installing PIP surfaces.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Theresa lantosca

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:44:11 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Elizabeth Tracy Cohan

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:46:03 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Ken Wang

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 14:52:52 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Dhruva Kashyap

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 15:44:10 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Inna Kupershimdt

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 16:32:41 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

We fully support the upgrade of our city however the choice to use PIP rubber at Shoup Park is alarming and there are safe alternatives available. We are sadly in an era where cancer rates in young people are soaring and these measures are vital in trying to reduce the toxicity we are exposing our kids to.

There is so much evidence all over the world that these rubber products are 100% proven harmful.

Please listen to the parents.

Stephanie Deck

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 17:05:15 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Lisa Peterson

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 17:12:29 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Kinjal Gavadiya

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 17:47:25 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

We urge the City of Los Altos to prioritize natural playground surfaces and reconsider the use of poured-in-place (PIP) rubber at Shoup Park and in future park projects.

We live on University Avenue, just steps from Shoup Park, and care deeply about maintaining a safe, usable, and environmentally responsible space for families in our community.

There are well-established natural alternatives to PIP rubber, including engineered wood fiber (EWF) and cork-based products, that provide safe fall protection without the hazards associated with PIP rubber. These options are widely used, cost-effective, and align with a more natural park environment.

PIP rubber is typically made from recycled tire materials bound with polyurethane, which could expose our children to heavy metals, cancer-causing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and other hazardous "forever chemicals." Exposure can occur through hand-to-mouth contact, dust inhalation, or chewing on debris. We want to bring our children to Shoup Park without worrying about the consequences to their health. Given the breadth of alternatives available, we hope you will choose one that doesn't pose a health risk to our young children that could last their entire lives.

PIP rubber surfaces can also reach extreme temperatures significantly higher than ambient air on sunny days, which limits usability and poses a burn risk for children on days the park is most likely to be busy. We walk Old Los Altos daily and we also wouldn't want our neighborhood impacted by the heat island this new surface would inevitably generate. Given how frequently Shoup Park is used during warm weather and given the potential effect on our neighborhood, please consider PIP rubber's heat retention in your decision.

We are concerned about long-term environmental impacts, as well. As these materials age and break down, they can release particulates that contaminate surrounding soil and run off into our limited water resources, including Adobe Creek. Natural playground surfaces are more compatible with soil health, permeability, vegetation, and clean ground water. Along with the adjacent Redwood Grove, Shoup Park is our most valued natural space in this beautiful neighborhood. Any improvements should enhance - not detract from - its environmental quality and long-term sustainability.

For these reasons, we respectfully implore city officials to prioritize natural surfacing materials that maintain our children's safety, their long-term well-being, and the health of our environment.

Sincerely,

Jarod Partlo & Taylor Howell

565 University Avenue

2026-05-02 18:55:50 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

We have lived in the Grant Park area since 1975. Our children and grandchildren have grown up using Grant Park. Please do not install a PIP surface in the park. Don't ruin the park for the children who live in this area.

Thank You

Sincerely,

Theresa Lay Lantosca

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 19:15:40 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely, Annette Graff

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 19:56:31 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Monica T

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 22:00:46 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I am concerned about the potential long-term impact of poured-in-place (PIP) rubber playground surfaces on Los Altos groundwater.

Groundwater is an important part of our local drinking water supply, and our community has water pumps and holding tanks located throughout residential neighborhoods. Because PIP surfaces contain recycled rubber and chemical binders, I believe the City should proceed cautiously and fully evaluate possible runoff and leaching impacts before installing these surfaces at Shoup and Grant Parks.

Once groundwater is contaminated, cleanup is extremely difficult and costly. Since safer alternative playground surfaces exist, including engineered wood fiber and cork-based materials, I urge the City Council to pause and carefully review the environmental and groundwater implications before moving forward.

Please prioritize the long-term health of our parks, soil, groundwater, and community.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Weiden

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 09:29:01 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

My family lives near Grant Park. We have 3 kids, now 8, 10 and 12 years old that have grown up playing at Grant Park. Before starting school at Montclair, they were there twice per day with grandma and we spent our Sundays at Shoup Park after church at St Nicks. I am deeply concerned since learning about the plan to replace the tan bark with rubber at both these parks. This rubber is very toxic and gets absorbed through the kid's skin and processed through the kidneys. What will end up in the creek? Especially as the rubber ages and breaks down?

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely,

Christa-Lynn Vampola

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 11:01:48 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

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Sincerely,

Kathy FitzGerald

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 11:28:48 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Kristin Kado

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 11:29:50 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

With so many disappointing, depressing leadership decisions being made right now, is Los Altos really going to pile on top and approve this synthetic installation over maintaining a natural ground cover in Shoup Park. I've lived on Orange Avenue for 30 years. Our kids grew up in Shoup Park on these playgrounds. It is heartbreaking to think that today's City Council members would make such an unsafe, unhealthy choice for its people.

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely,

Jill Curcio

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 13:09:24 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

Hi.

I live next to Grant Park. I've watched generations of kids play. My family, other people's families. Toddlers, children, teenagers, adults. And the thought of turning it into a chemical waste dump makes me shake with fury.

So ask yourself, what kind of person are you? Are you the kind of person that seeks to poison our children and our natural spaces? Are you filled with the callous disregard that seems so common today?

No, no you are not. I know you are not. So be better. Choose better. Do not pour cancer into our playgrounds.

If you want to talk to me more about this, by all means, stop by. I'd be absolutely delighted to discuss the matter.

Sincerely,

Douglas Greiman

1889 Grant Park Lane,

Los Altos, CA 94024

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 21:05:53 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Shimol Shah

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 21:51:13 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Shibani Shah

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 23:29:13 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Jenna Moore

Lifetime resident of Los Altos and former PARC Commissioner

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 23:32:50 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

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Sincerely,

David Moore

Thirteen year resident of Los Altos and father of two children who frequent Grant Park"

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 23:33:14 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

My children love the amazing Grant Park, our neighborhood park. I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Jessica Lyall

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 00:47:11 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

To Whom It May Concern:

I am physician and a father of 2 daughters who attend public elementary school in Los Altos, and we have lived adjacent to Grant Park for the past 9 years.

The playground surface at our parks should remain natural. Beyond the obvious environmental concerns regarding the manufacture, installation, and degradation of a synthetic surface from wear and weathering which should themselves be prohibitive, there is the simple discomfort and potential danger of playing on a hot artificial surface.

Our girls have practically grown up in Grant Park and have loved the nature aspect of the wood chips and sand at the playground. On countless occasions they have used the wood pieces as currency for their imaginary ice cream shops, or as cookies and crackers for their fantasy picnics, all while never having suffered any injury jumping and sliding into the ground. And all without our needing to worry about any unnecessarily additional microplastics exposure or excessively hot surfaces.

Like many of my other fellow parent neighbors are requesting, please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Albert Luo, MD

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 00:49:28 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

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Sincerely,

Parth Shah

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 09:39:33 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Aside from the environmental and health concerns, I don't want the City to spend money fixing problems that aren't there- the current play surfaces are fine. If the City wants to spend money on parks, please invest in newer playground equipment or repairs to what's there, added trees or benches, and ensuring that pathways are smooth and ADA-accessible.

Sincerely,

Katherine Winant Carpenter

Resident since childhood in 1985, now raising my own kids here!"

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 09:44:56 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Smidth Panchamia

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 15:35:03 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Daryl Shafran

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 15:38:13 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Mike Shafran

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 22:21:21 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Rahul Bammi

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 22:22:21 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

Think about our children's future. Keep the tan bark!!

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely, Kuo Lu

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 22:23:46 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Cindy Lu

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 22:45:10 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Ashley Lu

Time Stamp: 2026-05-04 23:47:15 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I have two young kids who use the park everyday. We stay right across the street from the park, and the park was one of the reasons for us purchasing our home.

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely,

Padmini Jaikumar

Time Stamp: 2026-05-05 00:11:30 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

My daughter loves to play at parks and we often go to Grant Park.

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

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Sincerely,

Allison Brown

Time Stamp: 2026-05-08 21:50:03 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Karen Rizkalla

Time Stamp: 2026-05-08 21:50:44 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

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Sincerely,

Michael Rizkalla

Time Stamp: 2026-05-09 13:50:59 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

I have resided in Los Altos since 2011. I'm very concerned about forever chemicals on the playground on which my children play and the possibility of groundwater contamination. Please reject PIP on our playgrounds.

Sincerely,

Florence Lin

Time Stamp: 2026-05-24 23:13:17 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Bernard Parente

Time Stamp: 2026-05-25 13:26:00 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Mattieu Gamache-Asselin

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 12:42:55 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Suparna Vashisht

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 02:49:32 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I'm the father of a twelve-year-old, lived in Los Altos for many years, and graduated from Los Altos High School. It's a wonderful and safe community that we often visit. It greatly concerns me that so many natural settings, including playing surfaces (playgrounds and athletic fields) for our youth, are being replaced with unsafe artificial materials that harm both human and environmental health.

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

John McKenna

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 22:23:11 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Viviana Espinosa

Time Stamp: 2026-05-01 20:58:48 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Robert Hall

Time Stamp: 2026-04-28 19:24:33 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Jim Loveland

Time Stamp: 2026-05-03 20:30:00 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

When my children were little, we gathered each week with a group of other mothers and children at Shoup Park. The kids loved the big grassy field and the creek running along the edge of the park. This time in nature was priceless, as my kids were visibly calmer and happier after a day playing in the grassy park and playground, and I could relax knowing they weren't being exposed to toxic chemicals and were breathing in clean, healthy air.

So I was horrified to learn that the City of Los Altos is considering installing toxic, off-gasing and very hot Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber at Shoup and Grant park playgrounds.

I urge the Mayor and City Councilmembers to reject this proposal, and insist that ALL city park playgrounds are updated only with natural play surfaces, such as Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) or Corkeen.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including: heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

Natural play surfaces like EWF and Corkeen are much safer since they don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Therefore, as a mother, I ask that you direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children. Please also act to avoid contamination of Los Altos' drinking water and instead optimize the health of adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Linda Hutchins-Knowles

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 08:07:15 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I've written and made public comments many times to city council and various commissions in Los Altos and actually locally in the Bay Area and across the US.

I, once again, am urging that Los Altos do the right thing for the environment and the health of not only your kids but the planet and the rest of us, to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

By now I'm certain you are aware of all the harms this petrochemical product is being linked to - not to mention it gets unbearably hot and is not recyclable.

Please stay with the current surface that has been used not only in Los Altos parks but many others around the Bay Area and beyond - Engineered Wood Fiber.

Please direct city staff to not allow anymore PIP into your parks and playgrounds.

Sincerely,

Andrea Wald

Co-Founder, Community for Natural Play Surfaces

Time Stamp: 2026-05-02 18:28:19 ET

Subject: Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-in-Place playground surfaces

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds.

There are numerous health and environmental problems associated with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces including, heat islands, injuries resulting from UV degradation, chemical exposure, chemical runoff into our groundwater, reduced soil moisture, increased adjacent vegetation stress.

There are safer natural play surfaces (Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and Corkeen) that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that factor both the short term AND long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Sincerely,

Valeria Faraci Sindra

Casey Richardson

From: Nyssa Kansal <nyssakansal@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 2:45 AM
To: Public Comment
Cc: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026 - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers, cc: PARC Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly urge you to reject PIP playground surfaces on any Los Altos playground. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces.

I am a teenager who lives near Shoup Park and use it regularly to play with my friends and sometimes with my brother. It is a beautiful resource that I, and my neighbors appreciate for its natural setting and well maintained facilities, including the playgrounds.

I was dismayed to learn that the City's preferred plan is to replace the current Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) surface with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber as the playgrounds are upgraded.

PIP is a serious downgrade from the current playground surface. Natural play surfaces exist that avoid many of the health and environmental concerns associated with PIP.

Sincerely,
Nyssa.

Casey Richardson

From: Laura Fay <fay.laura@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 7:37 AM
To: Public Comment
Cc: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026 - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

To: PublicComment@LosAltosCA.gov
Cc: PARCPublicComment@LosAltosCA.gov

Subject: Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026 - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers, cc: PARC Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly urge you direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to prioritize natural surfaces and reject large swaths of PIP rubber surfaces.

The city has made the following statement in relation to the playground surface upgrades:

“The City also prioritizes access and safety when selecting playground surfacing. PIP provides a firm, stable surface that allows children and caregivers using wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility devices to move throughout the playground. While engineered wood fiber is ADA compliant when properly installed and maintained, it does not provide the same practical level of accessibility. It shifts, compacts and develops uneven areas through normal use, making it considerably more difficult to navigate with mobility devices. ”

There are 3 main points to be made in response to the above statement:

- The city cites higher maintenance costs to maintain EWF as ADA compliant, however there is no reference to the fact that PIP rubber surfaces have significantly higher up-front costs and a higher 10-year lifetime cost.
- Why is ok for the city to spend more on a less suitable surface? The answer comes down to how the city is prepared to spend its tax dollars. It's about a preference to spend upfront (from capital equipment funds) vs. ongoing maintenance cost (from operating funds). Thankfully the Los Altos's finances are strong. Let's not compromise the health of our children and their safe enjoyment of our parks, the health of the surrounding vegetation, and contribute to the heat generation in the face of our warming planet for the sake of accounting budget buckets.
- Where ongoing maintenance costs are of concern to the city, the maintenance cost of EWF can be lowered significantly with playground wear mats. These are heavy-duty rubber pads placed under high-impact zones like swing sets and slide exits to protect the ground surface and prevent dangerous holes (see below for more detail). When covered with EWF, these are less toxic and more limited than PIP rubber surfaces.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

EWF VS PIP – CHARACTERISTICS AND COST

EWF is roughly 25–35% cheaper over a 10-year window (source - Claude AI analysis), so why does the city want to spend more money on a ground cover that is the least preferred by residents?

Feature	EWF	PIP Rubber
Core Philosophy	Nature-based, open-ended play, and "beneficial risk".	High predictability, injury prevention, and "safety-first".
Sustainability Focus	Circular economy, biodegradable, and low carbon footprint.	Long lifecycle durability and utilizing recycled materials (like tires).
Upfront Cost	Lower upfront cost;	Higher upfront cost;
Ongoing Cost	Higher recurring maintenance.	Lower recurring maintenance.

RECAP WHY THE ADA CONSIDERS EWF A COMPLIANT SURFACE.

The [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) considers Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) compliant for wheelchairs because it meets specific physical testing standards, provided it is properly installed and maintained. Under the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, playground surfaces on accessible routes must be firm, stable, and slip-resistant. EWF achieves this status through specific engineering and testing protocols:

- **Balancing Safety and Mobility:** EWF is widely utilized because it simultaneously satisfies two conflicting requirements: it is firm enough to pass accessibility standards (ASTM F1951), yet resilient and impact-absorbing enough to meet fall-attenuation safety protocols (ASTM F1292)
- **Interlocking "Knit-Down" Structure:** Unlike standard decorative wood chips or landscape mulch, EWF is manufactured from the interior soft fibers of virgin wood, cut into specific 1-to-2-inch lengths. When layered, compressed, and properly tamped down during installation, these fibers interlock (or "knit down"). This creates a dense, compacted mat that is solid enough to support the weight of mobility devices like wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)]
- **Passing the ASTM F1951 Test:** To meet the ADA definition of an accessible surface, a material must pass the ASTM F1951 standard. This test uses a rotational penetrometer to objectively measure the baseline physical work and force required to propel a standard wheelchair across a straight path and a turn. When freshly installed and compacted, certified EWF falls below the maximum rolling resistance threshold. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)]

- A playground utilizing EWF is **only legally compliant if it undergoes routine maintenance**—including regular raking, adding wear mats under high-traffic zones (like swings and slide exits), and frequent top-offs to maintain the required compressed depth. [[1](#), [2](#)]
- EWF can easily be racked to be even and more added whenever needed. It is a simple maintenance issue. Conversely, when PIP wears out, not only is it unsafe to use, but it breaks down (see photo below) this can cause significant accessibility issues.

OVERVIEW OF PLAYGROUND WEAR MATS

Playground wear mats are heavy-duty rubber pads placed under high-impact zones like swing sets and slide exits to protect the ground surface and prevent dangerous holes. [[1](#), [2](#)]

Key Functions and Benefits

- **Prevents Surface Displacement:** Stops kids from kicking or pushing loose-fill materials (like wood fiber, gravel, or rubber mulch) out of place.
- **Eliminates Deep Holes:** Stops dangerous divots and ruts from forming where children land, run, or drag their feet.
- **Reduces Maintenance:** Cuts down on the constant need to rake and refill loose ground cover.
- **Improves Safety:** Adds an extra layer of shock absorption for heavy landings and prevents tripping hazards by keeping the ground level.
- **Aids Accessibility:** Helps playgrounds stay compliant with federal accessibility and safety laws. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#)]
- **Common Locations**
 - Under individual swings and swing bays
 - At the bottom exits of slides
 - Around spinning toys and merry-go-rounds
 - Beneath track rides and overhead climbing rings [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)]

Sincerely,
 Laura Fay
 30-year Los Altos resident

Casey Richardson

From: Peter Fay <lpfay@pacbell.net>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 8:20 PM
To: Public Comment
Cc: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: [External Sender]Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026 - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers, cc: PARC Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly urge you to reject PIP playground surfaces on any Los Altos playground. PIP rubber is not safe. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces.

Specifically, I want to address a statement made by the Los Altos city manager in recent weeks. *"The City has reviewed the available research regarding PIP and recycled rubber recreational surfaces, and the research supports their continued use as safe playground surfaces. California recently completed a comprehensive study of recycled rubber recreational surfaces and found no evidence that their use creates a health concern. Federal research comparing recycled-rubber surfaces with natural grass similarly found no meaningful difference in the measured exposure to the chemicals studied."*

Unfortunately the city, the rubber industry and other promoters of rubber surfaces in parks would have you believe that PIP is safe based on scientific study results, however, there are a number of points that refute the implied assumptions of PIP safety. Let's be very clear on these few points...

- **Lack of evidence of harm is NOT the same as proven evidence of safety.** Limitations with the referenced Federal study have been acknowledged by the government agencies themselves. Independent researchers continue to highlight concerns.
 - Federal study (EPA/CDC/ATSDR/CPSC Federal Research Action Plan
 - [EPA's 2019 Tire Crumb Rubber Characterization report \(Part 1 of the federal study\)](#)
 - [CDC/ATSDR's overview page for the full Federal Research Action Plan](#)
 - [CPSC's Crumb Rubber Safety Information Center](#)
- The city's reference to the California study (published in March 2026) **is a misguided attempt to distract from the reality that the study was explicitly NOT about PIP playground surfacing. Findings do not transfer to a "PIP playgrounds are safe" conclusion.** In fact, **the California study did not include PIP surfaces** at all. The study was focused on artificial turf in specific settings. Even so, the study concluded "no evidence of significant risk" based on available data. Again, is a formal risk-assessment finding, not a declaration of safety. It is also worth noting that two industry trade groups — the U.S. Rubber Manufacturers Association and the International Carbon Black Association were financial contributors to the referenced California study.
 - California study (OEHHA) on Artificial Turf
 - [OEHHA's release page with the summary/press release](#)

- The full final report PDF (March 2026) — this is the primary document, with the appendices, chemical list, and methodology
- Health researchers continue to express concern about PIP exposure.
 - Toxic chemicals lurk at playgrounds Reporting on researcher concerns about PAHs, phthalates, and VOCs in pour-in-place rubber playground surfacing. E&E News (POLITICO)
 - Toxic chemicals lurk at playgrounds NCHR's account of Diana Zuckerman's and Sarah Evans's concerns about chemical exposure and ingestion risk from PIP surfaces. National Center for Health Research
 - Playground lead levels in rubber, soil, sand, and mulch surfaces in Boston Peer-reviewed study comparing lead levels in poured-in-place rubber vs. other playground surfacing materials. PMC / NIH
 - Playground Surfacing: Fun & safety without toxic chemicals Covers Ecology Center lead testing, organophosphate ester flame retardants, surface heat, and microplastic shedding from PIP. Collaborative for Health & Environment
 - A review of the potential risks associated with chemicals present in poured-in-place rubber surfacing. Peer-reviewed literature review finding no identified chemical health risks in bound PIP systems, while noting data gaps. Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors
 - Playground Surfacing: Choosing Safer Materials for Children's Health and the Environment. TURI's comparative hazard assessment of playground surfacing materials, including PIP rubber. Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI)
 - Toxic chemicals lurk at playgrounds NCHR's account of Diana Zuckerman's and Sarah Evans's concerns about chemical exposure and ingestion risk from PIP surfaces. National Center for Health Research
 - Playground Surfacing: Fun & safety without toxic chemicals. Covers Ecology Center lead testing, organophosphate ester flame retardants, surface heat, and microplastic shedding from PIP. Collaborative for Health & Environment
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 - Playground Surfacing: Choosing Safer Materials for Children's Health and the Environment. TURI's comparative hazard assessment of playground surfacing materials, including PIP rubber. Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI)
- The **financial motivation of the rubber industry is real and significant**. The rubber industry works hard to convince cities and the public that rubber products are safe.
 - USTMA and TIA represent tire manufacturers and the broader tire industry, which generates roughly 300 million scrap tires a year in the U.S. Landfilling and stockpiling tires is expensive, environmentally risky (fire hazards, mosquito breeding), and increasingly restricted by state law. Playground and turf-infill markets are one of the biggest "beneficial use" outlets for that waste stream — 80 million discarded tires a year alone get processed into crumb rubber that becomes playground surfaces, synthetic turf infill, and other products. **If crumb rubber were declared unsafe for children, the industry would lose a major disposal outlet and face costs, liability, and reputational damage.** So they have a clear economic stake in the "recycled rubber is safe" conclusion. [Recycled materials](#)

- This has played out publicly. Concerns about crumb rubber on playgrounds and turf fields led to a joint federal investigation in 2016 by the EPA, CDC, and CPSC to see if there are possible health risks to young athletes, motivated partly because the EPA said existing studies didn't comprehensively evaluate the health-risk concerns from tire crumb exposure. Notably, before that federal probe, the synthetic turf industry had already been pointing to dozens of its own studies showing no link between crumb rubber and health risks — which is **exactly the kind of industry-funded reassurance that prompted regulators to step in with independent research**. [Watch CBS News +2](#)
 - TIA has been a staunch advocate for crumb rubber and has actively opposed state-level legislation seeking to restrict its use. The TIA is a trade association actively lobbying against restrictions.
 - Industry statements (TIA's, USTMA's, or a manufacturer's) shouldn't be your only source. The independent federal study is a stronger reference point than trade-association press releases, and even that study has real limitations that independent researchers continue to flag.
- The [National Center for Health Research has sent formal letters to municipalities](#) (e.g., Kensington, MD, 2025) opposing new PIP installations, citing both heat/burn risk and the lack of pre-market safety testing on PIP chemical composition.
 - The EPA, the CDC and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) wants us to be very [aware of the risk of thermal burns from playground equipment](#). All recommend the importance of washing after use, for example. These recommendations are in place for health reasons and no other.
 - With PIP, the city of Los Altos is introducing a new source of liability. Should there be claims of harm (like a toddler's foot burn for example) in the future, and the city was informed loudly by the community and formal institutions about the harm risks, and then chose to proceed with PIP installations anyway, the claimants are more likely to prevail.



