



**SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA
324 EAST PINE STREET
2ND FLOOR MEDIA ROOM**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2026
AT 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

MINUTES

1. Approval Of July 2026 Meeting Minutes
2. Approval Of Corrections To Dates In June Meeting Minutes

PUBLIC COMMENTS

DISCUSSION

1. Synthetic Turf In The Florida Landscape - Theresa Badurek, IFAS Urban Horticulture Agent
2. Panel Presentations Planning- Outreach Coordination
3. Foundational Community Qualities - Ongoing

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING AGENDA

STAFF COMMENTS

1.
 - Switch Together – In Partnership With SUN Is Open And Ongoing Through September
 - Sustainable Development Recognition Program Will Go To TRC In September
 - Ecofest Is September 19
 - Water Conservation- Third Round Of High-Use Postcards Mailed In August Through SWFWMD Conservaiton Education Program

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

This meeting is open to the public. The City of Tarpon Springs is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for access for people with disabilities. Anyone needing assistance regarding this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (727) 938-3711, fax a written request to (727) 942-5619, or email a written request to cityclerk@ctsfl.us at least two days prior to the meeting. For further information regarding this meeting, please contact the Sustainability Division at (727) 943-3555 or sustainability@ctsfl.us

MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS
JULY 16, 2026

THE SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MET IN THE CITY HALL MEDIA ROOM, 324 E. PINE STREET, TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA, ON THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026, AT 6:00 P.M., WITH THE FOLLOWING PRESENT:

DR. CAROL MICKETT	CHAIRPERSON
SIOBHAN NEHIN	VICE CHAIRPERSON
DR. MELINA SCALLY	MEMBER

STAFF PRESENT: HOLLY LANGSTON SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM MANAGER

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mickett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Langston called roll. Ms. Riquetti' s absence was excused as she provided advance notice.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 2026 MINUTES:

MOTION:	SIOBHAN NEHIN
SECOND:	DR. MELINA SCALLY

To approve the minutes of June 2026 Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting.

Vote on motion: Upon viva voce vote, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Visitors present included Rosalyn Atkinson, Denise Mannino, and Andy Duong. Rosalyn Atkinson discussed Sustainability at the Union Academy meeting on June 22, highlighted sustainability as economic, social, and architectural. She reminded the attendees of the award-winning 2023 Sustainability Plan and encouraged the community to contact the committee with sustainability concerns. Andy Duong, representing Children's Home Network, Introduced free in-home respite care services (8 hours/week). The program is funded by the Juvenile Welfare Board; providers are trained and background-checked. Organization partners with over 200 agencies statewide.

DISCUSSION

1. **Urban Forestry and Tree Management Update - Pat McNeese, Planning Supervisor**
Managing Community Forest Grant (\$55,000)
– Phase 1: Tree inventory completed (≈7000 trees).

- Phase 2: Urban Forest Management Plan completed and adopted.
- Phase 3: 34 trees to be planted in parks, stormwater ponds, and rights-of-way.

Hurricane Recovery Grants

- Tree Inventory Grant (~\$30,000) to complete remaining inventory.
- Storm-Ready Tree Maintenance Grant (\$75,000) for pruning/removal in Union Academy and Oak Leaf Village; City provides small matching funds.

Land Development Code Updates

- Modernizing tree protection and landscaping standards, updating species lists, tree condition rating systems, mitigation standards, invasive removals, and construction protections.
- Adjusting minimum tree-planting requirements to account for larger homes on smaller lots.
- Improving enforcement of long-term landscape plans.

Staffing and Programs

- New City arborist, Jackie Salas, hired and starting soon.
- Tree giveaway scheduled for September 19 at EcoFest.

Committee Discussion

- Concerns raised about Duke Energy tree-trimming quality and appearance; will explore potential city coordination.
- Answered questions regarding future grant availability.

2. Presentation/Panels Planning

Two public engagement events planned for September and November.

Preservation Panel: Smart development, environmental preservation, wetlands protection.

- Outreach to Klosterman Preservation Group, St. Petersburg College, and environmental leaders underway.

Affordable and Sustainable Gardening Overview: Proposed hybrid presentation with demonstrations and educational slides.

- Topics: Native plants, composting, DIY containers, propagation, soil health, water conservation.
- Discussion about including community garden members, Garden Club, AmeriCorps Green Team, and local artists.
- Potential inclusion of horticulture career pathways for students.

Outreach Strategy

- Committee to compile a list of social media pages, community groups, chamber contacts, and college communication channels; outreach responsibilities will be divided among committee members.
- Siobhan volunteered to design event flyers once dates are confirmed.

3. Foundational Community Qualities

Committee will review University of Kansas materials on community values, participation, equity, and guiding principles, with further discussion planned for next meeting.

ITEMS SUGGESTED FOR THE NEXT MEETING AGENDA

- Synthetic Turf in Florida landscapes – IFAS expert requested
- Presentations – discussion/planning updates with focus on outreach and engagement strategies
- Foundational Community Qualities discussion - ongoing

STAFF COMMENTS:

1. Upcoming library events:
 - Hurricane Preparedness: July 18
 - Storm-Scaping Your Yard: July 29
2. IFAS Tree Steward Program workshop available for volunteers.
3. Extreme drought conditions continue; significant rainfall in the forecast.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

Members noted relief about expected rainfall and discussed local weather conditions.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: DR. MELINA SCALLY
SECOND: SIOBHAN NEHIN

To adjourn the meeting at 7:17 PM.

