



PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

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To send correspondence to the City Council, on matters listed on the agenda please email PublicComment@losaltosca.gov

From: [Barbara Zieroth-Hoffman](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: public comment agenda item #7 May 9. 2023
Date: Sunday, May 7, 2023 9:17:09 AM

It is imperative that there is stricter enforcement of the gas-powered leaf blower ordinance in Los Altos. Some possible solutions to the lack of accountability would be citations to the property owner not the gardener; increased fines after one warning letter; and routine street patrols by a code enforcement officer. This enforcement is essential for the health of our community and the environment. Thank you for your thoughtfulness in this matter.

From: [Roberta Phillips](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Gas Leaf Blowers
Date: Sunday, May 7, 2023 7:22:37 PM

Dear Council

While I understand that it is better to use electric leaf blowers, we as a city should not be looking at more enforcement. Our Police have a lot more important matters to address. Education is a better solution.

Most of the landscape workers and gardeners are responsible, hard working people.

Sincerely

Roberta Phillips
640-941-6940

From: [Ken Girdley](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Gas Leaf blower Ban - Repeal It Or Leave It Alone
Date: Sunday, May 7, 2023 8:42:27 PM

Dear Mayor Meadows & Council Members,

Why are you so dead set on punishing the least among us? Most lawn services are struggling to make a living and it appears you are eager to force them to abandon their reliable gas-powered leaf blowers and purchase expensive battery-operated blowers and a ton of batteries to get them through the day. Not only that but it appears you stand ready to increase the fines they would have to pay if they continue using their gas-powered equipment.

As you know, most lawn services are owned and operated by Hispanics with most of their employees being foreign-born Hispanics. Is there a reason why you have decided to single out just gas-powered leaf blowers? Some might wonder if race has something to do with it. I'm not saying it does but there are those who tend to look at things through a race-based lens. And of course, we would expect you to deny it because no one ever admits when race plays into their decision-making process.

I remember when that ban was approved many years ago. I watched the city council vote for the ban mainly to get a very vocal resident off their backs. If I remember correctly, one council member commented during the meeting that they would probably only enforce the ban if a neighbor complained. That does seem to be what happened and I'm glad for it.

I recommend that you either repeal the ban or just leave it alone. Let the state ban on small gas engines force the conversion from gas to electric in a few years. Don't single out those minority-owned businesses and their employees with stiffer fines. And penalizing homeowners is just as unreasonable as levying stiffer fines on the minority-owned businesses that are serving our community.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ken Girdley
Los Altos Resident

From: [Kirk Lindstrom](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: Kirk.Lindstrom@gmail.com; [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment agenda item #6, May 9, 2023
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 8:22:15 AM

Dear City Council Members,

I am against fining property owners for what gardeners or any other workers do on their property while hired to do a service. We can't be expected to have someone at home to act as a police or code enforcement officer.

Yes, gas leaf blowers are loud and pollute more than electric leaf blowers but most of the other tools gardeners use legally do the same. Battery powered leaf blowers are usually quieter because they are less powerful.

Electric leaf blowers with a cord are just as powerful but still noisy.

Given this "concern" about noisy leaf blowers was an issue when I moved here in 1994 when we were more worried about "Global Cooling" from a "nuclear winter" than carbon emissions from garden tools causing climate change, I suspect it is the noise and odor that bothers most. I've solved the noise and smell problem by closing my windows for the 30 minutes or so the gardener is here once a week and I'm working at home.

Years ago when code enforcement officer gave my gardener a \$60 ticket for using a gas leaf blower. My gardener then asked me to put out an extension cord in the front of my house so he could use his corded blower. I did and it worked well but soon they were using the gas blowers in the back yard where code enforcement could not see what yard the noise was coming from. Eventually they learned the code was not being enforced any more and, as you would expect, they started using the gas leaf blowers everywhere again.

I see this issue as similar to people holding mobile phones to their ears while driving, which is illegal. The way to stop or reduce it is to issue citations to the people caught in the act.

Finally, for exercise, I hike around town nearly every day I am not windsurfing. I see, hear and smell gardeners using gas and electric power tools and have not found the smell or noise to bother me anywhere near as much as adults and older children riding bikes in the wrong direction on sidewalks on streets with bike lanes. Given one ran into me on the sidewalk on Los Altos Avenue, I find that more of a danger than leaf blower noise and fumes. People speeding or driving while holding cell phones to their ears while driving present a far greater danger to my health.

Thus, if the city council wants to put more resources into enforcing our laws, please start with the dangerous ones such as ticketing speeders, drivers holding cell phones to their ears while driving and adults riding bicycles on the sidewalks before spending

money to enforce leaf blower rules.

Thank you
Best Regards
Kirk Lindstrom
Los Altos, CA

From: [Barbara Weinstein](#)
To: [Public Comment](#); [City Council](#)
Subject: Comment regarding leaf blower ordinance
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 9:22:14 AM

Hello Council members,
I'm glad to learn that the leaf blower ordinance will be on the agenda for this week's council meeting.

It's long overdue to update this ordinance, which is so widely ignored as to be virtually useless. I urge you to adopt the following improvements to eliminate the noise and air pollution from the blowers.

1. Citations must go to the property owner, not the gardener.
2. Fines should increase steeply after a single warning notification.
3. Streets should be patrolled by a code enforcement officer.

For the sake of our health and well-being, please make it a priority to adopt all of these improvements.

Thank you,
Barbara Weinstein
1525 Siesta Dr.
Los Altos



May 8, 2023

Los Altos City Council

Re: Agenda item #7: Amending the Municipal Code with regard to Gas Powered Leaf Blower Enforcement, May 9, 2023

Dear Mayor Meadows and Members of the City Council,

The League of Women Voters of Los Altos-Mountain View supports urgent actions that mitigate and adapt to climate disruption. Governments at all levels must act boldly and swiftly to confront it. Gas powered leaf blowers spew large amounts of GHGs and produce massive amounts of "criteria air pollution" such as NOx, while raising soot, dust, and pollen into the air.

Therefore, we recommend that the Los Altos Council strengthen the enforcement of the city's gas powered leaf blower ban by increasing the fines to the homeowner, rather than the gardener, to \$250, \$500, and \$1000 per first, second, and third offense respectively, which matches the fines of Palo Alto.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Karin Bricker, President LWV of Los Altos Mountain View
Donna Davies, Chair, Climate Action Team (dnndavies@gmail.com)

Cc Nick Zornes, Gabriel Engeland, Angel Rodriguez, Tania Katbi, Casey Leedom