

*Proposed Statement*

The Environmental Commission recognizes that gas leaf blowers contribute significantly to air pollution. The 2022 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) designates the phase-out of off-road fossil fuel engines as a Priority Action in (1.6A). Seventy percent of respondents to a CAAP Task Force survey ranked air and air quality as “most important” to Los Altos quality of life.

In 1991, Los Altos was the first city in the Bay Area to ban gas leaf blowers. But a 10-minute walk or ride through Los Altos will confirm that the illegal use of gas leaf blowers is still prevalent in our community. Police rarely issue citations (40 in 2019, 13 in 2020, 7 in 2021), even though they witness violations on a daily basis.

In order to protect the health of our community, the Environmental Commission requests the enforcement of the Municipal Code ordinance that prohibits gas leaf blowers in Los Altos. As demonstrated in other cities such as Palo Alto, Cupertino, Saratoga, Santa Monica, Laguna Beach, Redondo Beach and soon Menlo Park, enforcement will be much easier if the ordinance is modified to hold the property owners as well as the operators responsible for the illegal use of gas-powered leaf blowers in Los Altos.