



# ***PARKS AND RECREATION***

## ***COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT***

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MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 25, 2018

ITEM NUMBER: 10d

SUBJECT: FAIRVIEW PARK ANNUAL REPORT

DATE: OCTOBER 15, 2018

FROM: PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PRESENTATION BY: CYNTHIA D'AGOSTA, FAIRVIEW PARK  
ADMINISTRATOR

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission review the Fairview Park Master Plan implementation accomplishments and approve the work plan implementation goals for the upcoming year.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Fairview Park (FVP) is the City's largest park, hosting 195 acres of natural open space area and 13 acres of passive parkland for a total of 208 acres. Within the 195 acres of open space there are two Native American Nationally Registered Historic Sites, and five different habitat ecosystems which are home to many rare and endangered plant and animal species. These sensitive habitats require local, state, and federal regulatory compliance for protection and preservation. The park also offers users multiple passive recreational opportunities such as picnicking, wildlife viewing, and over seven miles of trails for walking or bicycling. The City's management of Fairview Park requires finding balance between the protected habitats and public uses.

Item D of City Council Policy 500-11 calls for the submittal of *an annual report to the Parks and Recreation Commission, discussing any progress that has been made on the implementation of the Fairview Park Master Plan, and to describe the efforts and plans for the following year.*

The Parks and Recreation Commission last heard an annual report on Fairview Park Master Plan implementation in November of 2016. Since then, several important changes have occurred with regards to the oversight, management, and reporting for Fairview Park. These changes include: voter approval of Measure AA in November of 2016; the creation of a Council appointed Fairview Park Steering Committee; the appointment of a newly hired Fairview Park Administrator in September of 2017; and, transition of the management of Fairview Park from the City's Public Services Department to the Parks and Community Services Department. No report was provided to the Commission in 2017 due to the transition and implementation of all of these changes.

This report is being submitted for the first time from the Parks and Community Services Department, within the new management responsibilities, and to comply with the existing policy requirement.

As a compliment to this report, and as is designated by the City Council, the Fairview Park Steering Committee is also charged with presenting an annual report to the City Council describing progress on implementing the Fairview Park Master Plan and its accompanying Measure AA. This additional report is scheduled to be presented at the November 13, 2018 City Council meeting. The nexus of these reports is that the Fairview Park Steering Committee's work is closely linked with staff work, as it relates to implementation of the Fairview Park Master Plan.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The time and resources that were spent focused on Fairview Park in 2017 and 2018 were done so during a transitional period for public engagement, staff leadership, and management, touching all areas regarding Fairview Park. The transition has been relatively smooth, and a great deal of work has been accomplished to advance the implementation of the Fairview Park Master Plan.

The changes in oversight and park management have better positioned the City to implement future park restoration and preservation; have identified modifications and/or amendments needed within the Master Plan to make it current; and, have built upon public engagement with staff, to care for the park. Staff is encouraged by the changes and the challenges ahead, to see the Master Plan amended and implemented, and to provide for preservation of the unique and remarkable cultural, natural, and community based resources at Fairview Park.

### **ANALYSIS:**

#### **September 2017 – September 2018 Fairview Park Master Plan Implementation Progress:**

The following summary highlights the Fairview Park Master Plan implementation progress, grouped by calendar quarters, over the course of the last twelve months:

#### **September 2017 – December 2017:**

- Fairview Park Steering Committee:
  - Orientation; Brown Act, Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Training
- Project Study:
  - Pacific Avenue turnaround;
  - Storm drain improvement at Canyon Drive to bluffs;
  - Parking lot improvements;
  - Park trails; and,
  - Review of existing grants
- Development of Measure AA project interpretation and group decision-making tools
- Approval of tree removal & replacement at the end of Pacific Avenue
- Coordination and implementation of aesthetic improvements to the end of Pacific Avenue
- Presentation by Orange Coast College students
  - Discussion around signage needs in park
- Vernal Pool Fencing Project:
  - Coordination, installation and corrections
- Coordination of balancing Special Events park use and bird nesting season
- Introduction of annual work plan for future Master Plan implementation processes
- Conducted environmental education, restoration, and outreach programs:

- Institute for Conservation Research and Education (ICRE) monthly 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday workdays at Fairview Park
- Orange Coast College Architecture Studies student review
- Sea & Sage Audubon Bird Walk
- Swan Drive resident outreach and wetland tours

