

On Nov. 7 VOTE NO to Public Question \$11,800,000 for Artificial Turf Fields at Edison School

The November 7, 2023 General Election ballot will include a **Public Question** which asks Westfield residents to vote on a **\$11,800,000 bond referendum** to fund new synthetic (artificial) turf, aka **plastic grass** multipurpose athletic fields at Edison Intermediate School.

Reasons to VOTE NO to Public Question:



COSTS



\$11.8 million = JUST the upfront cost to construct the field

\$3-4 million = interest payments on the bonds over 15 yrs

\$2-3 million = replacing plastic carpet AT LEAST once in 15 yrs

\$0.5 million = maintenance, repairs and infill replacement over 15 yrs

~\$18 million = TOTAL COST over 15 yrs

\$18 million/15 yrs = **\$1,200,000** average ANNUAL cost on this ONE property

The cost of **destroying a natural grass ecosystem** cannot be measured in **\$\$\$**.



TOXICITY

- Artificial turf fields, aka plastic grass, contain **toxic chemicals** including: PFAS, carcinogens, neurotoxins, and endocrine disrupting chemicals.
- Toxic chemicals in plastic grass can cause **neurodevelopmental and endocrine disorders, obesity, renal and cardiovascular diseases and cancer**.
- Health experts warn that **children are uniquely vulnerable** to harmful exposures from artificial turf.
- Edison School students will have **NO natural spaces** for lunch, recess and P.E.



INJURIES

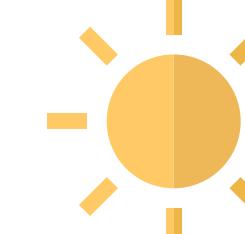
- Falling or sliding across plastic grass often leads to **painful abrasions**.
- Studies also show that players are much more likely to sustain **foot and ankle injuries** while playing on plastic grass compared to natural grass.
- Head contact with plastic grass is disproportionately associated with **concussions**.

The Edison field is adjacent to a tributary of the Robinson's Branch of the Rahway River that flows into the Middlesex Reservoir.



ENVIRONMENT

- The top layer of all artificial turf fields is a **plastic carpet** containing millions of blades of plastic grass.
- Plastic grass blades break apart into **microplastics** (plastics particles less than 5 mm in length).
- The microplastics and infill (usually ground up used tires) migrate off the field and **contaminate the air, soil, and water** with toxic chemicals.
- The plastic carpet wears out and needs to be replaced every 8-10 years.
- Worn out **artificial turf is not recycled**; it is burned, landfilled or dumped illegally.
- Artificial turf **emits carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases** that contribute to climate change.



HEAT

- Plastic grass can be more than 50 degrees **hotter than natural grass**.
- Field temperatures often exceed 150 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Children are less able to regulate body temperature, raising their risk of **dehydration and heat stress or heat stroke**.
- Artificial turf fields absorb energy from the sun, becoming **heat islands**.

There ARE alternatives to plastic grass!

Natural grass ATHLETIC fields ARE designed to withstand sports activities.

