



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

**November 12, 2025 - 6:00 PM
In Person**

IN-PERSON PARTICIPATION: Members of the public may participate in-person at the Los Altos Community Center in the Sequoia Room located at 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos, CA.

REMOTE MEETING PARTICIPATION: Members of the public may attend the meeting virtually via the link below, but will not be permitted to provide public comment via Zoom or telephone.

<https://losaltosca-gov.zoom.us/j/84746058434>

Telephone: 1-669-444-9171 / Meeting ID: 847 4605 8434

PUBLIC COMMENT: Public comments can be made verbally, in-person at the public hearing or submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Written comments can be mailed or delivered in person to the Development Services Department or emailed to ECPublicComment@losaltosca.gov.

Correspondence must be received by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting to ensure distribution prior to the meeting. Comments provided after 2:00 p.m. will be distributed the following day and included with public comment in the Environmental Commission packet.

Public comment cannot be taken via Zoom or telephone.

AGENDA

ESTABLISH QUORUM

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.

Public Comments_11.12.25

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

1. **Meeting Minutes: Approve minutes of the regular meeting of October 8, 2025.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. **Shared Mobility: Update on Commissioner Humayun's research on transportation actions to reduce GHG emissions.**
3. **Commission Workplan: Review 2025 workplan project status and continue planning for 2026.**

4. **Urban Forest: Example of trees and vegetation serving as wildfire protection.**

5. **2026 Commission Meeting Dates**

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

STAFF UPDATES

POTENTIAL 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.

Agendas, Staff Reports and some associated documents for the Environmental Commission items may be viewed on the Internet at <http://losaltosca.gov/meetings>.

From: [caroline horn](#)
To: [Public Comment - EC](#)
Cc: [Transportation](#)
Subject: Proposed bus pass program for High School students
Date: Tuesday, November 11, 2025 1:48:33 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I'm part of a parents' group at Los Altos High School that tries to encourage greater sustainability at our high school. One focus of our group is transportation. We are striving to have our students use "ABC", as they call it: Anything But a Car!

While walking and biking are ideal for high school students, we recognize that bike & pedestrian infrastructure is patchy in our area, at best. Our students face many dangers crossing El Camino Real, for example, even with the recent improvements to that road. About half of our students come into Los Altos from Mountain View and Palo Alto, often on busy roads like Rengstorff Avenue and San Antonio Road.

Parents are worried about their students' safety, and thus drive them to school or allow their kids to drive themselves. This results in higher traffic and, therefore, less safety for the students who are using active transportation.

What can we, as a community, do to break this negative feedback loop?

We propose the funding of VTA bus-only Smartpasses for all students in the attendance areas, regardless of financial need or home address. In addition, we would like to extend this program to staff as well, to be a fringe benefit. Currently, only colleges have been enrolled in this program, but other high schools are also exploring this option (Los Gatos High School). Teaching high school students how to use public transportation will provide many benefits:

1. Increased operational independence for students who don't have a license or access to a car.
2. Reduced car congestion at drop off and pick up times, which will increase safety for bikers and pedestrians.
3. Fewer cars parked near the high schools.
4. Transit-using students eventually become transit-using adults.

Currently, Los Altos High School distributes the traditional, individual VTA youth passes through their finance office. Some students qualify for reimbursement from Santa Clara County based on income and home address. Others do not, but the school district pays for these because it reduces the need for car parking, which is scarce at LAHS (and has been the cause of some tension between the school and the community).

The current monthly rate for these school-subsidized bus passes is at least 35 dollars per month. Because of this cost (\$350 for a student for 10 months) the school has not publicized this program for fear of running out of money. Thus LAHS has distributed only 116 bus passes this year, which is only about 5% of the LAHS student population of 2200. I don't have the numbers for Mountain View High School.

Notably, the school already has the infrastructure available to increase the scale of bus pass distribution: a stamp or sticker could be added to the student photo IDs, for example, to show that they can ride on VTA buses. This might not even be necessary (see Foothill College, for

example).

How much would this cost?

The VTA SmartPass system would greatly reduce the per student cost. A non-profit organization with over 3,000 users can obtain bus passes at a rate of \$20.75 PER YEAR per person. If the entire MVLA school district purchased bus passes for all 4,400 students, the cost would be \$91,300. Under the current system, only 260 LAHS students could have bus passes, assuming the district could pay for that many (unlikely).

