



Leslie Hardy
Community Services Director

Nathalie Adourian
City Attorney

Jessica Wang
Executive Assistant

AGENDA

Park Planning and Community Events Commission October 21, 2025

5:30 PM Regular Session

City Council Chamber
300 E. Chapman Avenue
Orange, CA 92866

JAMES KUSHON
Chair

STEVE FREEMAN
Vice Chair

ADAM LITWIN
Commissioner

EUGENE FIELDS
Commissioner

EVA PEREZ
Commissioner

CHIP AHLWEDE
Commissioner

BRANDY ROMERO
Commissioner

Welcome to the Park Planning and Community Events Commission. Regular meetings of the City of Orange Park Planning and Community Events Commission are held on the third Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September, and October at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda Information

The agenda contains a brief general description of each item to be considered. Written materials relating to an item on the agenda that are provided to the Park Commission after agenda packet distribution and within 72 hours before it is to consider the item will be made available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office located at 300 E. Chapman Avenue, Orange, during normal business hours; at the Park Commission meeting; and made available on the City's website.

Public Participation

Park Planning and Community Events Commission meetings are streamed live and on-demand on the City's website at www.cityoforange.org.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.3, members of the public may address the Commission on any agenda items or matters within the jurisdiction of the governing body by using any of the following methods:

1) In-Person

To speak on an item on the agenda, complete a speaker's card indicating your name, address, and identify the agenda item number or subject matter you wish to address. The card should be given to staff prior to the start of the meeting. General comments are made during the "Public Comments" section on the agenda. Public comments are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker, unless a different time limit is announced.

2) Written Public Comments

Members of the public can submit their written comments electronically for the Park Commission's consideration by using the eComment feature on the Agenda page of the City's website at www.cityoforange.org. To ensure distribution to the Park Commission prior to consideration of the agenda, we encourage the public to submit written comments by 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. All written comments will be provided to the Commissioners and posted on the City's website after the meeting.

Please contact the City Clerk's Office at (714) 744-5500 with any questions.

ADA Requirements: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need accommodations to participate in this meeting, contact the Community Services Department at (714) 744-7274. Notification at least 48 hours in advance of meeting will enable the City to make arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting.

1. OPENING/CALL TO ORDER

1.1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Brandy Romero

1.2 ROLL CALL

1.3 PRESENTATIONS

Presentation on Grijalva Park Masterplan

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this time, members of the public may address the Commission on matters not listed on the Agenda which are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission, provided that NO action may be taken on off-agenda items unless authorized by law. Public Comments are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1. Approval of minutes of the City of Orange Park Planning & Community Events Commission Regular Meeting held on September 16, 2025

Recommended Action:

Approve minutes as presented.

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
 [September 16, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes](#)

4. COMMISSION BUSINESS

4.1. Capital Improvement Project Planning for Fiscal Year 2026-27

Recommended Action:

Recommend the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Capital Improvement Plan project(s) for approval by the City Council.

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
 [El Camino Real Park Court Resurfacing and Conversion Project Layout](#)

4.2. 2026 3rd of July Celebration

Recommended Action:

1. Review and provide feedback on the proposed 3rd of July event concept.
2. Select up to three Park Planning and Community Events Commissioners to serve on a 3rd of July Celebration Fundraising Subcommittee.

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

5. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR'S REPORT

6. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Park Planning and Community Events Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

I, Jessica Wang, Executive Assistant for the City of Orange, hereby declare, under penalty of perjury, that a full and correct copy of this agenda was posted pursuant to Government Code Section 54950 et. seq., at the following locations: Orange Civic Center kiosk and Orange City Clerk's Office at 300 E. Chapman Avenue, Orange Main Public Library at 407 E. Chapman Avenue, Police facility at 1107 N. Batavia, and uploaded to the City's website www.cityoforange.org.

Date posted: October 16, 2025



Agenda Item

Park Planning and Community Events Commission

Item #: 3.1.