Ref: [Toddler receives second-degree burns to feet from hot PIP Playground surface](#)

Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces.

Sincerely,
Peter Fay, MD

30 year Los Altos Resident

Casey Richardson

From: Stephen Dang <dangstephen100@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2026 3:56 PM
To: Public Comment; Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks - Public Comment Not on the Agenda

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers and PARC Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly urge you to reject PIP playground surfaces on any Los Altos playground. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces.

I am a parent with young children; we live near Grant Park and Shoup Park and use all the Los Altos Parks regularly. They are a beautiful resource that I, and my neighbors appreciate for their natural setting and well maintained facilities, including the playgrounds.

I was dismayed to learn that the City's preferred plan is to replace the current Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) surface with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber as the playgrounds are upgraded.

PIP is a serious downgrade from the current playground surface. Natural play surfaces exist that avoid many of the health and environmental concerns associated with PIP.

Sincerely,

Wei Dang, Via Huerta

Casey Richardson

From: Jim Alsup <jim.alsup@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2026 7:23 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Public Comment
Subject: Public Comment - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers and PARC Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly urge you to reject PIP playground surfaces on any Los Altos playground. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces.

I am a resident for over 27 years who lives near Grant Park and have used it and other Los Altos facilities over the years.

Please consider this warning:

PIP is made from recycled tires as a main source. I invite you to Google the impact using tires in roadways has had on Puget Sound's salmon population. This is an environmentally unproven product which is now proven to cause poisonous runoff into our aquifers and bay. Remember the little black rubber balls formerly used in astro turf for many years? It is now frowned upon in favor of environmentally safe alternatives.

Risking future generations health for a a unproven injury benefit is short-sighted. Has the city ever been sued over our current playground surfaces? Do you have independent data showing a significant injury differential for PIP surfaces in playground areas? A quick Google shows less injuries for playgrounds is not real. There is no need to do this. We have solutions that work and are environmentally proven to be safe.

Thank you,
Jim Alsup

Casey Richardson

From: Andrea Wald <waldmba@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2026 1:33 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Public Comment
Subject: PARC mtg 9-15-26 Agenda item #2: Grant and Shoup playgrounds

Dear Mayor, City Council members and PARC commissioners,

My wish for Los Altos residents and especially the youth – NO PIP in your playgrounds!

In looking through the documents contained in the agenda for Tuesday night's PARC meeting I was quite dismayed and disheartened to see the recommendation from the adHoc committee to include any PIP at all. Substantial evidence has already been provided to show that EWF is safe and a much healthier choice than PIP. If maintained properly (raked and infilled as needed) EWF provides as much if not more fall safety than PIP, which wears out over time, gets hard, cracks and needs total replacement. Although not explicitly stated, it seems that one major reason the city is using as an excuse to use any PIP at all is related to a maintenance issue. This should not be taken into account if you are truly interested in the issues related to health and the environment. Since PIP has not been proven to be totally safe from an environmental and health aspect, why are you taking a chance on the future of generations of Los Altans?

And why has the voice of Los Altans, who have voiced their desire for NO PIP (I've not heard a single individual say they were in favor of PIP), been ignored? From agenda attachment: "Grant-Shoup-Playground-Adhoc"

What residents told PARC				
PARCPublicComment + direct input · Aug 31 – Sep 9, 2026 · name + subject				
R3 · Research				
Themes: reject wall-to-wall PIP · want natural / cooler · heat & burn risk · chemicals · keep Shoup/Grant nature feel · ADA/cost rebuttals · pause for broader outreach				
Aug 31 Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks... Reject PIP; natural surfaces only	Aug 31 Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks... Natural only — Grant already poorly shaded	Aug 31 · Sep 9 Input regarding renovations... (pause / outreach) Reject PIP; pause for broader outreach (Sunnyvale model)	Sep 2 Grand Park and Stu Park: public comment... No rubberized cover — wood chips fit Shoup	Sep 2 Playground surface at Grant and Shoup Parks... PIP = downgrade vs EWF
Sep 5 Playground Surfaces in Los Altos Parks Prefer EWF / wood chips over synthetic	Sep 5 · 1:22pm PUBLIC COMMENT SEPT 15 — PLAYGROUND SURFACE No PIP — heat/burn risk (CBS video)	Sep 5 · 8:30pm Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026... Reject PIP at Grant; natural alternatives	Sep 6-7 Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026... Natural only; ~64-letter packet; ADA/cost rebuttal	Sep 7 Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026... Teen near Shoup — reject PIP; natural only

Shouldn't the city be responsive to residents who are paying taxes to cover these renovations and who will be using these facilities along with their children and grandchildren?

In "Item 2 - ATTACHMENT B - PARC Commission Surface Comparison" there is the following statement:

"A popular playground surface In Bay Area"

Why, as shown in "Item 2 - ATTACHMENT A - Playground Committee Report" (see screen shot below) is there no mention of any look into local playgrounds. There are many in Los Gatos, Saratoga and Cupertino that use

Casey Richardson

From: Robert Hall <bilgepump100@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2026 2:17 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Item 2, Public Comment on Playground Surfacing
Attachments: Schroeder-Park-Safe-Playground-Ideas-20220712.pdf

Why risk public health and the environment over playground surface choices? While our country is in the midst of yet another oil war it's absurd that our public officials continue to turn to petroleum-based solutions when natural products like Engineered Wood Fibers exist.

Are you up to date on playground studies?

[This 2019](#) study looked at 14 children's playgrounds in Seoul, comparing sites with poured rubber surfacing to plain dirt/soil playgrounds, testing for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) — a class of chemicals mostly released from vehicle exhaust and burning fuel that are known or suspected carcinogens. The researchers found PAHs in the dust and soil at all sites, with traffic-related pollution and fossil fuel burning as the likely main sources. Using a statistical modeling approach to estimate children's cancer risk from touching and accidentally ingesting this dust/soil over time, they found risk levels slightly above the U.S. EPA's typical safety threshold — and notably, the rubber-surfaced playgrounds showed roughly 10 times higher estimated cancer risk than the plain soil playgrounds, likely because the rubber traps and concentrates these chemicals. The biggest factors driving that risk were how long children spent playing there and how much dust stuck to their skin.

On the other hand, health can improve in more natural settings. It turns out that multi-year studies ([1](#), [2](#)), led by researchers in Finland, found that [the skin of the children who played in forest soil, known to be biodiverse, had fewer disease producing bacteria](#), and that [children who played in sandboxes enriched with biodiverse microbiota \(known to be safe\) developed improved immune systems](#) in as little as two (2) weeks. Synthetic surfaces, such as pour-in-place (PIP) rubber or plastic grass, are not only unnecessary in playgrounds, they may keep children from developing their best resistance to disease.

I'm attaching a PDF that shows you the Good, The Bad and the Ugly of Playground Ideas. This guide will give you plenty of ideas for healthier happier kids plus it will help you avoid the following problems of synthetic materials, such as:

- Chemical hazards
- Maintenance and repairs (worn surfaces, fungus, mildew)
- Short life cycle
- Federal and state investigations of products
- Scorching temperatures (2nd and 3rd degree burns)
- Concussions
- Expense and warranty

This guide should give you all the support you need to make the right decision.

Sincerely,



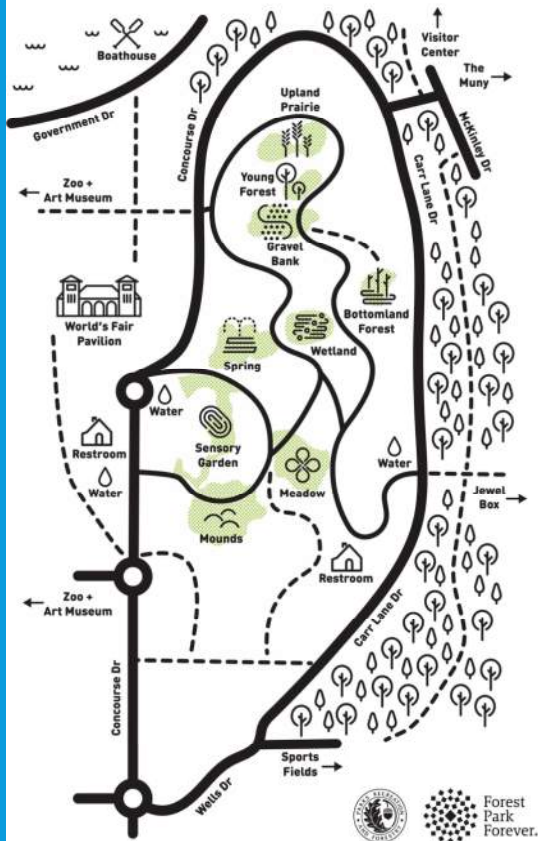
PLAYGROUNDS:

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

July 12, 2022

Jill and Kevin Schilling

INSPIRATION AND HOPE



	Mounds 1 min walk/wheel 15 sec run
	Sensory Garden 2 min walk/wheel 300 butterfly flutters
	Meadow 3 min walk/wheel 65 cartwheels
	Spring 4 min walk/wheel 131 frog hops
	Wetland 7 min walk/wheel 1.3 hour turtle trek
	Bottomland Forest 9 min walk/wheel 14,250 worm squirms
	Gravel Bank 9 min walk/wheel 1,010 fox trots
	Young Forest 10 min walk/wheel 667 log rolls
	Upland Prairie 9 min walk/wheel 42 sec dragonfly buzz



**Forest Park Anne O'C. Albrecht
Nature Playscape**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=GDfvQtLSaYM&feature=youtu.be>
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/wuJ7sBQtzhk?start=105&end=133>
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Y2TQDSN4ghc?start=247&end=278>

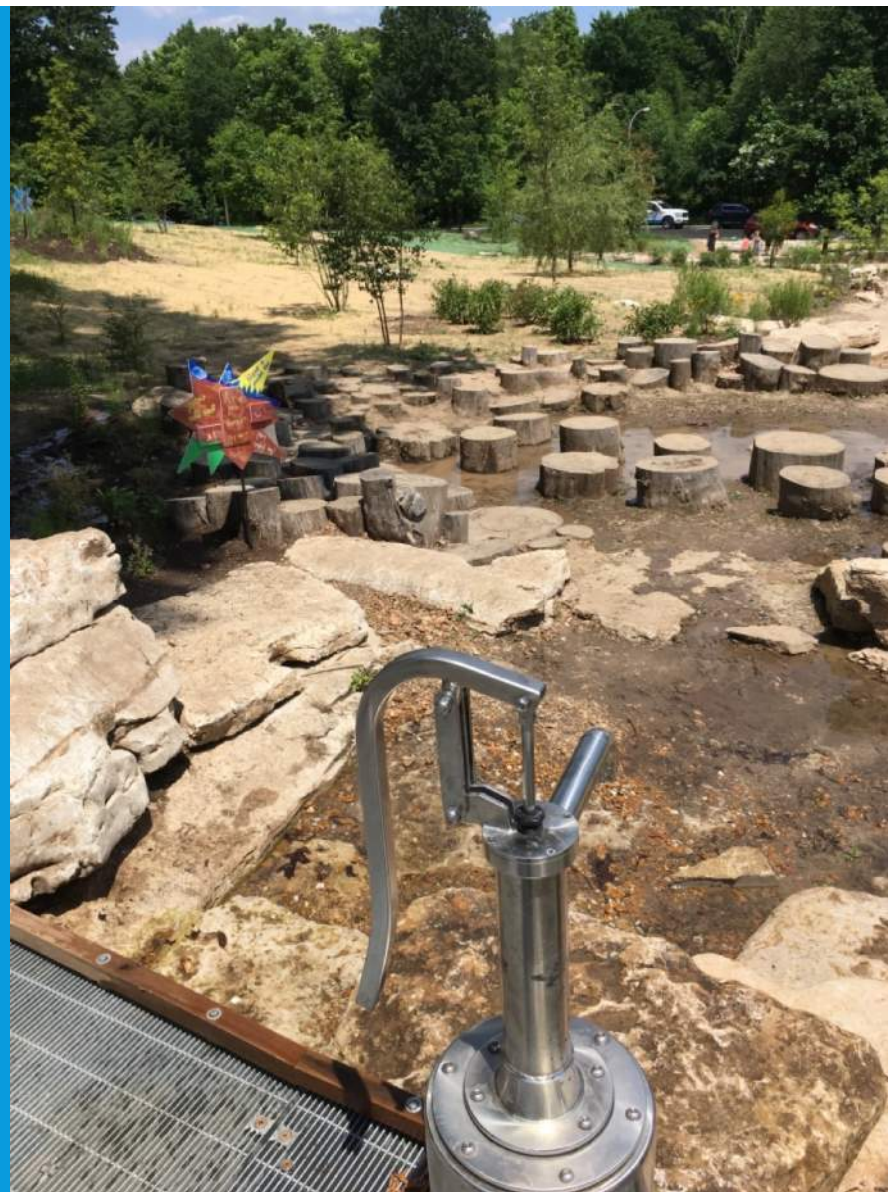
"I love coming here!"

I wonder how many dinosaur bones I'll find today?

"Going on the logs and balancing on the little blocks — I love going on the rocks, too. I'm also pretending that the sand is quicksand."

"I like how it has different areas and especially the water!"

What do kids think about the Playscape?



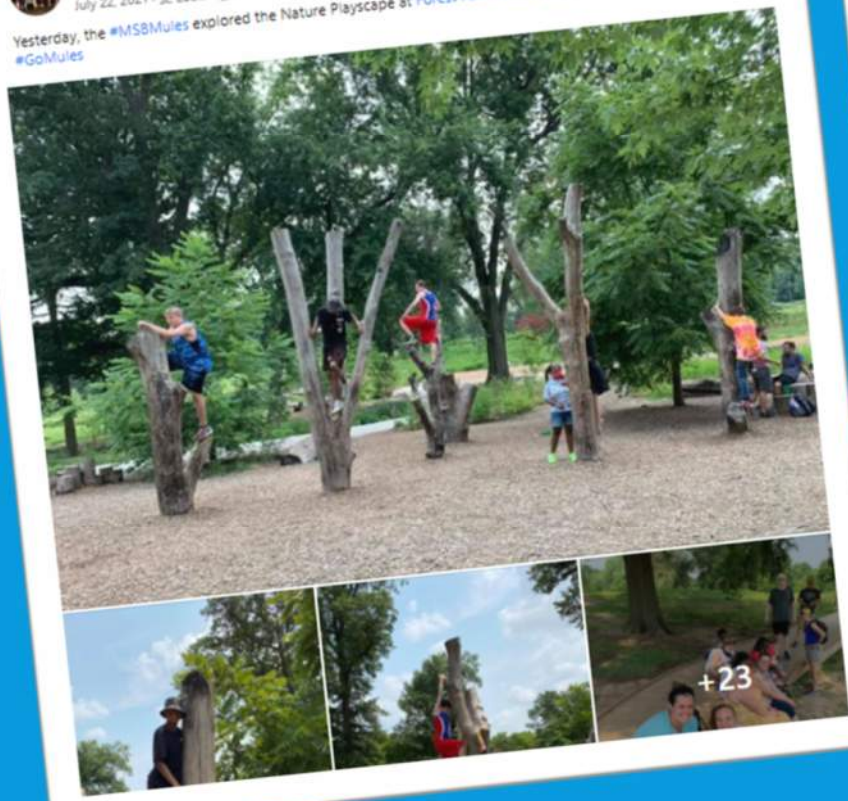


Missouri School for the Blind added 26 new photos to the album: 2021 ESY Summer Program

— at Forest Park.

July 22, 2021 · St. Louis · 🌍

Yesterday, the #MSBMules explored the Nature Playscape at Forest Park Forever! #LoveMyMSB #MulesRule #GoMules





INSPIRATION AND HOPE



Forest Park Oakland Avenue Playground



INSPIRATION AND HOPE



Everyone's Beanstalk Playground (North Carolina)

"Everyone's Beanstalk Playground. Built in Morganton, North Carolina, a staple to Catawba Meadows. Attracting visitors from all over the country, this 9 tower design features sky hammocks, spider webs, monkey fists, mini slack lines and more. We designed this playground to suit everyone and enable everyone the experience of fun and adventure. 80% of this playground is accessible by wheelchair !! Features a self managed zipline, and a wheelchair enabled swing, you have to see this in person to truly appreciate the uniqueness. #webuildthis #everyonecanplay

<https://vimeo.com/189645642>

MORE IDEAS: INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES/EQUIPMENT

Playgrounds need to be inviting spaces for children of all abilities. Children need access but also the activities and opportunities to engage in play with others. To enjoy the playground once there!

INSPIRATION AND HOPE



Towne Park Certified Nature Explore Classroom



Design Process

The dynamic design process begins as a collaboration between your staff, families, your community and our landscape architect/educator team. Working with you, our team will synthesize site conditions, the needs of your program and staff, and Dimensions' research based on direct observations of children interacting in naturally designed outdoor environments.

The result: a cost effective, efficient, and attainable solution is created. Your concept plan will be drawn to scale and will incorporate outdoor activity areas, accessible pathways and surfacing, playground safety standards, and will indicate where plantings should be placed.

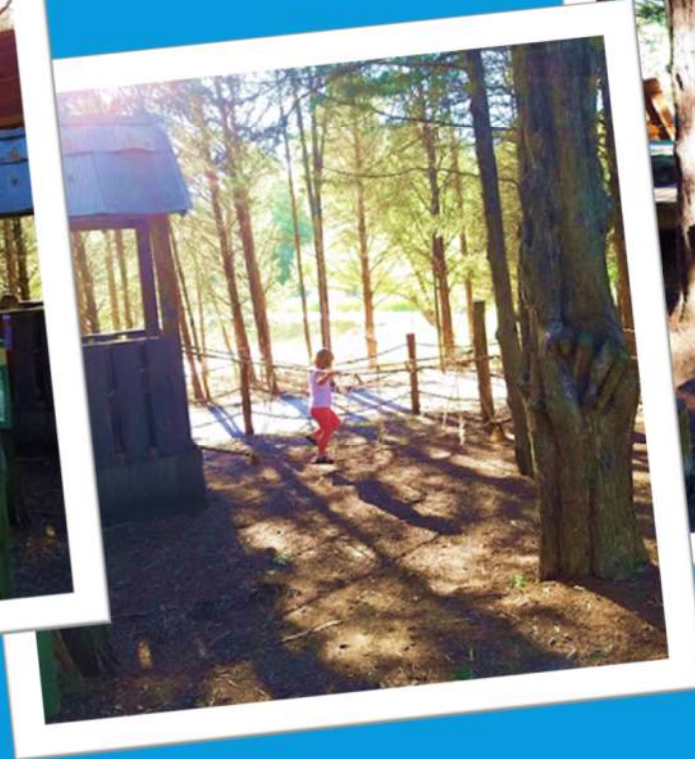
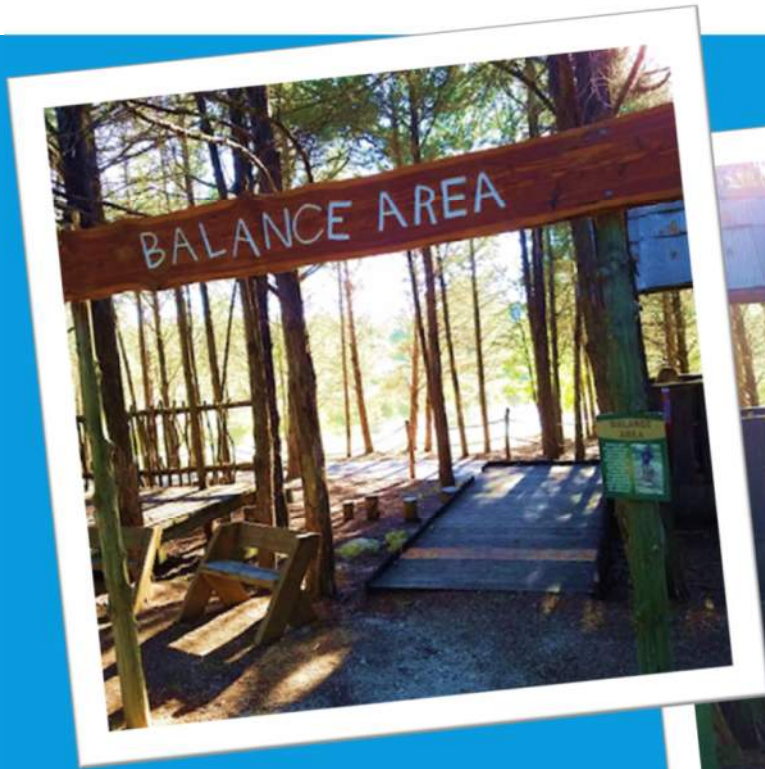
During your initial presentation, the designer will walk through the spatial organization and circulation of the outdoor classroom. The final concept plan is rendered in color and can help you with fund-raising for implementation.

Visit us at natureexplore.org or call (888) 908-8733 to learn more.

INSPIRATION AND HOPE



INSPIRATION AND HOPE



INSPIRATION AND HOPE



INSPIRATION AND HOPE



Missouri Botanical Garden Nature Explore Classroom



Shaw Nature Reserve Nature Explore Classroom

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/shaw-nature-reserve/learn-discover-at-shaw-nature-reserve/kids-families/childrens-nature-play-areas.aspx>

INSPIRATION AND HOPE

Adventure Base Camp



The history of Oxbow Regional Park is as fluid and wild as the Sandy River that forms the landscape even today. However, many of the Park's secrets go unnoticed. The Adventure Base Camp concept offers young people a way to connect more deeply with the park, its history and the natural environment. The Adventure Base Camp structures provide a place to dispense maps and information that highlight unique habitats, seasonal attractions and natural features. These Adventure Cards provide detailed information to prepare the visitor and equip them for greater park exploration. The Adventure Base Camps also act as stepping stones for hesitant or younger visitors. The goal of the Nature Adventure Base Camp is to offer visitors a hands-on, self-led learning opportunity with the hopes for a deeper nature-based connection.



