
FW: Public Comment for April 15 Agenda item #7.1 - The Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 4/8/2025 4:12 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Andrea Wald <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 3:50 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment for April 15 Agenda item #7.1 - The Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Councilmembers,

I've heard that you will be discussing the new athletic fields for Columbus Park at your April 15th meeting. The documents that I was able to review online do not specifically mention the type of ground covering that is being considered.

I am writing to ask that you only approve a design that calls for natural grass. There is so much being learned/researched pertaining to artificial turf and how bad it is for the environment and the health and safety of all. I hope you will not consider this toxic, non-sustainable, non-recyclable material for the new athletic field.

Please take a look at the two links below - they will hopefully provide enough info about the harms of artificial turf and how natural grass can and does work.

<https://www.mill-woods-park.org/artificial-turf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gDs9Z4kQME>

In addition to the materials I've sent, I hope you take more time to truly look into the harms of artificial turf so that you can make the best decision for the health and safety of everyone - especially future generations.

Thank you.

Andrea Wald
Co-Founder of Community for Natural Play Surfaces
[REDACTED]

FW: Public Comment for April 15 Agenda item #7.1 - The Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Wed 4/9/2025 7:51 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Robert Hall <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 4:47 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment for April 15 Agenda item #7.1 - The Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Councilmembers:

Please ensure that the new athletic fields in Columbus Park are built using natural grass. On average, an 80,000-square-foot field contains 40,000 pounds of plastic carpeting and 400,000 pounds of infill, [according to Beyond Plastics](#), a nonprofit aimed at eliminating plastic waste. While we don't have the exact Columbus Park athletic field acreage yet, one soccer field, for example, covers between 1.6 and 2 acres of ground. That is a lot of plastic, and artificial turf comes in layers. There is always a top "carpet" layer with plastic grass blades. In addition to the carpet layer, there may be plastic padding underneath, or infill bits that may be mixed-or-made-with plastic or rubber. Each full-size artificial turf field eliminates over two acres of carbon-sequestering green space.

According to the [Santa Clara County Medical Association, Environmental Health Task Force](#), Artificial turf is composed of a plastic backing, plastic "blades of grass" and cushioning infill. Typically tire crumb rubber is used for infill. All of these components are derived from petroleum products. These components contain microplastics as well as chemicals acknowledged as being hazardous such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), bio-accumulative ("forever") per- and polyfluoroalkyl

substances (PFAS), phthalates, silica (silica sand infill), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), carbon black and metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, and arsenic. In addition, pesticides and biocides are used on artificial fields to reduce bacteria, viruses and weeds, which could cause adverse reactions and skin sensitization.

Synthetic grass is expensive to install, damages easily and needs to be replaced every decade. At this time, there are very few facilities nationwide that claim they can recycle only portions of this product, due to the high costs and difficulty resulting from various components of plastic turf that need to be dismantled and recycled separately. Thus, plastic turf typically ends up in landfill where it can take up to 500 years to decompose.

Some day you'll like back, like we do with cigarettes, and wonder how we let plastic fields happen.

Thanks,
Bob Hall

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FW: Approval of April 15,2025 Item #7.1 25-377 Columbus Park Mitigation Plan

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 4/14/2025 9:01 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Alette Lundeborg <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 7:20 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Approval of April 15,2025 Item #7.1 25-377 Columbus Park Mitigation Plan

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My name is Alette Lundeborg, and I live at [REDACTED] and have done so for four decades. My hope is that the Council will approve the Columbus Park plan and expedite implementation, as the neglect of this park has had a negative impact on the lives of working families and their children.

School age children in our area have limited opportunities for recreational activities in our part of town. Many of these children are latch-key children, whose parents are both working, and are thus left unsupervised/unsupported for significant amounts of time---and many are living in crowded housing that does not offer space for recreation.

For many decades Columbus Park was the home of PAL athletic leagues, and other supervised youth activities...it was safe, well cared for and used by thousands of residents.

Advocates for Youth Services have been overshadowed by other pressing issues facing the City. Please approve this Plan and begin the rehabilitation of a much needed, long neglected community resource,

Thank you,

Alette Lundeborg

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FW: Subject: Public Comment for April 15 Agenda item #7.1 - The Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 4/14/2025 12:35 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Susan Hinton <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 11:57 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Subject: Public Comment for April 15 Agenda item #7.1 - The Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

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April 14, 2025

Subject: Public Comment for April 15 Agenda item #7.1 - The Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Councilmembers,

Please ensure that the new athletic fields in Columbus Park are built using natural grass and not plastic grass.