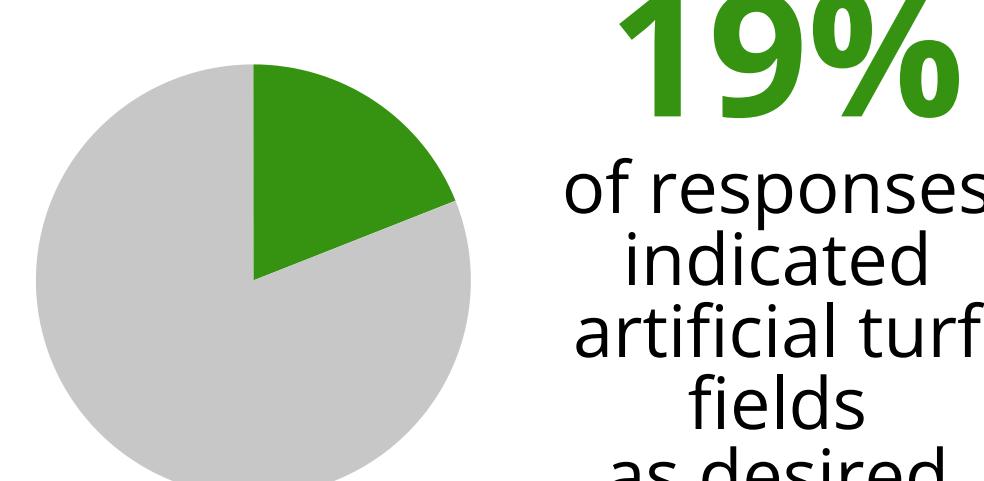
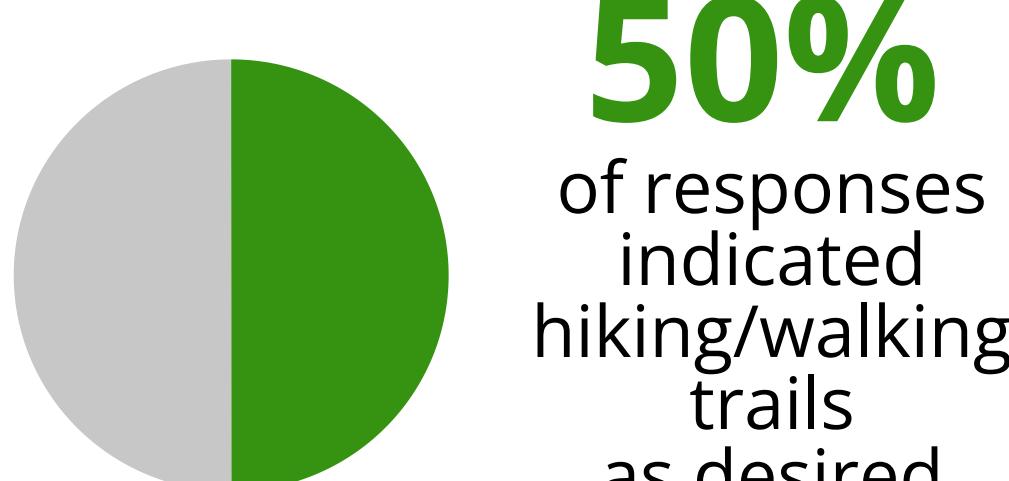
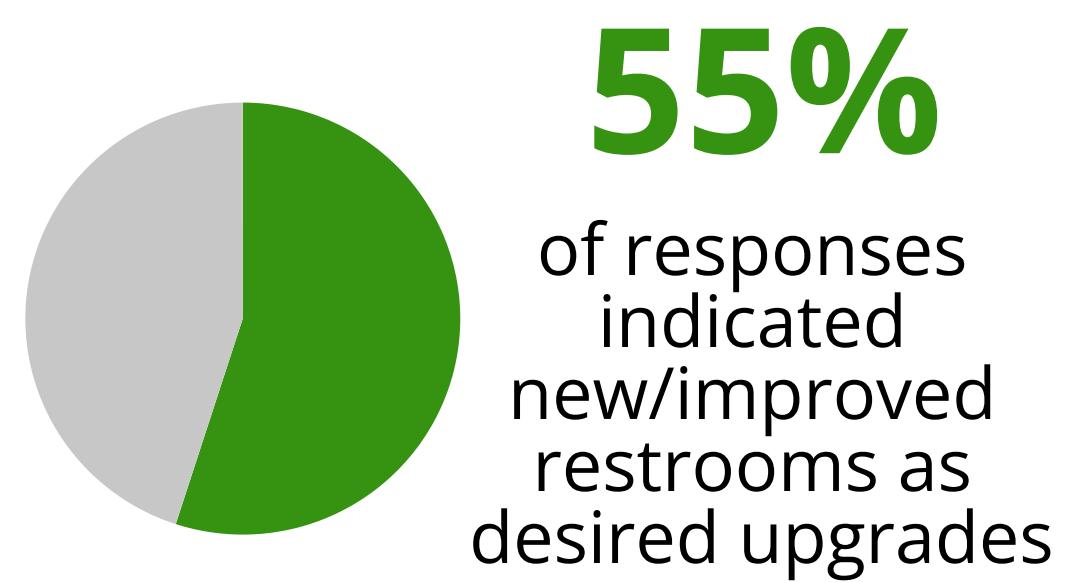
- Westfield does not have ANY natural grass ATHLETIC fields.
- Westfield has minimally maintained schoolyards and parks, forced to serve as athletic fields.

Natural grass ATHLETIC fields offer many benefits:

- Durable, safer, virtually rain-out proof playing surfaces
- Provide far more hours of play than Westfield's current fields
- Absorb stormwater and require less irrigation
- Free from toxic chemicals
- Provide cool and cushioned surfaces
- Do not need to be rested or replaced
- Grow stronger and more resilient as soil health improves
- Capture and store carbon dioxide in the rootmass and soil
- Cost far less to install and maintain than artificial turf over time

Other Northeast communities have been successful with organically maintained natural grass athletic fields. **Westfield can have safe, healthy natural grass athletic fields, too!**

Parks Master Plan Survey Results Revealed:



- \$11.8 M**
- on a low priority improvement is excessive.
 - Projects with broad appeal should be the priority.

- Artificial turf athletic fields were the 10th priority in the survey.
- **New or improved natural grass athletic fields were not even an option on the survey.**

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1 LEARN

Scan the QR code for references and links to get more info.
Email WestfieldCRAFD@gmail.com or call/text **(908) 652-5174** to learn how you can help.



2 CHECK YOUR VOTER STATUS

Be sure you are registered to vote. Check voter status at:
<https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/registration-check>

3 MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE

1. Request a mail-in ballot and vote by mail.
 2. **Or** vote early from Saturday, October 28 thru Sunday, November 5
 3. **Or** vote in person at your polling place on Tuesday, November 7, from 6:00am to 8:00pm
- Get the details at: <https://unioncountvotes.com/>

THANK YOU FOR VOTING

Paid for by CRAFD (Citizens for Responsible Athletic Field Development), P.O. Box 622, Westfield, NJ 07090