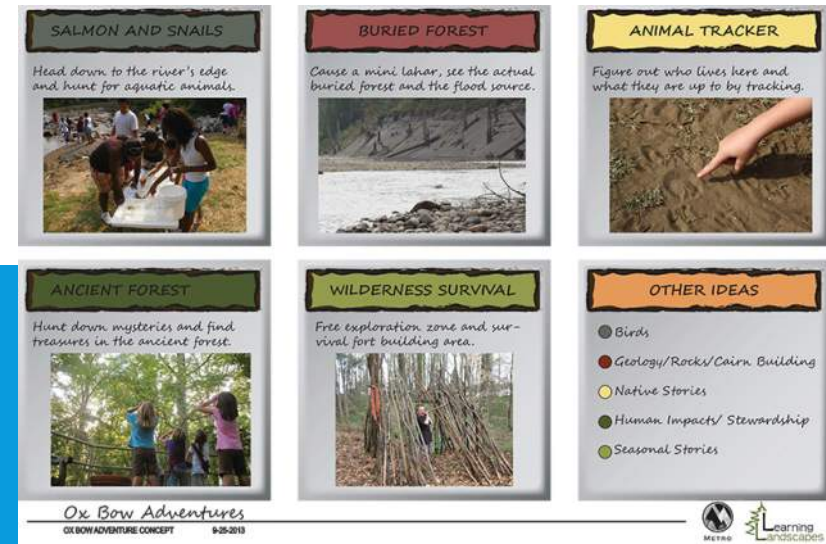
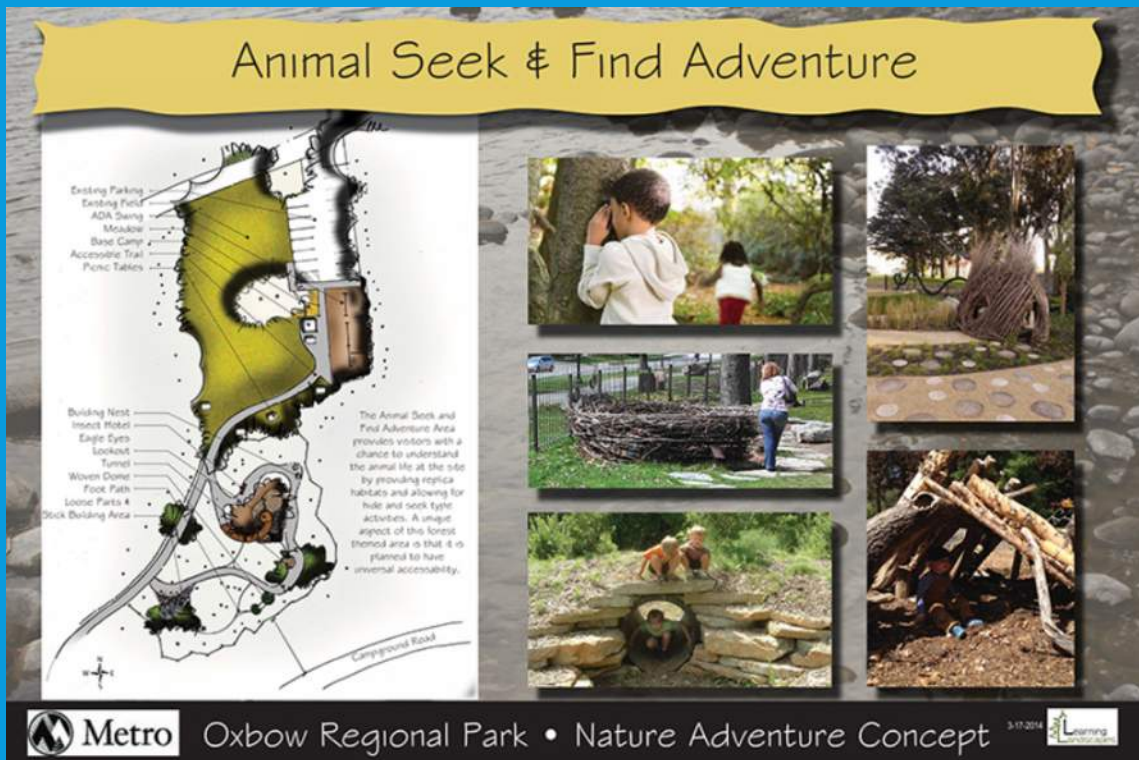
 Metro Oxbow Regional Park • Nature Adventure Concept  3-17-2014

Oxbow Regional Park (Oregon)



<https://learninglandscapesdesign.com/playgrounds-go-wild-at-metro/>

INSPIRATION AND HOPE



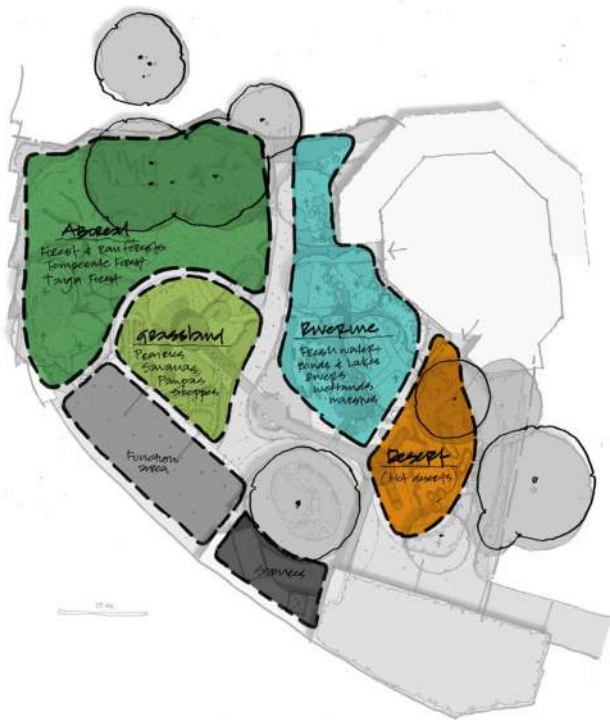
<https://learninglandscapesdesign.com/playgrounds-go-wild-at-metro/>

INSPIRATION AND HOPE

- The two nature play areas cost a total of \$565,000
- **Because of parent insight**, Metro planners were better able to gauge how easily children could be transferred from wheelchairs to play equipment. They planned accessible paths from parking areas, designed fencing around the play areas and even **chose building materials that won't interfere with the use of cochlear implants**.
- Over the last decade, Metro has invested in nature-based play areas across the region, with the goal of **giving kids opportunities to connect on a deeper level with the natural world around them**.
- **"We've found that in nature-based play areas, where you provide things like rocks, logs, sand and water, kids are able to engage their minds as well as their muscles,"** said Rod Wojtanik, parks planning manager at Metro. "They collaborate more and they spend more time in the play area. It also brings the parents or caregivers down into the play area with them, which has been fun to see."

<https://learninglandscapesdesign.com/playgrounds-go-wild-at-metro/>

INSPIRATION AND HOPE



Adelaide Zoo – Nature's
Playground (Australia)



<https://landezine.com/adelaide-zoo-natures-playground-by-wax-design/>

INSPIRATION AND HOPE



<https://landezine.com/adelaide-zoo-natures-playground-by-wax-design/>

INSPIRATION AND HOPE

- The playspace has rejuvenated the Zoo and created a **valued asset**... with its success measured by some of the **highest visitor numbers on record** and unprecedented increase in Zoo membership and patronage.
- The underlying philosophy of the project is for **children of all ages**, genders, cultures and **abilities to learn from nature through play**, enabling children to make decisions, take risks, develop resilience and have fun.
- A custom four metre high elevated walkway with timber pods provides wheelchair compliant access and a unique visitor experience irrespective of age or mobility. **The playspace is based on the planet's major Biomes and allows the Zoo to expand teaching programs into Nature's Playground.** These biomes provide numerous educational opportunities allowing children to learn through the natural environment. The creek represents aquatic systems focusing on water play, and the sand pit demonstrates the hot desert environments. The bamboo maze, trampolines, and grass chimes recreate the Savannah and the rope climb, walkway and pods allow play in the forests of the world.

<https://landezine.com/adelaide-zoo-natures-playground-by-wax-design/>

DESIGNING PLAYGROUNDS FOR HAPPIER, HEALTHIER KIDS



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZCbNstq2Uk&t>

Fake surfaces
using ground up
tires and
synthetic turf –
the bad, ugly and
nasty

THE BAD SURFACES

THE BAD SURFACES

- **Tire Surfaces** (also known as “rubber”, however they are just ground up tires)
 - Tire poured-in-place (PIP)
 - Tire mulch
 - Bonded tire mulch
 - Tire Tiles
- **Synthetic turf** (also known as Astro turf, artificial turf)
 - FieldTurf, Shawgrass, other brands
 - Infill or no infill
 - Shockpad or no shockpad



<https://playstlouis.blogspot.com/2012/02/kirkwood-city-park-kirkwood.html>

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: SUMMARY

- ADA compliant, but potential to contribute to disability because of its chemical maintenance sprays, lead, PFAS (infills also contain carcinogens)
- Much maintenance to repair worn surfaces, fungus, mildew growing on it, replace infill, repair seams
- Short life cycles (1 yr, 2 yr, 5 yr, 7 yr)
- Under federal investigation for causing harm
www.epa.gov/tirecrumb
- Hellish temperatures recorded at 150 and higher on clear, sunny days – death, heat stroke, 2nd-3rd degree burns recorded



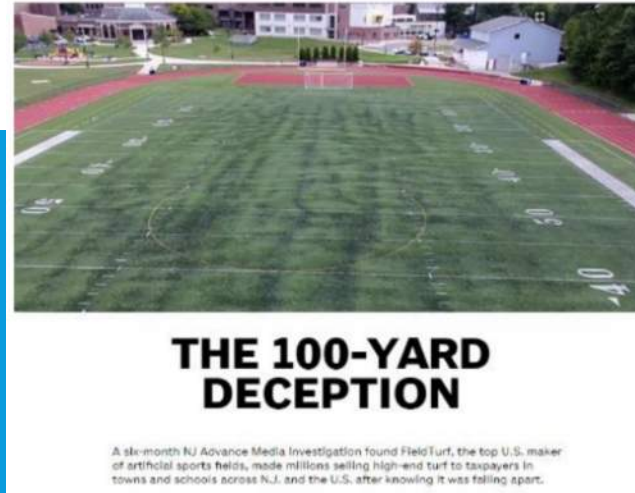
Photo taken by Jill Schilling June 2022

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: SUMMARY

- Expensive and known to fail before warranty (most playgrounds ZERO warranty)
- Reported dangerous for falls, concussions, 2nd-3rd degree burns
- Causes outbreaks of Staph/MRSA and coxsackie virus (hand, foot and mouth disease)
- Tire crumb infill chemicals include at least 12 carcinogens
- Lead, PFAS (leaches when it rains)
- Fine particulate matter=cancer and respiratory problems (plastic turns to dust)

<http://fieldturf.nj.com/>

<https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/news/latest-fieldturf-issue-nothing-1000-gallons-glue-wont-fix/>



THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: MAINTENANCE



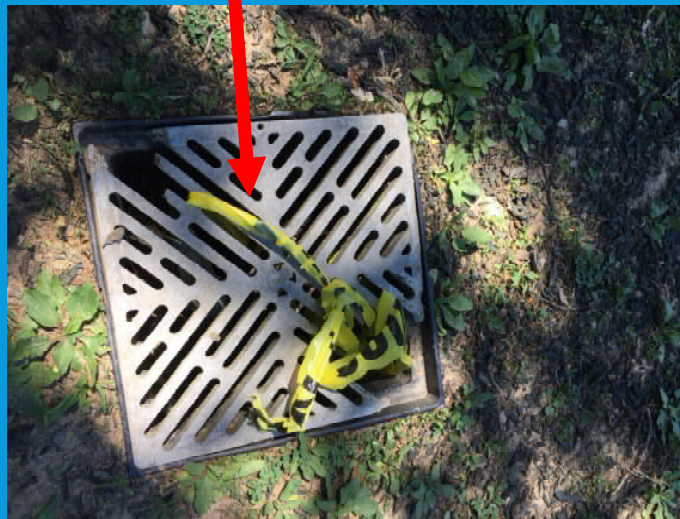
<https://playstlouis.blogspot.com/2012/02/kirkwood-city-park-kirkwood.html>
Additional photo taken by Jill Schilling June 2021

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: MAINTENANCE



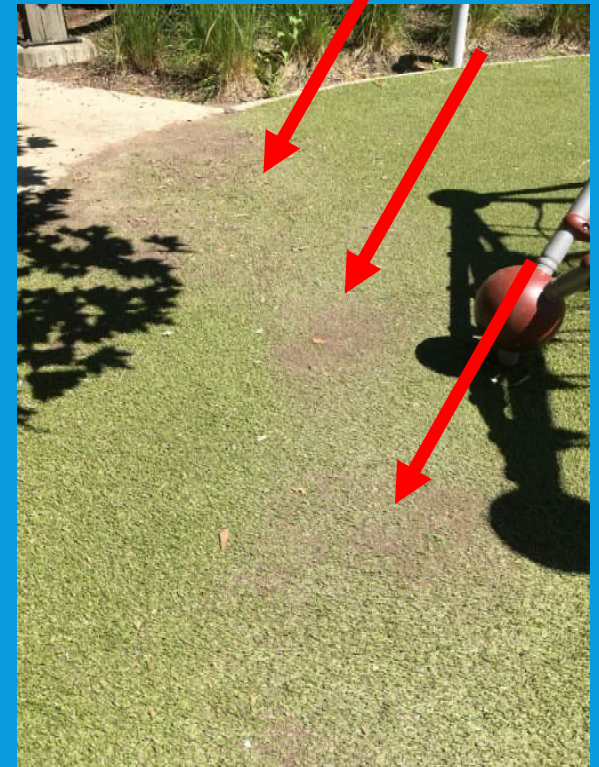
Additional photos taken by Jill Schilling June 2021

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: MAINTENANCE



Additional photos taken by Jill Schilling June 2021

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: MAINTENANCE

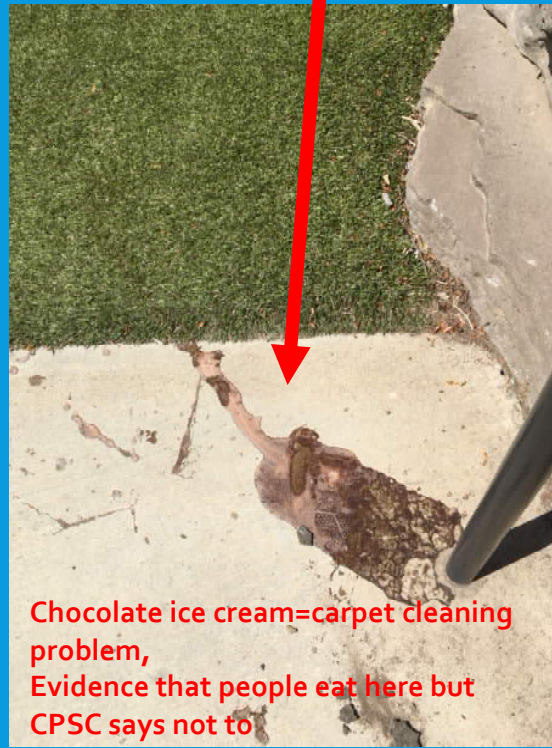


Additional photos taken by Jill Schilling June 2022

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: MAINTENANCE



Matted down synthetic turf=can be a sign of Gmax/HIC failure! Potentially dangerous for falls



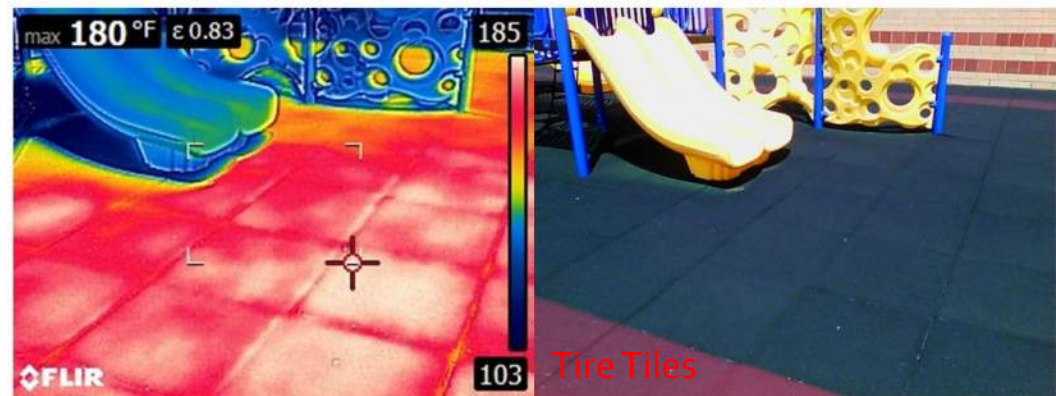
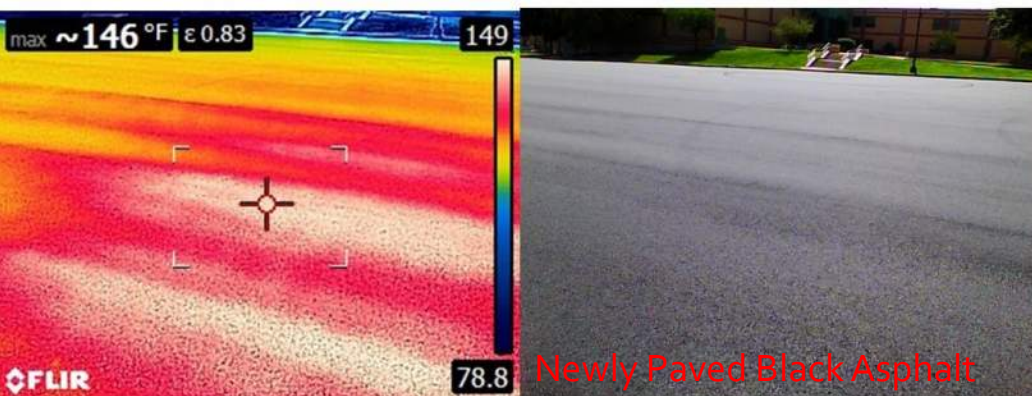
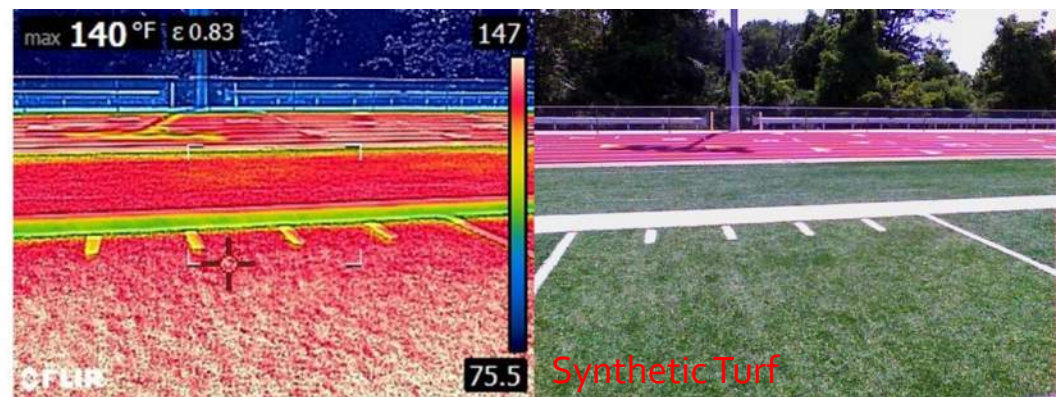
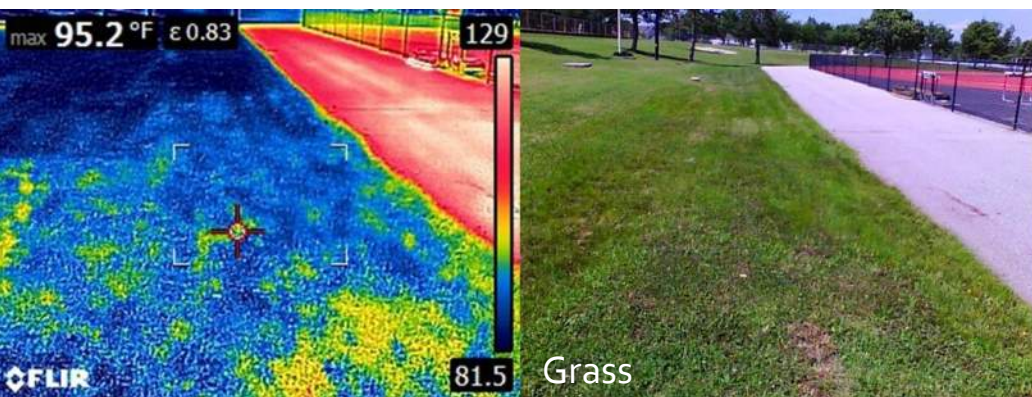
Chocolate ice cream=carpet cleaning problem,
Evidence that people eat here but CPSC says not to



Closeup of matted down synthetic turf
Under approx 8-10 ft climbing structure

Additional photos taken by Jill Schilling June 2022

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HEAT



Rockwood School District Surfaces FLIR Thermal images taken July 2019 by Kevin Schilling

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HEAT

- Real grass is the standard for surface temperatures. It is by far the coolest and best for children and adults alike.
- Real grass surface temperature usually matches air temperature
- Engineered wood fiber is next coolest
- Concrete next
- Surface temperatures of 120 F and higher are hot enough to cause 2nd-3rd degree burns and contribute to heat stress, heat stroke and death

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HEAT

- Asphalt hot enough to burn
- Hottest surfaces are plastic and tires. By far!
- Tire surfaces and synthetic turf are typically DOUBLE the surface temperature of real grass!
- Heat is a problem on fake surfaces March-September
- Consider Veterans Tribute Park: June 2022
 - Air temp: 84 F
 - Grass: 91 F
 - Plastic slide: 148 F
 - **Synthetic turf: nearly 170 F!**

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HEAT

"The child's mother posted photos on Channel 3's Facebook page, saying the 14 month old went down a slide and landed on a rubber mat with his palms down, causing second degree burns to his hands."

https://www.local3news.com/toddler-burns-palms-while-playing-on-daycare-playground/article_97d5fe70-d1d1-56d6-8ed3-ae7ca6b7d722.html

https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbidoN7LHYkE66kgEiRzWRg1FFWhajAvZoequZWCg7eYyZUshWga8cpCUTt6CvWLuVucZI&id=100001265063234



Ashley Elizabeth Corliss

June 30, 2016 · 🌐

La Petite Academy -Cleveland, TN

See these burns on MY 14 MONTH OLD SON'S hands? This is a result of him going down a slide at his daycare outside, in 90 degree weather, and landing on the rubber mat at the bottom of the slide. What does plastic/rubber equipment do in the sun? IT HEATS UP BEYOND THE OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE. What happens when you put your skin on extremely hot surfaces? IT BURNS. Where were his teachers? Why didn't anyone think to check with their own hands how hot those surfaces were, knowing that babies (that tumble down every now and then) were playing there? Why was he even outside in that heat in the first place? I have NEVER heard a child scream and cry like that, let alone MY OWN SON. This is one mama bear that you do not mess with.



THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HEAT

Toddler Burned on Playground; Suit Filed

By ABC News via [GMA](#)

Share

May 24, 2004 -- Max Weinmeister's parents can still remember the grotesque burns the 2-year-old suffered last year when he was allegedly left unattended on a hot Arizona playground at his daycare center.

"It was so bad that when I arrived there at his daycare [center], the skin was just dripping off his hands and knees onto the floor," Jennifer Weinmeister claimed on ABCNEWS' Good Morning America today.

The Weinmeisters have since filed a civil lawsuit against the La Petite Daycare Center and its officials for allegedly leaving Max unattended on the hot playground and causing the circumstances that led to his burns. Max was 13 months old at the time he suffered his burns and his parents say he wasn't quite walking on his own yet. He was still primarily crawling to get around.

The playground where Max was playing was made of recycled tire. Jennifer Weinmeister maintains that in Arizona, daycare centers are supposed to have awnings or coverings to prevent the playground surfaces from becoming too hot, and La Petit apparently had neither.

Screams of Pain

Pictures of Max show the severity of the second-degree burns he suffered on his hands and knees. The Weinmeisters are not sure how long their son was left alone but insist he had to have been left unattended long enough to suffer his burns.

"It could have been anywhere from two minutes to five minutes," said Jason Weinmeister, Max's father. "But [it was] long enough for him [Max] to get second-degree burns on his hands and knees."

Jason and Jennifer Weinmeister said they had to repeatedly clean Max's wounds to prevent infection for weeks, even as he writhed in pain in his bathtub. They said his older sister would flee to the other end of their home just to get away from his screams.

"That was the most horrible thing I've ever gone through in my life," Jason Weinmeister said. "It took two of us to hold him down while he thrashed and cried and screamed."

<https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/story?id=127819&page=1>

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HEAT

Artificial turf trouble at Loma Portal Elementary and Euclid Elementary

"Our children shouldn't
be the canaries in the
coal mine on this one."

Author Publish Date
Julie Stalmer Dec. 1, 2016



Lundeen recently witnessed what she believes was a serious synthetic turf hazard. One hot day in late September at Euclid Elementary, 44 students were sent to the school nurse for heat exhaustion after playing soccer on a new synthetic field. She said the field reached temperatures of at least 120 degrees.

<https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/2016/dec/01/stringers-hold-artificial-turf/>

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HEAT

Athlete Injuries from Synthetic Turf

Marquette High School (kids playing at Lafayette)
7/2016

Grass = 111 °F FieldTurf with GreenPlay (park turf) = 140 °F

Air Temp = 97 °F

CALIFORNIA PROPOSITION 65 WARNING
This product contains crystalline silica which is "known to the State of California to cause cancer and other adverse effects which are known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects and reproductive harm".

"The **skin is all ripped off**; it's pretty **disgusting**. It's like **walking on hot coals** with your **skin ripping and slowly cracking, constantly**."
— Australia NT Striker, Michelle Heyman

"I don't want no FieldTurf. It's bad on your knees." — Steelers CB, Ike Taylor

<http://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/the-problem-with-alternative-infills/>
<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2016/09/07/new-jersey-school-coxsacievirus/>
<http://fieldturf.nj.com/>
<https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/to-pics/news/latest-fieldturf-issue-nothing-1000-gallons-glue-wont-fix/>

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES)

- “The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has long recognized the potential hazards that exist with the use of playground equipment, with over 200,000 estimated emergency room-treated injuries annually.”
- “Falls. Overall, about 79 percent of the injuries that occurred on public equipment involved falls (Table A2). Specifically, 68 percent of the injuries involved falls to the surface below the equipment, 10 percent involved falls to other parts of the same equipment, and 1 percent involved falls to unidentified surfaces.



<https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf>
https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/playgrnd_o.pdf
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/fCLSASyKlBE?start=664&end=711>
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/fCLSASyKlBE?start=1096&end=1115>

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES)

- Fall-related injuries were most prevalent on climbers, accounting for 86 percent of the total injuries on these products."

Palmquist's play structure, designed for children ages 5 to 12, was installed over a solid rubberized surface meant to provide a cushioned area for students using the equipment.

The impact of her fall against the rubberized surface on the ground broke Alexis' arm in two places, Coates said.

Nearly all of the students who broke their arms, wrists or elbows at Palmquist did so while using the zip line or sky wheels.

However, Hertweck said last week that ---- with children still breaking their arms ---- the problem clearly hasn't been solved.

"I think there should be a thorough look into this," he said. "Something has got to be done."

<https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf>

https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/playgrnd_o.pdf

<https://www.courant.com/sdut-exclusive-14-kids-break-arms-in-palmquist-2011jan22-story.html>

EXCLUSIVE: 14 kids break arms in Palmquist playground

By STACY BRANDET, sbrandy@courant.com
San Diego Union-Tribune • Jan. 22, 2011 at 1:00 am



You can read more about the story & children on the [Palmquist injured website](#).

Fourteen students at Palmquist Elementary School have broken their arms on a campus play structure over the past three years ---- far more than at any other Oceanside school ---- and the spate of injuries doesn't appear to be slowing, district officials acknowledged last week.

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BREAKING
Officials
Cheshire
10

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES)

- "The key measurements used to determine safety performance are referred to as **Gmax (g-force) and HIC or Head Injury Criteria**. Both of these values relate to the ability of the surface to reduce the force of impact, cushion falls and reduce serious head trauma.
- If any portion of a playground surface exceeds the maximum allowable limit of 1000 HIC or 200 Gmax at any point during its service life, the playground must be fenced off until the surface can be brought into compliance either through extensive refurbishment or replacement. In light of these factors, it makes considerable sense to evaluate surfacing systems that perform well below the maximum limits of 1000 HIC and 200 Gmax."

Kirkwood Park

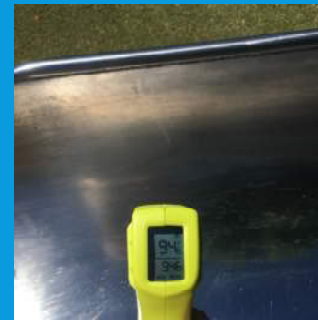


<https://playstlouis.blogspot.com/2012/02/kirkwood-city-park-kirkwood.html>

https://wasbo.com/images/wasbo/documents/6/handouts/FMC2014_Designing_Performance_Based_Playground_Binder.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1RtwRnCOkMPVu8bFzIW-Z_aJRPaHcsMngCrw-7ZFSxRmLZJ5oQ_mvTG2Y

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES) AND HEAT

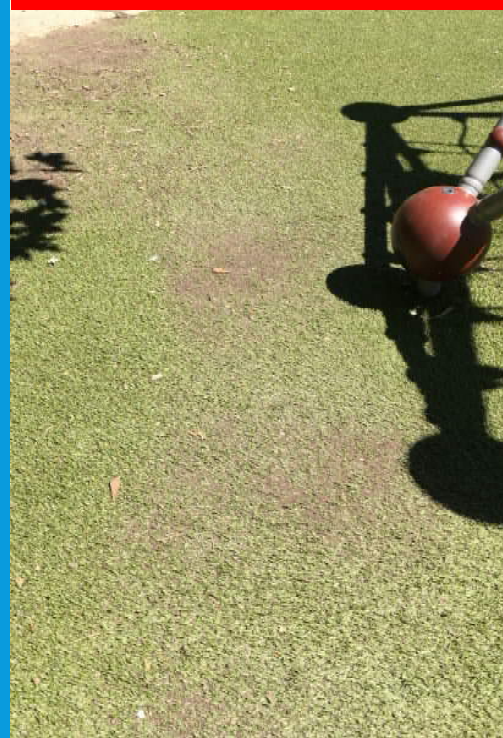
- Veterans Tribute Park, Weldon Spring, Missouri
- June 24, 2022
- 160 F at 10:30 am; 170 F by 11:00 am synthetic turf surface temperatures
- ASTM F1292 requires that surfaces meet Gmax 200 and/or HIC 1000 for the life of the product to prevent fatality (death)!
- Gmax and/or HIC values should be lowered to prevent injuries.



THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES)

- Dirt coming through the synthetic turf in at least two spots - under approximately 8-10 ft rope climbing structure and a metal slide.
- Matted down carpet under all structures (can be a sign of failure).
- St. Charles County says - no surface temperature checks performed.
- St. Charles County is does not conduct Gmax or HIC testing for their playgrounds and have never done so, past the initial installation. Only routine playground inspections conducted.
- Question: How did a playground inspection miss this?! It has been like this for some time. Doesn't happen overnight!

**Veterans Tribute Park:
3-Year-Old Surface!**



**Veterans Tribute Park:
Surface at Installation**



<https://playstlouis.blogspot.com/search?q=veterans+tribute>
Additional photos taken by Jill Schilling June 2022

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES)

- ASET Services' Paul Elliott conducts Gmax and HIC testing since 2009.
- Out of the playgrounds ASET has serviced, only 1/20 playgrounds installed have Gmax and/or HIC tested at installation. ASET has only tested ONE PLAYGROUND as a follow up after initial installation!!!
- ASTM F1292 requires that a SURFACE meet either 200 Gmax or 1000 HIC. And the only way to know if the SURFACE meets the requirements is to test. Age of surface doesn't matter.
- "...testing once per year is not likely to hold up in a liability court case. To ensure field safety, sports turf managers at all facility levels are advised to test throughout the season."

<https://asetservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/playground-safety-surface-performance.pdf>
<https://www.stma.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Field-Hardness-Testing-STMAInstitute-logo.pdf>

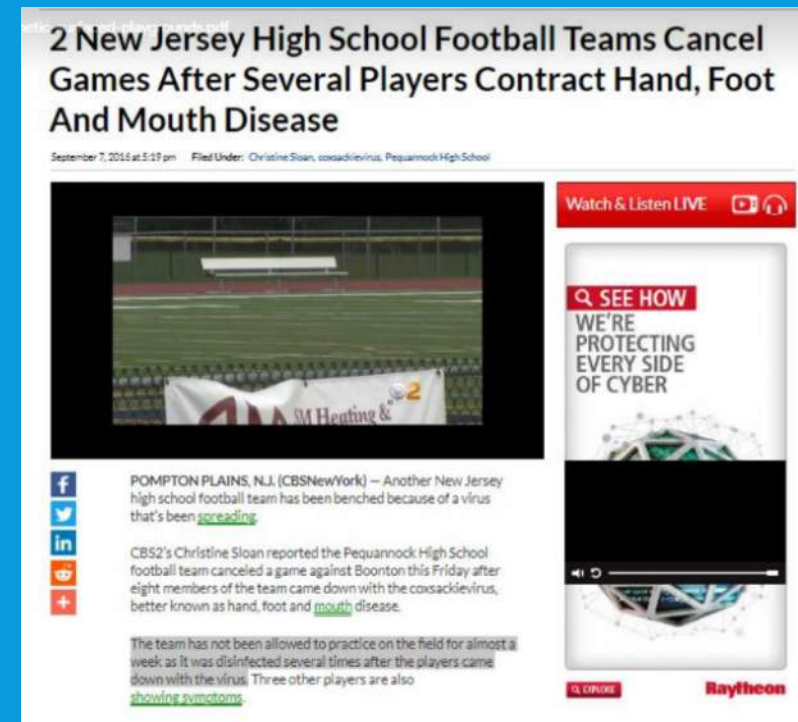
THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES)

- Elliott says his company charges around \$500 per playground for Gmax or HIC testing. It's very expensive to do 5-10 playgrounds or however many a city, school or park owns.
- Schools with synthetic turf athletic fields usually have a manufacturer warranty that if the school tests, manufacturer warrants that the field will test at a certain Gmax level (usually under 200) for that 10 yr period or whatever the warranty period is.
- Playgrounds DON'T GET A WARRANTY he says! No promises for playgrounds.
- He also said they don't want to test playgrounds because there are only three outcomes - good, bad and must be fixed or bad enough to shut down.

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: HARDNESS (INJURIES)

- And he says for playgrounds that fixing them is all up to the playground owner (city, school, county)! It's too expensive to fix. They have to pay for it all on their own.
- He told me a typical synthetic turf playground costs around \$50,000. That does not include the subbase and base work - leveling dirt, compacting and adding gravel or asphalt.
- I mentioned that I can't tell if Veterans Tribute Park had a shock pad since I didn't see anything but green carpet and straight dirt.
- He said that if there is no shock pad, a synthetic turf carpet would NOT PASS a 3 ft fall height.

THE BAD SURFACES' PROBLEMS: NASTINESS



<http://www.safehealthyplayingfields.org/the-problem-with-alternative-infills/>
<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2016/09/07/new-jersey-school-coxsackievirus/>

THE GOOD SURFACES

Nature Playscapes and Playgrounds Using Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR NATURE PLAYSCAPES

- **Safe Accessibility Paths Surfacing**

- Concrete (can also do wood/steel bridges, EWF like Forest Park Albrecht Nature Playscape)

- **Why Concrete Accessibility Paths?**

- “In-situ concrete (that is, concrete that is poured on-site) is one of the best options for accessible, long-lasting paths. Concrete surfaces are generally smooth, relatively non-slip, and have seams that are narrow and infrequent.
- Concrete walkways require careful site preparation and on-site access for concrete delivery, so up-front costs can be high. However, they are long-lasting and require minimal maintenance. If you consider spreading the installation cost over the life of the walkway (which can be up to 50 years!), concrete may turn out to be an affordable option.”

<https://kidsgardening.org/resources/designing-a-school-garden-designing-accessible-garden-paths/#::~:~:text=However%2C%20they%20are%20long%2Dlasting,to%20be%20an%20affordable%20option>

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR NATURE PLAYSCAPES

- **Why Concrete Accessibility Paths?**

- **Durability – it lasts!**

- “Concrete is typically a better surface for activities with wheels, like skateboarding and roller skating. Wheels can roll on short pile [synthetic] turf, like putting [synthetic] turf, but not as easily as they can roll on concrete. In addition, wheels regularly rolling across [synthetic] turf can wear it down more over time, and snag and pull on the [synthetic] turf, resulting in tears and damage to the [synthetic] turf.

- **Low Cost**

- **Low Maintenance**

<https://turffactorydirect.com/2021/01/18/artificial-grass-vs-concrete-when-to-use-each/>

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

- **Safe Accessibility Paths: Concrete and/or EWF**
- **Fall Protection Surfacing**
 - Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) – 100% virgin wood fiber, processed to a fibrous consistency, randomly sized, maximum length of 2 in. Safe. **Not** wood chips. EWF is stamped/flattened; fibers knit together to provide a surface springy enough to cushion falls, yet firm enough for wheelchairs. Another advantage: Rainwater passes through, so kids can play right after rain.



THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

- **Why EWF for Fall Protection?**

- ADA Compliant
 - Minimal maintenance
 - Cheapest
 - Safest
 - Positive for health and environment
 - Good, easy choice
 - Lead-free
 - Cool
- Not chemically treated
 - 15-25 year life (years of play in any weather conditions)
 - Drainage allows quick water removal and drying
 - Used on 75% of playgrounds in U.S.
 - Third-party certified by IPEMA for ASTM standards, and meet ADA and CPSC requirements
 - Recommended by pediatricians at Mount Sinai Children's Environmental Health Center



THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

- **EWF ADA Compliance**

- "6. Is Engineered Wood Fiber accessible? Engineered Wood Fiber meets the specifications of the ASTM F1951 Standard for Accessibility according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), provided there is proper drainage, are installed correctly and appropriately maintained."

- **2013 IPEMA Engineered Wood Fiber Accessibility Testing Debunks NCA Study:**

- "The results of this preliminary study of EWF accessibility show that engineered wood fiber surfaces, when properly installed and maintained, offer a high level of compliance with ADAAG accessible route requirements, and one certainly much improved over that of the improperly installed EWF surfaces evaluated in the NCA study. The firmness and stability of the correctly installed and maintained EWF playgrounds, as measured with the rotational penetrometer, comfortably exceeded the performance values for acceptable firmness and stability."

<http://ipema.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/IPEMA-FAQ-Surfacing.pdf>

<http://ipema.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/EWF-Accessibility-Report.pdf>

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

- **Installation is key to everything! EWF can perform with proper installation.**
 - Level the soil topped with geo textile fabric
 - Install with adequate drainage and clean rock sub base
 - Followed with the EWF leveled and compacted in several layers to a depth of 16-18 inches
- Zeager has a lot of good information on installation and EWF. They mention amongst other instructions, that EWF should be installed in 6-inch layers and compacted by wetting each layer, and using a mechanical compactor or track loader to compact.



<http://www.fibar.com/playgrounds/ewf.htm>

http://www.fibar.com/aslaGreen/EWF_LEED_brochure.pdf

<https://www.gametime.com/playground-surfacing/engineered-wood-fiber>

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

- Video of installation: <https://youtu.be/FJ7gl3S-cCc>
- Installation is so important; it is mentioned 99 times in this article! Also, remember that the 2013 IPEMA study shows that engineered wood fiber surfaces, when properly installed and maintained, offer a high level of compliance with ADAAG accessible route requirements. The NCA study mentioned in article below only looked at improperly installed EWF. **INSTALLATION IS KEY!**
- Locally, Rockwood School District likes to get their EWF from Missouri Mulch, whom they found to have the cheapest price.
<http://missourimulch.com/index.html>

<https://www.zeager.com/products/recreation/woodcarpet-system-1/>
<https://www.zeager.com/planning-resources/about-engineered-wood-fiber/>
<https://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/1666/play-surfaces.pdf>



The Benefits of Engineered Wood Fiber Mulch

Playground Safety Surfacing

Engineered
Wood Fiber Is
LOW COST
and Easy to
Install

KEEPS KIDS SAFE

It is rated to an 8"
depth and an 8'
Fall Height

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

Engineered Wood
Fiber is locally
sourced.

INCLUSIVE

Engineered Wood
Fiber is ADA
Compliant,
making It Ideal for
public
playgrounds.

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE

Periodic raking
and topping off is
required to
maintain a safe
depth.

CERTIFIED AND SAFE

EWF meets ADA,
ASTM and CPSC
playground
surfacing
standards.



AAA
AAA STATE OF PLAY®

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

EWF Recommendation Letters

- Tower Grove Park, 2 playgrounds, park sees 3.5 million visitors/year
- Rockwood School District (RSD), 21 public elementary schools, around 500 students per school

The following is a letter from Tower Grove Park in St. Louis, MO recommending engineered wood fiber (EWF) to Clayton School District as an ADA compliant and safe playground surface.

1. Names of the playgrounds that use the EWF? **Central Playground at the Roman Pavilion and East Playground at Grand Entrance**
2. How many years has Tower Grove Park been using EWF? **At least 6 to my knowledge**
3. How has EWF performed short- and long-term? **Short term it performs great with little maintenance. Long term it holds up well when more product is added as needed**
4. Please talk about EWF ADA compliance, how wheelchairs can go across, etc. Do you have any issues with ADA compliance? If so, how do you meet these challenges? Some folks are concerned that EWF will get kicked around and not compliant anymore. **EWF is ADA compliant. Our access points meet ADA standards. Routine raking eliminates the kicking around problems. EWF packs together without losing it's ability to meet ASTM standards for fall height compliance which allows wheelchairs to move across it.**
5. How many hours a day do you have to maintain EWF? **We rake low spots 3 times a week totaling roughly 2 hours a week which is included in our routine playground inspections.**

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

6. What are the tasks for maintaining EWF? Raking product from high areas to low areas which tend to be around swings, slides, and other high use equipment.
7. What is the average depth of EWF that you keep on playgrounds? Ideally we would like to keep it at 9 inches but realistically it is more like 6. Our equipment does not have any high fall height areas so we don't have to keep it as thick as a higher play structure.
8. Why are you happy you chose EWF for Tower Grove Park playgrounds? It is cost effective, natural, and it holds up well
9. Why are the school, parents and kids happy with EWF? Comments I have heard are that it is a natural surface and is safe for children to play on
10. How does EWF handle heavy usage? Our central playground receives heavy use on a regular basis and holds up well. With a routine inspection program and adding product proactively it handles this use well.
11. What can you tell us about cost of EWF? We pay 1500 for 90 cubic yards which is very cost effective compared to other options
12. Would you recommend EWF to Clayton Parks and Rec to use on their playgrounds? Parks are supposed to be "natural" and safe. EWF is both of these

Clint Meyer
Maintenance Supervisor
Tower Grove Park

THE GOOD SURFACES FOR TYPICAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

The following is a letter from Rockwood School District in Eureka, Missouri recommending engineered wood fiber (EWF) to Clayton School District as an ADA compliant and safe playground surface.

