

OCTOBER 30, 2025
6:00 P.M. – UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER by Chair Brown at 6:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by Commissioner Leger.

ROLL CALL

☒ = Present ☐ = Absent

Commissioners

- ☐ Cristian Garcia Arcos
- ☐ Jake Husen
- ☒ Jason Komala
- ☒ Brandine Leger
- ☒ Elizabeth Dorn Parker
- ☒ Shyanne Wright, Vice Chair
- ☒ Kelly Brown, Chair

City Staff

- ☒ Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director
- ☒ Monique Villasenor, Recreation Manager
- ☒ Robert Ryan, Public Works Maintenance Manager
- ☒ Kelly Dalton, Fairview Park Administrator
- ☒ Laura Fautua, Executive Assistant
- ☒ Kathia Viteri, Recreation Specialist

SPECIAL BUSINESS ITEM:

1. DRAFT FAIRVIEW PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE: DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Parks and Community Services Director, Brian Gruner, Fairview Park Administrator, Kelly Dalton, and Travis Brooks from Land IQ presented.

Chair Brown thanked attendees and those who submitted comments, emphasized the importance of public engagement, and explained the meeting structure to prioritize public input. She highlighted Fairview Park’s significance as the city’s largest park, the need for PACS Commission involvement, and encouraged using the Commission’s values document to guide recommendations to City Council.

Commissioner Leger asked whether community outreach efforts informed residents about the tribal cultural areas in Fairview Park, recalling personal memories of learning about the site’s archaeology.

Vice Chair Wright thanked staff and requested clarification on Measure AA and its possible implications for the plan, questioned the omission of “Concerts in the Park” from the draft Master Plan Update, and emphasized the event’s significance to community identity and park use.

Chair Brown asked about community engagement with groups on the east side regarding the proposed fly field relocation, requested clarification of the term “passive use” in the plan, and inquired about potential city benefits—financial and otherwise—if Fairview Park were managed more as a preserve than a park.

[Correspondence received.](#)

Public Comment:

Josh Guesman: Orange County Model Engineers (OCME) president thanked the Commission, expressed OCME's support for most of the draft Master Plan Update, and requested that the organization be formally included in future decisions affecting the east side of Fairview Park.

Nick: Opposed the draft Master Plan, stating it unfairly displaced the model flyers and raised concerns about Measure AA and accessibility for youth.

Marcus: Opposed the draft Master Plan Update, saying Harbor Soaring Society (HSS) provided valuable engineering and educational experiences that should not be taken away.

Hank Castignetti: OCME Treasurer and Fairview Park Steering Committee liaison supported inclusion of OCME in future discussions, noting the group's long stewardship of the east side and prior outreach to HSS about relocation.

Dan Vizanalik: HSS Member opposes the draft Master Plan Update, cited potential Measure AA restrictions, unsuitable conditions on the east side, and the long-standing coexistence of HSS with the park's natural habitat.

Michael August OCME Vice President of Facilities supported the draft Master Plan Update and emphasized OCME's role as volunteer docents who educate thousands of visitors about Fairview Park's wildlife and environment.

Carrie: Opposed the draft Master Plan Update, arguing that residents need spaces for active recreation and educational activities alongside natural areas.

Jay Humphrey: Submitted written comments and recommended renaming Fairview Park to reflect its natural preservation goals, while questioning the logic of retaining the fly field in a sensitive habitat area.

Daiquiri Shear: Supported HSS and advocated for environmental education rather than increased fencing, emphasizing that teaching youth respect for nature better protects Fairview Park.

Dr. Adam Ereth: Explained that Measure AA allows glider flying and that relocating the fly field could be considered new construction requiring voter approval, cautioning against triggering Measure AA.

Jake Underwood: Supported keeping glider flying at Fairview Park, calling it a quiet, low-impact hobby and urging balance between recreation and preservation.

Angely Andrade Vallerta: Supported designating Fairview Park as a nature preserve, citing environmental and cultural significance, federal compliance needs, and the value of long-term ecological stewardship.

Mike Costello: Opposed eliminating glider flying, referencing expert advice that limited flying schedules were sufficient to protect wildlife without banning the activity.

Cynthia McDonald: Urged relocating the fly field outside Fairview Park to comply with environmental laws and strengthen habitat protections while maintaining balanced public access.

Andy Campbell: Supported the draft Master Plan Update and regulatory recommendations, cited erosion damage from glider use, and suggested refining the park history, adding a staircase, and emphasizing preservation.

David Martinez: Recommended allowing bicycles on Fairview Park's primary trails for consistency with other city parks and aligning with Costa Mesa's circulation plan.

Henry Smith: Defended HSS, noting no grading had occurred for over a decade and minimal mowing, arguing wildlife had adapted to glider activity.

