



Board and Commission Study Issue Form

The Study Issues process is designed to assist City Council with setting priorities for the coming calendar year. Board and commission members have two roles in this process:

1. To advise Council regarding the identification of policy issues to study, within their relevant area of authority;
2. To advise Council on those issues Council has decided to study.

The study issues process should focus on considering a new or revised ordinance, new or expanded service delivery program, changes to existing Council Policy, or amendments to the General Plan. The Study Issues Form is designed to focus board and commissioner members' ideas on potential policy study issues, and provide the opportunity for staff feedback and guidance in a transparent process. *Board members or commissioners may only fill out a form for study issue ideas within their purview.*

Date Submitted to Staff

Liaison:

Board/ Commission:

Submitted by: David Kesting

Study Issue Working Title:

Policy to Limit Synthetic Turf Use in Sunnyvale Parks to High Use Athletic Fields

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated this study?

This study proposes policy to limit artificial turf exclusively for high-traffic athletic fields, where durability & usability are essential.

Artificial turf offers benefits at athletic fields: year-round use, lower maintenance, & water savings. At Fair Oaks Park, field turf supports extensive programming w/o surface degradation. In contrast, using natural grass at Lakewood Park has increased capital costs by \$2.2 – \$2.9 million & will require \$500K – \$800K annually in upkeep. These natural grass fields will also have limited playability due to seasonal closures & surface wear.

A balanced policy would meet sustainability goals by reducing unnecessary plastic in low-use areas, while preserving the recreational value of field turf where needed.

Review Sunnyvale field turf usage, especially at sites like Fair Oaks.

Compare cost & usability of natural vs. artificial turf, focusing on Lakewood Park data. Assess options to limit field turf to athletic uses through policy or zoning tools.

2. Staff Summary of Scope and/or Comments: [Staff Use Only]

See Attachment.

PRC Study Issue

Staff Summary of Scope and/or Comments:

The proposed Study would consider a policy that would allow the limited use of synthetic turf in City Parks. Synthetic turf would be used only in areas that experience a high level of sports activity. Due to the high demand for sports fields in the City and the associated wear and tear, the Park sites that see heavy sports use struggle to meet performance standards throughout the year. The Study would review the field usage at City Parks, compare the cost and useability of natural grass fields vs synthetic turf and consider limiting the use of synthetic turf via City policy. This Study would consider a policy that would allow for a balance of natural grass fields and synthetic fields to meet the growing demand for public sports fields in the City.

A City funded Study is underway similar to this proposed Study. ESD 24-01 "Evaluate the Use of Artificial Turf versus Living Groundcovers".