We have used Engineered wood Fiber or "Wood Carpet" for **15 - 20 years**. We has a school district **like it and it covers us in regards to liability because it is certified**. **Almost all of our schools** [21 schools] use engineered wood fiber in their playgrounds. This includes Babler Elem., Ballwin Elem., Blevins Elem., Bolwes Elem., Chesterfield Elem., Ellisville Elem., Eureka Elem., Fairway elem., Geggie Elem., Green Pines Elem., Kehrs Mill Elem., Kellison Elem., Pond Elem., Ridge Meadows Elem., Stanton elem., Uthoff Valley Elem., Westridge Elem. Wildhorse Elem., Woerther Elem., Vandover Early childhood, and R. Summit High...The EWF works great short term, but it will decompose over the coarse of a few years. **We had [add] EWF to our playgrounds twice a year. We top dress all of our playgrounds in the winter and we top dress our fall zone areas in the summer before school starts back up.** We spend probably 2 months out of the year on **maintaining our playgrounds. Wheel chairs can be pushed through the wood carpet.** Sometimes it may not be easy depending on the grade of the playground. There is around a foot in depth if not a little more of EWF on each playground. I think **EWF is a good, safe playground surfacing that gives our kids, parents, and our staff security that we have the best playground surfacing on our playgrounds to help prevent kids from getting seriously hurt like broken bones and head trama.** I think we made the right decision many years ago when we went with Engineered Wood Fibers. It is a safe Product that is helping keep our kids from **getting seriously injured when they fall using our playground equipment.** Pour in play Rubber is another option but it is a huge up front cost. **Yes, I would recommend EWF for playground surfacing** at The Clayton School District. We have at Least 3 vendors that we bid our EWF out to each year. They are Zeager Bros. Inc., Missouri Mulch, and Bi State Landscape Supply. Hopefully this answers all of your Questions. If you have any other questions. Please let me know.

Steve Meyers
Rockwood School District
Grounds Services Supervisor

NATURE IS BEST!

IDEAL PLAY ENVIRONMENTS

- The most ideal playgrounds for children are nature trails in our parks. Playgrounds should be one step away from the trail. Nature playscapes are this exactly! **Children need nature: fresh air to breathe and to be able to play, run, climb in an environment that meets their needs.** They and their parents should leave refreshed and better than when they arrived.
- Fake surfaces can leave children physically injured: concussions, broken bones, 2nd-3rd degree burns, heat stroke and more from the toxic surfaces' breakdown
- **Nature playscapes are a destination space! Let's bring that to Schroeder Park!**

Questions?



Casey Richardson

From: Taylor Coccio <taylor.coccio@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2026 5:03 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: Urging the City and PARC to Preserve Natural Playground Surfacing at Grant Park

Dear Members of the PARC Commission and City Staff,

I am writing as a local parent living near Grant Park, which my family and neighbors visit regularly. We deeply value Grant Park for its natural environment and open green spaces, and the current playground is an essential part of our weekly routine.

I was extremely dismayed to learn about the proposal to replace our current Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) playground surfacing with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber. I strongly request that you reject PIP surfaces for Grant Park and all Los Altos playgrounds, and direct city staff to prioritize natural play surfaces instead.

While PIP is often promoted for low routine maintenance, it represents a step backward for our community's health, environmental goals, and financial sustainability for several key reasons:

- **Toxic Chemical Off-Gassing & Heat Risks:** Synthetic rubber surfaces absorb extreme heat, making playgrounds uncomfortably hot—and often dangerous—to play on during summer days. Additionally, rubber surfaces degrade over time, releasing microplastics and potentially harmful synthetic chemicals into the air and surrounding soil where our children play.
- **Environmental Impact:** EWF is a natural, organic material that blends seamlessly into the eco-friendly aesthetic of Los Altos parks. Synthetic PIP, by contrast, relies on non-biodegradable petroleum products that eventually end up in landfills when replaced.
- **Long-Term Cost & Maintenance:** While wood fiber requires periodic top-offs, PIP surfaces inevitably crack, peel, and degrade under UV exposure, requiring incredibly costly full replacements that put a heavy burden on municipal budgets down the line.

Our children deserve a safe, natural, and heat-resilient environment to play in. Retaining and properly maintaining Engineered Wood Fiber—or exploring other high-quality natural alternatives—is the far safer, more sustainable choice for Los Altos.

Thank you for your time, dedication to our city, and consideration of our neighborhood's health and environment.

Sincerely,

Taylor

Grant Park Neighborhood Long Time Resident

Casey Richardson

From: Andrea Wald <waldmba@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 7:09 AM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Public Comment
Subject: PARC meeting 9-15-26 Agenda item #2: Grant and Shoup playgrounds
Attachments: Article about how unsafe PIP playgrounds are based upon commentary from Diane Zuckerman NCHR 10-28-25.docx; CHE report Playground Surfacing- Fun & safety without toxic chemicals 12-1-2023.docx; 2-8-26 email to Los Altos PARC commissioners re renovations for Grant and Shoup parks.docx

I am sending this second email with my comments regarding the proposal that will be presented tomorrow night as I realized I have more to say about why I am against PIP and why the proposal is flawed and should not be accepted as presented. Originally all PARC commissioners said that they were against PIP. At that meeting the adHoc committee was formed to gain more info on the issue. The results of their study do not support the proposal that is being made.

The proposal does not provide any substantial, referenced materials as to why they have recommended PIP. There is nothing that indicates what research materials they have looked into regarding PIP surfaces. I know that there was an email sent this weekend by Robert Hall that contained a good deal of info in support of natural materials for playgrounds, including the ground cover. I hope you'll all have a chance to review it. I've also attached two reports with substantial info on why PIP should not be used.

Aside from listing playgrounds that were visited and researched there was nothing about those playgrounds. All except for one in Sunnyvale were in SF and ALL of them contained PIP and artificial turf. Previously I supplied info on local playgrounds in Los Gatos, Cupertino and Saratoga that all contain only EWF ground covering. I supplied photos as well as comments from park staff as to how they manage with this surface. Maybe those on the adHoc committee did not see it or do not recall the contents so I have attached a copy of the file I created with this email. Please do take a look at it. There are many playgrounds that use and prefer EWF surfacing and believe its the best choice.

There is also a document that provides results to outreach that was done to residents (screen shot below). There are no details provided: how many residents, how were they contacted or did they themselves contact the city. This document clearly shows that not a single comment was in favor of PIP. If that is the case, then why is PIP still being recommended?

What residents told PARC				
PARCPublicComment + direct input · Aug 31 – Sep 9, 2026 · name + subject				
R3 · Research				
Themes: reject wall-to-wall PIP · want natural / cooler · heat & burn risk · chemicals · keep Shoup/Grant nature feel · ADA/cost rebuttals · pause for broader outreach				
Aug 31 Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks... Reject PIP; natural surfaces only	Aug 31 Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks... Natural only — Grant already poorly shaded	Aug 31 · Sep 9 Input regarding renovations... (pause / outreach) Reject PIP; pause for broader outreach (Sunnyvale model)	Sep 2 Grand Park and Stu Park: public comment... No rubberized cover — wood chips fit Shoup	Sep 2 Playground surface at Grant and Shoup Parks... PIP = downgrade vs EWF
Sep 5 Playground Surfaces in Los Altos Parks Prefer EWF / wood chips over synthetic	Sep 5 · 1:22pm PUBLIC COMMENT SEPT 15 — PLAYGROUND SURFACE No PIP — heat/burn risk (CBS video)	Sep 5 · 8:30pm Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026... Reject PIP at Grant; natural alternatives	Sep 6-7 Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026... Natural only; ~64-letter packet; ADA/cost rebuttal	Sep 7 Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026... Teen near Shoup — reject PIP; natural only

Might I suggest a broader community outreach. The city of Sunnyvale has a great way to get community input on matters that affect residents. They hold community outreach meetings – some on line and some live. They post physical signs at the places that are involved with verbiage letting residents know what is going on and how to get involved. This way any decision that is made truly reflects what residents want and is not made simply by what staff might think is best.

I hope that Los Altos will not move forward with the recommendation being presented on Tuesday and do some more research, if needed, and soul searching about what truly is best for residents and users of the playgrounds.

Thank you.

Andrea Wald



Are Playgrounds in Your Community Safe?

COMMENTARY

October 28, 2025 by Dr. Diana Zuckerman, President, National Center for Health Research

Many communities are renovating playgrounds using materials that were never proven safe for children's long-term use. As a scientist and a grandparent, I'm very concerned that young children are being exposed to toxic materials as they play, day after day and year after year. You should be too.

Are these materials being used in your community, perhaps even in your home? This is what you need to know.

Rubber playground surfaces, tiles and even garden mulch are the surprising culprits. They are often very attractive and colorful, and may cover your community playground, K-12 play area or day care floor. You may have seen them advertised online for flooring for a playroom or to use in your backyard under swing sets and other play equipment.

I used to think that rubber is a safe and natural material that comes from a rubber plant, but most rubber is a synthetic product that combines natural rubber (latex) and chemicals from petroleum. Numerous studies show that chemicals found in rubber disrupt our hormones and can cause serious health problems, contributing [to obesity, early puberty, and attention problems such as ADHD. They can eventually cause cancer.](#)

There are two kinds of rubber surfaces on children's playgrounds:

PIP ("poured in place") consists of a solid rubber surface that covers the playground. All rubber has chemicals that affect hormones, but underneath the PIP surface is a layer of recycled tire crumb (also called tired mulch or tire waste) that also contains lead (which can cause learning problems). You can see that black tire crumb when the top layer of rubber cracks or becomes worn out, often at the foot of the slides or other places where children are especially active.

The tire crumb often gets mixed with small pieces of colorful rubber from the top surface, looking like candy that small children may find irresistible. Children like to play with it, leaving a black residue on their hands. Small children may put it in their mouths, noses, ears and pockets.

Tests of [recycled tire crumb from numerous playgrounds](#) conducted by the Ecology Center have found that some pieces have extremely high levels of lead, while others have very little lead or no lead at all.

Unfortunately, you can't tell by looking at pieces of tire crumb which ones have lead and which ones don't.

And when children play with those pieces, they can be exposed to the chemicals and the lead.

The second type of rubber playground surface consists of small, colorful pieces of rubber. This is sold on Amazon, at Home Depot, Lowe's, and other websites as "recycled rubber," which almost always means recycled tire waste. It contains the same hormone-disrupting chemicals as PIP and is also likely to contain lead.

[The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission banned](#) numerous hormone-disrupting chemicals from toys and products used by young children. Those products, such as pacifiers, teething toys and bath toys, are banned even though the children would be exposed for much shorter times compared to playground surfaces.

Why? Probably because rubber playground surfaces were not popular when the law was passed banning certain chemicals from toys in 2008.

Although they have not banned these rubber surfaces, the CPSC has [warnings about rubber playgrounds](#) on its website. The agency suggests that parents wash their children's hands, clothes and toys immediately after they play on these surfaces. Those are good ideas, but not very practical — how many parents or babysitters are likely to do that?

Heat

These [playground surfaces are hot](#) because they absorb sunlight and trap heat. The surfaces regularly become 50-60 degrees Fahrenheit hotter than grass, and on warm or sunny days, our research has reported temperatures that reach 150-180 degrees.

Fortunately, there is an alternative to rubber playground surfaces that contains no harmful chemicals and is ADA compliant. It's called engineered wood fiber.

It looks like wood mulch but is made in a way that contains no dangerous chemicals, is piled up several inches to feel spongy instead of hard, and can't cause splinters. It doesn't get hotter than grass. And if strong winds, rain or snow move the wood fiber around, it can easily be raked back in place.

Myth and Reality

Many companies claim that their rubber products are "PFAS free." However, there are thousands of PFAS chemicals, and tests don't even exist for all of them. Companies that claim their products are "PFAS free" have tested fewer than a dozen of those PFAS chemicals.

Despite claims to the contrary, no U.S. government agencies have concluded that PIP or tire crumb playgrounds are safe.

Last year, I joined the Ecology Center scientist who studied the lead content of PIP playgrounds in meeting Consumer Product Safety Commission staff and a commissioner.

We discussed next steps for the CPSC to study these playgrounds, but he was one of the three commissioners fired by the White House this year.

As president of the National Center for Health Research, I work with scientists, physicians and health experts who conduct studies and scrutinize research, explaining scientific and medical information that can be used to improve policies, programs and products. We do not accept funding to work on this issue.

I have repeatedly heard scientists paid by the companies selling and installing these products claim that these products are proven safe (not true) and that federal agencies have stated there are no health risks (also not true).

Unfortunately, they have successfully lobbied officials in cities and towns to ignore the pleas of their own constituents. There have never been any safety tests required prior to sale that prove that any of these products are safe for children who play on them regularly. There are also no long-term studies of children who have been exposed to these playgrounds compared to those who haven't.

None of these products are proven to be as safe as engineered wood fiber, which costs less and is much easier to maintain.

It would not be ethical to intentionally expose children to rubber playground surfaces to study the exact risks. However, there is clear scientific evidence that these materials can be harmful.

The only question is how much exposure is likely to be harmful to which children?
We should not be willing to take such a risk. Our children deserve better.

Dr. Diana Zuckerman is the president of the National Center for Health Research, a nonprofit think tank that scrutinizes the safety and effectiveness of medical and consumer products. She was trained in epidemiology and public health at Yale Medical School and a faculty member and researcher at Harvard and Yale before moving to Washington, D.C., to be a congressional investigator in the U.S. House of Representatives and a health policy staffer in the U.S. Senate and White House. She founded the [National Center for Health Research](#) in 1999. Neither she nor the center accept funding from entities with a financial interest in their work. The NCHR can also be found on [LinkedIn](#).



Playground Surfacing: Fun & safety without toxic chemicals

By [Rachel Massey, ScD](#) - Senior Science & Policy Advisor, CHE and [Lindsey Pollard, MS](#)

Research Associate, Lowell Center for Sustainable Production

December 12, 2023

A playground is a wonderful place for kids to play, exercise, build skills, and make friends. It's important that the [materials used in playgrounds](#) are as safe as possible.

Playground surfacing is used under play equipment to protect children from fall injuries. Surfacing options are grouped into two broad categories: unitary and loose-fill. Unitary surfacing is a smooth surface — for example, pour-in-place (PIP) and rubber tiles are made with rubber or cork granules held together by a binder. Loose-fill surfacing is what it sounds like: loose particles such as pieces of wood, pieces of synthetic rubber, pea gravel, or sand. Depending on the materials used to make either loose-fill or unitary surfacing, these options are variable in terms of fall protection, accessibility, and chemical hazards.

Pour-in-place rubber surfacing

PIP unitary surfacing draws its name from the way it is installed. The top layer of PIP — composed of rubber granules often in bright colors and patterns, and held together by a binder — is mixed and poured into the playground on site by workers. Just below that top layer is a cushioning layer, usually made from shredded waste tires. As the top layer breaks down over time, the loose tire shreds underneath can be exposed.

While PIP rubber surfacing can be aesthetically pleasing when new, PIP surfaces can contribute to rubber and plastic pollution in the environment. If you look closely at the soil around a pour-in-place playground, you may see small bits of rubber that escape from the product as it wears.

There are also concerns about chemical hazards. In 2019, the Ecology Center tested several playgrounds in Washington, DC and [found high levels of lead contamination](#) on some of the PIP surfaces ([see this blog](#) to learn more about the Ecology Center's work on play surfacing). [A recent study](#) found organophosphate esters, used as flame retardants and plasticizers, in several PIP materials.

Rubber PIP surfacing can also get very hot. For example, [as noted in our recently updated report on playground surfacing](#), on a day when the air temperature measured 75 degrees F, a parents' group documented a temperature over 170 degrees F on a PIP playground surface.

Waste tire mulch

Some playgrounds are surfaced with loose shredded tire mulch, also known as rubber mulch. These pose a particular concern as children are directly exposed to the waste tire material in loose form, and can readily handle and play with the material. Waste tires contain a variety of [chemicals of concern](#), including lead, polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), vulcanization compounds such as benzothiazole, and [antiozonants such as 6PPD](#).

Some communities and schools that have previously installed shredded tire mulch surfacing are now revisiting that decision. For example, the community of Poolesville, in Montgomery County, MD previously had loose fill surfacing made from shredded waste tires in seven town playgrounds. In 2022, [a small fire was set in one of the playgrounds](#). The shredded tires ignited, creating a large plume of smoke. In 2023, responding to community activities including a [petition](#) and a public [information session](#), the town

commission [revisited its decision](#) to use waste tires in play areas. The Poolesville commissioners reviewed new evidence on health and environmental concerns related to the use of these materials, and opted to replace the waste tires with engineered wood fiber (EWF) in all the playgrounds.

Safer alternatives

Alternatives to rubber- and plastic-based products include wood chips, bark mulch, engineered wood fiber (EWF), pea gravel, or sand. Pea gravel and sand provide less fall protection, but can be a reasonable choice in some settings where play structures are lower, or there is primarily ground play. Wood chips and EWF, on the other hand, both provide high fall protection. EWF has the additional advantage of providing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility.

Loose-fill wood chips, bark mulch, and EWF are all made from raw wood. Wood chips are made from ground fresh trees, and bark mulch is a byproduct of the industrial paper and lumber industries. EWF is a finely shredded wood mulch that is designed specifically for use as playground safety surface material. Wood products can only be labeled EWF if they meet the specific particle size, consistency, purity, and drainage standards described in American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) 2075: [Standard specification for engineered wood fiber](#). EWF is also tested for levels of soluble hazardous elements such as lead, chromium, cadmium, and arsenic.

Wood products designed for use in playgrounds are a safer alternative to waste tires or other synthetic materials on the market, as long as they are tested to verify the absence of chromated copper arsenate (CCA). CCA is a highly toxic pesticide that was used in the past in pressure-treated wood. Look for wood products labeled for playground use. Although the products are made from raw wood, it is essential to ask the vendor for CCA testing data to rule out contamination.

For communities that wish to install a unitary playing surface while avoiding the hazards of the rubber-based materials, a cork-based PIP product may be an option. These products are more expensive per square foot than others.

Fall protection

[The Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) (CPSC) requires that playground surfacing materials be tested for critical height, which is “an approximation of the fall height below which a life-threatening head injury would not be expected to occur.” The CPSC recommends testing the impact performance of playground materials annually. Communities can ask their chosen playground installation company about annual field tests for impact performance. Communities may also choose to install play equipment that requires lower fall height protection.

EWF, wood chips, and tire mulch all offer high fall protection when installed and maintained correctly. All of these materials have standard fill depths that offer protection for fall injury prevention. Fill depths must be maintained over time by “topping-off” materials in order to preserve performance.

Unitary surface materials have varied quality and shock-absorption properties, and therefore do not have standard fill depths for fall heights. Manufacturers must supply critical fall height test data for all playground surfacing, including specifications for unitary rubber tiles or pour-in-place materials. Weather and age may also affect the quality of fall protection in unitary surfacing.

When making decisions about fall attenuation, also consider the height and design of the play equipment. Select play equipment that is built to prevent falls from high areas such as the top of a slide. Assess the amount of fall attenuation that is needed based on the equipment design.

Accessibility

In order for a surfacing material to be labeled as compliant with regulations within ADA, it must fulfill wheelchair accessibility specifications described in [ASTM 1951: Standard specification for determination of accessibility of surface systems under and around playground equipment](#).

Some communities choose PIP surfacing specifically because of accessibility. However, accessibility can be achieved using EWF. The wood pieces in EWF are sized to “knit” together when compacted, causing the pieces to remain in place, creating an even, accessible surface.

For all surfacing products, maintenance is key to maintaining accessibility. PIP surfacing needs to be repaired or replaced periodically to ensure that it maintains performance. EWF must be raked to maintain evenness, especially under swings and slides. Using mats in high use areas, such as under swings and slides, can help keep the EWF in place.

In addition to ADA considerations related to accessibility, a range of health conditions can affect children's ability to make use of play spaces. For example, material choices can affect the suitability of a play space for children with asthma.

Safer play surfacing: Why it matters

Children are uniquely susceptible to the effects of toxic chemicals. Their organ systems are developing rapidly, their detoxification mechanisms are immature, and they have more hand-to-mouth exposure to environmental contaminants than adults. Adult caregivers who spend time at playgrounds — especially pregnant women, the elderly, or those with medical vulnerabilities such as asthma — can also be affected by chemicals in surfacing materials.

For all of these reasons, it's important to make careful choices about play surfacing, and to ensure that the places where children learn and play are as healthy and safe as possible. Luckily, safer playground surfacing options are both practical and affordable.

*This blog draws from and builds upon our newly updated report, **Playground Surfacing: Choosing Safer Materials for Children's Health and the Environment**. Please see the report for additional detail and references related to the information presented here.*

This blog post is the third in a series on artificial turf, playground surfacing, and safer alternatives. Also see:

- ***[Playing on Plastic: Artificial Turf Hazards and Safer Alternatives.](#)***
- ***[6PPD in Tires: A concern for playgrounds, artificial turf, and more.](#)***
- ***[Forever Chemicals in Artificial Turf: Understanding PFAS testing.](#)***

Rachel Massey, ScD is Senior Science and Policy Advisor at the Collaborative for Health and Environment and Senior Research Associate at the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

All Posts by Rachel Massey, ScD

Lindsey Pollard, MS is a Research Associate at the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Her work includes research on chemical hazards and alternatives assessment for consumer and industrial applications. Prior to joining the Lowell Center, Lindsey worked as a researcher at the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute, and in the field and lab as an aquatic ecologist at Arizona State University and the University of Texas at Austin Marine Science Institute.

Materials pertinent to Feb 17th meeting of PARC Commission members

Andrea Wald waldmba@gmail.com 2-8-26

7:38 AM (1
minute ago)

to crichardson
crichardson@losaltosca.gov

Dear PARC commissioners,

At your February 17th meeting you will be discussing the plans for renovation at both Grant and Shoup parks. I am fearful that plans could be presented that can contain materials that the Los Altos community does not want as was evident when the city was looking into the new dog park at Hillview.

To better help you understand what the best option is I am sending you information that pertains to the best ground covering for playgrounds: EWF (Engineered Wood Fiber) – not to be confused with tan bark, which is rough and made from the bark of trees. EWF is made from the inside of trees, is softer, and is processed such that it is an excellent ground covering for our playgrounds – ALL NATURAL, unlike PIP (poured-in-place rubber) which is made from fossil fuels.

There are plenty of parks that use EWF. If EWF is ADA compliant, that should suffice. Why risk environmental and health harms with unnatural (fossil-fuel) materials like PIP. As for performance over time, the PIP surfaces do wear down and end up in landfill, where they sit for hundreds of years releasing the toxic chemicals they were made with.

<https://sfstandard.com/2025/05/02/san-francisco-playground-sunset-park-playground-cost-price/>



Below are several photos from parks nearby that show many local cities prefer natural EWF surfacing.