Sarah Rodelo: Spoke as an educator in support of preserving Fairview Park's natural areas for students' outdoor learning, mental health, and environmental education.

Andrew Ineguez: Supported maintaining Fairview Park's accessibility for families and encouraged balance between natural preservation and community use.

Scott Smith: Model flyer and opposed the draft Master Plan Update in regards to the fly field.

Mat Garcia: President of HSS and read a US Fish and Wildlife letter from 2014.

Kim Hendricks: shared a PowerPoint showing Fairview Park wildlife, sunset views, and encouraging nature education.

Kohl Crecelius: Chair of the Fairview Park Steering Committee and would like to see recreation, preservation, and conservation within the park. Commends the different passions the public expresses for the park use.

Don Wittenberg: HSS member and the value the fly field brings regarding aviation education.

Rick Huffman: Plan has been a long-time coming and tells a great story of a nature preserve and accessible for all types of community. Would like to see the relocation of the fly field as it impacts sensitive species/habitat.

Jon Rittenhouse: 50-year resident and HSS member and explain why the park location is best for the hobby.

Terri Fuqua: Expressed concern of gliders landing into park habitat.

Priscilla Rocco: Spoke about Council decision concerns based on community input rather than scientific expert recommendation. Advocated for restoration and relocation of the fly field and assign additional Park Ranger at the park.

Ben B: Spoke in favor of the draft Master Plan Update. Hopes for stronger policy and e-bikes restrictions.

Rob: Does not support the draft Master Plan Update. Wants to see a balance of diverse groups within the park.

Patrick Flynn: Would like to see clear access to trails without taking away amenities/events.

James Robertson: Not in support of moving the fly field.

Jim Erickson: Cited Measure AA definitions to argue relocating the fly field conflicts with its intent, emphasized gliders' lack of noise, and urged a balanced interpretation of park uses.

Jennifer Tanaka: Echoed concerns about Measure AA compliance and bicycle access, questioned use of park impact fees for a plan reducing active recreation, and urged caution over potential legal risks.

Andreas A.: Supported keeping Fairview Park as a balanced, family-friendly space where children can explore nature safely without losing recreational access.

Brief recess occurred from 8:07 PM to 8:13 PM.

Commissioner Dorn Parker spoke about Back Bay's evolution to argue Fairview Park was too unique and fragile to continue "as is," supported stronger restoration, education, signage, fencing and public safety, and urged exploring relocation of the fly field to another park while moving forward quickly with a flexible master plan.

Commissioner Komala emphasized that "balance" between resource protection and public access had to guide the plan, treated the master plan as a first step rather than final word, and asked detailed questions about funding for rangers, handling contaminated fill and archaeology, and designing interpretive and play features to remain passive and Measure AA-compliant.

Commissioner Leger reflected on growing up playing in Fairview Park, acknowledged any decision would upset some users, raised safety and regulatory concerns about the current fly field, and asked whether relocation would change flying limits, generate revenue, affect vernal pools, and how concerts in the park and a potential name change to a preserve would be handled.

Vice Chair Wright supported investments in trails, fencing, ADA access, nature play and robust interpretive signage, backed CMABS' bicycle trail recommendations, and argued that HSS was being unfairly singled out compared to other high-impact uses, stating support for keeping the fly field under the current limited, permitted operation unless the park were fully redefined as a strict nature preserve with all high-impact uses reconsidered.

Chair Brown asked staff to spell out the regulatory, financial and legal consequences of keeping or ignoring directives about the fly field, sought clarity on bike restrictions and tribal engagement, and then stressed Fairview Park's unique sensitive habitat, expressed concern about long-term regulatory risk of keeping HSS in place, signaled openness to relocating the club outside the park, and framed her position around scientific expertise, species protection, and a nuanced concept of ecological and social balance.

Commissioner Dorn Parker urged City Council to consider a future ballot measure to update Measure AA so the city could add interpretive facilities, shade, and other protective/educational features at Fairview Park, framing it as a necessary long-term step to truly protect and responsibly enjoy the open space.

Commissioner Leger stated that she supported the draft master plan as presented and did not find any issues with it.

Chair Brown praised the educational value and public engagement of the process but noted she felt rushed, and recommended earlier involvement of PACS and the Fairview Park Steering Committee, better tools like matrices, and simple summary "cheat sheets" to help more community members understand and participate.

Commissioner reviewed the recommendation and drafted commission comments. (Attachment 1)

MOTION: To accept the draft values as written with additional edits as discussed.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Leger / Commissioner Dorn Parker

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Dorn Parker, Commissioner Komala, Commissioner Leger, Vice Chair Wright, Chair Brown

Nays: none

Absent: Commissioner Husen, Commissioner Garcia Arcos

Motion Carried: 5 – 0

ADJOURNMENT by Chair Brown at 10:06PM.