Plastic grass gets quite hot in sunlight. When air temperatures reach the upper 80's Fahrenheit and into the 90's Fahrenheit, plastic grass surfaces reach into the 130's, 140's Fahrenheit and can reach well above.

Surface temperature is important as athletes will fall and slide across the ground. An important [NASA research paper](#) set the "safe" threshold for bare skin contact with a hot surface at 113 degrees Fahrenheit. Above that threshold a person will feel more of an impact as time or temperature increase.

As temperatures increase, and keep in mind that 2023 and 2024 were the hottest recorded years on record, the plastic surface will be even hotter. One reason given for using plastic grass is that it can be played on continually - except that is not actually true because even today most plastic athletic fields in our area are kept closed most days until very late afternoon.

Natural grass does not have this problem, and there are drought tolerant natural grasses grown specifically for athletic fields in the Western US. Additionally there are proven care regimes that are sustainable - no pesticides for example. Plus grass is much less expensive over time as, when properly maintained, it can be continually improved and does not need complete replacement, unlike plastic.

Similarly please avoid synthetic rubber surfacing in other areas. Rubber surfaces have been shown to heat up as much or even more than plastic grass.

I urge you to care about your youth athletes and to put real grass in your park.

Sincerely,

Susan Hinton

P.S. If you haven't seen the flowing YouTube video, regarding "But will real grass work?" I urge you to see this short, 6 minute, video about Middlehead Oval Soccer Field in Australia.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gDs9Z4kQME>

Sent from my iPhone

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FW: item 7.1 of 4/15/25 city council meeting - Here's how to make real grass work at Columbus Park.

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Tue 4/15/2025 7:43 AM

To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Cynthia Fan [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 6:50 PM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: item 7.1 of 4/15/25 city council meeting - Here's how to make real grass work at Columbus Park.

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Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council,

Please see my 6-page letter regarding the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan (which is agenda item 7.1 of your April 15, 2025 city council meeting). I urge you to direct city staff to explore the modern solution described within for enabling economically-maintained, highly usable real grass playing fields at Columbus Park.

I included a number of appendices to the letter as part of providing the supporting evidence that real grass is a well-warranted and viable alternative to plastic turf.

The letter with its appendices can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/real-grass-for-Columbus-Park>

(I didn't attach the letter to this email because it is a large file.)


Thank you for your time and serious consideration.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Fan
local parent of student athletes

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FW: Written Testimony for Item 25-377; 'Columbus Park Revitalization Plan.'

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 4/15/2025 7:45 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (375 KB)
Columbus_Park_and_Mahons_Proposal.pdf;

From: Wayne W [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 7:33 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Re: Written Testimony for Item 25-377; 'Columbus Park Revitalization Plan.'

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I overlooked one very important correction. Attached is the testimony I would like posted.

Please and thank you:)

- Wayne W Gazzola

On Mon, Apr 14, 2025 at 7:29 PM Wayne W [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello,

Attached is my testimony on the revitalization plan for Columbus park, and also for Matt Mahons related proposal to criminalize unhoused persons who refuse shelter.

I have to work tomorrow so will not be able to testify in person. If you could include this testimony in the written testimonials of the agenda I'd appreciate it. Thank you

Wayne W. Gazzola

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Wayne W. Gazzola
San Jose, CA

To
San Jose City Council

April 14, 2025

Columbus Park & Matt Mahon's Proposal to Criminalize Houselessness

Dear San Jose city council members,

I am writing in regards to Matt Mahon's proposition of making houselessness illegal in the event that a person continuously refuses shelter, and in regards to the proposal to develop Columbus park as a means of deterring the unhoused.

Developing Columbus Park as a Deterrent to homelessness

Using infrastructure to bully the unhoused is not a new tactic. On the east coast cities are over 400 years old and by now are so dense that this process likely played out long ago, so it is difficult to ascertain from these cities the effects of this policy.

Cities along the west coast, however, are in their own way still undergoing a more obvious phase of domestication.

