

Bainbridge Park Project – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

City of Fort Bragg, CA



1. What is being installed at Bainbridge Park?

The renovation includes a multi-use pavilion with stage, two fenced artificial-surface soccer pitches, landscaping and irrigation, a master lighting control system, cosmetic and maintenance upgrades to the existing restrooms, art and natural-play elements including retaining the natural grass area in front of the stage, and a poured-in-place (PIP) rubber playground surfacing that meets ASTM F1292 fall-protection and ASTM F1951 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, making the playground inclusive for all.

2. What is the soccer court surfacing material?

The Bainbridge Park soccer court features the PolyTurf Champion Sport Mini Pitch Field, a high-performance synthetic turf system designed for safety, durability, and sustainability. The field is composed of multiple layers:

- **Base Layer:** A pervious poured-in-place (PIP) surface made from 100% recycled rubber granules manufactured by Rubberway. These granules are sourced from post-consumer tires, diverting waste from landfills.
- **Turf Layer:** PolyTurf synthetic grass made of non-toxic, lead-free polyethylene yarn fibers and a dense nylon thatch layer for added resilience.
- **Infill Layer:** A layer of Envirofill, a rounded silica sand coated with a durable polymer. This infill enhances drainage, stabilizes turf fibers, and includes an antimicrobial agent to support hygiene.

PolyTurf products are LEED eligible, green building rated, and 100% recyclable, with recycled content used wherever possible. The entire system is designed to be safe for users and environmentally responsible.

3. What will the playground surface be made of?

The playground at Bainbridge Park will feature a poured-in-place (PIP) rubber surfacing system manufactured by Spectraturf. This system is composed of two layers:

- **Base Layer:** Made from a 100% recycled blend of shredded SBR (styrene butadiene rubber) and urethane, primarily sourced from post-consumer tires. This layer is poured and cured on-site, forming a stable, inert surface that users do not come into direct contact with.
- **Top Layer:** Composed of recycled EPDM (ethylene propylene diene monomer) rubber, a food-safe material commonly used in valve seals and other applications within the food industry. This layer provides the visible, colorful finish and tactile surface of the playground.

The poured PIP is prepared by mixing rubber with a binding agent, which is allowed to cure, creating a fully inert surface, leaving no loose crumb rubber. Spectraturf confirms that all materials used are non-toxic and not classified as hazardous, and the installation process ensures the final surface is safe, durable, and environmentally responsible.

4. Is it safe to use recycled rubber in park surfacing?

Yes. Multiple peer-reviewed studies and government assessments have found no significant health risks from recycled rubber used in synthetic turf fields or poured-in-place (PIP) playground surfaces.

Key findings:

- **OEHHA (2025)ⁱ**: A comprehensive 183-page study concluded “no significant health risks” to players, coaches, referees, or spectators from chemical exposure on or near synthetic turf fields.
- **CIPHI (2018)ⁱⁱ**: The Canadian review found no health risks from PIP surfacing when cured and installed properly. While individual components may pose hazards in isolation, they are inert and bound in the final product, minimizing exposure risk.
- **EPA (2022)ⁱⁱⁱ**: National biomonitoring and air sampling showed no meaningful difference in chemical exposure between turf users and the general population.

These findings support the City’s use of modern, regulated materials that meet safety and environmental standards. We remain committed to monitoring emerging research and maintaining transparency with the public.

5. Why not keep natural grass?

Natural grass will remain in the park. Specifically, the field in front of the pavilion will be restored with real grass (turf sod) to preserve green space and support passive recreation. Artificial turf was selected specifically in response to community demand for soccer mini-pitches to meet year-round playability and water conservation goals. The selected turf conserves water and eliminates the need for fertilizers and pesticides that contribute to chemical runoff. It provides a consistently safe and playable surface year-round, with the durability to withstand all weather conditions and minimize cancellations due to rain or poor field quality. Over the long term, turf reduces maintenance costs by removing the need for mowing, watering, and reseeding, making it both environmentally responsible and cost-effective for public fields. The use of artificial turf was requested by the local soccer community, who advocated for an all-weather turf field. City staff thoroughly researched the best artificial turf options and examined deployments in similar communities, including soccer fields in the City of Ukiah and PIP at the Mendocino K-8 playground, where modern, safe turf and PIP systems have been successfully installed.

6. How was the community engaged in this process?

Since the 2016 Bainbridge Park Master Plan, the City has held twelve Council and/or committee level meetings, a pop-up at the Farmers Market, a pop-up at the playground, a public scoping session, and regular online updates. Local soccer stakeholders drove the push for an all-weather pitch, leading the Council to allocate TOT and asset-forfeiture funds in 2021 and include turf in the successful Prop 68 grant application. A full overview of the project timeline, including links to all public meetings and staff reports, is included on the City's project page of the website: <https://www.city.fortbragg.com/departments/public-works/bainbridge-park-enhancement-project>

7. What is the status of this project?

Construction is currently underway. The City is monitoring installation closely to ensure safety, environmental compliance, and full adherence to design specifications approved by the City Council.

8. How will the City continue to address health and environmental concerns?

The City remains committed to transparency and public engagement. Staff are available to answer questions, share documentation, and respond to new concerns. Any new information that arises will be evaluated in coordination with health and environmental authorities.

9. What about state legislation regarding turf and PFAS?

PFAS State Legislation - Efforts to enact a statewide prohibition have not succeeded.

On October 8, 2023, California Governor Gavin Newsom (D) announced that he **vetoed** a number of bills, including AB 1423.

AB 1164 (Gatto) - Effective October 9, 2015; Enacted to address water conservation prohibited local jurisdictions from enacting (or enforcing existing) ordinances or regulations prohibiting the installation of drought-tolerant landscaping, synthetic grass, and artificial turf on residential properties. This law only impacts residential properties.

SB 676 (Allen) - Effective January 1, 2024; AB 1164 (see above) was amended to remove the protection from local regulation of synthetic grass and artificial turf on residential properties.

AB 1423 (Schiavo) - **vetoed** by Governor October 8, 2023; Would have prohibited a public entity from purchasing or installing a covered surface containing regulated PFAS.

10. Who can I contact with more questions?

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References

- OEHHA Synthetic Turf Study (2025)** California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. *Public Review Draft: Synthetic Turf and Crumb Rubber Exposure Study*. [Download the full report \(PDF\)](#)
- Canadian CIPHI Study on Poured-in-Place Surfacing (2018)** Janes et al. *A review of the potential risks associated with chemicals present in poured-in-place rubber surfacing*. Environmental Health Review, Vol. 61(1). [Access the full article \(PDF\)](#)
- EPA Federal Research Action Plan on Crumb Rubber (2022)** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Final Report: Synthetic Turf Fields and Playground Rubber*. [View the EPA summary and findings](#)