


From: [Susan](#) 
To: [-- City Council](#)
Subject: Public Comment on discontinuing synthetic turf fields and replacing with environmentally safe playing fields
Date: Monday, March 6, 2023 3:41:28 PM

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Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

Petaluma will benefit from looking outward to other cities and communities who are making their playing fields safe for young people and adults.

For example, Boston, Massachusetts and the United Kingdom have banned synthetic turf fields, which contain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. These substances comprise a group of chemicals used to produce fluoropolymer coatings and products - to resist water, grease, stains, heat and oil. PFAS exposure has been linked to cancer, liver, damage, and decreased fertility, among other negative impacts.

How does Petaluma change course? We already know the recent review at Parks & Rec Commission of the draft IPMP on pesticide use and discontinuing that was unsatisfactory, with significant public input as well as questions from Parks & Rec Commissioners. I was at least pleased to see some current Commissioners appear to be leaning toward environmental responsibility, and I would like to see this trend continue.

It will likely be relevant to review and expand staffing and expertise within the City Parks and Recreation Department for this direction. Your guidance as elected leaders could support this.

So, let's move in a direction of support for health and environmental balance. Before approving installation of any new playing field, let's look to other cities and to experts to install natural turf playing fields, learn to maintain them, and staff our Parks and Recreation Department to be able to manage these fields. Let's also review replacing fields if needed.

There are resources to whom to turn for support, such as FACTS (Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety).

Sincerely,

Susan Kirks
Petaluma