Vote on motion: Upon viva voce vote, the motion carried unanimously.

DR. CAROL MICKETT
CHAIRPERSON

HOLLY LANGSTON
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM MANAGER

CITY CLERK'S NOTE: This meeting has been recorded in its entirety, and the recordings are kept on file in the City Clerk's office for the required retention period.

MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS
JUNE 18, 2026

THE SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MET IN THE CITY HALL MEDIA ROOM, 324 E. PINE STREET, TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA, ON THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026, AT 6:00 P.M., WITH THE FOLLOWING PRESENT:

DR. CAROL MICKETT	CHAIRPERSON
SIOBHAN NEHIN	MEMBER
LORETTA RIQUETTI	MEMBER
DR. MELINA SCALLY	MEMBER

STAFF PRESENT: HOLLY LANGSTON SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM MANAGER

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mickett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Langston called roll.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 2026 MINUTES:

MOTION:	SIOBHAN NEHIN
SECOND:	DR. MELINA SCALLY

To approve the minutes of April 2026 Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting.

Vote on motion: Upon viva voce vote, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Visitors present included Denise Mannino, who praised the previous month's "Sustainable Minds" mental-health panel. Recommendations included increasing outreach, engaging students, and repeating the panel during the school year.

DISCUSSION

1. Review of Mental Health Panel & the Annual Report to the BOC

Committee members stated that attendance was low due to summer break, but content was strong. Future collaborations with schools, Peace4Tarpon, Kaiser University, and others will be explored. The Committee discussed improving event notification and developing better outreach methods. Regarding the annual report, Committee members felt it was well received by Commissioners. Commissioners requested an update on the sustainability plan implementation, which this presentation will provide.

Sustainability Advisory Committee

2. Future presentation planning: Preservation, Sustainable Gardening

September: Presentation on land preservation with WK Preserve Group, university representatives, and regional experts, to be coordinated by Dr. Mickett.

November: Presentation on sustainable gardening and trees, including rain garden discussions. Discussion on city tree loss, adopt-a-tree ideas.

3. Sustainability Plan Implementation Update - Holly Langston

Progress made in forestry, solar feasibility, water conservation, and public outreach. Several items limited by Florida House Bill 1217. Multiple long-term projects remain in progress.

4. Foundational Community Qualities - Dr. Mickett

Committee discussed exploring values such as respect, integrity, and environmental stewardship as guiding principles for sustainability efforts.

ITEMS SUGGESTED FOR THE NEXT MEETING AGENDA

- Presentations – discussion/planning updates with focus on outreach and engagement strategies
- HB1217 implications
- Arborist/tree grants and tree plantings update
- Foundational Community Qualities discussion - ongoing

STAFF COMMENTS:

1. Rodenticide SOP proposed and under staff review
2. Sustainable Development Recognition Program under staff review
3. Stormwater Drain Murals update
4. Keep Pinellas Beautiful event of interest

Recycling: Myths and Misconceptions, Tuesday, July 7, 6 PM - 7 PM, Moccasin Lake Nature Park, Clearwater

COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

- Juneteenth events announced
- Election of next Committee Chairperson was broached
- Fabric recycling through *Trashie* was given as a resource
- Ms. Riquetti has a scheduling conflict for July 16

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: DR. MELINA SCALLY
SECOND: LORETTA RIQUETTI

To adjourn the meeting at 7:31 PM.

Vote on motion: Upon viva voce vote, the motion carried unanimously.

DR. CAROL MICKETT
CHAIRPERSON

HOLLY LANGSTON
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM MANAGER

CITY CLERK'S NOTE: This meeting has been recorded in its entirety, and the recordings are kept on file in the City Clerk's office for the required retention period.



Understanding Synthetic Turfgrass in Florida Landscapes

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SYNTHETIC TURF VS.
FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING™