I watched the city of Portland (and others in the northwest) go from good to bad to a state which reminded me of downtown Los Angeles. Over a period of about a decade, a series of mayors whose policies demonstrated a distinct lack of understanding of the issue and which were distinctly lacking in innovation or intelligence quickly devolved (as many cities do) to what is close to a last resort of weaponizing their power over infrastructure as a means of bullying unhoused populations in some way which [supposedly] was intended to in some way align with the end goal that some public official had in mind. What that end goal was was usually unclear in that it was poorly articulated, and it changed from time to time. Being one who paid attention though, the common thread I found to their series of actions was not that they were concerned with the wellbeing of the city at large – least not so much as they were concerned with appeasing a few influential business leaders in the downtown and surrounding areas.

The number of bars and fences multiplied, as did the presence of disgustingly large boulders with globs of cement tossed between them along the highways. Whereas before this many campers dwelled in out-of-the-way places which were in many cases literally hidden from the public, the cities' blind weaponization of infrastructure [not COVID as the public at large presumed] forced the issue onto public sidewalks. In turn the issue only escalated. The prevalence of tents downtown in turn was cause for bike racks to be placed where there was little to no use for them beyond stopping some campers from setting up in front of some local business. In the end, a city which was once renowned as 'the most walkable city in America' – a city many described as 'chill', beautiful, safe, and welcoming – became in a matter of years a city which made headlines for how much it had devolved. Many professed that it just did not feel the same, and that they are doubtful it ever will.

By all means, revitalize Columbus park if there is a good reason for it. But lacking leadership who is capable of conceiving more intelligible alternatives is not a good reason. This is a thing which once it is done it cannot easily be undone. It will either cause the unhoused to rebel or to infest other areas.

Something which makes San Jose so unique and pleasant is how it was seemingly designed *opposite* of San Francisco – as though it learned from that city. Instead of condensing everything, people here sprawled out their infrastructure and left space for both the public to enjoy nature and for those without a place to go to not feel the need to fight local businesses and pedestrians over every square inch of pissed-on sidewalks.

———— Matt Mahon's Proposition to criminalize outdoor sleeping & Camping

The most glaring problem here – one which will surely undermine Mahon's inhumane efforts in the long run – is how little has been said with regard to stipulating tenant rights & responsibilities or of the quality standards of shelters. When a person continuously refuses shelter, the natural and reasonable question to ask is 'why?'. And when it is the case that so many persons who refuse shelter consistently cite the inadequate state of shelters, the unnecessary restrictions of autonomies, and the demeaning treatment people receive when going there, it is in the least case only rational to investigate these claims. Yet somehow, those who discuss these peoples fates usually only speak of the lack of shelters – they say nothing of quality standards. Over ten years of advocating for shelter reform in Oregon has made it abundantly clear to me that reforming shelters so they meet a higher standard is where the real challenge lies, and this is work Mahon and so many others conveniently ignore in an effort to simplify the issue in ways which will fit their own agenda. What attempts there are to study shelter systems today are laughable in their lack of objectivity and the lack of qualitative ethnographic standards. In the present case, Matt Mahon may well be trying to infuse his fledgling political career with much needed hype, but he has given little thought to the systemic repercussions of the proposals he has put forth, or of alternatives which the city of San Jose might pursue.

Another issue which reflects his lack of thought in this matter is the lack of distinction between sleeping without or without a tent (i.e. sleeping vs. camping). This is another detail which is easily overlooked, but if and when the issue is pressed in court, laws will inevitably need to make a distinction between the two.

I hope council members who are in support of Mahon's plans consider,

- A. Mahon was elected at a time when 'homelessness' was perhaps the most concerning issue for many cities along the west coast, but this is no longer the case.
- B. When a man's greatest idea is how to criminalize people for not going to shelters and he conveniently sweeps the question of why people do not go to these places to begin with under the rug – this is a good indicator that such a man is not in possession of innovative ideas, nor is he capable of strategizing pragmatically. It is perhaps too much to ask for that those elected as mayors have transcendental qualities or to be a person who is willing to put in the work and make the commitment needed to see through changing deeply fundamental facets of society. But in the least case we should try to ensure the community is protected from opportunists who care more about their own short-term political aspirations than they do about whether their strategy will actually work in the long run, or in what ways it might undermine basic human rights. Any time we find ourselves scraping the bottom of the barrel for ideas as San Jose seems to be at the moment, we should default into defensive mode.

