



City of Buena Park

MINUTES CLIMATE ACTION COMMISSION AUGUST 5, 2025

1A. CALL TO ORDER

The Climate Action Commission met on August 5, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 6650 Beach Boulevard, Buena Park, CA.

1B. ROLL CALL **PRESENT:** Schooner, Singhal, James, Figueroa, Bendinelli
STAFF: Lotus Thai, Sustainability Manager
Joe Hunt, Public Works Manager
Jeff Porter, Street Services Superintendent
Elizabeth Genera, Recording Secretary

1C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. COMMUNICATIONS

This is a portion of the meeting set aside to invite public comments regarding any matter within the jurisdiction of the Climate Action Commission. Public comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes for each speaker.

2A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

***M/S/P – Singhal/Figueroa – Approval of meeting minutes June 16, 2025

4. OLD BUSINESS – No items.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5A. Discuss Tree Policy and Urban Forest Management Plan – Presented by Joe Hunt, Public Works Manager

The City maintains an urban forest comprised of publicly-owned trees planted in parkways and medians and at parks and facilities. The urban forest consists of approximately 10,700 trees, a number which has remained fairly consistent over the last several years. The city has earned the designation of Tree City USA from the Arbor Day Foundation six times, most recently in 2023.

Last year, the City Council approved the Buena Park Public Tree Policy with the objective to fully realize the benefits of trees in public spaces. The policy clarifies tree selection, maintenance, and conditions for removal. Although the City makes its best efforts to increase the number of public trees, there are still significant number of vacant spots on parkways that could potentially support a tree. Reasons for a spot to be vacant may include, but are not limited to: utility and/or hardscape conflicts, maintaining line of sight, inadequate irrigation or landscape maintenance, disease, or lack of desire for a tree from the adjacent property owner.

Parkway trees are trimmed by the City every few years but watering, cleaning up leaves droppings, and other routine maintenance is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner.

The City Council has asked the Climate Action Commission to review the City's Tree Policy, Urban Forest Management Plan, *Tree Care Guide* door hanger, and the *Benefits of Trees* brochure. All of these documents can be found at buenapark.com/trees.

Public Works Manager Joe Hunt reported that in the last 7 months, Public Works has planted over 400 parkway trees, this surpasses our average of planting 250 trees/year. City Council has approved funds for 2 part-time employees to help water trees, which if sufficiently watered, tree roots will grow down minimizing the damage to sidewalks.

Joe Hunt reported the City is working on a partnership with Buena Park High School to provide saplings for the Student Agriculture Program, creating an orchard to supply parkway trees to the City. In addition, Public Works is working with West Coast Arborists on a proposal to add a *Tree Dashboard* and GIS layer to the City Website to enable residents to access information on tree inventory, canopy cover %, carbon sequestration, pollution removal, avoided runoff, urban heat map, etc.

The Commission discussed the overall direction and theme(s) for Urban Forest Management Plan last update in 2010. The discussion included questions: Are the goals in line with today's goals? Should the City to focus on more specific types of trees to plant on parkway? Are there any updates to the current maintenance practices and standards section? Commissioners offered several suggestions.

Chair Schooner stated that more water trucks are needed to ensure new trees get water in areas without irrigation. The Commission discussed the current guidelines for residents who refuse to water or care for trees; perhaps more incentive for residents would encourage residents to take care of parkway trees. Trees native to California should be added to the approved tree list. When a City tree is removed, a new tree should immediately be planted in its place.

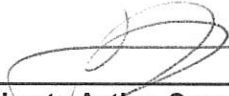
Lotus Thai reported that the City Council would like the Commissions input on the development of a Community Orchard. A community orchard is a collection of fruit trees in a public space like a park. The program would provide the community with a healthy food system, volunteer opportunities, and environmental benefits. On the other hand, the program would require paid staff time to maintain, proper care so trees produce tasty ripe fruit, and could attract loitering and pests. There are two community gardens in the City for Buena Park residents; there is a high demand for more community gardens. The startup cost for a community orchard is approximately \$10,000.00.

Chair Schooner stated that a community orchard would need to be well supervised for liability reasons. Commissioner Bendinelli stated that it is a great idea; signage should be used to make rules clear. He suggested a group from Buena Park like the boys and girls club or high school could learn a lot about agriculture and also be a good volunteer base for the orchard.

6. CITY/STAFF UPDATES, INFORMATIONAL ITEMS, FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. The next regular scheduled meeting is September 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.



Elizabeth Genera, Recording Secretary

Climate Action Commission Chair