

CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA
CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-XXX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA ADOPTING POLICY 2025-XX PROHIBITING THE INSTALLATION OF ARTIFICIAL TURF IN ALL ZONING DISTRICTS

WHEREAS, in 2016, the State of California enacted Government Code Section 53087.7, which required jurisdictions to approve proposed installations of drought tolerant landscaping, including synthetic grass/artificial turf, on residential property; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the City Planning Division developed Permitting Standards for Artificial Turf to comply with State law; and

WHEREAS, the City reviewed and approved approximately forty applications for artificial turf on residential properties between 2017 and 2014; and

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2023, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill 676, restoring the authority of local agencies to regulate or prohibit synthetic grass and artificial turf installations, effective January 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, while additional scientific study is needed to conclusively determine the safety – or safety risks of – exposure to artificial turf, the product is known to contain carcinogens, neurotoxins, mutagens, and endocrine disruptors that may pose a risk to public health; and

WHEREAS, artificial turf provides inferior water percolation rates as compared to natural plant material, hindering water absorption into soil and increasing runoff; and

WHEREAS, micro and nanoplastics, nylon, and “crumb rubber” materials in artificial turf deteriorate over time and leach into the air, water, and soil, endangering Carmel Bay, a protected watershed and a designated Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS); and

WHEREAS, the application of artificial turf limits the supply of air, water and organic material to soil beneath, affecting living organisms necessary for healthy soil; and

WHEREAS, the average longevity of artificial turf is ten years, and because of its complex makeup of petroleum and plastics, aged turf is typically landfilled or incinerated rather than recycled; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Municipal Code and Design Guidelines speak extensively to the importance of natural settings, natural forest character, and

natural materials; and

WHEREAS, because artificial turf is a plastic petroleum product that may cause adverse effects on public health, stormwater management, pollutant discharge, soil health, and neighborhood character, the use of artificial turf/synthetic grass in all zoning districts is inappropriate; and

WHEREAS, City staff has prepared an Artificial Turf Policy prohibiting the installation of artificial turf citywide; and

WHEREAS, on January 16, 2025, the Forest and Beach Commission considered the draft Artificial Turf Policy and recommended City Council adoption; and

WHEREAS, on February 11, 2025, the Planning Commission considered the draft Artificial Turf Policy and recommended City Council adoption; and

WHEREAS, The California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code §§ 21000, et seq., "CEQA"), together with State Guidelines (14 California Code Regulations §§ 15000, et seq., the "CEQA Guidelines") and City Environmental Regulations (CMC 17.60) require the review of certain projects for environmental impacts and preparation of environmental documents; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that pursuant to CEQA regulations the Application is categorically under Class 8 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15308, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment, which reads: "Class 8 consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. Construction activities and relaxation of standards allowing environmental degradation are not included in this exemption."

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA DOES HEREBY adopt Policy 2025-XX prohibiting the installation of artificial turf in all zoning districts.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA this 4th day of March, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Dale Byrne
Mayor

Nova Romero, MMC
City Clerk