Even a 10% increase in bus ridership, however, would significantly reduce congestion around the schools. Expanding the program to the junior high students would produce similar benefits.

I recognize that the City of Los Altos has other priorities for its spending, of course. The dog parks are expected to cost over a million dollars, for example, after the \$137,000 for the design stage. Therefore I suggest that we coordinate with cities of Mountain View and Palo Alto to share the cost of the bus passes. They will also benefit from the reduced car traffic and increased safety on their streets.

Thank you for considering this idea.

Sincerely,

Caroline Horn

References:

1. The attendance map for the MVLA school district:
<https://locator.pea.powerschool.com/?StudyID=187720>
2. Los Gatos High School VTA proposal:
<https://mccmeetingspublic.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/losgatos-meet-2aa078460e6343afbaad93542f6a9fca/ITEM-Attachment-001-902f92dfcdf84b5b99ed71d8573b64d6.pdf>
3. LAHS bus pass information: Derek Miyahara, personal communication
4. VTA Smartpass information: <https://www.vta.org/go/fares/smartpass>

From: [David Cain](#)
To: [Public Comment - EC](#)
Cc: [Laura Fay](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda item #3 - 2026 Work Plan - Nov 12, 2025
Date: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 9:55:05 AM

Dear Environmental Commission Members,

I am pleased to see priority #1 attached to the Council directed topic "Analyze and Develop Recommendations Regarding an Artificial Turf Policy or Ordinance". I urge the Commission to recommend a policy requiring natural surfacing for all public areas, conforming with the Los Altos Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP) Focus Area 5 Green Community Strategy 1 Nature Based Solutions. Not only are there clear aesthetic benefits of natural materials conforming with Los Altos sense of who we are as a community but, more importantly, the health risks associated with the breakdown of artificial materials run counter to CAAP, Commission's mission, and our community's public safety interest.

Thank you for your consideration.

David Cain
1132 Russell Ave Los Altos

From: [Laura Fay](#)
To: [Public Comment - EC](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda item #3 - 2026 Work Plan - Nov 12, 2025
Date: Tuesday, November 11, 2025 9:16:34 AM

Dear Environmental Commission Members,

I am very pleased to see priority #1 attached to the Council directed topic "**Analyze and Develop Recommendations Regarding a Artificial Turf Policy or Ordinance**"

As a Los Altos concerned about the health and climate risks of synthetic surfaces, I have 4 specific suggestions, and an offer of help, as you take on this work.

Suggestions...

1. Please consider developing an ordinance vs. a policy
2. Use the terminology of 'synthetic turf' instead of simply 'artificial turf.' This more include term can be defined to cover all petro-chemical based surfaces, including pour-in-place rubber.
3. Until any formal policy is proposed and adapted, please recommend a moratorium on the installation of all synthetic surfaces in city properties. Since these issues can take years to be finalized, a moratorium, such as was put in place by the city of Millbrae until they finalized their ban, would be a great start.
4. Consider a city-wide ordinance that includes city owned properties and parks, residential and commercial use.

I, and other knowledgeable citizens and organizations, will be pleased to provide the working committee with scientific research, along with a variety of municipal practices and trends (beyond Sunnyvale and Palo Alto study), that can assist in the development of an effective ordinance.

Sincerely,

Laura Fay

720 Spencer Court

Los Altos.

From: [Laura Teksler](#)
To: [Public Comment - EC](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Item #3 - 2026 Work Plan
Date: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 12:41:33 PM

Dear Environmental Commission,

On behalf of GreenTown Los Altos I want to thank you for including the issue of artificial turf as priority 1 on your 2026 work plan. Commissioners' knowledge and skills in the areas of the environmental and human health impacts of chemicals, solid waste considerations, water use and pollution impacts and climate hazards will be necessary to adequately evaluate the use of synthetic surfaces in the city. GreenTown stands ready to assist in any way as this work proceeds and to share our research and considerations in coming to our Board's position of opposing the use of synthetic surfaces in the city.

We would also suggest that in the interim the EC recommends to Council that they consider a temporary city-wide halt on installation of any such surfaces while the EC develops a formal recommendation to avoid the potential of installing a surface that is shortly after found to be incompatible with the City's CAAP goals.

GreenTown, of course supports, the other items on your work plan and looks forward to collaborating on our shared goals of greening and electrifying Los Altos!