Fairview Park Master Plan Update Recommendations					
Rec. #	Consultant Team Rec.	Fairview Park Steering Committee Rec.	Location referenced in the Oct. 2025 Draft	Present in existing Master Plan (revised 2008)	Parks and Community Services Commission Recommendations
1	Provide clearly defined trails and establish a designated trail system for the park.	As-is.	Pages 11, 64, 75-76	Yes, described in graphic master plan and environmental documentation.	Include language to align trails plan to City's adopted Active Transportation Plan; incorporate south bluff stairs.
2	Adopt design standards for the designated trail system, including widths, materials, and designated modes of travel by trail type.	As-is.	Pages 75-76, 96-99	Yes.	As is.
3	Finalize and adopt the habitat restoration and enhancement opportunities technical report for Fairview Park.	As-is.	Appendix C, Pages 78-85	Partially. Habitat restoration opportunities are described generally in the high value conservation areas including the vernal pools and associated grasslands.	As is.
4	Establish a boardwalk or similar pedestrian pathway allowing for pedestrian access in both wet and dry seasons from the north end of Pacific Avenue to the north end of Canyon Drive. The pathway shall be planned and designed in a manner that protects the integrity of the vernal pools and the vernal pool watersheds.	Establish functional and pedestrian pathways allowing for pedestrian access in both wet and dry seasons for approved trails (see Rec 1), including from the north end of Pacific Avenue to the north end of Canyon Drive. The pathway shall be planned and designed in a manner that protects the integrity of the vernal pools and the vernal pool watersheds.	Pages 76, 82, 98	Yes, partially. Seasonal ponding and drainage issues are described generally in the area, and potential improvements are discussed to maintain use/access.	As is.
5	Provide for long-term preservation of the vernal pools and their associated watersheds using suitable fencing, interpretive displays, and the removal of unauthorized user-defined trails that have formed through the vernal pool watersheds.	As-is.	Page 69, 75,81-82, 85, 96, Appendix B	Yes, partially. Fencing and other physical protective barriers are described in the 2008 master plan and adopted as mitigation measures in CEQA environmental documentation.	As is.
6	Relocate the fly field activity currently located within the vernal pool watershed, due to detrimental impacts to sensitive biological resources associated with the activity and required maintenance of the fly field. Staff is working with the model flying club to identify potential alternative flying sites for the activity.	Relocate the fly field activity currently located within the vernal pool watershed to outside Fairview Park, due to detrimental impacts to sensitive biological resources associated with the activity and required maintenance of the fly field.	Page 69, Appendix B	The 2008 Master Plan does not use the term "fly field", but refers to the "silent flyer launch/land site", which is to be adjacent to the restroom facility in the lawn area.	Relocate the fly field activity currently located within the vernal pool watershed to outside Fairview Park, due to detrimental impacts to sensitive biological resources associated with the activity and required maintenance of the fly field. Explore flying sites outside Fairview Park.
7	Revegetate and restore excessive areas of barren ground and exposed soil usingecologically appropriate native vegetation.	As-is.	Pages 50, 102	Yes. Fill removal and native plant revegetation are identified in 2008 Master Plan and are adopted as a mitigation measure in the CEQA documentation.	As is
8	Provide for a potential native plant growing space on the east side of Fairview Park in a location that avoids impacts to native habitat. The growing space shall be planned and designed in consultation with a qualified restoration ecologist.	As-is.	Pages 11, 100, 102	No.	As is.
9	Provide for improved and updated signage and interpretive materials to highlight the exceptional conservation value of the site, and the importance of local and global biodiversity preservation.	As-is.	Pages 12, 18, 55, 64, 67, 69, 73, 77, 100	Yes, partially. Interpretive opportunities are described in the 2008 Master Plan.	Add multi-language content, accessibility, all ages, and diversity of cultural perspectives.
10	Utilize the site to enhance community education about the nexus between human mental and physical health, and ecological health and conservation of natural open spaces.	Utilize the site to enhance community education about the nexus between (1) human health and (2) ecological health and conservation of natural open spaces.	Pages 77, 99	Yes, this theme is discussed partially in the 2008 plan.	As is
11	Provide for improved and updated signage and interpretive materials to highlight the cultural history of the site, indigenous ecology, and to recognize the site's significance to tribal communities.	As-is.	Pages 12, 55, 58, 64, 69, 73, 77, 100	Yes, partially. Interpretive opportunities are described in the 2008 Master Plan.	As is
12	Provide for an on-site maintenance and storage facility, or designated area on the east side for efficient storage and use of Fairview Park restoration tools and equipment, and to support the operations of the native plant growing space.	As-is.	Pages 100, 102	Yes, partially. A museum/multi-purpose building is shown on the east side of Placentia Ave.	As is
13	Continue the current Master Plan recommendation that calls for unsuitable fill removal and restoration of the Fairview Park mesa.	Continue the current Master Plan recommendation that calls for the removal of unsuitable fill material (imported fill material placed on the Mesa in the late 1980s), protection of culturally sensitive resources, and habitat restoration of the Fairview Park mesa.	Pages 11, 56, 65, 69, 71-72, 82, 87, 100, 102, Appendix C	Yes, fill removal is recognized in the 2008 Master Plan, which calls for the City to prepare a phasing plan to remove the unsuitable fill in a manner that protects the vernal pools, sensitive biological resources, and prevents damage to the cultural resources site.	As is