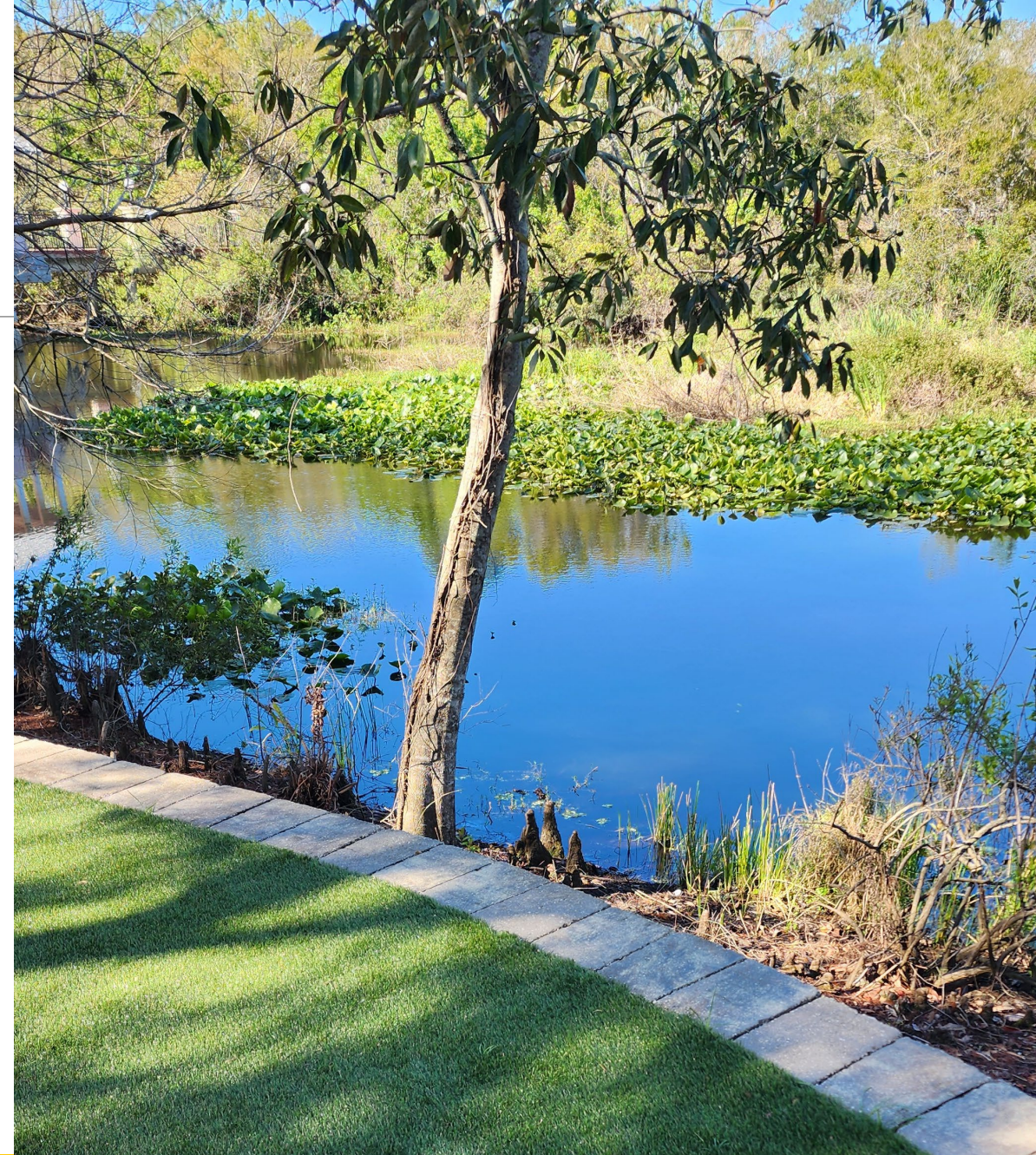
Why This Matters

- Growing trend in Florida residential landscapes
- Marketing claims vs. environmental reality
- Impact on Florida's unique ecosystem
- Long-term sustainability considerations



Learning Objectives

- Compare synthetic turf with natural turfgrass
- Understand environmental impacts
- Evaluate using FFL principles
- Make informed landscape decisions



Florida-Friendly Landscaping Principles

Southwest Florida
Water Management District



1 Right Plant, Right Place

Plants selected to suit a specific site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizers, pesticides and maintenance.



2 Water Efficiently

Irrigate only when your lawn and landscape need water. Overwatering can waste water, cause pollution and makes plants more prone to disease and pests.



3 Fertilize Appropriately

Less is often best. Overuse of fertilizers can be hazardous to your landscape and the environment.



4 Mulch

Maintaining a 2"-3" layer of mulch will help retain soil moisture, prevent erosion and suppress weeds.



5 Attract Wildlife

Plants in your landscape that provide food, water and shelter will attract Florida's diverse wildlife.



6 Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

Unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial organisms and the environment.



7 Recycle

Grass clippings, leaves and yard trimmings recycled on-site provide nutrients to the soil and reduce waste disposal when reused on the landscape.



8 Reduce Stormwater Runoff

Water running off your landscape can carry pollutants such as soil, debris, fertilizer, gasoline and pesticides that can negatively affect water quality and the environment. Reduction of this runoff will help prevent pollution.



9 Protect the Waterfront

Waterfront property, whether on a river, stream, pond, bay or beach, is very fragile and should be carefully protected to preserve Florida's waterways, plants and wildlife.

See other side for more information.

FFL Principles

- Science-based, developed by UF/IFAS
- Address Florida-specific considerations
- Account for Florida's unique soil types, rainfall patterns, and ecosystems
- Proven environmental benefits when applied consistently
- Offer comprehensive evaluation considering multiple factors, not just one aspect



Understanding the Basics: Synthetic vs Natural Turf

COMPONENTS, INSTALLATION, AND MAINTENANCE



Synthetic Turf Components

- Artificial fibers (nylon, polypropylene, polyethylene)
- Backing material construction
- Infill materials
- Base layer requirements



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Natural Turfgrass Components

- Living plant system
- Root structure
- Soil ecosystem
- Microbial community

Installation Comparison

Natural Turf:

- Soil preparation
- Species selection
- Establishment period
- Root development

Synthetic Turf:

- Soil removal
- Compaction
- Base installation
- Surface attachment

Initial Costs

- Material costs comparison
- Installation labor
- Site preparation
- Equipment needs
- Professional services required

Estimated cost comparison:

- Synthetic turf : \$8 - \$12 per SF
- Living turf \$2 - \$3 per SF



Average lawn in Pinellas about 4000SF

Synthetic turf \$40,000

Living turf \$10,000

Temperature Characteristics

- Surface temperature differences
 - Heat retention properties
-
- Cooling effects of natural turf
 - Impact on surrounding areas





Water Interaction

Natural Turf:

- Natural absorption
- Filtration
- Groundwater recharge
- Evaporative cooling

Synthetic Turf:

- Surface runoff
- Drainage requirements
- Cleaning needs
- Heat management

Maintenance Requirements

Natural Turf:

- Mowing schedule
- Fertilization needs
- Pest management
- Irrigation planning

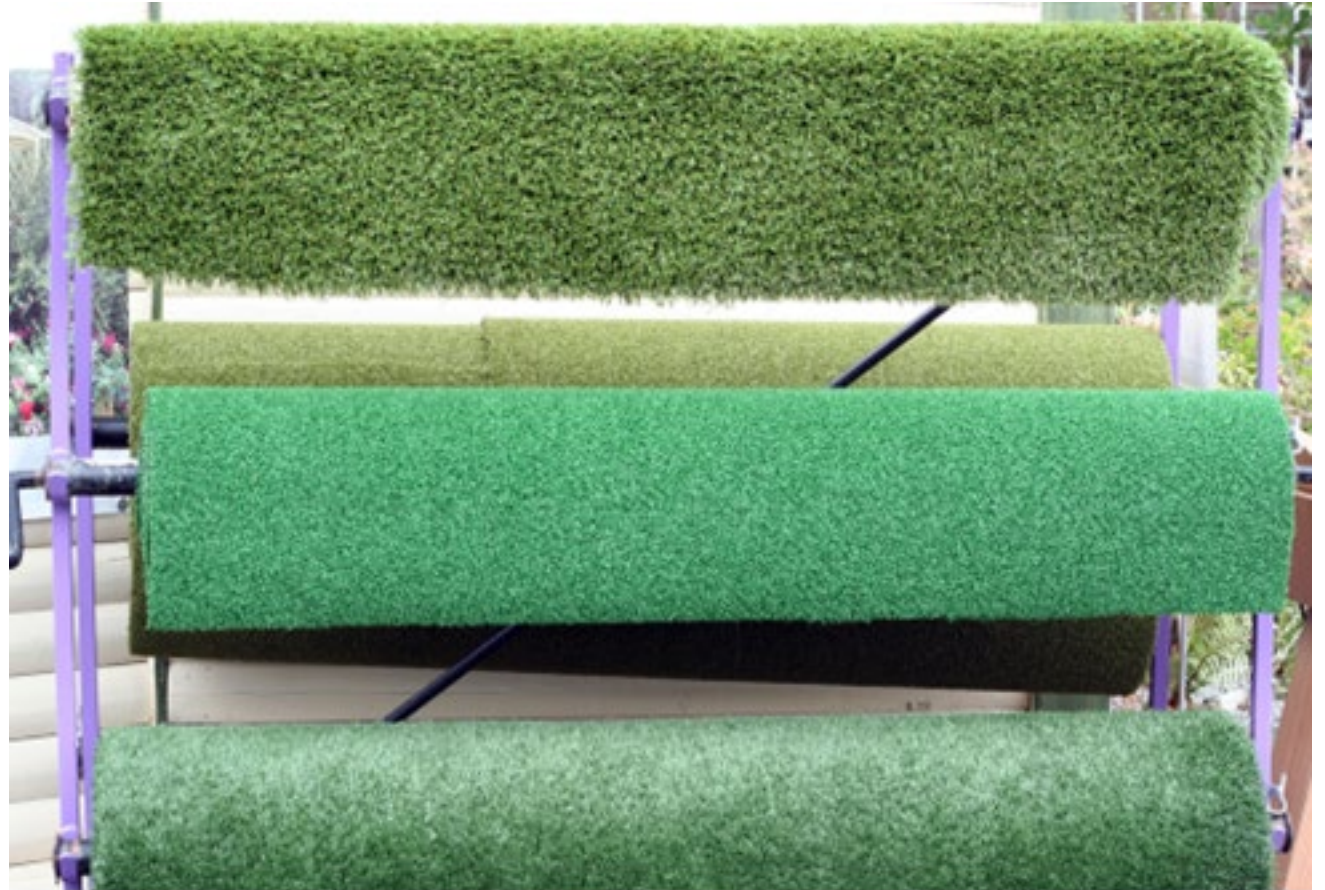
Synthetic Turf:

- Surface cleaning
- Disinfecting
- Infill replacement
- Cooling
- Repair needs



Lifespan and Replacement

- Natural turf regeneration
- Synthetic turf degradation
- Replacement cycles
- End-of-life considerations





Environmental Impact Analysis

UNDERSTANDING THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT
OF TURF CHOICES

Heat Island Effect

- Surface temperature differentials
- Natural turf:
 - Ambient to +5°F
 - Synthetic turf: Up to +100°F
- Impact on surrounding air temps
- Energy consumption implications
- Human comfort considerations

Synthetic Sports Fields and the Heat Island Effect

May 8, 2019, Department, by Sonia Myrick

Operations



Synthetic turf fields are commonplace in many U.S. communities. According to the [Synthetic Turf Council](#), there are "between 12,000 and 13,000 synthetic turf sports fields in the U.S., with approximately 1,200–1,500 new installations each year. If you've ever attended any game played on one of these fields on a hot, sunny day, you've probably seen the shimmer of heat rising from the surface or heard players complain about feeling the heat through their shoes.