Oak Meadow Park, Los Gatos – 11/9/25



Visona park playground:



Wildwood Park, Saratoga:



Creekside Park, Cupertino:



Playground at Blackberry Farms in Cupertino – newly laid EWF. In a recent communication with the head of parks in Cupertino I learned that “in October of 2025 the city had a contractor install Certified EWF within all City owned playgrounds”.



To better understand why I, along with many others, are against PIP playground surfacing, please see info below:

2023, National Center for Health Research (Dr. Diana Zuckerman), **Are PIP rubber playgrounds safe for Kingston?**

<https://www.center4research.org/pip-playgrounds-danger-kingston-ny/>

2024, National Center for Health Research (Dr. Diana Zuckerman), **Testimony on: HB1147 - Environment – Playground Surfacing Materials – Prohibitions** to Montgomery County, Maryland Environment and Transportation Committee

https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/cmte_testimony/2024/ent/1zNZLKC1F2RIHeb8PKNT5aRiqxgewbQfy.pdf

Lastly, in the playground design I would recommend much more shade structures and less plastic materials. Even though EWF does not get hot like artificial turf and PIP, we are experiencing periods of not only hotter weather, but prolonged heat waves. Kids especially should be protected from direct sunlight as much as possible. Plus, just the playground equipment itself can get hot and uncomfortable to be playing on.

If the playground is expected to be accessible to all users then you should be aware that plastic slides are not good for anyone with a cochlear implant. What is recommended are metal slides. See material below.

<https://www.miracle-recreation.com/blog/hearing-impaired-playgrounds/>

Static electricity, particularly from plastic playground slides, poses a significant risk to cochlear implants (CIs), potentially causing electrostatic discharge (ESD) that can temporarily or permanently "fry" or shut down the external sound processor. To prevent damage, it is recommended to remove CI processors before using plastic slides, bouncy houses, or trampolines.  www.gametime.com +3

Thank you for taking the time to review the materials I've shared. I hope it will help you make the best choices for the renovations at the parks and for what Los Altans want and can enjoy for years to come.

Thank you.

Andrea

Casey Richardson

From: Dashiell Leeds <dashiell.leeds@sierraclub.org>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 11:46 AM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Cc: SueHintonE@gmail.com; Sue Chow; Gita Dev; James Eggers
Subject: September 15, 2026 PARC Commission Agenda item #2 - Playground Design
Attachments: SCLP letter to PARC Commission re_ Sep 15 Agenda item 2 Playground Design.pdf

Dear PARC Commissioners,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter encourages Los Altos to reject aggressive, profit-driven sales pitches that prioritize private equity gains over public health and the environment. Pour in place rubber (PIP) is not the simple, foolproof solution it's often claimed to be. Please read the attached letter with our full comments.

Sincerely,
Susan Hinton
Conservation Committee, Chair
Plastic Pollution Prevention Committee, Chair
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

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

Casey Richardson

From: Couture, Terri <Terri.Couture@cbnorcal.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 2:41 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: parks, arts, recreation and cultural items not on the agenda for september 15 meeting

Dear Public and Commissioners

Although I know you are not in charge of the privately placed trees on private land, I would like you to be aware of homeowner's actions happening in Los Altos.

I have been representing buyers and sellers in Los Altos for over 32 years. One of the major reasons buyers want to move here, is the peace and nature in Los Altos. The town has ordinances to remove trees of heritage. The trees actually matter.

I have witnessed over and over; large shade trees being removed. Some trees I have documented, without the appropriate permits. I am told by staff after the fact, that a tree will be replaced. A 4 ft tree CANNOT replace 100-year-old trees with large canopies. The trees house birds and help keep our town cool. If all the trees are removed, the town's appeal will diminish.

Please take care of your trees, instead of cutting them down.

Sincerely
Terri Couture

***Wire Fraud is Real*. Before wiring any money, call the intended recipient at a number you know is valid to confirm the instructions.** Additionally, please note that the sender does not have authority to bind a party to a real estate contract via written or verbal communication.

Casey Richardson

From: Tanya Payyappilly <tanya@lungsrus.org>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 2:41 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Cc: Casey Richardson
Subject: Breathe California letter for Item#2 PARC meeting September 15, 2026
Attachments: LosAltos_artturfandpip_9.14.2026.pdf

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Commissioners,

Please find attached letter informing about Breathe California's opinion on item #2 concerning artificial turf. Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions I can answer.

Warmly,
Tanya Payyappilly, MD, MPH
CEO



of the Bay Area, Golden Gate, and Central Coast

1469 Park Avenue, San Jose, CA 95126

Phone: (408) 998-5865 | Web: www.lungsrus.org

Breathe California is dedicated to fighting lung disease, advocating for clean air and promoting public health in our local communities.

**Breathe California
of the Bay Area,
Golden Gate, and
Central Coast**

1469 Park Avenue
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September 14, 2026

The Honorable Chair,
Members, Los Altos PARC
1 North San Antonio Road,
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Item #2 - Artificial Turf and Pour-in-Place Rubber

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Commission:

I am writing to express that Breathe California does not support installation of new plastic artificial turf at Grant and Shoup Playgrounds. Our children and athletes should be playing on well-maintained natural grass fields that do not risk their health, harm our environment, and contribute to the climate crisis.

Breathe California of the Bay Area, Golden Gate, and Central Coast is community-based nonprofit that was founded in San Jose in 1911. Our mission: As the local clean air and healthy lungs leader, we fight lung disease in all its forms and work with our communities to protect lung health. We have worked for clean air for sixty of our 115 years of service and championed healthy policies for decades in the County. Now we are excited once again at your plans to tackle this troublesome source of pollution and emissions locally, that will also have a tremendous impact in other parts of Bay Area.

Artificial turf contributes to chemical runoff, microplastic pollution, and the heat island effect, all of which are harmful to human health. While natural grass helps recharge groundwater by letting water percolate through the turf, plastic synthetic grass leads to water runoff filled with microplastics and chemicals, including PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals”. When it comes to children playing directly on poured-in-place (PIP) rubber, chemical exposure and intense heat absorption are two major environmental and health drawbacks. Unlike natural grass or wood mulch, solid rubber lacks ventilation and acts as a massive thermal sponge creating heat island.

These microplastics and chemicals have been linked to various potential negative health impacts, such as metabolic effects, developmental effects, neurotoxicity, immunotoxicity, and respiratory issues. With children and athletes of all ages being exposed to artificial turf materials through inhalation, skin contact, and accidental ingestion, we must exercise caution in further exposing our community to plastic turf.

Additionally, the elevated surface temperatures that cause the heat island effect have the potential to damage equipment, burn skin, and increase the risk of heat-related illness. Children are even more vulnerable to extreme heat as they are less able to regulate their body temperature compared to adults. As climate change increases the number of days of extreme heat, playing time on artificial turf fields will have to be increasingly limited for the safety of players.

A member of the
Breathe America™
Alliance

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to our planet, with our community facing risks of rising temperatures, more frequent wildfires, and sea level rise. Please reconsider in taking a meaningful step in reducing potential greenhouse gas emissions, cutting down on the demand for plastic, and preserving natural landscapes that sequester carbon.

Instead of promoting a surface that endangers children's health, water quality, and environmental health, the Commission should focus on investing in high-quality natural fields and professional maintenance to ensure that our children and athletes have safe, healthy spaces to play.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tanya", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Tanya Payyappilly, MD, MPH
CEO

Casey Richardson

From: Cindy Andrews <cindyandrews@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 2:56 PM
To: Casey Richardson; Anthony Carnesecce
Subject: Woodland Library art??

Hello Parks, Art and Recreation Commissioners, and Library Commissioners (I can't find your names),

I was very shocked to find that "The Thinker" sculpture has been relocated. Could you please tell me why you moved it, and where it is now located?

The Woodland librarian told me of its journey here across the country after being commissioned in Massachusetts as a memorial to a deceased family member.



When I ran the library at Blach Intermediate, I gave an extra credit assignment to my students to do a "thinking pose" next to the thinker at Woodland, and then to go into the library and find a picture of the real sculpture (one of subliminal those library lesson ploys!). You should have seen some of the poses they presented to me!

Thank you ~~~ I will take my granddaughter to POSE next to the Thinker when she comes to town for Thanksgiving!

Cindy Andrews

Casey Richardson

From: bonnieburdettwalker@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 6:39 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Public Comment
Subject: Public Comment - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers,

cc: PARC Commissioners

I am writing to **strongly** urge you to reject PIP playground surfaces on any Los Altos playground. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to **only consider natural surfaces**.

I am a grandparent and my grandchildren live near Heritage Oaks Park, Grant Park and Marymeade Parks and use them regularly. We also often frequent Shoup Park with our grandchildren. Our parks are a beautiful resource that we, and our neighbors, appreciate for its natural setting and well-maintained facilities, including the playgrounds.

I was dismayed to learn that the City's preferred plan is to replace the current Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) surface with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber as the playgrounds are upgraded.

PIP is a serious downgrade from the current playground surface. Natural play surfaces exist that avoid many of the health and environmental concerns associated with PIP.

For reasons of safety, accessibility, maintenance, cost, and environmental impact — (PIP) rubber is the **wrong** choice for our parks and engineered wood fiber (EWF) is the **right** choice.

I strongly urge you to stop poured-In-place (PIP) rubber from being installed at Grant and Shoup Park playgrounds. We demand better alternatives for our health and our children's and grandchildren's health. Better natural play surfaces exist that avoid many of the health and environmental concerns associated with PIP.

PIP Rubber is the Wrong Choice

- **Dangerously Hot** - Scientific studies demonstrate PIP rubber surfaces are the hottest over all other park surfaces. While air temperature may be 80°F, PIP playground surfaces can reach 140°F and higher, posing significant burn risks and off-gassing volatile compounds.

The City should select **EWF as the preferred surface for the playgrounds at all Los Altos parks**. EWF's heat-safety, cost, and environmental profile outweigh the advantages of other surfaces — provided the city commits to a consistent maintenance schedule. In addition, EWF is a better, more natural fit with Grant and Shoup on aesthetic grounds.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this important issue. I trust you will make the right decision.

Sincerely,

Casey Richardson

From: Sabra Abraham <sabra_abraham@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 7:12 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Public Comment
Subject: Public Comment Not on the Agenda - Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks

Dear Los Altos City Councilmembers, cc: PARC Commissioners,

I have been a Los Altos resident for 40 years, and raised two boys who often played at Shoup Park. It is a beautiful resource that I appreciate for its natural setting and well maintained facilities, including the playgrounds. I still walk around the park every week and really love it.

When I take walks near playgrounds with PIP, I can smell the synthetic chemicals and it is NOT PLEASANT (I have a VERY sensitive nose).

PIP is a serious downgrade from the current playground surface. Natural play surfaces exist that avoid many of the health and environmental concerns associated with PIP.

I strongly urge you to reject PIP playground surfaces on any Los Altos playground. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces.

Sabra Abraham

Casey Richardson

From: Andrea Wald <waldmba@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 8:06 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Public Comment
Subject: PARC mtg 9-15-26 Agenda item #2: Grant and Shoup playgrounds

Dear Mayor, City Council members and PARC commissioners,

Since what happens at Grant and Shoup playgrounds will most likely affect decisions for the other Los Altos playgrounds down the road and will also have implications for other cities facing the same decisions, I decided I needed to send one last email to make sure that reasons for not going with PIP are totally covered.

Another angle to consider is the Los Altos' Climate Action Plan where there are many reasons not to install PIP.

Green Community	Develop Nature-Based Solutions
Climate Risk	Understand and Reduce Physical Risk
Municipal Operations	Operate Sustainable Municipal Buildings
	Promote Green Municipal Practices
	Reduce Municipal VMT
	Integrate Climate Action and Adaptation into City Functions

- 1) Its not a natural material – therefore counter to “Develop Nature-Based Solutions”
- 2) There are climate related risks with PIP, and also environmental hazzards
- 3) PIP is not sustainable and definitely does not promote “Green Practices”.

Has anyone considered what is going to happen to any PIP that the city installs when it wears out? Maintaining PIP as it wears out and ages is not as simple as simply racking EWF and filling in more material as needed. See below info and note that there are no recycling facilities for PIP in CA or even a neighboring state. American Recycling seems to be the only place that advertises recycling of PIP, and even there there are limitations to what they take and what they do with it. What should also be noted is that their facilities are either in Michigan or Georgia. Would that be the plan – ship the pieces all the way across the US and not even know if they will be recycled – and at what cost?

◆ AI Overview

Worn-out Poured-in-Place (PIP) playground surfaces are either [repaired, resurfaced, or completely demolished](#) and sent to specialized facilities for [Recycled Playground Poured In Place Rubber](#) processing.  American Recycling Ce... +1



American Recycling Center, Inc.

Corporate Headquarters

655 Wabasse Drive
Owosso, MI 48867
1-800-234-5414

American Recycling Center, Inc.

7629 Adairsville Hwy
Adairsville, GA 30103

<https://www.americanrecycling.com/blog/how-to-recycle-old-playground-poured-in-place-rubber-surfacing>

Below I've copied a few sections from the American Recycling web site - please pay particular attention to the section that I show in **red**.

Jul. 1, 2025

How to Recycle Old Playground Poured In Place Rubber Surfacing

All playground surfacing begins to break down over time. So what happens when it's time to replace it? Recycle it!

Even the strongest and most durable playground surfacing begins to break down over time. While most park developers place a heavy emphasis on designing and selecting a new playground surface for their facility, less attention is placed on what to do with the remaining poured-in-place surfacing.

Discarded playground surfacing rubber can have a detrimental impact on the environment, particularly if the remnants are sent to a local landfill. Rather than simply getting rid of the previous playground rubber that is no longer usable, community planners can consider sustainable disposal options, such as recycling that playground surfacing rubber.

What Makes Playground Rubber Recyclable

Playground designs often feature recycled rubber in the base material of poured-in-place surfaces. This base material, which is commonly recycled rubber, can once again be reclaimed at its end of life to start the recycling process once again.

Ideal Material Characteristics:

While most playground recycled rubber can be transformed into new and durable recycled rubber products, you will want to verify that your material meets the requirements. These are some of the ideal material characteristics for recycled rubber:

- Rubber surfaces should not have metal reinforcement or fiber backing so that they can easily be processed.
- All materials should be clean and free from wood contamination in order to protect the integrity and purity of the recycled product.

- Rubber surface should be free of any stone aggregate. Detached from any asphalt or concrete.

In order to verify that your playground rubber can be recycled, you can [request a material assessment](#).

Common Packaging and Removal Methods

Once you have determined that your playground surfacing material is ideal for recycling, you can consider the packaging and removal options that are available. In general, the process begins with bulk demolition and removal. Contractors will work to properly dismantle the playground surfacing, ultimately preserving its integrity and ensuring that it remains viable for recycling. The surfacing material is then removed, packaged, and transported to the rubber recycling facility. For large playgrounds, efficient baling options are available.

By working with an experienced and reliable recycling partner, you can ensure that your playground surfacing solution is removed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

There are just too many reasons not to use PIP. Please take these to heart and also the desire of the Los Altos residents who have indicated they do not want PIP in their playgrounds.

Thank you.

Andrea Wald

Casey Richardson

From: Laura Fay <fay.laura@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 9:10 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Manuel Hernandez; Gabriel Engeland
Cc: Jonathan Weinberg
Subject: Public Comment for item #2 on 9/15/26 PARC Commission Agenda
Attachments: protect-our-kids-keep-los-altos-parks-safe_signatures_202609140650.pdf

Dear Manny, Gabe and PARC Commission,

CC: Councilmember Weinberg (City Council liaison to the PARC Commission)

Over 200 neighbors are speaking out this month to object to the replacement of EWF with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber surfaces in the park playgrounds.

See the letter with 200+ signers and their additional comments, attached to this summary request.

(Note: For clarity, this is different from the 65 letters previously sent to the city objecting to the installation of PIP rubber in our parks, in spring and early summer 2026)

THE REQUEST

This is a formal request to the Los Altos city staff and the PARC Commission to renovate the city's parks with the same safe, ADA complaint, and natural Engineered-Wood-Fibers (EWF) surface already in place today. PIP is the wrong choice for our children, our parks and our environment, for the numerous reasons outlined in many public comment emails and statements.

PLEASE DON'T TURN AWAY

We are park neighbors. We are Los Altans. We care about the health of our children.

IF YOU ARE UNDECIDED

If the city staff isn't willing to exclusively upgrade with natural surfaces, please request the Major and City Councilmembers put this issue on the City Council agenda before the Shoup Park and Grant Park designs are finalized. This gives the opportunity for open and transparent consideration of the safety, ADA compliance, cost and environmental issues involved.

PLEASE KNOW

Los Altos does not have to choose between safety and a natural playground. Both can be true.

Natural Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) surfaces are already in place today. EWF provides fall safety and ADA compliance, in addition to being toxic chemical free and environmentally friendly - all the things that the City says are important. EWF provides attractive, accessible playground surfaces without many of the concerns associated with PIP rubber.

Respectfully,

Laura Fay, on behalf of over 200 others.
Los Altos

Los Altos City Council and PARC Commission,

219 people have signed a petition on Action Network telling you to PROTECT OUR KIDS.
KEEP LOS ALTOS PARKS SAFE.

Here is the petition they signed:

Please protect our children's health and oppose Poured-In-Place playground surfaces.

I urge the city of Los Altos to install natural surfaces and reject Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber in Shoup and Grant park playgrounds and in ALL city park playgrounds, and instead choose to retain the current Engineered-Wood-Fiber (EWF) surfaces or other natural alternatives.

I am particularly concerned about the extreme heat that PIP surfaces can reach in direct sunlight. A toddler in Colorado recently suffered second-degree burns after walking on a PIP playground surface on an 82°F day. We should not put Los Altos children at unnecessary burn risk in places where they play, or incur the possible liability exposure. (Reference: CBS News Playground Report: Toddler receives second-degree burns to feet from hot playground in Castle Rock
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUJ8OZAcMMA>)

I am also very concerned about the longer-term health and environmental questions surrounding PIP, including chemicals associated with recycled rubber, deterioration of the surface over time causing trip and other hazards, potential runoff and impacts to surrounding soil, vegetation and groundwater.

Los Altos should be choosing safe playground materials with our children's short term safety, their long-term health and our environment in mind, not simply what is easiest to install and maintain. There are safer natural play surfaces to choose from that don't have the same hazard profile as PIP rubber.

Our children will be living with the city's choices for decades.
Please direct city staff to install play surfaces that have a less of a hazard profile as PIP, factoring both the short term and long-term health of our children, in addition to avoiding contamination of our drinking water and optimizing the health of our adjacent green spaces.

Our children deserve it.

You can view each petition signer and the comments they left you below.

Thank you,

1. Cheryl Weiden (ZIP code: 94022-2327)

2. Laura Fay (ZIP code: 94024)

Please avoid PIP.

3. Peter Fay (ZIP code: 94024)

4. Andrea Wald (ZIP code: 94087)

PIP is not the right choice if one is concerned about the environment and health of all - especially children being exposed to harms at a young age. Please choose EWF - the natural and safer material.

5. Peter Landsberger (ZIP code: 94024)

6. Caroline Rumptz (ZIP code: 94022)

Please keep artificial substances off of children's playgrounds!

7. Eric Rumptz (ZIP code: 94022)

8. Erika Tang (ZIP code: 94022)

9. Danny Morris (ZIP code: 94022)

This is bad for the environment, bad for budget, and terrible for child development. There is no upside here.

10. Vijay Kori (ZIP code: 94024)

11. Mike Gardner (ZIP code: 94024)

12. Mary Ann Dewan (ZIP code: 94024)

13. Janet Harding (ZIP code: 94022)

PLEASE RECONSIDER your decision re the use of artificial turf on our public lands. These plastic materials have been demonstrated to be harmful to kids & also the environment.

14. JoAnne Estill (ZIP code: 94024)

15. Judith Whelan (ZIP code: 94024)

I am appalled and disgusted at the City of Los Altos planning on replacing the beautiful wood chips in the children's play area at Shoup Park and Grant Park, and already have

inatalled the toxic PIP (Poured in Place) rubber in 2 areas. I certainly would not want my own children or grandchildren playing in something so toxic and damaging to their health. My own children enjoyed Shoup Park many years ago. My grandchildren are grown with young families of their own and I certainly would NOT bring them to the Park with toxic PIP rubber. PLEASE DO NOT USE in our beautiful playgrounds!!!

Judy (Judith) Whelan

16. Pat Marriott (ZIP code: 94024)

There's clear evidence this is extremely dangerous!

17. Bruce England (ZIP code: 94043)

18. Barbara Loebner Loebner (ZIP code: 94024)

Let's find a better answer.

19. Melissa Smith (ZIP code: 94022)

20. Loretta M. Fennell (ZIP code: 94024)

21. Jennifer Keller (ZIP code: 94024)

Please only consider natural surfaces and keep parks safe for our kids!

22. Jarod Partlo (ZIP code: 94022)

23. Taylor Howell (ZIP code: 94022)

24. Inna Kupershmidt (ZIP code: 94024)

No pip in our parks. It's hazardous and unsightly.

25. Shane Fay (ZIP code: 94024)

26. Portia Larentis (ZIP code: 94024)

27. t couture (ZIP code: 94024)

PLEASE do not be swayed by the environmentalists that say lawns are wasteful. Living plants help keep our town cool & children can play on lawns in hot weather. There are NOT enough studies on poured in place rubber. We don't know the how long the rubber will last as it will breakdown and will constantly seep gases into our atmosphere. The rubber surface will get extremely hot and children will get hurt.

28. John Kehoe (ZIP code: 94085)

Please avoid covering more of our cities in synthetic playground surfaces or artificial turf. Let's keep our natural areas natural.

29. Wendy Walleigh (ZIP code: 94024)

Please use again the Engineered -Wood-Fibers surface. Our children and city should not suffer PIP as an unhealthy option.

30. BARBARA ZIEROTH-HOFFMAN (ZIP code: 94022)

31. Michael Rizkalla (ZIP code: 94024)

It's amazing that in today's world we need to sign petitions to reject chemicals and use natural materials. But here we are. Why isn't common sense taking the lead here?

32. Katherine Carpenter (ZIP code: 94024)

33. Caroline Jordan (ZIP code: 94024)

34. Paulina Bruce (ZIP code: 94024)

35. Eduard Keller (ZIP code: 94024)

36. Matt Mendoza (ZIP code: 94024)

Will attend town comments. Feel free to submit this comment under our name if and where appropriate: "We Los Altos residents and everyday, rain or shine users of Grant Park strongly oppose any rubberized surface where our children play. The existing mulch is a safer and more responsible choice than the proposed degradation to our kids' safety."

