



City of Cambridge

POR 2026-77
FIRST IN COUNCIL
April 13, 2026

COUNCILLOR NOLAN
MAYOR SIDDIQUI
COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN
COUNCILLOR ZUSY
COUNCILLOR FLAHERTY
VICE MAYOR AZEEM
COUNCILLOR AL-ZUBI

- WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge is moving forward with targeted improvements to the [158 Spring Street building and Ahern Field](#) to strengthen this important East Cambridge campus, and community feedback gathered through public meetings, pop-ups, stakeholder conversations, and the March 11 open house has directly informed elements such as park layout, entrances, seating, play areas, and landscape improvements; and
- WHEREAS: At Ahern Field, proposed improvements include a new synthetic turf field with lighting, renovated basketball and hockey/pickleball courts, better park entrances, new seating and gathering spaces, and enhanced landscaping to create a more welcoming and active space for people of all ages; and
- WHEREAS: The City Council and City staff have long been considered about the proliferation of PFAS materials in a range of uses citywide, as noted in [CMA 2022 #181](#), which outlined policies and procedures on artificial turf, and [CMA 2024 #137](#), which provided updated policies on PFAS in all relevant city areas (water, firefighting, turf, waste, etc.); and
- WHEREAS: On the [Danehy Park field replacement project](#), which included replacement of turf fields and track, City staff considered a number of options for materials and opted not to use typical “crumb rubber,” and instead used a wood-fiber-sand mix, and took steps to independently test the turf grass blades for PFAS; and
- WHEREAS: Providing a durable field at Ahern improves access to recreation for East Cambridge residents, especially for youth and families who rely on nearby facilities and may not have easy access to fields elsewhere; and
- WHEREAS: The City should take great care to ensure that construction of the new field will fully address public health impacts and provide durable and accessible playing fields for the entire community; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested work with relevant City

departments to provide a report on how the decision to install artificial turf was made, the rationale for artificial turf, and what process was taken to ensure community concerns and public health considerations were fully addressed, and to ensure that construction will not move forward until a report is delivered; and be it further

ORDERED That the City Manager work with relevant City departments to study and analyze the demographics in relation to field resource allocations, including how many synthetic vs. natural turf fields we want to have and in which neighborhoods to meet resident needs; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report back to the City Council in a timely manner.

In City Council April 13, 2026.
Adopted as Amended by Affirmative
Vote of Nine Members:-
Attest:- Paula M. Crane, Interim City Clerk
A true copy;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paula M. Crane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paula" being more prominent.

ATTEST:-

Paula M. Crane
Interim City Clerk