About 15 years ago I stayed at the rescue mission in Eugene, OR. It was very different then than it is today in that it had a very large and accommodating day room from which people could come and go as they pleased, access showers when needed, relax, find clean clothes at various times of the day, eat meals, etc. – all without standing in lines out in the cold for hours every day as is the norm in so many shelters today. Still, even then this mission had mandatory chapel service for those who did choose to stay the night. they had issues with power trips and demeaning treatment by staff, and their curfews were not always compatible with employment (nor were they willing to bend on this). Today, this day room has devolved into a holding cell in which new arrivals must submit themselves to being contained in for twenty days straight before 'graduating' to the upstairs dormitory. Shelters in Portland can no longer be accessed without being checked in by a professional staffer. I watched that town go from good to bad to awful.

The reasons behind why shelters are becoming even less desirable places than they were 10-20 years ago have much to do with the housing first agenda which the *National Coalition to End Homelessness* has taken to literally bribing private agencies into adopting. It also has to do with the desire of social workers to professionalize the act of 'serving' the unhoused and justifying the need for more funds instead of enabling unhoused persons to do for themselves.

There is also a cultural aspect to consider..

About ten years ago a seemingly simple question arose in my mind; 'why not pack a warehouse full of bunkbeds and put them on the free rental market? why have our options been reduced to paying for an arm and a leg for

our own undersized private unit, being chased around outside, or of being treated like prisoners in missions?'. And I thought to myself that people are homeless, not helpless, and they need options more than they need help. My background being in physics, my instinct was proof by disproof; I sought out holes in my own idea. Instead of finding such a thing cannot be done or has not already worked, I instead found that it (communal living in general) is too easily sabotaged by those with a vested interest against it. Aside from the numerous vested interests there are to be found against communal institutions (especially those which go so far as to legitimize communal living/ sleeping), on a cultural level these places present too much of a contrast to the surrounding domestic society.

For starters – before I ever began reading history books by the dozen – a strange thing I observed in my years of experience is that unhoused peoples coming together as a community in a healthy fashion seemed to be perceived by the surrounding populace as a greater threat than was individual acts of degeneracy by isolated campers. Why would people coming together threaten those nearby more than all the hoarding, stealing, and drug use which a system of compartmentalized tents give rise to? It is because we are still tribal creatures, and this is still tribal warfare. Accordingly, although it is looked down on, it is OKAY to devolve into a street life because you come from a broken family and/ or the domestic social life didn't fit you; it is OKAY to turn to drugs as a means of connecting to other humans, and it is OKAY to piss and shit yourself after getting high on public sidewalks once the daily ostracism and punishment of domestic society takes its toll. It cannot, however, be OKAY for you to come together as a tribe and heal yourselves in holistic fashions, for it is only when it is divided that a family falls.

Basically, I am saying that 'homelessness' is a family issue more than it is a private housing issue. Healing our families, and legitimizing alternative (or restoring very old) forms of family for those who come from a broken family is really where our focus ought to be if we hope to improve the issue in any meaningful way rather than shuffle it around. Today economists might refer to what I am trying to describe and to suggest we redirect our focus to improving [as opposed to simply housing people] as 'social capital'. Many who experience it out here will tell you 'homelessness' is a simple matter of loneliness. More specifically, I am arguing it is an attempted return to a tribal way of life for those who have failed to find purpose in the domestic way of life; a street family to substitute for the nuclear family that didn't work out.

By now I've read laundry baskets full of history books, and I am convinced there is a tug-a-war which consistently arises between communal and domestic forms of society. Living communally is in our DNA – we are inherently tribal creatures. Transitioning from a communal scheme to one in which private property, monogamous marriage, the nuclear family, and the private home are all fundamental principles of organization which we accept as 'normal' today. But these principles weren't normalized overnight, nor did this occur without mass indoctrination¹, centuries of conditioning, and much strife – bloodshed even. There was a time when people were governed according to what social group they belonged to rather than by what geographic territory they currently inhabit. This is such a fundamental paradigm shift in both governmental systems and in the notion of identity construction that only a fool would think he could change it in a short time – in his own lifetime even.

My purpose is only partly to erase the dogma preached by housing first advocates – that 'homelessness is a housing issue'. Again, *Homelessness* is a *family* issue. From its inception thousands of years ago, the private home was [and it remains] a tool to legitimize the supremacy of and to serve the needs of the nuclear family (as opposed to the tribe which has largely been de-constructed and rendered a taboo topic). Anthropologists often note how labor markets in any society of the last thousand years tend to center around the private home (and by extension the nuclear family). Without a family a person loses motive to perform labor in such labor markets. What the housing first strategy amounts to for many persons who come from broken families is this; they are shoved into isolated and overpriced boxes which in effect separate them from what at some point became their most significant source of family – their street family (their tribe). Drugs become an excuse to reconnect with others in such a divided state. Hoarding of goods and territoriality [characteristics of a domestic existence] instead of a conscious sharing of goods and an unconscious cultivation of trust is the inevitable result of living next to rather than with one another. We see this outcome in tent communities here in California and elsewhere.

What is rarely tolerated however, is outdoor communal sleeping – regardless of the fact that such an approach is much cleaner and cost efficient. For a time I seen this method in effect in Oregon, and it had very positive outcomes – so positive I dare say many observers would be surprised to find it is the cultivation of community more than the establishment of a tent which motivates people. This I'd reason is because it is shame and safety

that are the feelings which ultimately motivate us. Some degree of safety can be found in tents, but even then many rely on safety in numbers – by the presence of others. When a person arrives to a town and they have no where to go and no encampment established, and especially if they are new to the act of sleeping outside, then it is natural to seek safety in the presence of others who are in the same boat. Shame can and usually is hidden from with the use of private walls and tents. But it is all too often overlooked that in a more natural and human state, we overcome shame with a sense of tribal belonging; so long as we have a group of people close by to call our own and with which we may face the surrounding world, then it matters little what others think of us or how they label us.

My primary purpose however, is not to convince the council that they should pursue shelter reform or to piss in the wind as I have trying to reinvent communalism. It is instead to convince you all that a reasonably educated person has put his life into this matter, and he has come to the conclusion that shelters – communal living arrangements in general – cannot be reformed unless or until government itself is reformed. Like education, housing is a thing that is very difficult to change, mainly because government won't *allow* it to change. And this is a thing which goes well beyond any one city or transient body of council persons.

One might wonder if it is possible to just criminalize unhoused persons without worrying about what humane alternatives they have, and to this I can only be optimistic and presume I am writing to intelligent people. No further consideration of this break in my chain of reasoning warrants considering; to criminalize unhoused people should be considered equivalent to pursuing shelter reform, as pursuing the former will sooner or later require addressing the latter.

So, while I wholeheartedly believe shelter reform is necessary, again, it is futile unless or until government itself is in some way changed. To this I bring to mind the words of the influential economic historian Karl Polanyi, "too much change, too fast, is dangerous".

I have come to accept that real change is like planting the seeds to a tree which you may not be around to reap the fruits of. Real change happens gradually and in harmony with its surroundings – it does not violently uproot and overthrow entire systems which people have learned to rely on. People are creatures of ecology; if you suddenly uproot them and force them into a different environment it will surely have unforeseen and unintended consequences. In the end it will not serve the city of San Jose. At best, if we let this come to pass, it will serve the political ambitions of one deficient Mayor. My father used to say to me that, 'evil spirits are things you feed, and the more you feed them, the more they'll demand of you'. What Mahons proposal really is is an attempt to create drama – to create political energy for his fledgling political career to feed on.

Notes: ¹ e.g. nomadic tribal spiritual beliefs overlaid with formal religious beliefs which had interwoven into them inherent qualities of the domestic life; centralized/ hierarchical/ patriarchal systems of authority, sedentarism, monotheism and monogamy – rigid loyalty to a set person, group, or god in general.