10/21/2025

File #: 25-0591

TO: Chair and Members of the Park Planning and Community Events Commission

THRU: Leslie Hardy, Community Services Director

FROM: Jessica Wang, Executive Assistant

1. SUBJECT

Approval of minutes of the City of Orange Park Planning & Community Events Commission Regular Meeting held on September 16, 2025

2. SUMMARY

Submitted for your consideration and approval are the minutes of the above meeting.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve minutes as presented.

4. ATTACHMENTS

- September 16, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes



Agenda Item

Park Planning and Community Events Commission

Item #: 3.1.

10/21/2025

File #: 25-0591

TO: Chair and Members of the Park Planning and Community Events Commission

THRU: Leslie Hardy, Community Services Director

FROM: Jessica Wang, Executive Assistant

1. SUBJECT

Approval of minutes of the City of Orange Park Planning & Community Events Commission Regular Meeting held on September 16, 2025

2. SUMMARY

Submitted for your consideration and approval are the minutes of the above meeting.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve minutes as presented.

4. ATTACHMENTS

- September 16, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes

MINUTES - DRAFT

City of Orange

Park Planning and Community Events Commission

September 16, 2025

The Parks Planning & Community Events Commission of the City of Orange, California convened on September 16, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in a Regular Meeting in the Council Chamber, 300 E. Chapman Avenue, Orange, California.

1. OPENING/CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Freeman called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

1.1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Vice Chair Freeman.

1.2 ROLL CALL

Present Freeman, Fields, Perez, and Romero

Absent Litwin, Ahlswede, and Kushon

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1. Approval of minutes of the City of Orange Park Planning & Community Events Commission Regular Meeting held on May 20, 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Fields, seconded by Commissioner Perez, to approve the minutes as presented.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Freeman, Fields, Perez, and Romero

Noes: None

Absent: Litwin, Ahlswede, and Kushon

4. COMMISSION BUSINESS

4.1. Capital Improvement Project Planning for Fiscal Year 2026-27

Robert Ambriz Jr., Parks and Facilities Manager, provided a comprehensive report on potential Park Capital Improvement projects for Fiscal Year 27.

Commissioners provided input on the collective list of potential park capital

improvement projects for Fiscal Year 2026-27 by considering public interest, safety, priority, and available funding.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fields, seconded by Commissioner Perez, to recommend the collective list of potential park capital improvement projects for Fiscal Year 2026-27 to City Council for approval.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Freeman, Fields, Perez, and Romero

Noes: None

Absent: Litwin, Ahlswede, and Kushon

4.2. USA250-Orange Planning Update & Request for Input

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, provided a brief report on the Semiquincentennial Subcommittee's approach and status of commitments from community groups.

Vice Chair Freeman shared updates from the Semiquincentennial Subcommittee. Commissioners provided input to staff on ideas to include community groups in celebrating the Semiquincentennial.

5. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Community Services Director, Emily Bustamante, provided the Commission with updates on current projects including Grijalva Area Lighting, Hart Park Pickleball and Fitness Circuit and Skatepark of Grijalva Park Projects, as well as plans to work with community groups who have committed to hosting event programs such as Concerts in the Park, Treats in the Streets, and the Tree Lighting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

The next Regular Park Planning & Community Events Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

Emily Bustamante
Assistant Community Services Director



Agenda Item

Park Planning and Community Events Commission

Item #: 4.1.

10/21/2025

File #: 25-0587

TO: Chair and Members of the Park Planning and Community Events Commission

THRU: Leslie Hardy, Community and Library Services Director

FROM: Robert Ambriz, Jr., Parks and Facilities Manager

1. SUBJECT

Capital Improvement Project Planning for Fiscal Year 2026-27

2. SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2026-27 Capital Improvement Plan submission.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommend the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Capital Improvement Plan project(s) for approval by the City Council.