Sincerely,

Laura Teksler
GreenTown Board of Directors

From: [Maria Bautista](#)
To: [Public Comment - EC](#)
Subject: Public Comment EC Meeting: November 12, 2025 #3. Commission Workplan: 2026 workplan
Date: Tuesday, November 11, 2025 1:45:54 PM

Dear Environmental Commissioners,

Recent meetings with City staff point to the **urgent** need to establish a city-wide policy on synthetic ground surfacing materials. There are currently two park renovation projects under development at Shoup and Grant Parks, and one project confirmed known as the Hillview Fitness Area.

I urge the Environmental Commission to—

1. Elevate the discussion of surface materials to your highest priority.
2. Ask City Council to put on hold all commitments to the installation of any synthetic ground surfacing materials until a policy has been adopted.

Los Altos has long established that our public parks, in particular, respect the character-defining natural environment that makes Los Altos unique. With continued respect for our natural surroundings, our park designs should reflect our values. We've banned plastic in our restaurants and shops; we should not cover our ground with it.

Los Altos is ideally set to be a leader in the park and playground innovation trend that is a return to nature. The award-winning and community-embraced Tunnel Tops at the Presidio in San Francisco helps set a new standard in outdoor play. Los Altos should proudly be part of this movement toward utilizing natural materials and ruling out plastics in our environment.

Thank you,

Maria Bautista

PS: For your consideration, below is the very straightforward ordinance the City of Millbrae adopted in 2023.

MILLBRAE PROHIBITION OF ARTIFICIAL TURF

<https://www.ci.millbrae.ca.us/276/Prohibition-of-Artificial-Turf>

The installation and use of synthetic turf and artificial grass landscaping is prohibited in the City of Millbrae. The City Council passed an ordinance on October 24, 2023 establishing [Chapter 8.65 of the Millbrae Municipal Code](#), prohibiting the installation of synthetic grass and artificial turf.

The ordinance became effective on January 1, 2024. Residents with existing synthetic grass and artificial turf landscaping are required to remove and replace their existing synthetic material with natural landscaping once their installations begin to show visible signs of wear and degradation or if their existing installations are unable to accommodate the permeability of storm water during rain events. Wear and degradation includes identifiable holes, tears, stains, discoloration, seam separations, lifted surfaces, loose or separated nap and netting, buckling, heat degradation, and excessive wear. Areas adjacent to existing synthetic installations must be kept clean and free of plastic blades, netting and crumb rubber at all times.

Millbrae Municipal Code Title 8, Chapter 8.65, “City of Millbrae Synthetic Grass and Artificial Turf Ordinance,”

as adopted by City Council on October 24, 2023:

8.65.010 Title

This chapter shall be known as the “City of Millbrae Synthetic Grass and Artificial Turf Ordinance.”

8.65.020 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to protect and enhance the health, safety and general welfare of residents and to protect the water quality of our watercourses, water bodies and wetlands in a manner pursuant to and consistent with the state and federal regulations and permits, including the Clean Water Act.

- A. Eliminating the discharge of debris from synthetic grass and artificial turf products, such as plastic blades, crumb rubber, nylon and other synthetic components, into stormwater runoff;
- B. Improve the absorption and retention of storm water through the use of natural drought-tolerant landscaping using living plant material;
- C. Eliminating solid waste generated by the disposal of synthetic grass and artificial turf products;
- D. Improving public health and safety by removing exposure to potential environmental carcinogens found in synthetic grass and artificial turf products.

8.65.030 Definitions

- A. Definitions. As used in this Section, the following definition will apply:

1. “Synthetic Grass” and “Artificial Turf” is synthetic or artificial non-organic material that simulates the appearance of organic sod, grass, or lawn ground cover, and includes outdoor plastic carpeting. Synthetic grass and artificial turf does not include painted natural organic grass or sod.
2. “Subgrade” is the native ground underneath a synthetic grass and artificial turf installation. Subgrade does not include concrete, pavers or impermeable hardscape.

8.65.040 Prohibition

The use and installation of synthetic grass and artificial turf landscaping material is prohibited within the city.

