

City of Piedmont  
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

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DATE: May 04, 2026  
TO: Mayor and Council  
FROM: Rosanna Bayon Moore, City Administrator  
SUBJECT: Receipt of the Park Commission's Annual Report 2026

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RECOMMENDATION

Receive an informational update on the Park Commission's Annual Report. No action required.

BACKGROUND

The Park Commission is submitting an annual report to City Council in accordance with Section 25.13 of the Municipal Code, which states that each commission shall submit in writing to the City Council a report assessing those programs and activities concerning their respective area of responsibility.

At the November 5, 2025 Park Commission meeting, a subcommittee was formed to draft the report. The subcommittee consisted of three Park Commissioners: Tom Smegal, Kimberly Moses, and Arden Hall. Their draft report was presented and discussed at the April 9, 2026 Park Commission meeting.

The Park Commission's 2026 Annual Report is attached for review.

By: Daniel Gonzales, Director of Public Works  
Nancy Kent, Parks & Projects Manager

ATTACHMENTS

A. 2026 Annual Report

City of Piedmont  
Council Agenda Report

Date: May 4, 2026

To: Mayor and Council

From: Tom Smegal, Chair of Parks Commission

Subject: Park Commission Annual Report to Council

Background:

Section 25 of the Municipal Code offers that the Commission shall provide an annual report to the City Council:

Annually, on or before the first day of May, each commission shall submit in writing to the City Council a report assessing those programs and activities concerning its respective areas of responsibility, including the submission of programmatic and fiscal recommendations as appropriate. Each body shall also be responsible for submitting such additional reports as necessary or as requested by the Council. (Ord. No. 395 N.S., §16)

Park Commission Meetings and Activities

The Park Commission met ten times between April 2025 and March 2026. At various meetings, members of the public attended and spoke to the Commission on a variety of topics, both on the agenda and in general session.

The Commission conducted its responsibilities with respect to street tree selection and management, approving several new and replacement street trees and approving removal of certain trees at Staff's and the public's request.

Through its street tree subcommittee, the Commission recommended to staff an expanded palette of street trees which might be suitable for planting in current and future openings. As the Commission discovered at the conclusion of the tree inventory in 2024, there are many currently open potential street tree locations. The purpose of the expanded list was to allow public works the opportunity to increase street tree species diversity, plan for an uncertain future climate, and encourage native plantings when possible.

The Commission further advised staff and made various recommendations to Council about parks projects and activities in accordance with its mandate.

The Park Commission is especially pleased that the Council moved forward with the sustainability master planning process the Commission had recommended in 2024. The Commissioners were eager participants in the scoping, publicity, and public input phases of the plan. The Commission looks forward to the final product guiding City staff consideration of future projects and policies.

In receiving public input on the strategic plan, the Commission heard from members of the community very interested in dog uses of Piedmont's parks. While Piedmont parks are generally open to dogs on leash, increased demand for limited off-leash space (particularly since the closure of the sloped area at Linda Park) necessarily brings residents, dogs, and park maintenance issues into conflict. As the Council receives the final sustainability study, you may see and hear recommendations from citizens about this issue. We acknowledge there has been a long history of discussions at Council over off-leash ordinances. If Council were to be interested in the subject again, the Park Commission would be ready and able to

provide advice on the subject or provide opportunities for public engagement.

The Commission was also pleased this year to see the completion of a study and stylish new bridge near the bottom of Bushy Dell Creek. The Commission first brought the old bridge to the City's attention a few years ago. It was fortunate that Proposition 68 funding was available to complete the project.

During the past year, the Commission provided advice to staff on issues such as dead tree removal/reforestation in Dracena Park, plantings at Oakland Avenue bulb-outs and the Nova/Magnolia island, and the green infrastructure project at Grand and Fairview. The Commission provided an additional public forum for a review of the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan.

The Park Commission furthered its efforts to promote parks and street trees by once again sponsoring an Earth Day/Arbor Day celebration and nominating additional public trees as Heritage Trees. Our celebration was a success again in 2026 with dozens of elementary and pre-K Piedmonters exploring nature and the City's large trucks. Many thanks to Nancy Kent, Nick Milosevich, Deniz Ergun, Echa Schneider, and all city staff for planning, supporting, and publicizing the event and the Heritage Trees. Also we are excited that after many years of planning and discussion, bronze markers for the Heritage Trees are now being fabricated and will be placed soon.

#### 2026 Focus of the Parks Commission

During the remainder of 2026 and into 2027, the Commission, which includes landscape professionals, native plant experts, infrastructure experts, and other valuable skill-sets, is excited to assist staff in efforts to comply with AB 1572 which will ban watering non-functional turf on City property with drinking water beginning in January 2027. We look forward helping finalize the Sustainable Parks Management Plan and assisting staff with future parks projects guided by it.

The Commission is cognizant of the limits on Staff time and the City's budget. We support the continued budgeting of a replacement irrigation system in Piedmont Park. A state-of-the-art irrigation system should improve the aesthetics and usefulness of the park. It would reduce over-watered areas and is likely to save the City money in the long run.

As mentioned above, there are also almost 1,000 open street tree planting locations. The Commission strongly encourages the Council to plan a moderately larger tree-planting budget so that over a period of ten or fifteen years, many more street trees could be added, providing shade, habitat, and other desirable effects in our community.

#### Facilitating Volunteer Efforts

The Park Commission continues to be interested in staff or legal counsel developing guidelines, forms, and rules about volunteer landscape management in Piedmont's more natural park areas. Commissioners and others have expressed strong interest in invasive plant removal and native plantings. Invasive plants including broom, acacia, and ivy are pervasive in parts of Piedmont and Dracena Parks. Community volunteers hope to be able to clear non-native and nuisance vegetation with hand tools, plant natives and climate-adapted species, tend to and propagate seedling plants and clean litter around our parks.

Unfortunately, due to constraints on City Staff time and a lack of historical volunteer initiatives, Piedmont has not been the easiest place to volunteer. The Commission is interested in assisting and

advising Staff on development of more streamlined volunteer coordination, including release forms. We expect possibly to coordinate this effort with the Recreation Commission and staff of the Recreation Department.

#### Conclusion

We respectfully seek feedback from the Council to direct our City Staff and Commission's efforts in a manner that aligns with the Council's future plans for our City's parks and street trees.