37. Sitara Holla (ZIP code: 94024)

We are not in favor of this change, it's not sustainable for the future of our children.

38. Nandini Moghe (ZIP code: 94024)

Poured-in-Place (PIP) surfaces are bonded using polyurethane binders that contain MDI-based isocyanate chemicals. According to manufacturer safety data sheets, these compounds are classified as skin and respiratory sensitizers that can cause allergic reactions, asthma-like symptoms, and organ damage from repeated exposure. Beyond these and other documented environmental hazards, PIP surfaces can reach outrageously high temperatures in warm weather, creating a severe burn risk for children.

These risks are not something we should take up, for the health and safety of the kids in our community.

39. Roger Heyder (ZIP code: 94022)

Looks like Los Altos has lost all common sense. Incapable of maintaining something lovely, only capable of embarking on a me-too endeavor that makes no sense. Similar to

the street bollards which obstruct traffic and help nobody.

40. Magdalena Cabrera (ZIP code: 94306)

41. Shibani Shah (ZIP code: 94024)

42. Parth Shah (ZIP code: 94024)

43. Panduranga Bhat (ZIP code: 94024)

44. Lynn Khau Boucher (ZIP code: 94024)

45. Swati Agarwal (ZIP code: 94024)

46. Swapna Samant (ZIP code: 94024)

47. Aysha Khan (ZIP code: 94024)

48. Kathy Hanson (ZIP code: 94022)
Please don't use PIP for the playground.

49. Killian Fay (ZIP code: 95060)

50. Dieter Bruno (ZIP code: 94061)

51. Kristy Harrison (ZIP code: 94024)
Grant Park resident for over 10 years.

52. Candy Sohn (ZIP code: 94024)

53. JESSICA SCHAEFFER (ZIP code: 94024)

54. Veronique Bourdeau (ZIP code: 94024)

55. Serena Li (ZIP code: 94024)

56. Pegah Alavi (ZIP code: 94024)
Please do not expose our children and community to any more forever chemicals and micro plastics

57. Denise Twum (ZIP code: 94024)
Please leave the natural surface in place for the parks and children's play areas. PIP is not safe and the convenience right now does not merit the health issues later.

58. David Moore (ZIP code: 94024)

59. Nidhi Rani (ZIP code: 94024)

I don't want our children to play on rubberized playground. Learn something from European nations like Netherlands. They try to preserve nature while keep safety in mind. Sand or wood chips for our playground. These materials promote sensory learning for very young children.

60. Didi huang (ZIP code: 94022)

61. Andris Ramans (ZIP code: 94024)

62. Rose Torreano (ZIP code: 94024)

Please keep our kids safe and healthy! Do not spend any money on installing this chemical product in any of our parks.

63. Kari Lam (ZIP code: 94024)

64. Maria Bautista (ZIP code: 94022)

I support a ban on the use of all synthetic surfaces in Los Altos public spaces.

65. Cheryl Herms (ZIP code: 94024)

66. Nyssa Kansal (ZIP code: 94022)

I am writing to strongly urge you to reject PIP playground surfaces on any Los Altos playground. Please direct the city staff and the PARC Commission to only consider natural surfaces.

I am a teenager who uses it regularly along with my younger brother, and have done so for years. It is a beautiful resource that I, and my neighbors appreciate for its natural setting and well maintained facilities, including the playgrounds.

I was dismayed to learn that the City's preferred plan is to replace the current Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) surface with Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber as the playgrounds are upgraded.

PIP is a serious downgrade from the current playground surface. Natural play surfaces exist that avoid many of the health and environmental concerns associated with PIP.

67. Douglas Greiman (ZIP code: 94024-6908)

68. Clari Nolet (ZIP code: 94022)

69. Patrick Murphy (ZIP code: 94022)

We don't need more chemicals.

70. Shelley Sinclair (ZIP code: 94022)

I visit these parks almost daily because they are more natural & Very special. Please don't use toxic chemicals to redo these grounds.

71. Anju Makhija (ZIP code: 94024)

72. Katd Disney (ZIP code: 9402w)

73. Melissa Bai (ZIP code: 94022)

74. David Mariani (ZIP code: 94022)

75. Sarah Shreve (ZIP code: 94022)

76. Alice Mansell (ZIP code: 94024)

77. Annie Specker (ZIP code: 94022)

78. Bonnie Walker (ZIP code: 94022)

No more PIP. Please stick with EWF.

79. Anika Mathakari (ZIP code: 94024)

80. Terry Bush (ZIP code: 94022)

81. Pat Lang (ZIP code: 94022)

82. Joan Loney (ZIP code: 94024)

Please do not put the healthy development of our children's sensitive bodily systems, and the healthy wellbeing of our park's air, soil, flora, and fauna at risk from PIP materials. There are far better, natural, cost effective materials available for the higher good of everyone and the environment. Please no petroleum toxins on our playgrounds!! Leave things alone until we agree on a healthier alternative. The kids are doing fine the way things are.

83. Mary Mills (ZIP code: 94022)

84. SANDRA GOLDSTEIN (ZIP code: 94024)

85. Susan Huang (ZIP code: 94024)

86. Gita Nezamfar (ZIP code: 94024)

87. Vshid Majidzadeh Bafar (ZIP code: 94024)

88. Jean Wolman (ZIP code: 94024)

89. Diane Stadlen (ZIP code: 94024)

90. Quinten Yearsley (ZIP code: 94022)

I'm a parent of kids at Gardner Bullis Elementary; we sometimes visit Shoup Park.

91. Becky Bell (ZIP code: 94024)

Why did the city council think the residents of our city would want this toxic option for our playgrounds. Who stands to gain from this?

92. Amy Bogart (ZIP code: 94024)

Strongly against non-natural materials!

93. Rick Evans (ZIP code: 94024)

94. Alicia Evans (ZIP code: 94024)

Our children's health is top priority !

95. Jan Hustler (ZIP code: 94024)

Please keep our children and the environment safe by using bark instead of plastics.

96. Kurt Kuckein (ZIP code: 94022)

Environmental directions appear to be moving strongly against PiP Rubber. For full ADA compliance and ease of maintenance, the city should at least consider PiP Cork.

97. Robert Bartruff (ZIP code: 94024)

Natural fiber products should be the choice even with the higher maintenance costs.

98. Nancy Martin (ZIP code: 94024)

The cost is ridiculous, it's terrible for the planet and even worse for our children. Los Altos prides itself on using natural products, so this goes against all that we stand for. Our City maintenance department and City manager need to stop falling for these gimmicky sales people selling the latest and greatest thing. They're sales people! They use fear tactics to sell their products. Fear of falling and law suits which is always a possibility anywhere (that's why we have insurance) Bark has always sufficed and is the natural solution. NO chemicals!

99. Cindy Sidaris (ZIP code: 94022)

100. Maureen Griffin (ZIP code: 94022)

101. KIM Hunter (ZIP code: 94024)

102. Vivien D'Andrea (ZIP code: 94022)

As a physician I am concerned about the toxic effects of PIP. We should stick to the more "natural" EWF that is safer and has worked well for the recent generation of kids.

103. Parikshit Sondhi (ZIP code: 94024)

104. Vinay Perneti (ZIP code: 94041)

105. Karen Shea-Daley (ZIP code: 94024)

106. Jamie Bindon (ZIP code: 94024)

107. Wendy Walleigh (ZIP code: 94024)

PIP as new playground material is going to harm children in multiple ways. Just read the vendor's description of its content!

108. Linda White (ZIP code: 94024)

This type of surface has not been thoroughly tested. It is potentially toxic to our children and the environment. We do not benefit from covering up our natural lands with artificial surfaces. Please look into other alternatives for the safety of our children and the health of the environment.

109. Cindy Law (ZIP code: 94306)

110. April Anderson (ZIP code: 94024-6022)

111. Lalia Helmer (ZIP code: 94022)

112. Pawan Deshpande (ZIP code: 94022)

113. Megan Marwede (ZIP code: 94024)

114. Joan McNulty (ZIP code: 94022)

115. Li-Feng Chang (ZIP code: 94024)

116. Wenshan Liu (ZIP code: 94024)

117. Mary Theis (ZIP code: 94022)

It's 95 degrees outside today, in mid-September. With global warming, we need to increasingly plan for hotter temperatures. Unfortunately, heat impacts PIP rubber in

several ways:

Increased Off-Gassing of Chemicals: High temperatures cause PIP rubber to off-gas other volatile compounds. Studies have found that heat triggers the release of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), plasticizers, and other chemicals found in the recycled tire base layer. This off-gassing becomes noticeably more intense at temperatures above 77°F (25°C).

Extreme Surface Temperatures: PIP rubber absorbs and retains solar radiation remarkably well, especially dark colors. On a moderate 75°F day, the surface temperature of PIP rubber can skyrocket to over 140°F to 170°F (60°C to 76°C), posing a severe skin burn hazard to young children.

Accelerated Breakdown: Prolonged exposure to extreme heat and UV radiation causes the top wear layer of PIP rubber to degrade and become brittle over time. As it cracks or sheds, children can come into closer contact with the underlying tire crumb dust.

Please find a more natural option on which is safer for our children to play.

118. Nancy Sugimoto (ZIP code: 94022)

119. Namrata Gupta (ZIP code: 94022)

Do not replace natural bark with chemically processed products. We do not need to imitate other cities, we seem to be wasting a lot of money on unnecessary changes throughout the city, like our very visible signs outside the library & police station □ STOP

120. Yvonne Chu (ZIP code: 94024)

Renovate with the same safe Engineer Wood Fibers, NOT Poured in Place rubber in Los Altos Parks!

121. Janet Corrigan (ZIP code: 94022)

122. Julia Powell (ZIP code: 53562)

123. Andrea Colaco (ZIP code: 94022)

124. David Andrews (ZIP code: 94024)

125. Eva Emerson (ZIP code: 94022)

please look for other alternatives!

126. Diane Gass (ZIP code: 94024)

127. Bettina Epp (ZIP code: 94024)

Keep our kids safe and healthy! Use natural materials only!!!

128. Brian Tully (ZIP code: 94024)

I have a 3 year old and take her to all the local parks regularly. We live walking distance to Grant Park and go there the most. While we haven't always spent time in the playground, we have gone to the park regularly for 13 years. I understand why so many parks use PIP and that it is trending, but long term, it is not "better". It definitely emits a smell. When it breaks down, it looks like microplastic trash central, and doesn't get repaired. My first thought when I heard Grant Park was set to get their wood fibers replaced with this was, "Please, no". I live in the neighborhood and 100% prefer the far more natural wood/sand setup. As for fall protection, I discovered this first hand the other day. My 3 year old is learning to climb and trying to climb everything. She slipped off a playground ladder and tested the wood fiber/sand ability to break her fall. To my genuine surprise, she was 100% okay. Not even a single ouchie. The natural Grant Park setup is tried and true and has withstood the test of time. In fact, the only issues have been with rubber/plastic components, like the red climbing tubes or nets that have fallen apart and degraded over time - ultimately to be removed without replacement in some cases - a legitimate playground hazard because now kids can freefall. Imagine if the entire floor was like that. No thank you. I sincerely appreciate your consideration.

129. Simran Gupta (ZIP code: 94022)

130. Patricia Evans (ZIP code: 94022)

131. Florence Lin (ZIP code: 94024)

132. Janet Vassar (ZIP code: 94024)

PLEASE stop using PIP in our parks and playgrounds. Restore with EWF when needed. There is no reason to use toxic chemicals when environmentally-friendly options exist. Thank you!

133. Mary Tabor (ZIP code: 94041)

134. Ronni Sharpe (ZIP code: 94041)

135. PRAVEEN KUMAR (ZIP code: 94024)

Don't do it. Leave the natural wood fibers alone.

136. Lianne Thompson (ZIP code: 94024)

137. Erica Fischer-Colbrie (ZIP code: 94024)

138. Jim Alsup (ZIP code: 94024)

Please don't pollute our playgrounds and outdoor exercise areas.

139. Judy Chen (ZIP code: 95024)

140. Donna Songer (ZIP code: 94040)

Not only Los Altos, but everywhere. I'm sick of chemicals being used everywhere. STOP!

141. Jeny Ginsberg (ZIP code: 94024)

142. Carol Ovelman (ZIP code: 94024)

143. Lonnie Gary (ZIP code: 94043-4112)

Protect our kids from artificial turf and poured in place rubber surfaces.

144. Jenny Yip (ZIP code: 94024)

145. Megan Noice (ZIP code: 94306)

This kind of rubber is both an environmental hazard and genuinely too hot for little feet and hands!

146. Sudhir Arora (ZIP code: 94024)

147. Kinjal Gavadiya (ZIP code: 94024-6224)

148. Maitreyi Roy (ZIP code: 94024)

149. Priyanka Aggarwal (ZIP code: 94024)

150. Smriti Talwar (ZIP code: 94024)

No more PIP

151. Ana Jackson (ZIP code: 94024)

Poured in place rubber will be too hot in the summer. Please choose a more environmentally friendly surface for our park playgrounds.

152. Yvonne Nachtigall (ZIP code: 94024)

153. Audrey Lanzalaco (ZIP code: 94024)

In many countries they are doing the opposite replacing playground with plastic PIP with woods. It has been proven that it has reduced many allergies for kids

154. Kristina Stewart (ZIP code: 94024)

155. Milena D Santos (ZIP code: 94024)

We need good playgrounds for the kids healthy overall.

Viable natural surface alternatives to PIP exist that are safe, ADA compliant and environmentally friendly.

There's no compelling reason to resurface with a hazardous petro chemical product.

156. Jennifer Lee (ZIP code: 94024)

157. Emma Nakamoto (ZIP code: 94024)

158. P M (ZIP code: 94024)

159. Twisha Shah (ZIP code: 94024)

160. V Chulamorkodt (ZIP code: 94024)

161. Jayanti Sharma (ZIP code: 94024)

162. Elizabeth Cohan (ZIP code: 94024)

No toxic PIP on our playgrounds!

163. Ka Shing Chu (ZIP code: 94024)

164. Harsha Sabbineni (ZIP code: 95051)

165. Roopa Sirohi (ZIP code: 94024)

Are kids & dogs playing in that environment would request relieve the woodchips as they are

166. Reto Egeter (ZIP code: 94024)

167. Tami Mulcahy (ZIP code: 94022)

On so many levels, using PIP is wrong. Our world already exposures our kids to a boatload of toxins. It is criminal that we would purposely expose them to more. If anything, Los Altos should go the opposite direction toward nature based parks, which, in addition is in keeping with the vibe of Los Altos.

People go to green spaces for serenity. Don't un green them!!! Nothing replaces natural products. And the planet needs us to keep it natural.

As for the justification that PIP uses recycled products, omg! Recycling a product like tires that are now made with a lot of plastic and the chemicals contained in them, is simply giving that product another life, another chance, to expose us to the toxicity. In this case that exposure is to children who are the most biologically affected by that exposure. Keep it natural Los Altos!

168. Steve Headley (ZIP code: 94024)

Keep parks safe

169. Bruce Hansen (ZIP code: 94022-3531)

fully agree with the need to use wood chips.

170. David Jeng (ZIP code: 94024)

We don't need more micro plastics

171. Sylvia Tsai (ZIP code: 94041)

Stop PIP

172. Mike Demele (ZIP code: 94024)

173. Bonnie McGhee (ZIP code: 94025)

1925 churton ave

174. Lawrence ackner (ZIP code: 94024)

175. Imran Qureshi (ZIP code: 94024)

Please don't put plastics in the playground as it's not bio degradable and also for a few weeks in summer when the temperatures spur past 90 degrees, it gets very hot

176. Kiana Leekamura (ZIP code: 94024)

177. Ashwin Bharambe (ZIP code: 94024)

The high temperature concerns are real and so is the destruction of the natural look of the playground.

178. Jill Ford (ZIP code: 94022)

Stop using materials that are toxic & harmful to the environment and children!

179. Vinod Madabushi (ZIP code: 94024)

180. Mark Werlich (ZIP code: 94024)

181. Cristina Woytowitz (ZIP code: 94024)

182. Connie Guglielmo (ZIP code: 94024)

I DO NOT want poured-in-place (PIP) rubber used in any playgrounds, dog parks or public land. Use natural surface materials ONLY (100%).

183. David Munoz (ZIP code: 94024)

Covering our children's playground with petrochemical rubber serves noone. We've lived here for 26 years and the natural wood chip cover has worked fine.

184. Alexis Haman (ZIP code: 94024)

185. Emma Tweddell (ZIP code: 94024)

186. SHREEPADMA VENUGOPALAN (ZIP code: 94024)

187. Taki Hiraoka (ZIP code: 94024)

188. Trina Oettinger (ZIP code: 94022)

Do not use PIP. Use natural surfaces.

189. Philip Oettinger (ZIP code: 94022)

190. Eric Chu (ZIP code: 94024)

191. shiri kadambi (ZIP code: 94022)

Should not use PIP in children playgrounds.

192. Zoe Hua (ZIP code: 94024)

193. Jane Holt (ZIP code: 94024)

194. Dan Mars (ZIP code: 94024)

195. Stacey Hiraoka (ZIP code: 94024)

196. Vivian Rollinger-Niemczura (ZIP code: 94041)

197. Connor Chu (ZIP code: 94024)

198. Amanda Steele (ZIP code: 94040)

199. Brion LaPointe (ZIP code: 94024)

Stop the PIP train!

200. Brent Smith (ZIP code: 94022)

201. Robert Hall (ZIP code: 94117)

202. Taylor Coccio Taylor (ZIP code: 94024)

URGING TO to Preserve Natural Playground Surfacing at Grant Park for our children

203. Sierra Bartruff (ZIP code: 94024)

Long time resident near Grant Park on Alford Ave

204. Anita Kapadia (ZIP code: 94024)

205. Marilyn Pirofalo (*ZIP code: 94924*)

Not safe for children or the environment.

206. Laura Chicchi (*ZIP code: 94024*)

No PIP

207. Alexandra Diddams (*ZIP code: 94040*)

Please do not put artificial anything in this park! We love the way it is!!

208. Malavika Samak (*ZIP code: 94024*)

Casey Richardson

From: Laura Teksler <laurateksler@greentownlosaltos.org>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2026 9:14 PM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Cc: board@greentownlosaltos.org
Subject: GreenTown Los Altos Letter

Dear Los Altos PARC Commissioners,

The GreenTown Los Altos board is writing to share our opposition to the installation of Poured-In-Place (PIP) rubber in Los Altos' playgrounds.

By their very nature, petroleum products such as PIP present environmental and health concerns to Los Altos residents. As a city committed to sustainability, Los Altos should be working to reduce, not expand, these surfaces in our community, particularly in places where the primary users are children. While there are many factors to consider in selecting the appropriate surface for a playground, we would like to address those we feel most important from a human and environmental health standpoint.

Environmental & Human Toxicity:

- While the industry claims that the toxic chemicals composing PIP present low exposure risk because they are in a bound state. These are not long-term studies and do not consider surface wear that can lead those chemicals to become available to the surrounding environment and surface users.
- The fact is that these surfaces contain carcinogenic compounds such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), benzothiazole, and potentially PFAS "forever chemicals" along with heavy metals, exacerbating asthma and other conditions.
- Studies have found that PAH levels in playground dust can be 4 to 5 times higher on PIP rubber playgrounds than on bare ground. One of the purported benefits of PIP rubber, reducing children's injuries, only considers fall from height harms. It does not account for the very real burn risks associated with exorbitantly high temperatures. Further, it does not account for the risks associated with chemical exposures, that may not be immediately evident, but could have potentially much more consequential long-term health impacts.

Excessive Heat:

- IP rubber has a consistently much hotter surface temperature than natural surfaces. For example, On an 82°F day, PIP rubber surfaces have been recorded at 160°F or higher, hot enough to cause contact burns within seconds. Children are more susceptible to burns as pediatric skin is 20% to 30% thinner than adult skin.
- While natural surfaces can help absorb ambient heat, artificial surfaces contribute to the urban heat island effect heating up surrounding areas and stressing adjacent vegetation and human park goers.

Chemical Runoff:

- As stated above, any claim that the toxic chemicals that comprise PIP rubber will not enter our groundwater as they wear is unsubstantiated by long-term use case studies.

Solid Waste:

- Artificial surfaces have to be replaced and verified recycling at end of life is not available.

All too often new products, such as the PIP rubber considered here, rely on the absence of conclusive longitudinal studies as cover to claim the products are safe, and perhaps even preferable.

All too often, once science is conclusive it is too late and the harm is done. The environmental movement therefore relies on the precautionary principle which dictates caution in situations where there is threat of harm.

Installation of artificial surfaces is a clear case of potential for harm to human and environmental health that would be very difficult, if not impossible, to abate once the products are in use.

The GreenTown Board, therefore, implores the PARC Commission to reject the use of PIP rubber in city-owned playgrounds and parks.

Sincerely,
Los Altos GreenTown Board of Directors

Casey Richardson

From: Andrea Wald <waldmba@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2026 5:48 AM
To: Public Comment - PARC; Public Comment
Subject: topics related to Agenda item #2 9-15-26 PARC mtg that most likely have not yet been addressed by others

Dear Mayor, City Council members, PARC commissioners,

I'm pretty sure that all other emails you've received relate to the PIP surface that is being considered for the playground renovations at Grant and Shoup. I have two other important issues I'd like to address:

- 1) The recommendations from the adHoc committee include a pilot of Corkeen at the Shoup 0-5 year-old playground.

I personally reached out to the company that makes Corkeen but even with multiple attempts to get questions answered they have never responded. After reading whatever material is available concerning this product, which is not very much and mostly just from the producer themselves, and knowing that most of their installations have been in Europe and extremely few have been done in the US (pretty sure none in the bay area), I wanted to get any references available for local places and also understand how one can get a well-trained, certified installer for the material since it's a very complicated installation process and I read about one instance where it failed miserably. It also has not been around long enough to know how it holds up, what repairs can be done and when it might need to be totally replaced and what would one do with the material that needs to be pulled up and replaced. I don't believe there are any recycling facilities so it would end up in landfill. I believe they only offer a 5-year warranty.

There are no studies to prove that this new material is not harmful. No meaningful testing by any organizations – health, environment, etc. The cork sourcing is problematic, too, and can come from any number of countries with no regulations relating to that.

One of the biggest concerns is the binder that is used when installing the product. Is it truly safe? What happens over time when the material wears out and breaks down? Is there any risk that even when new have not been studied.