Fairview Park Master Plan Update Recommendations					
Rec. #	Consultant Team Rec.	Fairview Park Steering Committee Rec.	Location referenced in the Oct. 2025 Draft	Present in existing Master Plan (revised 2008)	Parks and Community Services Commission Recommendations
14	Continue the current Master Plan recommendation that calls for stabilization and restorationof the Fairview Park west bluffs.	Continue the current Master Plan recommendation that calls for stabilization and habitat restoration of the Fairview Park west bluffs to protect natural resources and public safety.	Pages 64, 71, 83, 88-89, Appendix C	Yes.	As is
15	Continue the operation of the model train railroad facilities, and integrate environmental interpretive content and ecological enhancements along the model train network to provide educational opportunities to the youth while onboard the model train circuit.	Continue the operation of the model train railroad facilities, and integrate environmental interpretive content and ecological enhancements along the model train network to provide educational opportunities to all ages while onboard the model train circuit.	Pages 3, 57, 59, 67, 73	Yes.	As is
16	Adopt the Maintenance, Operations, and Management Plan for Fairview Park, including the Invasive Species Management Plan for Fairview Park.	Develop and adopt the Maintenance, Operations, and Management Plan for Fairview Park, including the Invasive Plant Species Management Plan for Fairview Park.	Pages 81-86, Appendix C	No. No O&M plan was prepared at the time of the 2008 Master Plan.	Broaden scope to address public safety, enforcement with adequate staffing resources and/or technology.
17	Continue to build community partnerships with local organizations invested in environmental conservation, and expand opportunities to participate in community-based restoration, stewardship, and nature-based educational activities.	Continue to build partnerships with organizations invested in environmental conservation, and expand opportunities to participate in community-based restoration, stewardship, and nature-based educational activities.	Page 64, 77	Yes, partially.	As is.
18	Provide continuing opportunities for tribal coordination and participation in the implementation of the Updated Fairview Park Master Plan.	As-is.	Pages 10-11, 39-40, 82, Appendix D	No.	Revise to include participation in public facing communications around historical storytelling.
19	Provide an ADA-accessible pathway from the main parking lot to the existing paved multi-purpose path west of the main parking lot.	Provide ADA-accessible pathway(s) from the main parking lot to the existing paved multipurpose path west of the main parking lot.	Pages 96, 98	No.	As is.
20	Provide a service and emergency vehicular access point into the park from Pacific Avenue, to be accessible only by authorized public safety vehicles and maintenance vehicles.	Provide an emergency and service vehicular access point into the park from Pacific Avenue. Develop protocol guidelines for vehicular use of this access point.	Page 75, 96	Partially. 2008 Master Plan calls for a small parking lot at the northern terminus of Pacific Ave.	As is.
21	Provide for the incorporation of a central interpretive area.	As-is.	Page 99-102	Partially. The 2008 Master Plan reflects multiple small interpretive areas in the park.	As is.
22	Incorporate viewing platforms and scenic viewpoint features to enhance environmental interpretive opportunities while preserving sensitive features.	As is.	Page 82	Yes.	As is.
23	Incorporate a nature play area near the central interpretive area.	Incorporate nature play elements throughout the park and a nature play area within the existing lawn area.	Page 11, 64, 81, 99, 102	Partially. The 2008 Master Plan shows a small play area on the south end of the park near Canyon Drive, but not in the lawn area.	As is
24	Incorporate a native pollinator area to attract butterflies and other pollinators. The native pollinator area would replace the ornamental vegetation including invasive species currently located in the planter area.	As is	Pages 68, 100	No. The 2008 Master Plan shows a small play area on the south end of the park.	As is
25	Based on community input - consider renaming the site to reflect the site's natural and cultural resources.	Modify and refine the name of the Fairview Park site to a more nature-oriented name, such as “Fairview Nature Park” to reflect the site’s exceptional natural resources, significant conservation value, and lasting legacy as Costa Mesa’s premier natural open space asset.	N/A	No.	As is
26					Request City Council to consider the impact of Measure AA and the possibility that elements of the Master Plan Update may need a public vote.

Primary Recommendations presented to FVPS Committee in July 2024.

Secondary Recommendations presented to FVPS Committee in October 2024, based on consultant evaluation and community feedback review.

October 2025 PACS Commission Recommendation addition