Debate continues over the health impacts from playing on synthetic turf fields, but the high surface-level temperatures recorded on these fields compared to natural turf have been well-documented. Since grass leaves release water vapor (or transpire) and the evaporation of that water vapor leads to cooling, grass fields rarely get above 100° F. Turf fields, in comparison, regularly rise well above 100° F. Penn State University's Center for Sports Surface Research conducted studies comparing surface temperatures of synthetic turfs composed of various fiber and infill colors/materials and found that the maximum surface temperatures during hot, sunny conditions averaged from 140° F to 170° F.

Another study conducted at Brigham Young University found that "The surface temperature of the synthetic turf was 37° F higher than asphalt and 86.5° F hotter than natural turf." And, as neuroscientist Kathleen Michels points out: "Any temperature over 120° F can cause skin burns with skin contact in two seconds."

Source: [Synthetic Sports Fields and the Heat Island Effect](#) | [Operations](#) | [Parks and Recreation Magazine](#) | [NRPA](#)

Water Management

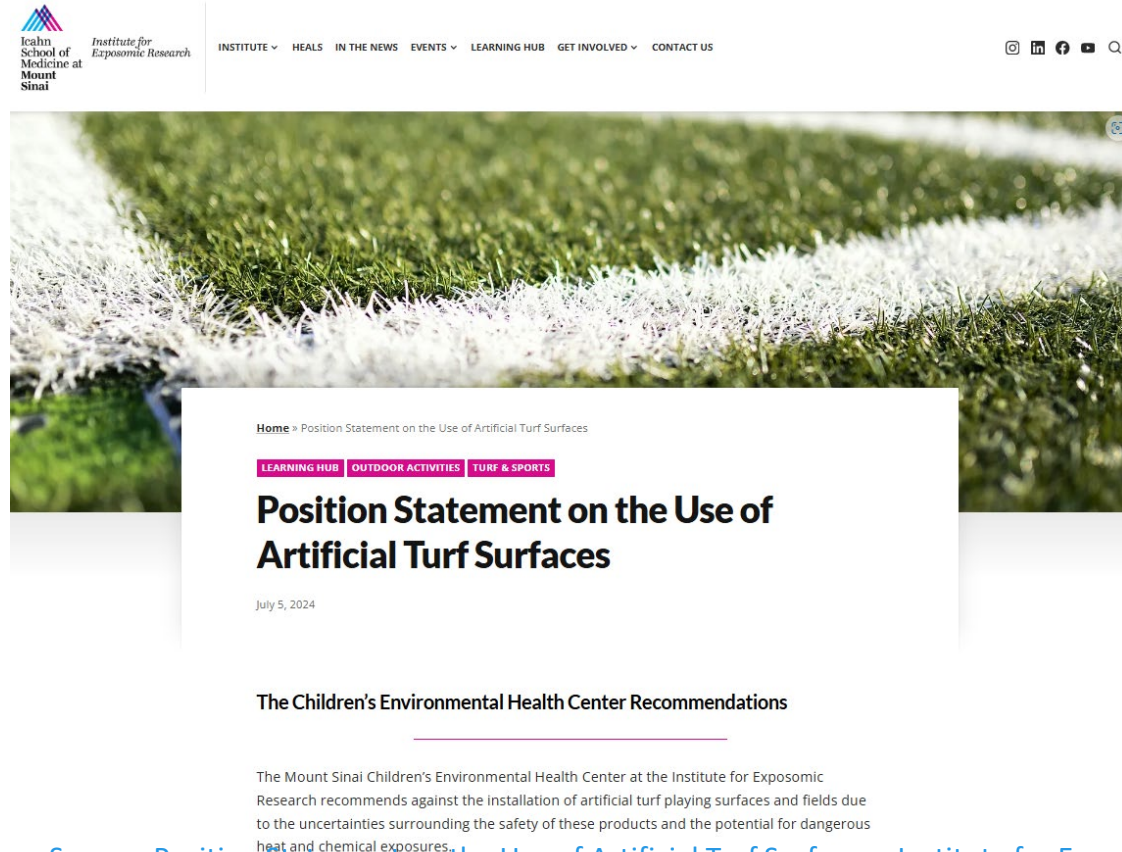
- Infiltration rates
- Runoff patterns
- Groundwater recharge
- Water quality impacts



Chemical Leaching

Types of chemicals present

- Zinc
- Lead
- Selenium
- Cadmium
- Migration patterns
- Environmental accumulation
- Impact on water systems



[Source: Position Statement on the Use of Artificial Turf Surfaces - Institute for Exposomic Research](#)

Wildlife Habitat

Natural Turf Benefits:

- Insect populations
- Bird feeding grounds
- Small animal habitat
- Soil ecosystem support