8.65.050 Existing Synthetic Grass and Artificial Turf Installations

- A. Existing synthetic grass and artificial turf legally installed prior to January 1, 2024, is permitted to remain under the following conditions:
 1. Synthetic grass and artificial turf installations must be maintained pursuant to its manufacturer’s maintenance schedule, in an attractive and clean condition, and must not contain holes, tears, stains, discoloration, seam separations, lifted surfaces, loose or separated nap and netting, buckling, heat degradation, or excessive wear.
 2. Existing installations must remain taught and flush with subgrade.
 3. Existing installations must allow permeability of storm water.
 4. Adjacent hardscape, ground cover and natural landscaped areas must be kept free of residual debris from synthetic grass and artificial turf such as plastic blades, netting and crumb rubber.
- B. The parking of vehicles on synthetic grass and artificial turf is prohibited.
- C. Synthetic grass and artificial turf installations damaged or destroyed, by any means, to the extent of thirty-five (35%) percent of its replacement cost new, must be removed and replaced with water-efficient natural landscaping.
- D. Existing synthetic grass and artificial turf installations must be removed and replaced with water-efficient natural landscaping once they are unable to be maintained as required by this section.
- E. Failure to comply with the provisions of this section is an unlawful property nuisance and may be abated by the city pursuant to MMC Chapter 6.25.

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF
THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M. IN
PERSON AND TELECONFERENCE

ESTABLISHING QUORUM

PRESENT: Chair Humayun, Vice Chair van Reis, Commissioner Nee, Commissioner Hecht
and Commissioner Weiden

ABSENT: Commissioner Lu

ATTENDEES: Tania Katbi (Management Analyst II)

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Public comments provided by Andrea Wald.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION**1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Approved new Chair and Vice Chair.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Weiden, seconded by Commissioner Hecht, the Environmental Commission elected Commissioner van Reis as Chair of the Commission.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Hecht, Humayun, Nee, van Reis, Weiden

NOES: None

ABSENT: Lu

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Humayun, seconded by Commissioner van Reis, the Environmental Commission elected Commissioner Nee as Vice Chair of the Commission.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Hecht, Humayun, Nee, van Reis, Weiden

NOES: None

ABSENT: Lu

2. Environmental Commission Minutes

Approved minutes of the September 10, 2025, meeting.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Hecht, seconded by Commissioner Weiden, the Environmental Commission approved the meeting minutes.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Hecht, Humayun, Nee, van Reis, Weiden

NOES: None

ABSENT: Lu

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. Case Study: Mountain View's Urban Forest and Biodiversity Plan

Chair van Reis presented an overview of Mountain View's plan highlighting important information and data.

4. Transportation Discussion

Commissioner Humayun provided updates from her research on this item.

5. Workplan Update

Commissioners discussed the 2025 workplan project status and began planning for 2026. Item to come back in November.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

6. Reports from Council Meetings

Commissioners shared updates from Council meetings.

7. Roundtable Progress Updates

Commissioners shared project updates.

Group	Topic	Commissioner
Working Pair	Residential Home Electrification	Hecht, Nee
Working Pair	Urban Forest	Lu, van Reis
Individual Work	Electrification Event	van Reis
Individual Work	Transportation	Humayun
Individual Work	Deconstruction	Humayun

STAFF UPDATES

Staff shared updates with the commission.

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. CAL Water Update (Special Presentation)
2. GHG Inventory Follow-up (Staff)
3. Altadena Fire Discussion (Humayun)
4. Workplan Updates (All)
5. Artificial Turf Discussion (All)
6. Living Green Event Discussion (Humayun)

ADJOURNMENT

Chair van Reis adjourned the meeting at 7:58 pm.

2026 Los Altos Environmental Commission Work Plan - Details

CORE WORKPLAN Powers & Duties B: Review & provide recommendations for the implementation of the CAAP

