

Dear Friend of Moraga Canyon,

## We need your help to stop the Blair Park sports complex!

On March 21st, the Piedmont City Council voted 4-1 (with Garrett Keating opposed) to move the PRFO Blair Park sports complex proposal forward. Despite the 850+ people who have signed our petition opposing the project, and despite the many reasoned arguments against the proposal, it appears that the Council — and the proponents (PRFO) — **want to break ground as soon as possible.**

The Council will make a final decision on the project **as soon as April 25<sup>th</sup>**. **If they approve it, we are prepared to take even stronger action. But we can't do it without your help.**

- We have retained an independent, highly qualified traffic consultant to review and analyze what we believe is flawed, inadequate, and inaccurate traffic data in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- We are working with Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger, a highly qualified, specialized environmental law firm, to analyze the flaws in the EIR, and to advise us on potential legal action.

## All of this costs money.

**The project proponents have deep pockets. We do not. That is why we need your contribution.** Please read the attached fact sheet detailing some of the many reasons to oppose this project. If you agree that Blair Park is worth protecting and saving as natural open space and should not be turned into an elevated, walled-off, artificial turf sports complex, **with traffic and pedestrian safety issues, and huge liabilities to the city (taxpayers), please donate today** at one of these suggested levels. Friends of Moraga Canyon is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, and your donations are tax-deductible.

\$100     \$250     \$500     \$1000     Other

You can donate online at [www.moragacanyon.org/donate](http://www.moragacanyon.org/donate) or by sending a check made out to "Friends of Moraga Canyon" to:

Friends of Moraga Canyon  
P.O. Box 70127,  
Oakland, CA 94612-0127

## Please join us to stop this ill-conceived project before it's too late!

Thank you for your support,

Jim Semitek, President  
**FRIENDS OF MORAGA CANYON**

### In addition to donating:

1. **Call, write or email** the four City Council members who voted to proceed with the project. See the list at the end of the fact sheet. (Council members John Chiang and Margaret Fujioka expressed some concerns about the city's financial liability and pedestrian safety so it's especially important to contact them.)
2. Share the attached fact sheet with at least 4 – 5 of your friends and neighbors.
3. Ask neighbors to contact council members, post a lawn sign, and sign the petition on our website:  
[www.moragacanyon.org](http://www.moragacanyon.org)

### With the donations received so far, we have:

- Produced two mailings to all Piedmont and nearby Oakland residents to fully inform them of the impacts of the project. These mailings were critical to the rapid community response of the 850+ list of petition signatures.
- Produced and distributed hundreds of yard signs throughout Piedmont and Oakland.
- Held demonstrations and rallies in Blair Park, with more to come.

# BLAIR PARK, MORAGA CANYON: KNOW THE FACTS

## FISCAL IMPACTS:

- PRFO says they will raise \$5 million to build “phase 1” of their estimated \$6.5 million project. This would build the huge retaining walls on Moraga Ave. and on the hillside and the elevated soccer field, but little else. No public restrooms, no grass in the “grassy glade,” minimal landscaping and no walkways. They “promise” to raise the remaining \$1.5 million, but will they? Will Piedmont taxpayers be stuck with finishing what they started?
- No independent financial analysis of the project or of the city’s fiscal liability has ever been done.
- No detailed cost breakdown of PRFO’s ever-changing plan or how it will be funded.
- City Council said they would not spend any city funds on this project, but to date, the city has spent \$257,619 on the PRFO project.
- PRFO has offered free legal advice to the city to defend the project EIR, but the **city is liable** for potential structural damage to homes above the park and for traffic accidents on Moraga Ave. caused by potentially poor or inadequate safety designs. **This could cost the city millions!**

## SAFETY IMPACTS:

- Documented unsafe driver behavior on Moraga Ave. poses a danger to pedestrians.
- Blair Park would NOT be connected by sidewalks to any nearby streets for safe pedestrian passage, contrary to PRFO claims.
- Increased traffic and insufficient parking will create more congestion on Moraga Ave.
- A 1986 Environmental Impact Report on construction of Coaches Field recommended against building anything in Blair Park because of the danger of crossing the street.

## FLAWED CITY PROCESS:

- The proposed Blair Park project — the single largest project in Piedmont’s recent history — has caused serious divisiveness among residents and angered Oakland neighbors. Yet the City Council has ignored homeowners’ concerns.
- PRFO changes the plan in nearly every public hearing with no advance notice. The latest version – voted on by the City Council on 3/21/11 – is NOT the plan presented to the Park, Recreation and Planning Commissions. In this stripped-down version, there is no climbing wall, fitness track, community garden or dog run, and much less parking.
- Despite many public hearings, the Council (except for Garrett Keating) has made no effort to meet with Piedmont homeowners to discuss their concerns.

- The project has been in the works since 2006, but the FIRST and ONLY time the City Planning Commission had a chance to review and comment was on Feb. 24, 2011. The Commission voted unanimously **against** the project and gave lengthy reasons why it should not be approved. (See video excerpts and quotes at <http://bit.ly/blairplan>)

## CITY IGNORES ALTERNATIVES:

- Two reasonable alternatives to the PRFO plan have been proposed by Piedmont architects. Neither plan has been analyzed by city staff or seriously considered by City Council.
- The alternatives would enlarge Coaches Field into a full-size, U-12 soccer field, which is the size specified in the EIR. The alternatives would build a smaller field at Blair Park to reduce environmental destruction, eliminate the huge retaining walls and save 65 percent of the useable park.
- PRFO will only fund their own plan, despite the fact the alternatives would cost less to build.
- The City Council has made no effort to negotiate with PRFO for a smaller project or to work for a compromise.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- A “berm” and fence, 38 feet high at the highest point, would border Moraga Ave.
- The natural hillside would be destroyed by cutting 80 feet into its base.
- A 325-foot long retaining wall up to 35 feet high would be built on the hillside, directly below 25 homes.
- 155 trees, including 55 mature, live oaks, would be destroyed.
- Habitat for 22 species of birds, deer, other wildlife and flora would be lost forever.

Visit [www.moragacanyon.org](http://www.moragacanyon.org) to learn more.

## PLEASE CONTACT PIEDMONT CITY COUNCIL:

Dean Barbieri, Mayor 510.544.6802

[dbarbieri@ci.piedmont.ca.us](mailto:dbarbieri@ci.piedmont.ca.us)

John Chiang, Vice Mayor 510.655.2959

[jchiang@ci.piedmont.ca.us](mailto:jchiang@ci.piedmont.ca.us)

Garrett Keating 510.566.1481

[gkeating@ci.piedmont.ca.us](mailto:gkeating@ci.piedmont.ca.us)

Margaret Fujioka 510.463.7821

[mfujioka@ci.piedmont.ca.us](mailto:mfujioka@ci.piedmont.ca.us)

Jeff Wieler 510.428.1648

[jwieler@ci.piedmont.ca.us](mailto:jwieler@ci.piedmont.ca.us)

To email your concerns to the entire Council, send to the city clerk at [jtulloch@ci.piedmont.ca.us](mailto:jtulloch@ci.piedmont.ca.us). To mail, send to Piedmont City Council, 120 Vista Ave., Piedmont, CA 94611