Corkeen is more expensive than EWF, quite difficult to install, and has too many unknowns for Los Altos to take a chance on it. Just stick with EWF which has been around a long time and has worked just fine.

- 2) Other design features recommended in attachment A:

The below items seem like great suggestions which I hope will be taken into account in any new designs proposed by the vendor.

Under Item 5:

- f. Use of more natural materials in play structures such as wood. An example is a balance-beam apparatus: **“Walking the Plank”**;

And these two recommendations:

- 8 The use of interesting walkways & paths around perimeter with barriers or boardwalks that can be used for climbing and jumping (using rocks, concrete, & other natural materials, etc.)
- 9 The use of landscaping around the playground to create a softer, shadier & more natural look;

Your time and attention to these issues is appreciated.

Thank you.

Andrea Wald

Casey Richardson

From: Kat Winant Carpenter <akwinant@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2026 8:59 AM
To: Public Comment - PARC
Subject: comment on PIP rubber

Hello, my family has lived in Los Altos since 1985, about two blocks away from Grant Park. Back then it was the shuttered Grant School, and my father and some neighbors created a resident group they called "Grant for All," advocating for the city to not sell off the closed school grounds for housing, and instead transform them into a park, and we won!

This park is vitally important and heavily used by our entire community, and when it was originally created, there was rubber surface under the play equipment. It chipped, cracked, peeled, caused tripping hazards, and became a maintenance nightmare, and was eventually replaced by the current wood chips.

I have heard many many citizen concerns and complaints about the health hazards and negative environmental impact of Pour In Place rubber, but I have not heard any advantages to it, or explanation for why our parks need different surfacing. This seems to me to be a classic case of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it!" My children play at Grant Park regularly, and we have no complaints about the playground wood chip surface, which is the same as what is used at Cupertino Union School District sites. Why spend time and money on a hazardous product change?

Thank you for listening to citizen concerns on this issue.

Sincerely,
Katherine Winant Carpenter
Farndon Avenue, Los Altos

Sent from my phone, please excuse the inevitable typo or awkward autocorrect!

EWf. I sent info on these to City Council members and PARC commissioners in the past. Why was research and visitation done in SF?

Playgrounds in the Bay Area we have visited and researched include:

- Sunnyvale's new Community Park & Playground:
- San Francisco's remodeled Stern Grove playground,
- SF's Richmond playground,
- SF's Mountain Lake playground;
- SF's Redwood Grove playground.

I am strongly urging the city to not install ANY PIP in your playgrounds. You will be doing a great service to Los Altos and us all.

Thank you.

Andrea Wald



**CITY OF LOS ALTOS
PARKS, ARTS, RECREATION & CULTURAL
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
August 18, 2026
6:30 PM
Los Altos Community Center - Sequoia Room
97 Hillview Ave, Los Altos, CA 94022**

ESTABLISH QUORUM

Present: Chair Morris, Commissioners Stout, Sangani, MacDonald

Absent: Commissioner Dolich

Late: Vice Chair Nguyen

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Morris called the meeting to order at 6:33pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

1. **Minutes: Approve the minutes of the June 16, 2026 Special PARC Meeting**

Public Comment: None

Action: Based on a motion by Commissioner MacDonald, which was seconded by Commissioner Sangani, the Commission passed the Minutes of the June 16, 2026 Special PARC Meeting as written.

Approve: Morris, Stout, Sangani, MacDonald

Oppose: None

Abstain: None

Motion passed, unanimously: 4-0-0

Vice Chair Nguyen joined the meeting at 6:44pm

2. **Pickleball Project: Give Input to staff on McKenzie Pickleball Project**

Public Comment: Community member Susie Chang

Action: None

3. **Call for Art Selection: Receive presentation of submitted art and choose pieces for Community Center Gallery**

Public Comment: None

Action: Using a numbered voting system, the Commission chose 40 pieces of art and 4 alternate pieces.

COMMISSION/SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Playground Ad Hoc Update – presentation in September
- Mosaic Bench Working Pair Update
- Farmers' Market Tabling

REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Playground Surface Recommendation
- Date/Time of future PARC meeting
- Discuss parameters for Calls for Art
- Mosaic Bench

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Morris adjourned the meeting at 7:43pm



TO: Parks, Arts, Recreation and Culture Commission

FROM: Manny A. Hernandez, Parks & Recreation Director

SUBJECT: Playground Design Working Group

RECOMMENDATION:

The ad-hoc playground design working group will present their report to the commission as part of this process to provide a recommendation to staff on the playground projects at Grant and Shoup Parks

BACKGROUND

The City of Los Altos signed an agreement with Gametime/Playcore to install new playground equipment and surfacing at both Grant and Shoup Parks.

As part of this process to finalize a design for these playground replacements, the PARC Commission designated an ad-hoc working group comprised of two commissioners to create a recommendation to staff for the Commission to take action on. This recommendation will focus on playground surfacing and may include suggestions for play components. Once the PARC Commission makes a recommendation, staff will evaluate what components, if any, can be incorporated into the final plan for playground replacement.

The PARC Commission is asked to do the following.

1. Receive the presentation from the working pair
2. Make a recommendation to staff, based on the information in the ad-hoc working pairs report on the plans for playground replacement at Grant and Shoup Parks.
3. With the presentation to the PARC Commission, motion to dissolve the Playground Ad-hoc Subcommittee, per the Commission handbook rules.

Attachments:

- A. None

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SHOUP AND GRANT PARKS

“ADHOC Playground Commission Mission:

“Assist & advise staff and vendor in finalizing design and installation.”

1. All playground surfaces have pros and cons. No one surface is perfect. We recommend therefore using a mixed-surface approach with EWF used as the main surface combined with PIP in high impact areas only (slides, swings and climbing structures).

NOTE: We also recommend using Corkeen in a pilot study at the Shoup 0-5 year-old playground.

2. Add additional shade coverings especially over the sand play area at Grant Park and in areas where PIP is utilized. Additional shade coverings could include canopies, roofs and umbrellas. Trees can also be added in and around the Grant & Shoup playgrounds.
3. Use additional colors on PIP surfaces instead of the green shown in preliminary designs since it blends in with nearby grass. The use of different vibrant colors will add to the energy and fun of the playground. Stay away from darker colors since they conduct more heat than lighter ones.
- 5 We understand that the City has budget & environmental code restrictions. If possible, insert more free-standing and other additional structures with more challenging & creative play opportunities (**as illustrated in GameTime’s ’26 Catalog**), such as:
 - a. Slides that have tunnel & tube shapes with different curvy, unusual shapes;
 - b. Spinners;
 - c. Animal forms that kids can hide in or climb on (younger);
 - d. Ropes, netting or other climbing structures modeled on “connector-construction sets” (as in Tinker and Erector toy set designs);
 - e. Climbing towers with a larger enclosed structure underneath where kids can hide & play;
 - f. Use of more natural materials in play structures such as wood. An example is a balance-beam apparatus: **“Walking the Plank”**;
- 6 More challenging types of swings that allow kids to share and sit with others (substitute the tire swing at Grant with more contemporary ones);

- 7 Inclusion of newer looking benches and seating around the playgrounds such as “GameTime’s, **“Sway Bench”** (similar to a swing but the size of a bench);
- 8 The use of interesting walkways & paths around perimeter with barriers or boardwalks that can be used for climbing and jumping (using rocks, concrete, & other natural materials, etc.)
- 9 The use of landscaping around the playground to create a softer, shadier & more natural look;
- 10 Incorporate plays structures & designs **DIFFERENT** from the existing playgrounds at Grant and Shoup.

Playgrounds in the Bay Area we have visited and researched include:

- Sunnyvale’s new Community Park & Playground:
- San Francisco’s remodeled Stern Grove playground,
- SF’s Richmond playground,
- SF’s Mountain Lake playground;
- SF’s Redwood Grove playground.

Other resources:

- Manager of SF playground remodeling at SF’s Park & Rec—Alexis Ward;
- Research notes about playground surfaces from PARC staffer Yongdan Chunya;
- Los Altos residents in regard to playground surfaces such as PIP and Corkeen.

	Pros	Cons	Maintenance	Current Locations
Corkeen	1. Natural material 2. Doesn't conduct heat 3. Accessible for kids with mobility issues	1. Doesn't do well under heavy use-cracks 2. Expensive 3. Imported from Portugal—hard to get in U.S. 4. Potential surface for graffiti/vandalism 5. Different colors are not available	1. Tripping hazard: peels & cracks 2. Vendor support not always available 3. Daily blowing & washing	1. Philadelphia: Since 10/23 FDR Playground—cracking in high trafficked areas 2. Albany, CA schools:K-6 playground— surface cracking & peeling after 2-3 years of use 3. SF early childhood center-pilot project, just installed
Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)	1. Natural material 2. Doesn't conduct heat	1. Hard for Kids to maneuver with mobility iss1. 2. Needs regular maintenance	1. Lots of raking especially in fall ar	Note: A popular playground surface In Bay Area
PIP	1. Partially natural if virgin rubber 2. Good for accessibility 3. Comes in range of colors 4. Good protection under structures with fall potential	1. Can get hot 2. recycled PIP not natural 3. Chemical bindings		Note: Explore using virgin rubber instead of recycled rubber for top layer
Artificial Grass/Turf	1. In lieu of grass 2. Durable	1. Can get hot 2. Not natural 3. Contains chemical bindings 4. Not for high impact areas		

RECOMMENDATION: Use a combination of mixed surfacers with EWF as the largest surface used and PIP used only under structures with high fall potential such as swings, slides and climbing structures. Use Corkeen in a pilot study at Shoup 0-5 yr-old playground.

LOS ALTOS PARC COMMISSION

Grant & Shoup Playground

Ad-hoc recommendations for final design

Commissioners Dolich & Nguyen
September 2026

Grant Park (2-5 Years)



Page 10 of 68

Grant Park · GameTime

Shoup Park (2-5 Years)



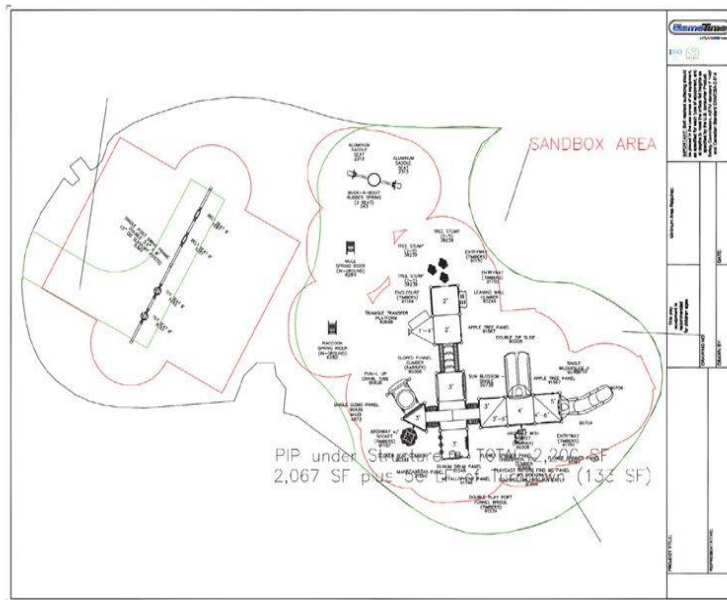
Page 20 of 68

Shoup Park · GameTime

Official city plans

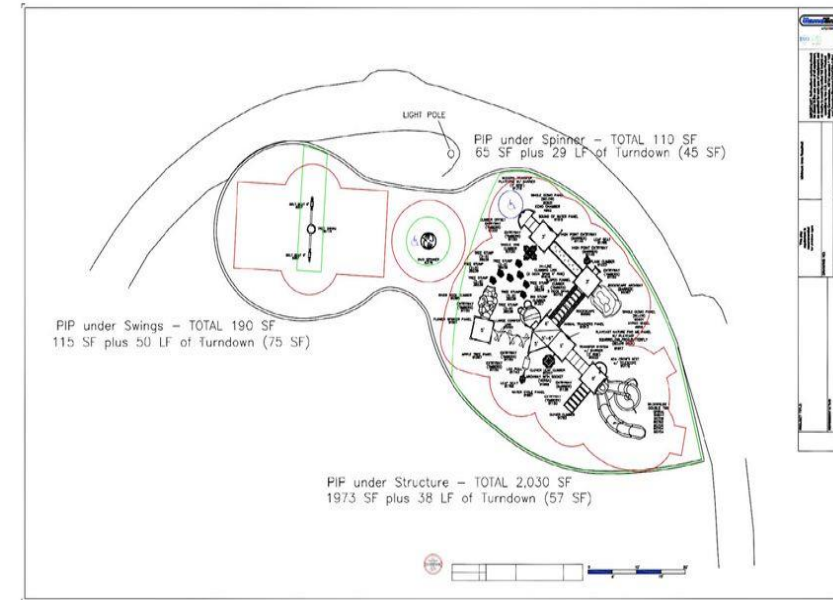
Grant Park

PIP under Swings – TOTAL 380 SF
260 SF plus 80 LF of Turndown (120 SF)



18
Page 25 of 68

Shoup Park



24
Page 31 of 68

GameTime • large PIP footprints. Grant keeps sand; Shoup has a 0–5 zone.

Vendor renderings

Grant Park

Grant Park (2-5 Years)



3
Page 10 of 68

Shoup Park

Shoup Park (2-5 Years)



13
Page 20 of 68

Tonight's ask: **surfacing direction** — plus shade & color.

What residents want

✓ Want

Cooler, natural surfaces

More shade

Safe for all abilities

Neighborhood park feel

✗ Don't want

Wall-to-wall PIP

Hot, empty mid-day

Chemical concerns

Rubber plaza look

Surfaces · EWF & PIP



EWF · Wood fiber

Most popular · cool underfoot

✓ PRO

Natural material

Stays cool

Park look

✗ CON

Harder for wheels

Needs top-ups



PIP · Rubber

~\$29/SF · 12' fall height

✓ PRO

Strong fall protect

Firm & accessible

Color options

✗ CON

Gets hot

Not natural

Chemical binders

Surfaces · Corkeen & Turf



Corkeen

~\$37/SF · 8' fall height

✓ PRO

- Natural cork
- Stays cooler
- Wheelchair access

✗ CON

- Higher cost
- Can crack/peel
- Possibility for vandalism/ graffiti



Turf

Non-impact zones · not for high falls

✓ PRO

- Grassy look
- Durable stand-in for lawn
- Works in low-fall / circulation areas (SF places turf on top of PIP)

✗ CON

- Can get hot
- Not natural
- Chemical binders
- Not for high-impact fall zones

Our recommendation



PRIMARY

EWF as the main surface

Largest footprint — cooler, natural, park feel.



PIP under high-fall only

Slides, swings, climbing — where fall height matters. Upgrade to virgin & lighter colored TPV instead of EPDM.



PILOT

Corkeen pilot · Shoup 0–5

Small footprint — labeled pilot · learn locally before wider use.



Design adds

Prioritize shade, natural look, & play variety

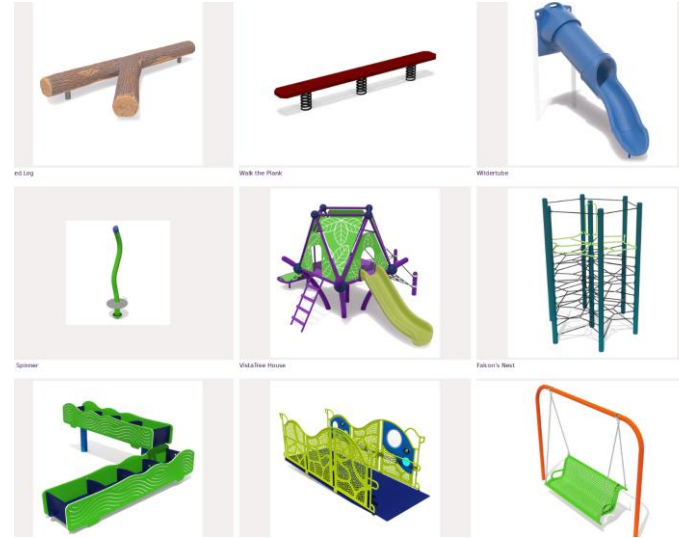
Design adds



COLOR

Lighter PIP

Where rubber stays — lighter tones, less heat.



PLAY

Play variety

Tunnels, spinners, natural materials.

Our recommendation for PARC recommendation

1

Support mixed surfacing

EWF primary · PIP only under high-fall structures

2

Virgin & lighter colored PIP

Prioritize cooling · virgin/lighter colored rubber where PIP remains

3

Corkeen pilot · Shoup 0–5

Small footprint · labeled pilot

4

Design adds

Prioritize shade, natural look, & play variety

Design adds · wood & nature

Natural materials & balance (GameTime)

D1 · DESIGN



Walk the Plank

8662



Forked Log Balance Beam

38248



Garden Planter

39007



VistaTree House

5963SP

Design adds · play variety

Different play: tunnels, spin, climb, swing

D2 · DESIGN



Wildertube

90755 · L Reverse



Solo Spinner

6246



Frog Climber

38004



Falcon's Nest

5272



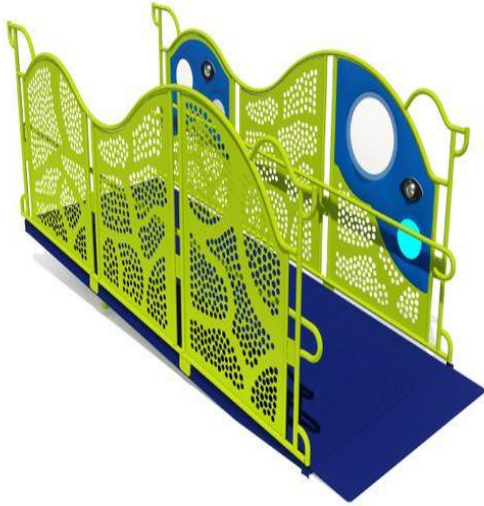
Adaptive Swing Seat

5294

Design adds · paths, water, seating

D3 · Design

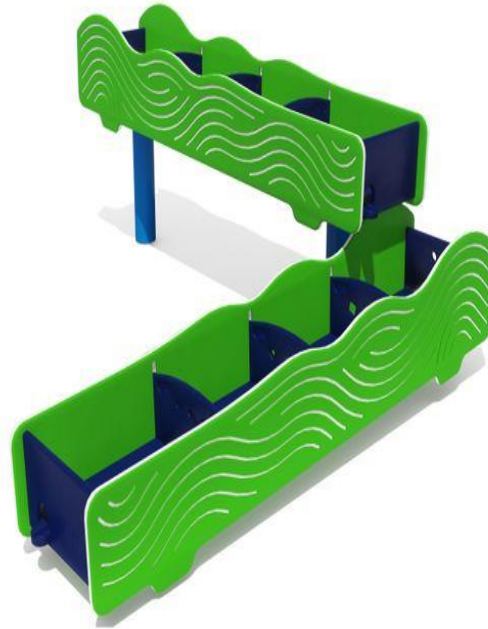
Walkways · water · seating



Sensory Wave Ramp

91467 · walkways / perimeters

Closest GameTime match — no exact boardwalk



Small Wonders Double Waterway

39034I



Sway Bench

28028

Alexis Ward

SF Rec & Park · Capital Project Manager

Jul 2, 2026 · phone + email

- SF mixes surfaces: PIP at high-impact; turf for a natural look in non-impact areas
- Custom / robinia wood looks great — delays & tariffs can bite
- Corkeen is a first-time pilot at private childcare — durability unknown
- Recommends mixed surfaces; likes Albany Memorial combination
- Brings up virgin rubber as a surfacing option

Yongdan Chunyu

Los Altos PM · email via Manny

May–Jun 2026 · feasibility + SDS / cost chart

- Corkeen feasibility: FDR Park cracking (high-traffic); Albany Cornell peel / trip hazard
- Shared SDS & tech tables: PIP · Corkeen · FlexBond (cost ~\$29 / \$37 / \$19 per SF)
- Binder comparison from vendor SDS/TDS wording

Sites researched

Visited or studied

SF Stern Grove

SF Mountain Lake

Herz Rec / Corkeen (McLaren)

Albany Memorial Park

SF Redwood Grove

Sunnyvale Community Park

SF Richmond

What residents told PARC

R3 · Research

PARCPublicComment + direct input · Aug 31 – Sep 9, 2026 · name + subject

Themes: reject wall-to-wall PIP · want natural / cooler · heat & burn risk · chemicals · keep Shoup/Grant nature feel · ADA/cost rebuttals · pause for broader outreach

Aug 31

Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks...

Reject PIP; natural surfaces only

Aug 31

Playground Surface at Grant and Shoup Parks...

Natural only — Grant already poorly shaded

Aug 31 · Sep 9

Input regarding renovations... (pause / outreach)

Reject PIP; pause for broader outreach (Sunnyvale model)

Sep 2

Grand Park and Stu Park: public comment...

No rubberized cover — wood chips fit Shoup

Sep 2

Playground surface at Grant and Shoup Parks...

PIP = downgrade vs EWF

Sep 5

Playground Surfaces in Los Altos Parks

Prefer EWF / wood chips over synthetic

Sep 5 · 1:22pm

PUBLIC COMMENT SEPT 15 — PLAYGROUND SURFACE

No PIP — heat/burn risk (CBS video)

Sep 5 · 8:30pm

Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026...

Reject PIP at Grant; natural alternatives

Sep 6–7

Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026...

Natural only; ~64-letter packet; ADA/cost rebuttal

Sep 7

Public Comment Not on the Agenda 9/8/2026...

Teen near Shoup — reject PIP; natural only



TO: Parks, Arts, Recreation and Culture Commission

FROM: Teresa Morris, PARC Commission Chair

SUBJECT: 2026/27 Call for Art Schedule Update and Future Selection Procedure/Process

RECOMMENDATION:

Preliminary discussion on parameters/guidelines for future calls for art

BACKGROUND

The goal of this item discussion will be to draft a preliminary set of parameters/guidelines for future Calls for Art.

Points to consider may include the following:

- Out of area entries and artist responsibility to send/bring and pick up all art submissions that are accepted
- Multiple entries from one artist that may need to be grouped together, or are individual stand alone entries
- Youth submissions
- Limited quantity
- Size
- Weight
- Hang ready
- Attention to theme
- No delivery (maybe multiple offender)

The commission may agendaize additional discussion(s) in future meetings.

Attachments:

A. None