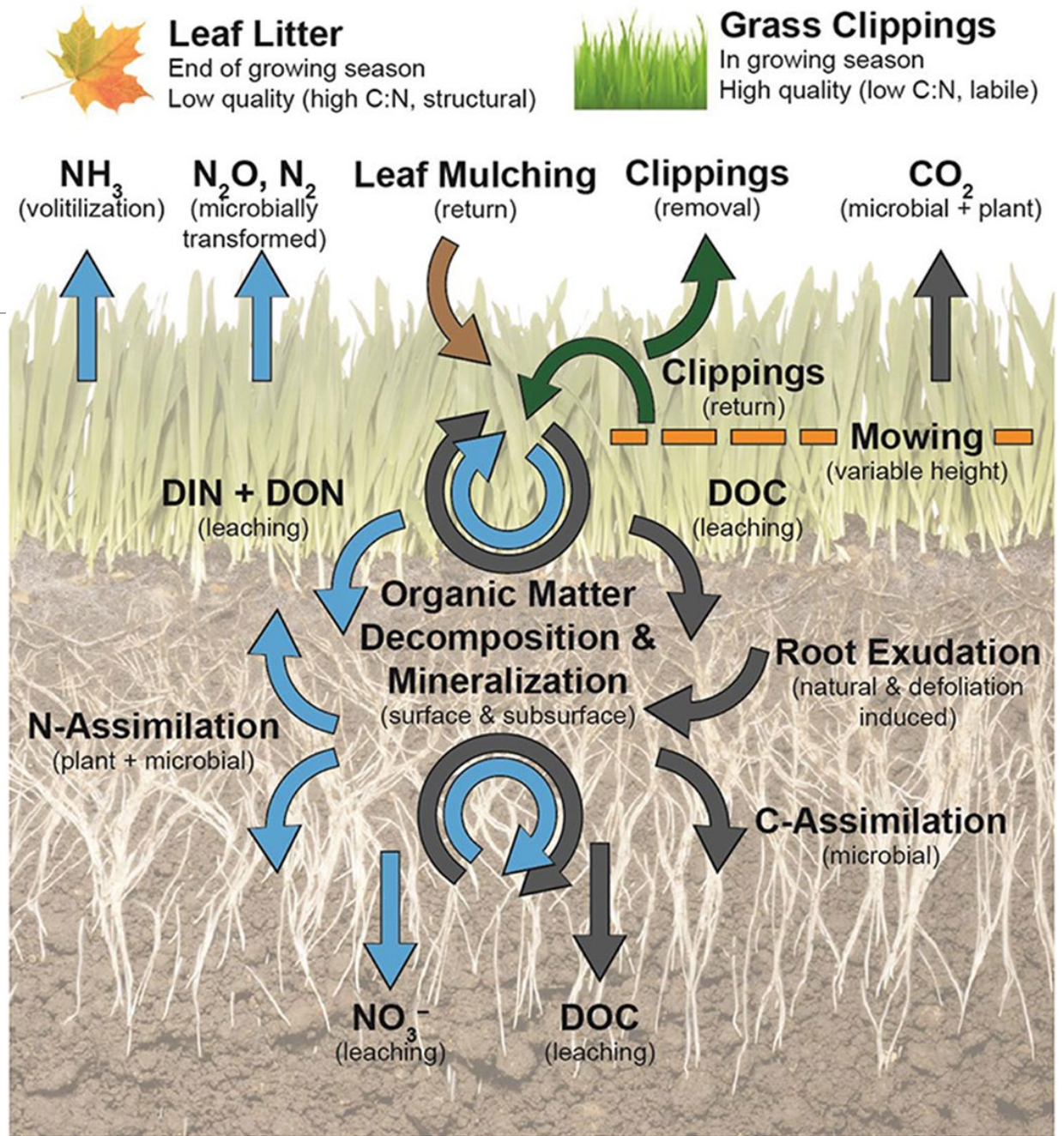
Photo: A. G. Rosales

Synthetic Turf Impact:

- Habitat elimination
- Food chain disruption
- Soil life elimination
- Migration pattern changes

Soil Health

- Soil structure changes
- Microbial activity
- Carbon sequestration
- Nutrient cycling

