



## Zero Waste - Organic Infill Artificial Turf Fields

*Excerpted from Minutes 2016-05-02*

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MOVED by Commissioner Wiebe  
SECONDED by Commissioner Mackinnon

### WHEREAS:

1. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation continues to review best practices in sustainability in order to be a leader in green employment, sustainable maintenance, water conservation, biodiversity, waste diversion and others;
2. As a key partner to the City of Vancouver's 2020 Greenest City Strategy, the Vancouver Park Board can help the city reach its diversion goal of over 70% by developing and implementing new policies that will reduce the waste heading to our landfill, including rubber; switching to the use of organic infill could reduce our waste by the equivalent of 20,000 used tires per field, of which the Park Board has currently over ten;
3. The City of Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy states that people have the right to live in a healthy environment, with awareness of pollutants and contaminants that can cause harm; multiple studies report the use of crumb rubber mulch leads to out-gassing and leaching of toxic chemicals and heavy metals; crumb rubber has been shown to contain 32 known contaminants, 11 carcinogens, volatile organic compounds, and 12 unidentified chemical compounds;
4. It is estimated that 6,000-7,000 lbs of crumb rubber migrates off an average playing field per year, into our parks, the city, people's homes, cars, and the environment, including local waterways; studies have also indicated that in cities with heavy rainfall, zinc from rubber tires leaches into the ground, which has been shown to damage and even kill aquatic communities of wildlife existing in streams and rivers;
5. As a result of crumb rubber's damaging effects, it is being banned as infill for synthetic turf fields by cities, school districts, and universities throughout North America, including: Edmonds, WA; Los Angeles, CA; New York, NY; and Hartford, CT; more locally, the Greater Victoria School District is working to approve the use of an alternative infill to crumb rubber to replace the synthetic turf field at Oak Bay High this year; while there are many cities and schools across Canada that have already begun the process to ban the use of crumb rubber, the city of Vancouver could set a national example with respect to this matter, and prove its leadership as a green and sustainable city; and
6. Examples of alternative organic materials that have been implemented instead of crumb rubber are cork, coconut husks, silica sand, rice husks, and/or acrylic coated sand; organic infill provides an evaporative effect similar to natural grass reducing the field's temperature; the overall long term cost for organic material is higher than crumb rubber, but it



has zero cost for disposal and it exceeds mandates for safety, environmental compatibility, and sustainability.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation implement the use of organic materials instead of crumb rubber, on all new and replacement artificial turf fields in Vancouver effective immediately.

The motion was withdrawn by the Mover and Seconder.