### **January 2018 – April 2018**

- Fairview Park Steering Committee votes to hold monthly meetings instead of every other month as was originally approved by the City Council
- Vernal Pool Fencing Project:
  - Coordination continues through March 2018
- Project Study:
  - Pacific Avenue Connector Trail grant and improvements;
  - North bluff trail & habitat restoration grant;
  - Approaches to vernal pool restoration
- Because of necessary project study and timely evaluation of Measure AA, the Master Plan implementation schedule was bumped from the agenda every month until March when staff introduced a monthly discussion schedule for review of the Master Plan for April through September 2018.
- Master Plan implementation discussions begin with a presentation on Archeology with invited speakers in April:
  - Public discussion ensued regarding protection measures needed at the park, guiding principles, and laws surrounding the site that should be considered in restoration planning.
- Wetland mosquito abatement intensifies, and emergent vegetation maintenance project begins
- Pursued grant opportunities with the State Coastal Conservancy and U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- City receives approved U.S. Fish & Wildlife permit and restoration plan for vernal pool complex 5, 6, & 7; and a CA Department of Parks and Recreation grant for restoration of vernal pool watersheds 4 and 5, 6, 7
- Conducted environmental education, restoration, and outreach programs:
  - ICRE monthly 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday workdays at Fairview Park
  - Love Costa Mesa Day at Fairview and Canyon Parks
  - Orange Coast River Park Board presentations
  - CA Parks & Recreation Society Tour of Fairview Park
  - Continued Swan Drive resident outreach regarding mosquito issues

### **May 2018 – August 2018**

- Implementation of the group decision-making process for:
  - The Fairview Park Steering Committee;
  - Measure AA project recommendations to City Council for:
    - ADA walkway;
    - Pacific Avenue turnaround;
    - Storm drain improvements;
    - North bluff trail; and,
    - Placentia Avenue connector trials projects.

- Successfully delivered the Steering Committee's recommendations to the City Council on the aforementioned projects
- Master Plan implementation discussion continued in June:
  - Public forum featuring invited speakers on restoration approaches for the different types of habitats within Fairview Park
- Wetland mosquito abatement and emergent vegetation maintenance project continues through August:
  - Removal of seven tons of reeds from the ponds providing for improved vector management and overall pond function
- Coordinated renewal and City Council approval of, Orange County Model Engineers license agreement
- Improved coordination of inter-departmental, inter-agency, and public interests at the park:
  - City Departments of Public Services and Finance
  - Orange County offices of Vector Control, Public Works, Maintenance and Parks and Recreation
  - State Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Coastal Conservancy
  - Federal U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Army Corps. of Engineers
  - Waldorf School, Orange Coast River Park (OCRP), Irvine Ranch Water District, UCI, Fairview Park Alliance, Orange County Model Engineers, Banning Ranch Conservancy, Institute for Conservation Research and Education, Costa Mesa Lions Club
- Conducted planning session for:
  - Master Plan implementation on restoration;
  - Public uses; and,
  - Park improvements
- Conducted environmental education, restoration, and outreach programs:
  - ICRE monthly 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday workdays at Fairview Park
  - Expert Restoration Panel public meeting
  - OCRP public forum in Newport Beach
  - Continued Swan Drive resident outreach related to mosquitoes
- Established desired shift of Master Plan implementation focus away from park capital improvement projects, and onto natural resource enhancement and restoration of the park

September 2018 – September 2019 Fairview Park Master Plan Implementation Plan:

The following summary highlights the Fairview Park Master Plan implementation work plan goals over the course of the next year:

Work Plan Goals:

- Restoration of vernal pool watershed & complex for pools 5, 6 & 7
- Plan restoration of vernal pool 4 watershed on west side of the park, and the vernal pool at Goat Hill Junction on east side of the park
- Complete protective fencing plans and installation for all vernal pools
- Complete comprehensive, independent study on the wetlands; prepare alternative solutions plan
- Establish adaptive maintenance management plan for wetlands habitat
- Plan for Fairview Park Native Plant Nursery
- Pursue partnership with OC Parks for bluff and riparian restoration

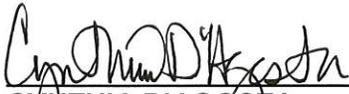
- Pursue Prop 68 and other grants for restoration, education, and park improvements
- Continue to improve on park management for resource protection and community enjoyment
- Present proposed Fairview Park Master Plan amendments before the Commission and City Council for consideration of approval
- Improve and expand on organization and non-profit partnerships
- Implement new / expanded environmental education, restoration, and outreach community programs; 2019 planned to date:
  - January 12, 2019: Tour of vernal pools
  - February 2, 2019: World Wetlands Day tour & Audubon Bird Walk
  - March 3, 2019: World Wildlife Day Celebration
  - April 22, 2019: Earth Day
  - May 18, 2019: Love Costa Mesa Day
  - June 1, 2019: National Trails Day

**LEGAL REVIEW:**

No legal review is required for this item.

**CONCLUSION:**

As is required by City Council Policy 500-11, this report provides an update on the progress made and future progress goals related to the implementation of the Fairview Park Master Plan. Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission review the Fairview Park Master Plan implementation accomplishments and approve the work plan implementation goals for the upcoming year.



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