Thank you,

Wayne W. Gazzola

Biking to Columbus Park - Item 7.1 Columbus Park Revitalization Plan - City Council 4/15 - Public Comment

From Jordan Moldow [REDACTED]

Date Tue 4/15/2025 12:59 AM

To City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>; Smith, Ryan <ryan.smith@sanjoseca.gov>; Karoly, Scott <Scott.Karoly@sanjoseca.gov>; Mui, Willa <Willa.Mui@sanjoseca.gov>; Costantino, Raymond <Raymond.Costantino@sanjoseca.gov>; Telahun, Bethelhem <Bethelhem.Telahun@sanjoseca.gov>; chris.mastrodiscasa@sanjoseca.gov <chris.mastrodiscasa@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>

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Dear Mayor and City Council,

The Initial Study states: "The project also encourages alternatives to single-vehicle occupancy trips by being centrally located and adequately served by pedestrian and bicycle facilities." I do not believe this to be true. The new Columbus Park should be accessible to All Ages and Abilities, but the bicycle facilities to access the park are not currently accessible to that same audience. Cycling here today, via Taylor or Hedding, is dangerous and uncomfortable, as the constrained bike lane is narrow and adjacent to high-speed traffic between Highway 87 and Coleman Ave. The bikeways on W Taylor and W Hedding would need to be widened and protected, and vehicle speeds would need to be slowed, for the bikeways to be safe, comfortable, and accessible.

According to the transportation consultant's Transportation Analysis: "The project should construct a protected Class IV bicycle facility along its West Taylor Street frontage per the Better Bikeways Plan 2025." This project is doing a facility demolition and rebuild along a frontage of nearly a quarter-mile, which makes this project a fantastic opportunity to create a comfortable protected bikeway. Building this segment along with the park construction will mean no additional impact on park users and pedestrians, as opposed to coming back at a later time to construct a (possibly sidewalk-level) bikeway. I urge the city to embark on these two projects as one simultaneous project, rather than separately designing and constructing the protected bikeway at an unknown future date.

I also urge the city to provide much more than the required minimum of 25 bicycle parking spaces. With 120 private vehicle parking spaces and only 25 bicycle parking spaces, the City is vastly encouraging driving to the park rather than biking, which will generate negative climate impacts. If the City is serious about this development

being climate neutral/positive, it needs to make biking to the park just as convenient as driving.

Thanks,

Jordan Moldow (speaking on his own behalf)

Member of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (for identification purposes only)

Japantown, District 3, 95112

FW: public comment for item 7.1 : Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Tue 4/15/2025 7:47 AM

To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Hector Hernandez [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2025 1:14 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: public comment for item 7.1 : Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

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Dear Mayor Mahan and fellow city councilmembers, I volunteer to distribute food and supplies to the unhoused neighbors at Guadalupe park and I ask you how are you going to help them? We shouldn't focus on recreating the park and putting soccer fields there until we helped the unhoused neighbors leaving there! In that area there are families with children and community members who have jobs, but can't afford the prices in San Jose and just trying to survive. The City of San Jose needs to help these people by being more inefficient in finding them shelter and housing, resources to help with their mental illness or drug abuse, Jobs for them to get back on their feet, not focusing on renovating a park. Focus on helping the people in the community first not making their lives worst by sweeping them. These people are no different then your neighbors in your community and should be treated and listened to with the same amount of respect.

Sincerely Hector Hernandez

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FW: Approval of April 15, 2025 Agenda Columbus Park Revitalization Plan Item #7.1. 25 377

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 4/15/2025 7:53 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Victoria Taketa [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2025 3:44 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Approval of April 15, 2025 Agenda Columbus Park Revitalization Plan Item #7.1. 25 377

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My name is Victoria Taketa and I have lived in the Japantown Neighborhood for over 35 years and support the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan that is before the Council today. During the past 15 years, I have witnessed the decline of this park that was once a vibrant and active recreational space for our communities' residences especially a designated sports venue for our local youth, young adults, and their families.

While the revitalization of Columbus Park has been overlooked and put on hold for other competing budgetary issues facing our city, the park has become unrecognizable and unusable. The continued neglect of this park created an unsafe site for any recreational use by residences living in our communities on both side of 89. The revitalization of this park space along the Guadalupe River Park (one of our city's most valuable underutilized assets) will enliven and reactivate this area along the Guadalupe River which includes the surrounding gardens, children's playground, bike trails and walking paths connecting the many neighborhoods from downtown to 101 for everyone of all ages to enjoy, truly a city park. The Revitalization Plan will return a sports venue and potentially organized youth sports supported by our city and organizations as existed before the park's decline and once again provide a dedicated and welcoming space for our youth.