4. FISCAL IMPACT

None.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 3: Enhance Public Communication Strategy and Quality of Life

3.7: Continue to offer high quality and efficient, city led recreation programs.

6. DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND

At the September 2025 Park Planning and Community Events Commission (Commission) meeting, the Commission recommended the following Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects be submitted for consideration for Fiscal Year 2026-27 (FY27):

- **Parking Lot Pavement Rehabilitation:** As part of a multi-year parking lot pavement rehabilitation initiative to address various stages of degradation of park parking lots, successful pavement maintenance & renovation treatments have been completed at the following parking lots: Killefer, Eisenhower, El Camino, Olive, Grijalva, Shaffer, Handy, Fred Barrera, McPherson, Serrano, and Santiago Hills Park. The next parking lot location in need of rehabilitation is Steve Ambriz Memorial Park. After this parking lot is rehabilitated, the project will be complete.

Project budget: \$60,000 (Slurry Seal and Stripe)

- **Park Restroom Interior Renovations:** Nineteen of the City's parks have restroom buildings. Many of these restrooms were last renovated 15 to 20 years ago and are in need of renovation to ensure the restrooms are functional and an inviting space for public use. This project will involve initial evaluation, design, and renovation of facilities that are past their useful life or are in need of an update in subsequent years. A specific scope will be developed for each restroom building depending on individual needs. This program looks to renovate restrooms at one park per fiscal year. The restrooms at Hart Park were included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26(FY26) CIP. Based upon site inspections and evaluations, the next restroom facility in need of rehabilitation is at Santiago Hills Park.

Project budget: \$70,000

- **Sports Court Resurfacing:** The City has 22 parks, several of which have sports courts. Parks with either tennis/pickleball, basketball, volleyball, and/or handball courts include Steve Ambriz, El Camino Real, Grijalva, Hart, Santiago Hills, and Serrano Parks. Court resurfacing is specialized and requires maintenance on a regular schedule in order to maintain a safe playing surface. A typical maintenance schedule includes court resurfacing every five years. With a total of 10 sports courts, the proposed court resurfacing program will resurface two courts annually based on priority of current conditions for the next 5 years. Estimates to resurface each sports court varies, so project budget will vary every fiscal year. The next two sports courts most in need of resurfacing are the volleyball courts and tennis courts at El Camino Real Park.

As part of the tennis court resurfacing, Commission considered permanently converting one tennis court at El Camino, which currently has a pickleball overlay, into four pickleball courts. The other tennis court with a pickleball court overlay would return to a permanent tennis court, resulting in five permanent tennis courts (see attachment). The conversion will include the installation of four sets of pickleball posts, sleeves and nets, color coating and striping, 3' tall chain link fence to provide a barrier between pickleball courts, and two 3' tall swing gates to close off the fencing between tennis and pickleball courts.

Project budget: \$155,000 (Courts resurfacing and permanent court conversion)

- **Veterans Park Memorial Fountain Restoration:** Due to ground settling, the foundation of the Veterans Memorial fountain at Depot Park is lifting and is no longer level. This has caused fountain water to pass over the weir unevenly, causing tile discoloration and cracking due to mineral buildup. This project includes restoration of the existing fountain to correct waterflow issues, tile removal, and replacement of current tiles at the fountain.

Project budget: \$50,000

- **Santiago Creek Trail - Lodge Pole Fencing Replacement:** Along the north side of the Santiago Creek trail, in the section between S. Cambridge Street heading east to S. Tustin Street, the split-rail fencing is rotted and broken in several places. The splintering wood and fence openings create potential safety hazards for trail users that are currently being addressed with temporary remedies on an as needed basis. Complete replacement is needed for the approximate 2,600 linear feet of fencing and can be completed in one phase.