CAAP Focus Area	Goal	Projects	Expected Completion	Priority Source	Status	Assignment	Expected Workload Weight	Notes
Energy	<u>Priority Level 1</u> Building Electrification: Reduce or eliminate methane gas use in buildings	Monitor and Assess community engagement & incentive programs to encourage electrification to determine future programs	Q1 2026	Council Direction <u>City Council Strategic Goal:</u> Environmental Sustainability, Public Safety CAAP Goals 2.3 & 2.4	Ongoing • \$75k budget for direct consumer rebates; staff will provide an update or report out to environmental commission in ~Q2 (Spring) • Researching non-monetary incentives to make recommendations Complete • Advised staff on planning phase of Residential Rebate Program	Working Pair + City Staff	Light	- This year's idea exploration for future programs can also look at energy efficiency, CAAP item 2.1B - Goal is to advise on whether speaker series and related programs should continue - Staff will provide an update or report out on to environmental commission on speaker series in ~Q3 <u>Community engagement through education and outreach</u> - Promote SVCE & 3rd party incentives & audits Educate residents & contractors on electrification benefits <u>Encourage electrification through city sponsored incentives</u> Monetary incentives for electrification projects Non-monetary incentives via Planning & Building Divisions
		Policy guidelines & ordinances to promote electrification	TBD	CAAP Goals 2.3 & 2.4 BAAQMD Rule 9-6 General Plan Housing Element	Complete • Advised staff on local amendments (reach codes) for the 2025 Building Code Adoption	TBD	Heavy	- Track BAAQMD & regional policies - NOx ordinance, other options
Green Community + Climate Risk	<u>Priority Level 1</u> Expand green infrastructure for human & environmental health + Mitigate risk	Support Community Outreach and Research for Urban Forest & Ecosystem Analysis Provide recommendations based on consultant report	Analysis Support and Subsequent Recommendation for future action: Q4 2026	<u>City Council Strategic Goal:</u> Environmental Sustainability, Public Safety CAAP Action 5.2 Supporting CAAP Actions 5.5, 6.1, 6.2 Lends habitat connectivity support to mission of SB 337 (2023) and AB 2785 (2008)	Ongoing • \$200k Budget Approved • Neighboring cities surveyed • Info sessions held on • RFP Being Prepared Next Steps • Hire Consultant/contractor for analysis & research • Evaluate analysis for Plan Development or Project Recommendations	Working Pair + City Staff	Light	<u>Phase 1: Tree protection ordinance (enacted in 2022)</u> Phase 2: Research & Analysis - 2025-26 budget approved, RFP in development Canopy analysis, green spaces inventory Ecosystem health assessment - Research adaptation and resilience impact & strategies - Evaluate fire safety & wildfire prevention techniques - Reference Santa Clara County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan - Reference Los Altos Safety Element Update Phase 3: Master Plan development - 2026-27 budget estimate 200k - Set goals, scope, budget, based on analysis - Include fire safety and wildfire prevention as a priority - Ensure alignment with County weed abatement guidelines - Identify additional funding sources & grants for implementation Community engagement - Work with staff & consultant to layout plan <u>Phase 4: Masterplan implementation (2026-35)</u>
	<u>Priority Level 1</u> Expand green infrastructure program to reduce impermeable surface area and capture runoff from paved areas	Analyze and Develop Recommendations Regarding a Artificial Turf Policy or Ordinance	TBD	Council Direction CAAP Action 6.1C	Not started	TBD	Heavy	- The Hillview Dog Park was sent back to the design phase after artificial turf discussions - Council subsequently requested the commission's guidance on this related topic - Delivery of Sunnyvale guidance from their current study is TBD
Operations	<u>Priority Level 1</u> Incorporate climate action and adaptation into city policy, budget, planning, & internal standards	Research environmental integration successes in other city operations and provide report of recommendations	Q3 2026	CAAP Action 4.6	Not started	Working Pair or New Subcommittee + City Staff	Heavy	- Research how other municipalities have created interdepartmental working groups to integrate climate preparedness and provide report - Find educational resources on these topics for possible inclusion into city materials - Suggest potential partners in other cities for brainstorming

Update CAAP	Review CAAP priorities	Reassess CAAP timelines Propose goal/action edits Adjust priority levels	Q1 2026	Power & Duties Item B	Not started	Commissioner Research	Medium	• Per the municipal code, the EC should make "annual recommendations for changes or updates to the plan" • Commissioners to review sections through the year & report to EC • EC to bring recommended updates if any to council at joint meeting
Community Outreach	Annual outreach at Electrification Fair	Continue assistance with Electrification Fair under NGO leadership	Q2 2026	CAAP Action 1.4A	Ongoing	EC Liaison	Medium	• Support & provide guidance to Volunteer Group



1 North San Antonio Road
Los Altos, California 94022-3087

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 17, 2024

TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: Tania Katbi, Management Analyst II

SUBJECT: 2026 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING DATES

January 14, 2026
February 11, 2026
March 11, 2026
April 8, 2026
May 13, 2026
June 10, 2026
Summer Break
August 12, 2026
September 9, 2026
October 14, 2026
*November 11, 2026 (holiday)
Winter Break