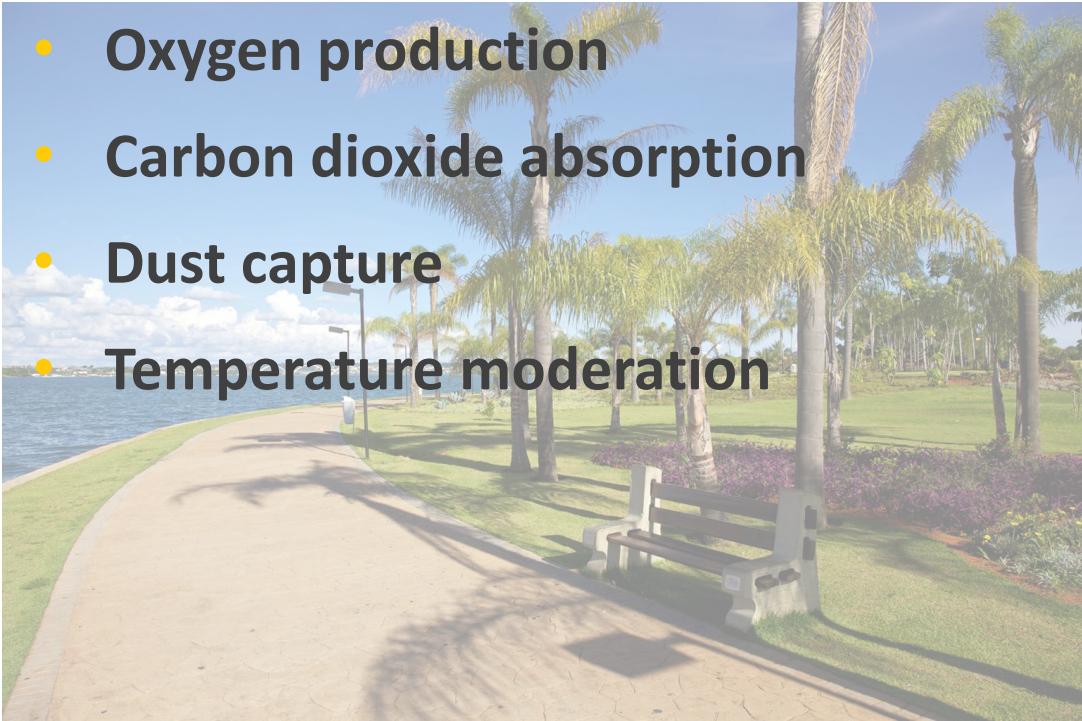


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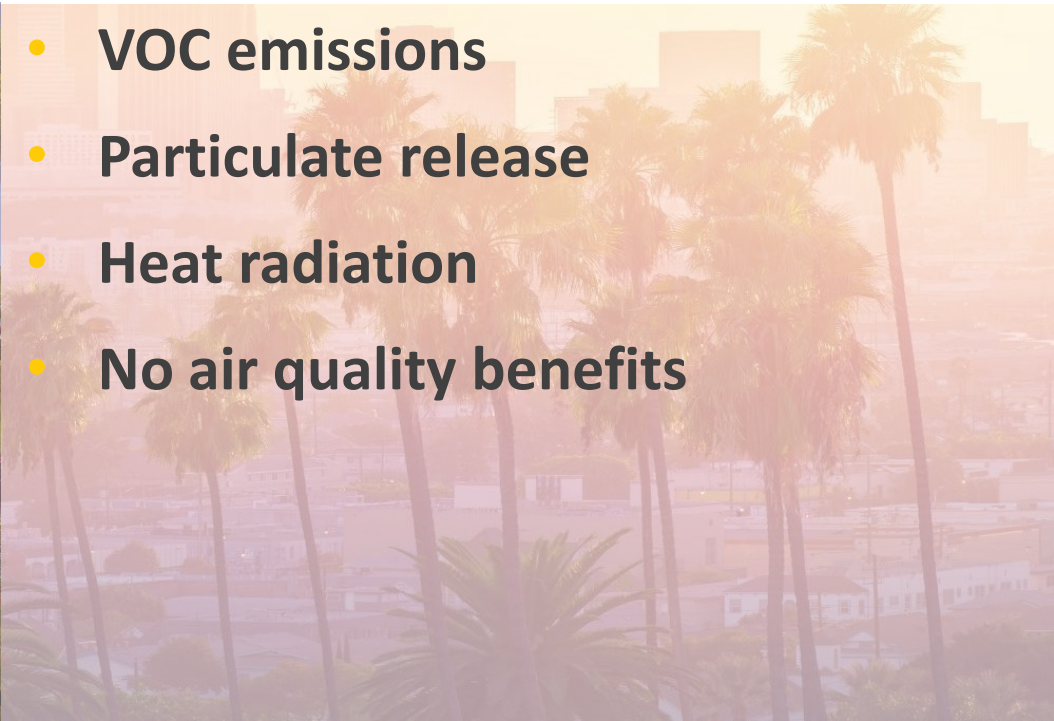


Air Quality Impact

Natural Turf:

- 
- Oxygen production
 - Carbon dioxide absorption
 - Dust capture
 - Temperature moderation

Synthetic Turf:

- 
- VOC emissions
 - Particulate release
 - Heat radiation
 - No air quality benefits



Lifecycle Analysis

- Manufacturing impact
- Installation footprint
- Operational effects
- End-of-life considerations
- Total environmental cost