Project budget: \$60,000

- **Playground Equipment Replacement:** The typical lifespan of park playground equipment is 8-12 years and the existing playground equipment in several of our City parks is reaching the end of their useful life. While they are inspected regularly for safety standard compliance, many are exhibiting signs of wear and tear. Over the years, staff have made numerous repairs and installed replacement pieces, but the equipment will soon need to be replaced altogether. The goal of this project is to replace playground equipment that has reached the end of its life with new, safe, and accessible structures to enhance community well-being and provide a vibrant, engaging play space.

Staff will evaluate all City park playgrounds and will create a list of each playground's current features and conditions. Commission can then prioritize one playground to be replaced annually, based on the community's needs/interests and budget. The cost to replace each park playground will vary, so project budget will vary each fiscal year. The remaining park playgrounds without shade sails installed (one at Hart, Killefer, McPherson, Santiago Hills, and two at Eisenhower), could have shade sails installed along with the installation of new playground equipment.

The FY27 project budget takes into consideration the current average cost of public park playground equipment, the potential need for accessibility upgrades, and possible installation of shade sails still needed at various park locations.

Project budget: \$800,000

In addition to the CIP projects to be submitted for consideration for FY27, the following is a list of previously approved in Fiscal Years 2024-25 and 2025-26 projects, most of which are already in progress, that will carryover into FY27.

- Skate Park at Grijalva Park
- Grijalva Park Master Plan Update
- Hart Park Diamond 1 Field Improvements
- Olive Park Netting Replacement
- El Modena Basin Area Improvements Design
- New Park in West Orange
- Rampart Street Park*
- Parks Master Plan
- Hart Park Bandshell Roof Renovation
- El Modena Park Area Renovation

***Rampart Street Park:** The City is working to secure an operating agreement with OC Public Works for two parcels managed by Orange County Flood Control along the Santa River. The smaller of the two is a narrow parcel, measuring roughly 1 acre, and located next to N. Rampart St., just north of W. Chapman Ave., adjacent to the bike trail, and parallel to the 57 FWY. The parcel has been identified as a location for a new passive park in District 2 that could feature a proposed walking path, dog amenity/park, and water bottle filling station, along with existing mature shade trees. A preliminary conceptual design and cost estimate for design and construction is currently in development. While this project is already approved in the FY26 CIP, the City is awaiting execution of an operating agreement with the County. Once

finalized, the conceptual design will be presented to the Commission for review and public input.

Project Budget: \$1,250,000

7. ATTACHMENTS

- El Camino Real Park Court Resurfacing and Conversion Project Layout



Agenda Item

Park Planning and Community Events Commission

Item #: 4.1.

10/21/2025

File #: 25-0587

TO: Chair and Members of the Park Planning and Community Events Commission

THRU: Leslie Hardy, Community and Library Services Director

FROM: Robert Ambriz, Jr., Parks and Facilities Manager

1. SUBJECT

Capital Improvement Project Planning for Fiscal Year 2026-27

2. SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2026-27 Capital Improvement Plan submission.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommend the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Capital Improvement Plan project(s) for approval by the City Council.

4. FISCAL IMPACT

None.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 3: Enhance Public Communication Strategy and Quality of Life

3.7: Continue to offer high quality and efficient, city led recreation programs.

6. DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND

At the September 2025 Park Planning and Community Events Commission (Commission) meeting, the Commission recommended the following Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects be submitted for consideration for Fiscal Year 2026-27 (FY27):

- **Parking Lot Pavement Rehabilitation:** As part of a multi-year parking lot pavement rehabilitation initiative to address various stages of degradation of park parking lots, successful pavement maintenance & renovation treatments have been completed at the following parking lots: Killefer, Eisenhower, El Camino, Olive, Grijalva, Shaffer, Handy, Fred Barrera, McPherson, Serrano, and Santiago Hills Park. The next parking lot location in need of rehabilitation is Steve Ambriz Memorial Park. After this parking lot is rehabilitated, the project will be complete.