Please approve this plan
Thank you
Victoria Taketa

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FW: City Council 04/15/2025, Item 7.1: Support for the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 4/15/2025 7:55 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (58 KB)

GRPC Letter of Support - Columbus Park Reconstruction 20250415.pdf;

From: Jason Su [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2025 7:15 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Mulcahy, Michael <Michael.Mulcahy@sanjoseca.gov>; Elizabeth Loretto [REDACTED]; Salas, Carl <Carl.Salas@sanjoseca.gov>; Joe Salvato [REDACTED]; Ghalandari, Sara [REDACTED]; Lisa Bankosh [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: City Council 04/15/2025, Item 7.1: Support for the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

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Dear City Clerk,

Thank you for receiving this public comment letter by the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy regarding Council 4/15/2025 Item 7.1 Columbus Park Revitalization Plan.

--

Jason Su (he/him)
Executive Director | [Guadalupe River Park Conservancy](#)
[REDACTED]

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April 15, 2025

San José City Council
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

RE: City Council 04/15/2025, Item 7.1: Support for the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

The Guadalupe River Park Conservancy writes in strong support of the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan. We are the City's non-profit partner providing community leadership for the active use and development of the Guadalupe River Park. The approval of this Plan marks a critical step in completing the revitalization of a park that holds deep significance for many San José residents.

For decades, Columbus Park served as a vital recreational space—a place where families gathered, youth played sports, and community bonds were strengthened. The proposed Plan honors that while meeting the needs of today's growing and diverse population.

The new 9.4-acre neighborhood sports park will bring back much-needed amenities and provide space for active recreation, supporting both public health and social connection. As stewards of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens, we know firsthand how access to open space, fitness, and gathering places can uplift communities and improve quality of life.

Importantly, this project complements and strengthens the broader network of destinations within Guadalupe Gardens. Alongside the Rotary PlayGarden, the Historic Orchard, and the Heritage Rose Garden—each undergoing its own renewal—this soccer-focused redevelopment adds momentum to the larger master plan vision for San José's "Grand Park." The Plan also reinforces adjacent efforts, particularly around Prototype Park and the future Urban Farm, helping to create a unified, welcoming, and vibrant civic space in the heart of our city.

The Guadalupe River Park Conservancy commends the City for its leadership and commitment to community-focused park investment, and supports the approval of the Columbus Park Revitalization Plan.

Regards,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Jason Su.

Jason Su, Executive Director

Agenda Item 7.1: Require natural surfaces (not plastic grass) for Columbus Park renovation

From Linda Hutchins-Knowles <[REDACTED]>

Date Tue 4/15/2025 10:34 AM

To The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (162 KB)

Letter to San José City Council re. requiring natural grass for Columbus Park.pdf;

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Dear Mayor Mahan, Vicemayor Foley, and City Councilmembers,

Please consider the attached comments from Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley.

Thank you,
Linda Hutchins-Knowles (she/her)
Co-Founder & Team Coordinator

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April 15, 2025

To: mayor@sanjoseca.gov, district1@sanjoseca.gov, district2@sanjoseca.gov, district3@sanjoseca.gov, district4@sanjoseca.gov, district5@sanjoseca.gov, district6@sanjoseca.gov, district7@sanjoseca.gov, district8@sanjoseca.gov, district9@sanjoseca.gov, district10@sanjoseca.gov,

Re: Agenda Item 7.1: Require Columbus Park renovation to **use natural grass**, not toxic turf

Dear Mayor Mahan, Vicemayor Foley, and Councilmembers:

Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley—San Jose’s first Climate Smart Champion—is a grassroots group with over 2000 local supporters advocating for a healthy environment today and a livable climate tomorrow for all children. We have not yet taken a position on the proposal to redevelop Columbus Park into a public park. However, should Council decide to approve this proposal, we ask that you make an important modification to protect public health and safety, our environment, and our climate.

The current plan calls for “synthetic soccer fields, courts for horseshoe, futsal, basketball and pickleball, picnic areas and a play area for children.” We ask that you **replace “synthetic soccer fields” with “organically-managed natural grass soccer fields”** and require that the picnic areas and play area for children **use natural materials like real grass and engineered wood fiber** rather than plastic grass or pour-in-place rubber surfaces. Pour-in-place rubber contains “polyaromatic hydrocarbons, phthalates, and volatile organic compounds” and often contains additional “additives and binders that could harm the health of children.” See this article: <https://www.eenews.net/articles/toxic-chemicals-lurk-at-childrens-playgrounds/>

Artificial turf (synthetic grass) is a petroleum product that is harmful to athletes, public health, air and water quality, and the climate. Consider each of these harms:

- **Health impacts:** Artificial turf contains many chemicals known to be carcinogenic, including PFAS (forever chemicals), benzene, lead, and other heavy metals that are absorbed through the skin and lungs.
- **Safety risks:** Studies have shown that athletes playing on artificial turf are at higher risk of knee and ankle injuries and concussions (a major reason why 92% of NFL players prefer natural grass).
- **Heat danger:** Artificial turf gets very, very hot—up to 60°F hotter than natural grass—and has been measured as high as 200°F on a sunny day. These high temperatures increase the risk of third-degree burns, melting shoes, and heat exhaustion and stroke.
- **Air pollution:** When heated by the sun, artificial turf releases dangerous volatile organic compounds (VOCs), increasing the risk of cancer.
- **Water contamination:** When watered (required for cleaning and cooling) and when rained on, artificial turf sheds microplastics and chemicals that flow to our creeks, contaminating our watershed with EPA-regulated PFAS chemicals.
- **Non-recyclability:** Despite industry claims, artificial turf is not recycled. It needs to be replaced every 8-10 years and the discarded rolls are sent to landfill, incinerated, or repurposed such as at animal shelters and playgrounds despite their toxicity.
- **Climate heating:** Plastic grass generates heat-trapping gasses at every state of its lifecycle. And unlike natural grass (which absorbs carbon pollution), plastic grass means the loss of the potential to capture carbon in a healthy soil ecosystem and intensifies the urban heat island effect.

For these reasons, the [Green Building Alliance](#) considers natural grass a more sustainable and “[safer alternative](#)” to artificial turf and the [Santa Clara County Medical Association](#) has urged both the Santa Clara County and local school districts to insist on natural grass instead of artificial turf.

We hope you will listen to these experts and parents like us who ask that you **protect our children’s and community’s health and safety and our fragile environment and climate** by insisting that any athletic fields you help to fund be **built with durable, drought-tolerant natural grass rather than toxic plastic turf**. Also be sure to use healthy surfaces for children’s playgrounds, not pour-in-place rubber. This will ensure alignment with your commitment to San Jose’s leadership as a sustainable and climate-smart city.


Thank you,
Linda Hutchins-Knowles
Co-Founder & Team Coordinator, Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley

FW: Agenda Item 7.1 Oppose Columbus Park plan with artificial turf

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Tue 4/15/2025 12:07 PM

To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 3 attachments (19 MB)

IMG_1542.jpeg; IMG_1540.jpeg; IMG_1554.jpeg;

From: Pam Bond <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2025 11:50 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Agenda Item 7.1 Oppose Columbus Park plan with artificial turf

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Dear San Jose City Council members,

I am sorry that I did not see this agenda item in time for an 8 am deadline for today's meeting.

I want to alert you to the dangers of artificial turf related to heat. There are many issues including plastic debris into storm drains, the chemical lifecycle and pollution from creation to end of life, the lower body injuries of players, risks of turf burns and infections, and many more but I don't have time to write to you about all of that.

I want to alert you to the fact that while the turf industry continues to claim better products, you can objectively see the issues that continue with artificial turf. In its newest iteration, it is claimed that "no infill" will make the field cooler. This is a lie.

I visited John Mise Park in San Jose which was recently renovated with a new infill-less artificial turf that is claimed to be cooler than turfs with infill. Aside from the fact that this means at least 2x the plastic to fill in the space, it still gets very hot.

This field was installed in October 2024.

I went to the field in March 2025 and not only were there tufts of plastic all over the field and outside the field including in and around storm drains, the temperature of the plastic (using an infrared thermometer) was almost 163°!

I can send more photos which include the grass, cement and asphalt temps but for reference:

Air Temperature: 73°

Natural grass: 86°

Cement: 106.7°

Asphalt: 112°

Artificial turf: 162.9°

Please seriously consider the consequences of installing this for the players, the community, the environment and keep in mind climate change which is going to create more issues with this unnatural surface.

I can put you in touch with grass professionals to discuss alternatives for efficient, drought tolerant grass playing fields.

Sincerely,

Pam Bond

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