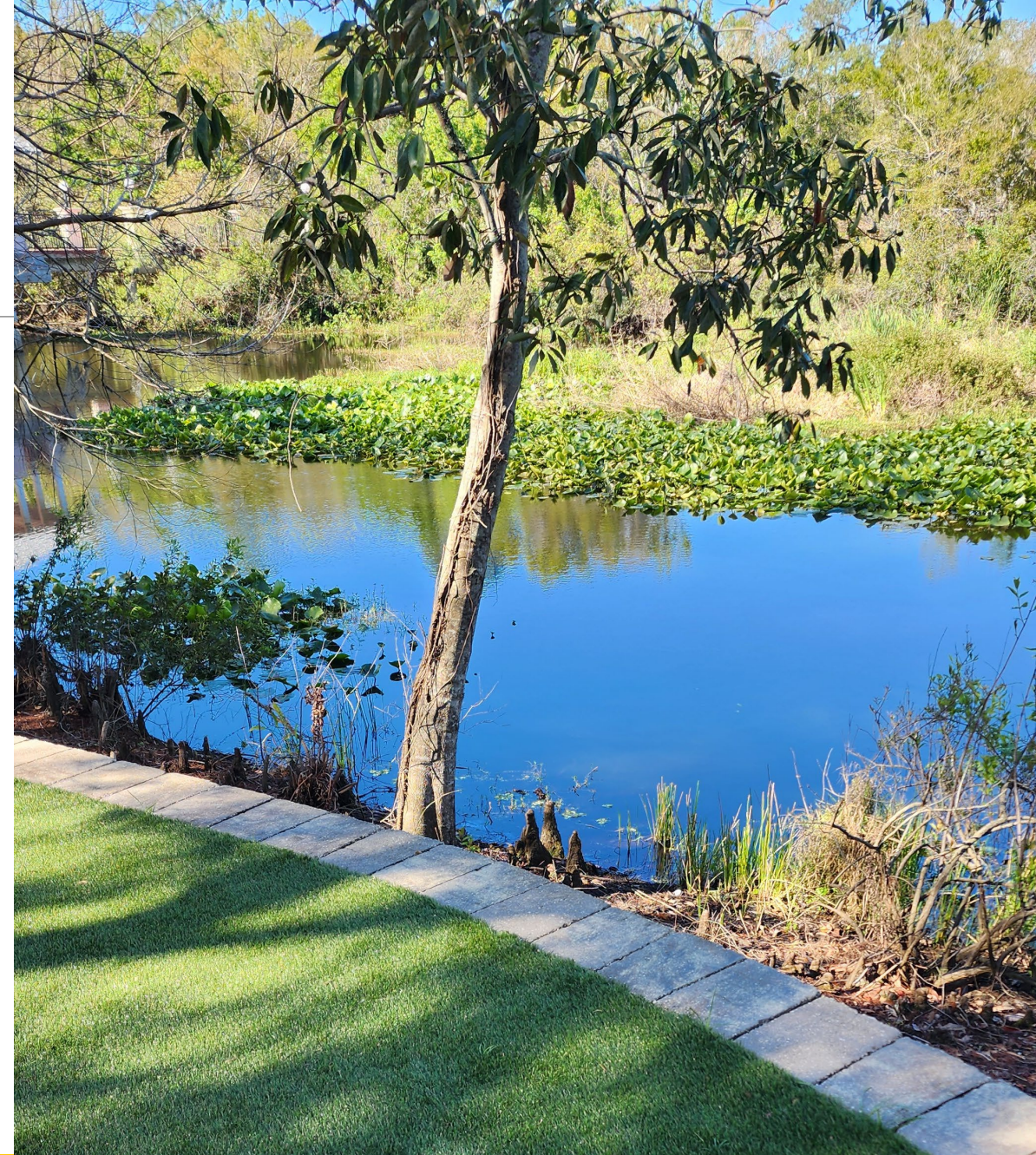


Photo: Emmet

Review/Questions

- Compare synthetic turf with natural turfgrass
- Understand environmental impacts
- Evaluate using FFL principles
- Make informed landscape decisions

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UF/IFAS Pinellas County
tmgwaves@ufl.edu



Section 6. Some Core Principles, Assumptions, and Values to Guide the Work

- [Main Section](#)
- [Checklist](#)
- [PowerPoint](#)

What do we mean by values, principles, and assumptions?

___Values are the deeply held beliefs about how the world should be that provide our guidelines for living and behavior.

___Principles are the fundamental scientific, logical, or moral/ethical “truths,” arising from experience, knowledge, and (often) values, on which we base our actions and thinking.

___Assumptions are the next level of truths, the ones we feel we can take for granted, given the principles we have accepted.

Core values of the Community Tool Box

___Everyone in a community has a right to a decent quality of life.

___Everyone is worthy of respect and equal consideration.

___Any community work or research should have the ultimate aim of being useful in improving people’s lives, particularly the lives of those most in need and/or least powerful.

___Racism and bias – because of religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, disability, etc. – have no place in a civil society.

___Fairness demands that everyone affected by research or by an issue – all stakeholders – should have the opportunity for either direct participation or representation in planning, implementing, and analyzing the resulting research or intervention.

___This work isn’t about power or turf, but about the public good.

Core principles of the Community Tool Box

___“Fair” doesn’t mean that everyone gets the same thing; it means that everyone gets what she needs.

___Community work is far more likely to be successful if it involves all stakeholders from the very beginning.

- ___ Leadership from within the community should be encouraged and nurtured.
- ___ Community work takes careful planning at every stage of the process.
- ___ Evaluation is absolutely necessary, and useful in many ways, although probably most useful as a tool for improving your effort.
- ___ Outcomes matter.
- ___ Time is of the essence.
- ___ Don't bite off more than you can chew.
- ___ Make sure that your funding and other resources are adequate for what you're trying to do.
- ___ Community action should take place at the level and time to make it most effective.
- ___ Community intervention should be replicable and sustainable.
- ___ Community work is never done.
- ___ Don't lose sight of your vision, your principles, and your values in the struggle to get things done.
- ___ The real goal of community work is positive social change.

Assumptions of the Community Tool Box

- ___ Just about everyone wants what's best for the community.
- ___ Once people understand others' circumstances, they're usually willing to help.
- ___ If people are treated with respect, they usually respond the same way.
- ___ Coalitions, partnerships, and collaborations are built one relationship at a time.
- ___ People have to believe something is possible before they'll work to make it happen.
- ___ People working together are better off and more successful than people working alone.
- ___ The world isn't perfect; this work is necessary to create positive social change and make it a better place for everyone.

Contributor

Phil Rabinowitz