Project budget: \$60,000 (Slurry Seal and Stripe)

- **Park Restroom Interior Renovations:** Nineteen of the City's parks have restroom buildings. Many of these restrooms were last renovated 15 to 20 years ago and are in need of renovation to ensure the restrooms are functional and an inviting space for public use. This project will involve initial evaluation, design, and renovation of facilities that are past their useful life or are in need of an update in subsequent years. A specific scope will be developed for each restroom building depending on individual needs. This program looks to renovate restrooms at one park per fiscal year. The restrooms at Hart Park were included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26(FY26) CIP. Based upon site inspections and evaluations, the next restroom facility in need of rehabilitation is at Santiago Hills Park.

Project budget: \$70,000

- **Sports Court Resurfacing:** The City has 22 parks, several of which have sports courts. Parks with either tennis/pickleball, basketball, volleyball, and/or handball courts include Steve Ambriz, El Camino Real, Grijalva, Hart, Santiago Hills, and Serrano Parks. Court resurfacing is specialized and requires maintenance on a regular schedule in order to maintain a safe playing surface. A typical maintenance schedule includes court resurfacing every five years. With a total of 10 sports courts, the proposed court resurfacing program will resurface two courts annually based on priority of current conditions for the next 5 years. Estimates to resurface each sports court varies, so project budget will vary every fiscal year. The next two sports courts most in need of resurfacing are the volleyball courts and tennis courts at El Camino Real Park.

As part of the tennis court resurfacing, Commission considered permanently converting one tennis court at El Camino, which currently has a pickleball overlay, into four pickleball courts. The other tennis court with a pickleball court overlay would return to a permanent tennis court, resulting in five permanent tennis courts (see attachment). The conversion will include the installation of four sets of pickleball posts, sleeves and nets, color coating and striping, 3' tall chain link fence to provide a barrier between pickleball courts, and two 3' tall swing gates to close off the fencing between tennis and pickleball courts.

Project budget: \$155,000 (Courts resurfacing and permanent court conversion)

- **Veterans Park Memorial Fountain Restoration:** Due to ground settling, the foundation of the Veterans Memorial fountain at Depot Park is lifting and is no longer level. This has caused fountain water to pass over the weir unevenly, causing tile discoloration and cracking due to mineral buildup. This project includes restoration of the existing fountain to correct waterflow issues, tile removal, and replacement of current tiles at the fountain.

Project budget: \$50,000

- **Santiago Creek Trail - Lodge Pole Fencing Replacement:** Along the north side of the Santiago Creek trail, in the section between S. Cambridge Street heading east to S. Tustin Street, the split-rail fencing is rotted and broken in several places. The splintering wood and fence openings create potential safety hazards for trail users that are currently being addressed with temporary remedies on an as needed basis. Complete replacement is needed for the approximate 2,600 linear feet of fencing and can be completed in one phase.

Project budget: \$60,000

- **Playground Equipment Replacement:** The typical lifespan of park playground equipment is 8-12 years and the existing playground equipment in several of our City parks is reaching the end of their useful life. While they are inspected regularly for safety standard compliance, many are exhibiting signs of wear and tear. Over the years, staff have made numerous repairs and installed replacement pieces, but the equipment will soon need to be replaced altogether. The goal of this project is to replace playground equipment that has reached the end of its life with new, safe, and accessible structures to enhance community well-being and provide a vibrant, engaging play space.

Staff will evaluate all City park playgrounds and will create a list of each playground's current features and conditions. Commission can then prioritize one playground to be replaced annually, based on the community's needs/interests and budget. The cost to replace each park playground will vary, so project budget will vary each fiscal year. The remaining park playgrounds without shade sails installed (one at Hart, Killefer, McPherson, Santiago Hills, and two at Eisenhower), could have shade sails installed along with the installation of new playground equipment.

The FY27 project budget takes into consideration the current average cost of public park playground equipment, the potential need for accessibility upgrades, and possible installation of shade sails still needed at various park locations.

Project budget: \$800,000

In addition to the CIP projects to be submitted for consideration for FY27, the following is a list of previously approved in Fiscal Years 2024-25 and 2025-26 projects, most of which are already in progress, that will carryover into FY27.

- Skate Park at Grijalva Park
- Grijalva Park Master Plan Update
- Hart Park Diamond 1 Field Improvements
- Olive Park Netting Replacement
- El Modena Basin Area Improvements Design
- New Park in West Orange
- Rampart Street Park*
- Parks Master Plan
- Hart Park Bandshell Roof Renovation
- El Modena Park Area Renovation

***Rampart Street Park:** The City is working to secure an operating agreement with OC Public Works for two parcels managed by Orange County Flood Control along the Santa River. The smaller of the two is a narrow parcel, measuring roughly 1 acre, and located next to N. Rampart St., just north of W. Chapman Ave., adjacent to the bike trail, and parallel to the 57 FWY. The parcel has been identified as a location for a new passive park in District 2 that could feature a proposed walking path, dog amenity/park, and water bottle filling station, along with existing mature shade trees. A preliminary conceptual design and cost estimate for design and construction is currently in development. While this project is already approved in the FY26 CIP, the City is awaiting execution of an operating agreement with the County. Once

finalized, the conceptual design will be presented to the Commission for review and public input.

Project Budget: \$1,250,000

7. ATTACHMENTS

- El Camino Real Park Court Resurfacing and Conversion Project Layout



El Camino Park Tennis/Pickleball Conversion



Agenda Item

Park Planning and Community Events Commission

Item #: 4.2.

10/21/2025

File #: 25-0590

TO: Chair and Members of the Park Planning and Community Events Commission

THRU: Leslie Hardy, Community and Library Services Director

FROM: Emily Bustamante, Community Services Assistant Director

1. SUBJECT

2026 3rd of July Celebration

2. SUMMARY

Consideration of a financially feasible re-imagined 3rd of July Celebration in connection with the celebration of the USA250 in 2026.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Review and provide feedback on the proposed 3rd of July event concept.
2. Select up to three Park Planning and Community Events Commissioners to serve on a 3rd of July Celebration Fundraising Subcommittee.

4. FISCAL IMPACT

None.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 3.7: Continue to offer high quality and efficient, city led recreation programs.

6. DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND

Background

On June 25, 2024, the City Council voted to cancel all future special events after July 4, 2024 and funding was eliminated due to budget challenges. On June 28, 2024, Council authorized the continuation of special events on an individual basis if the City received full sponsorships for the event. As a result, the remaining 2024 Concerts in the Park were sponsored by a local business, Treats in the Streets was sponsored and put on by a local non-profit group, and the Tree Lighting event was sponsored by a non-profit and implemented by City staff. Furthermore, in 2025, with no budget for events and reductions in staffing, the 2025 3rd of July event was cancelled, and Concerts in the Park, Treats in the Streets, and Tree Lighting received commitments from local non-profit groups for funding and implementation for multiple years.

3rd of July Celebration

For many years, the City of Orange has hosted a large-scale 3rd of July Celebration featuring live patriotic music, fireworks, and ticketed admission. While the event has been well-attended, it has become increasingly cost-prohibitive due to rising expenses associated with fireworks, audio/visual services, safety measures, venue and road closures, and staff resources required to manage logistics, safety, ticketing, and crowd control.

In connection with the celebration of the nation's 250th birthday, Park Planning and Community Events Commission (Commission) is being asked to provide feedback on a proposed re-imagined 3rd of July that emphasizes community connection, collaboration with local non-profit groups, and is fiscally feasible.

The new concept envisions a free, family-friendly "Semiquincentennial Celebration in the Park" at Hart Park, that could potentially feature:

- A live concert in the park with local or regional performers.
- A Mayor's welcome and small patriotic recognition ceremony honoring the nation's independence and 250th birthday.
- A "Movie in the Park" screening following the concert.
- Activation of existing Hart Park amenities throughout the day such as swimming at Hart Park Pool, pickleball, softball, and other recreational activities.

This approach leverages existing park resources and amenities and creates a welcoming community atmosphere without the high operational costs of a fully enclosed and ticketed event. Given the lack of funding available, the City could explore partnering with local non-profits on the implementation of certain components such as the concert and movie. Other costs associated with the event would need to be covered through funding received through outside sponsorship. Should the Commission consider this model, they are being asked to select up to three Commissioners to form a 3rd of July Celebration Fundraising subcommittee for the purpose of identifying and coordinating with potential sponsors of the event. The subcommittee would be active through July 3, 2026.

7. ATTACHMENTS

- None



Agenda Item

Park Planning and Community Events Commission

Item #: 4.2.

10/21/2025

File #: 25-0590

TO: Chair and Members of the Park Planning and Community Events Commission

THRU: Leslie Hardy, Community and Library Services Director

FROM: Emily Bustamante, Community Services Assistant Director

1. SUBJECT

2026 3rd of July Celebration

2. SUMMARY

Consideration of a financially feasible re-imagined 3rd of July Celebration in connection with the celebration of the USA250 in 2026.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Review and provide feedback on the proposed 3rd of July event concept.
2. Select up to three Park Planning and Community Events Commissioners to serve on a 3rd of July Celebration Fundraising Subcommittee.

4. FISCAL IMPACT

None.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 3.7: Continue to offer high quality and efficient, city led recreation programs.

6. DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND

Background

On June 25, 2024, the City Council voted to cancel all future special events after July 4, 2024 and funding was eliminated due to budget challenges. On June 28, 2024, Council authorized the continuation of special events on an individual basis if the City received full sponsorships for the event. As a result, the remaining 2024 Concerts in the Park were sponsored by a local business, Treats in the Streets was sponsored and put on by a local non-profit group, and the Tree Lighting event was sponsored by a non-profit and implemented by City staff. Furthermore, in 2025, with no budget for events and reductions in staffing, the 2025 3rd of July event was cancelled, and Concerts in the Park, Treats in the Streets, and Tree Lighting received commitments from local non-profit groups for funding and implementation for multiple years.

3rd of July Celebration

For many years, the City of Orange has hosted a large-scale 3rd of July Celebration featuring live patriotic music, fireworks, and ticketed admission. While the event has been well-attended, it has become increasingly cost-prohibitive due to rising expenses associated with fireworks, audio/visual services, safety measures, venue and road closures, and staff resources required to manage logistics, safety, ticketing, and crowd control.

In connection with the celebration of the nation's 250th birthday, Park Planning and Community Events Commission (Commission) is being asked to provide feedback on a proposed re-imagined 3rd of July that emphasizes community connection, collaboration with local non-profit groups, and is fiscally feasible.

The new concept envisions a free, family-friendly "Semiquincentennial Celebration in the Park" at Hart Park, that could potentially feature:

- A live concert in the park with local or regional performers.
- A Mayor's welcome and small patriotic recognition ceremony honoring the nation's independence and 250th birthday.
- A "Movie in the Park" screening following the concert.
- Activation of existing Hart Park amenities throughout the day such as swimming at Hart Park Pool, pickleball, softball, and other recreational activities.

This approach leverages existing park resources and amenities and creates a welcoming community atmosphere without the high operational costs of a fully enclosed and ticketed event. Given the lack of funding available, the City could explore partnering with local non-profits on the implementation of certain components such as the concert and movie. Other costs associated with the event would need to be covered through funding received through outside sponsorship. Should the Commission consider this model, they are being asked to select up to three Commissioners to form a 3rd of July Celebration Fundraising subcommittee for the purpose of identifying and coordinating with potential sponsors of the event. The subcommittee would be active through July 3, 2026.

7. ATTACHMENTS

- None