



Agenda Report

Parks and Community Services Commission

File #: 25-538

Meeting Date: 10/9/2025

TITLE: FAIRVIEW DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN
STATUS UPDATE

DEPARTMENT: ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES/PLANNING
DIVISION

PRESENTED BY: ANNA MCGILL, PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

CONTACT INFORMATION: MELINDA DACEY, PRINCIPAL PLANNER, (714) 754-5611

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Parks and Community Services Commission receive the presentation and status update on the minimum planned open space acreage and potential future park amenities for consideration and inclusion in the Draft Fairview Developmental Center (FDC) Specific Plan.

BACKGROUND:

In June 2022, the State Legislature, through Senate Bill (SB) 188, approved Government Code Section 14670.31, which provides a framework for the reuse of the FDC property. The legislation codifies a partnership between the Department of General Services (DGS), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and the City of Costa Mesa, with defined roles for each entity. To support this effort, the State allocated \$3.5 million in State funding to the City to develop a Specific Plan to implement the provisions of Government Code Section 14670.31, conduct necessary studies, and manage a community-based planning process. In October 2022, the City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the State, which was executed on January 29, 2023. Since then, the City has been completing the planning process to prepare the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan (FDCSP), with public outreach and engagement efforts commencing in November 2023, and throughout the rest of the 2024 calendar year for a total of 18 public outreach and engagement meetings to-date. Information regarding the outreach events are available on the project webpage linked here: <https://fdcplan.com/participate/>.

As part of the planning process for the development of a Specific Plan, a preferred land use plan must be prepared, and the provisions of the Specific Plan must be physically feasible and implementable. The Planning Commission reviewed varying financial feasibility and land use scenarios to test housing unit thresholds, land use distribution, circulation network, open space, and organization of the 80-acre site throughout the summer. On August 25, 2025, the Planning Commission provided recommendations to City Council for a preferred land use plan, that includes a minimum of 12 acres of open space area, so the City may conduct the necessary environmental review for the FDCSP. Staff anticipates receiving direction from City Council on the preferred land use plan at the October 21, 2025, City Council meeting.

ANALYSIS:

State Government Code Section 66477, known as the Quimby Act, authorizes cities to require the dedication of parkland or payment of in-lieu fees from residential subdivisions to support the development of park and recreational facilities. The law sets a baseline requirement of up to 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents. It also allows jurisdictions to adopt higher local standards if supported by their General Plan and local ordinance. In accordance with this authority, the City has established a local parkland dedication standard of 4.26 acres per 1,000 residents, as outlined in General Plan Policy OSR-1.18. This requirement is implemented through the City's Park and Recreation Dedications Ordinance (Municipal Code Title 13, Chapter XI, Article 5). Based on the Planning Commission's recommendation to City Council, The Specific Plan will require the City established local parkland dedication (4.26 acres per 1,000 residents), but will include flexibility and levers for a potential decrease in parkland dedication if the developer can demonstrate a combination of parkland land dedication, improvements and impact/in-lieus fees consistent with the requirement.

Notwithstanding the parkland dedication standards, the Land Use Element of the General Plan designates the site as Mixed-Use Center (MUC), which specifies at least 25% of the 80-acre site be preserved for open space and equates to approximately 22 acres. With that said, these policies were created prior to detailed conversations with the State about the original 115-acre site and the variety of uses, for both State agencies including the Department of General Services (DGS) and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), as well as the City-led Specific Plan process. Additionally, it is anticipated that a master developer will meet the open space requirements in the future Specific Plan through a combination of land dedication, developer-funded improvements to the land (including park amenities such as sports fields and courts, playgrounds, trails, landscaping, picnic areas, benches, etc.), and impact/in-lieu fees. Ensuring a master developer meets their overall open space requirements will ultimately be addressed with the implementation of the Specific Plan as it must define a realistic and implementable open space goal (supported by future land dedication and developer-funded improvements) that will guide how open space is integrated into the site's long-term development.

In addition to publicly accessible open space, the master developer will also need to meet private open space requirements for residents living within the Specific Plan area, which typically include open space areas, courtyards, private yard/balcony space, swimming pools, etc. Finally, the Specific Plans will include incentives and flexibility to provide more open space and amenities than the baseline minimum requirements. All open space provisions, whether required or voluntarily provided, will be memorialized in a development agreement, which includes provisions and timing for all open space improvements.

A defined amount of minimum publicly accessible open space provides the City with a basis to continue through the Specific Plan process and study a preferred plan and project description through an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The number of residential units to be studied for environmental purposes reflects that a secondary access road will be needed and it is proposed to affect six holes of the Mesa Linda Golf Course. In response, the City has secured a golf course design professional, Todd Eckenrode with Origins Golf Design, a local golf course architect firm, to evaluate potential design adjustments to the golf course in order to accommodate the secondary access route. The environmental review process allows the City to accurately anticipate and mitigate all potential environmental impacts of the project, while concurrently continuing to discuss and refine the Draft Specific Plan. Staff will return to the Commission when the Draft FDC Specific Plan is available for public review and seek feedback on the open space chapter of the draft plan.

Publicly accessible open space is essential to ensure a high quality of life, meet local and State parkland standards, and provide accessible recreational opportunities for future residents and visitors. Preliminary renderings from the land use scenarios reviewed by the Planning Commission depict park amenities, such as tennis courts, basketball courts, and baseball or soccer fields, as well as community specific amenities such as club houses and pools. The discussion for the eventual use(s) for publicly accessible open space will occur in accordance with identified needs in the City's Park Master Plan. In addition to these amenities, an integrated trail, pedestrian, and bicycle network is proposed.

FISCAL REVIEW

There is no fiscal review at this time.

LEGAL REVIEW

There is no legal review required since this item is administrative in nature.

CONCLUSION:

There is no formal action requested for this item. City staff ask the Parks and Community Services Commission to receive the presentation and status update regarding the minimum 12 acres of open space and the Commission's considerations to include as parks amenities for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan.