

MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
September 4, 2025**

Meeting Location:

Balboa Park Club Santa Fe Room
2150 Pan American Road West\
San Diego, CA 92101

Mailing Address:

Balboa Park Administration Building
2125 Park Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92101-4792

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

Allison Soares
David Baron
Jake Banfield-Weir
Howard Blackson
Mandy Brown
Makeda Cheatom
Chris Eddy
Patty Riddle
Michael Robinson
Tim Shields
Michael Singleton
Kathy Vandenheuvel

Members Absent

None

Staff Present

Jon Richards
Tyler Canales
Anthony Harrington

CALL TO ORDER

Allison Soares called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES July 10, 2025

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Baron/ Mr. Shields

A motion was made by Mr. Baron and seconded by Mr. Shields to approve the July 10, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion carried (10-0-1).

NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Web Form:

None

In-Person:

Andrea Zinco – The Puppet Theatre will be celebrating 70 years in the park They continue to serve patrons from not only San Diego County, but from all over the world.

Daniele Laman – The 90th Anniversary of HPR is this weekend. There will be a parade from the Organ Pavilion down the Prado.

Joe Mazares – HPR is 90 years this year. There will be a year long celebration. The opening weekend is this weekend.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

None.

STAFF REPORT

Ryan Darcey, Council District 3 – Councilmember Whitburn does not support the Balboa Park Paid Parking plan as it stands now. He asked for extend He will be voting no on the item at the Council Meeting on September 15th.

Michael Bravo, 78th District – None

SDPD - None

Jon Richards, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – Thanked everyone in attendance for being at the meeting and what they contribute to the park. The Planning Department was awarded a \$700,000 grant to conduct the Balboa Park Multimodal Mobility Study. They anticipate receiving another \$1 million grant from SANDAG. They plan launch the initiative with a webpage in the beginning of September. Morley Field water was shut off due to a main line water break and should be reopen 9/5. The Balboa Park- San Diego High School connections report will be presented to City Council on 9/8. San Diego Heart and Stroke Walk is 9/20 on the West Mesa and Haunted Trails will run from 9/28-11/11 also on the West Mesa.

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Forever Balboa Park – None.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Peter Comiskey – The Partnership looks after collaborations and advocates for the Park institutions. Thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Committee of 100 – Kevin Carpenter – Annual meeting will be on Monday at the Comic-Con Museum. Fencing for the Municipal Gym project has gone up. Connections Report to be presented at City Council on Monday. C100 objects to paid parking, but continues to discuss it..

Save Starlight – Vincent Puma/Steve Stopper – Finished collaborating with Twilight Concerts on 33 events that totaled 40,000 patrons in attendance. Paid parking would hurt attendance. Opened a SDPD storefront at Starlight which has helped containing intrusions. Still working on SUP but the process is going slow.

Village Arts & Education Foundation – Summer camps were very successful. Continues to have classes of various types. Opera Neo was very successful. Would like to see parking stay as it is.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

None

CONSENT ITEMS

Item 1: Village Arts & Education Foundation New Juried Artists

Presenter: Frank Casciani, Village Arts & Education Foundation

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Baron/ Mr. Shields

A motion was made by Mr. Baron and seconded by Mr. Shields to approve the July 10, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion carried (10-0-1).

INFORMATION ITEMS

None

DISCUSSION

Item 2: Park Ways: Balboa Drive – Event Cancelled

Presenter: Chloe Lauer, San Diego Bike Coalition

WORKSHOP ITEMS

Item 3: Balboa Park Paid Parking

Presenter: Emily Piatanesi, Office of the Mayor, Conrad Wear, Program Manager, Parks and Recreation.

Public Comment:

Web Form:

Debra Cantu - Free parking or (reduced parking permit) for SDCDA is crucial to provide accessible arts programming to the community. Has anyone suggested a parking permit to be included with any CLASS Registration vs. General Zoo Parking?

Clara Downes - I have concerns about the paid parking in Balboa Park. We are a local non-profit, Sports for Exceptional Athletes, and utilize Balboa Park facilities a few times during the year. We serve adults and children with developmental/intellectual disabilities by offering sports and recreational opportunities. We host an annual full day volleyball tournament in November at Balboa Park Activity Center with the help of several volunteer groups who serve as scorekeepers, team aides, etc. Family and friends attend to cheer on their sons/daughters. Many of our participants are low income and paying for 6-8 hours of parking would deter them from attending. Our other events in Balboa Park are fundraisers, one in the evening and the other during the day. Volunteers helping at those events would be there 6 to 8 hours. These events are important to our programs and placing this added expense on volunteers and attendees may adversely affect their success. Please consider the burden on the people who volunteer at events in the park. There is a whole array of people who volunteer at the museums, galleries, cottages, etc. throughout the park.

Mar Fernandez - I live in Chula Vista and my daughter, and I have been taking dance classes at Balboa Park for 20 years and we want to continue because is a good source of creativity and exercise plus friendship and personal connections. All the San Diego rec center programs at Balboa Park (and museum camps and programs) are a blessing for families and specially our youth who can have a safe creative and learning environment. I am afraid that paying for parking will deter parents and adults to continue taking classes there. We cannot pay for fancy dance studios (besides the quality of dance, ballet, music and theatre and all classes here are superb, we are really very lucky). It is an investment really for the city to continue having this programs available. Recitals and exhibitions have been exposing how great San Diego City is. We have many visitors from all over the country and overseas. Balboa Park is a beautiful place and what

makes it more beautiful is the regulars who meet here for just strolling or by taking a class. It will be hardship for all of us to pay extra for parking. This will definitely deter a lot of families to come here and enjoy this magnificent place. Please let's find another way to help the city, fund-raising or special events but please don't do this mandatory to families. We want to help. I would volunteer in a fund-raising event. Thank You.

Jennifer Kazan - My comment concerns the paid parking issue at balboa park. Implementing paid parking will impact visitor revenue and also deter residents to enjoy and support balboa park activities such as the old globe and the museum of art.

Tom Hicke - Charging for parking at Balboa Park creates multiple problems for the volunteers that love and support the programs. Volunteers are already paying for family member to participate in events at Balboa Park. Having to pay for costumes, classes, performance fees, and tickets for the events already create financial stress for some volunteers' families. The proposed "affordable or discount" parking for volunteers is not near the venues that are used and asking volunteers and their families to have walk after events through unsafe areas of the Park is not reasonable. The City is creating financial stress and potentially putting volunteers' safety at risk. The charging for parking also impacts non volunteer/participant low-income families, seniors and others that come to the park to enjoy its beauty.

Mary Laiuppa - I am against charging fees for parking in Balboa Park. I am a senior on a fixed income. I do have a car but if I have to pay to park in Balboa Park, a PUBLIC park, that is just a bit too much no matter what the fee is. The cost of living is going up considerably and by charging me to park my car to enjoy a PUBLIC park, that means that what once was a free activity I could enjoy frequently is one that I can no longer afford to enjoy at all. This restricts our "free" public spaces to only those that can afford to pay extra for them. My taxes will pay for the park that I can no longer afford to enjoy. I am AGAINST charging a parking fee to park in Balboa Park or any free public space owned by the city that is paid for by my tax dollars. That includes parking in public beach areas or other public parks and open spaces.

Sandra Yeaman - In addition to being a volunteer at the House of Norway, hosting at the cottage at least once a month on weekends, I have been hosting a crafting session twice a month to teach Norwegian crafts to interested participants since 2022. Some of the attendees come from as far away as Temecula for these sessions. We have had participants from Japan and Hungary as well as children as young as 10 wanting to learn how to knit, crochet, and complete Hardanger embroidery projects. I fear that if they must pay to park, they will no longer take part and we will lose an opportunity to share our cultural traditions with others. I am also concerned about how the city plans to monitor who are volunteers at the many museums, including the international village cottages, if the plans include free or reduced parking for us. I fear it will be cumbersome with the result being that many volunteers will stop being available or end up paying for parking because the process won't be simple to follow.

Jim Walker - An Open Letter to the City of San Diego
Regarding the Proposed Balboa Park Parking Fees by Jim Walker, San Diego Archers Club,
September 2, 2025

Why Paid Parking Threatens the Heart of Balboa Park

To the Honorable Mayor and Balboa Park Committee Members,

For nearly a century, the San Diego Archers have cared for the Rube Powell Archery Range in Balboa Park. Without city funding, our volunteers have preserved one of the last public field archery ranges in Southern California.

For a nominal fee, families, students, and seniors can enjoy year-round access to a healthy and inclusive activity.

The City's proposal to introduce paid parking threatens this tradition. A park that has always been free and open risks becoming, in effect, a gated space—less welcoming to the very people who built and sustained it.

Accessibility at Risk

Balboa Park has long been a rare place where cultural and recreational opportunities were not defined by cost. Parking fees turn a simple day at the park into an added expense, shutting out seniors on fixed incomes, families with children, and others who rely on these commons as one of the last affordable spaces in our city.

Volunteers Discouraged

The Archery Range is maintained entirely by volunteers, many of them older adults who carry heavy equipment to keep this historic facility alive. Asking them to park far away and navigate trams or long walks will drive them away.

As one member put it: "If I can't park close enough to carry my gear, I simply can't volunteer anymore." Without volunteers, the archery ranges—and many other nonprofit programs—cannot survive.

Impact on Cultural Life

Balboa Park is not just a collection of museums and gardens; it is a cultural hub that draws visitors from across the region. Events like our annual King Arthur Archery Tournament, alongside concerts, plays, and exhibitions, are woven into the life of the city. Parking fees will discourage participation, weaken community traditions, and chip away at the park's role as San Diego's cultural heart.

A Better Way Forward

Nonprofits and volunteers should not be treated like commercial operators. We urge the city to adopt a nonprofit and volunteer parking permit system—one that protects access, supports those who maintain the park, and ensures cultural events remain open to all.

Balboa Park has always been a place where everyone belongs. The San Diego Archers have upheld that vision for generations. We ask you to preserve it for the generations to come.

Respectfully,

Jim Walker

With The San Diego Archers

Stewards of the Rube Powell and Morley Field Archery Ranges

Joyce Walker - Parking at Balboa Park? After 100 years of not charging?! What are you thinking?! This is a civic treasure and should not be charged to visit/experience. I express my deepest and loudest NOOOOOOOO to this idea. It is misguided - you will be losing the soul of the city to your greed. I often would go for a quick visit to smell the roses. Now I have to PAY 10 bucks or whatever ridiculous fee to do that? My husband volunteers and practically runs the archery club there. He's there several times a week, maintaining the site - now he has to pay to do that? And there are archery events every other week - now you expect participants to pay for the event AND to park? This will devastate this club. This is all just WRONG, WRONG, WRONG!!!

William Green - Balboa Park, The San Diego Zoo, and all the museums and buildings in the park is the grand crown of the City of San Diego. Please do not tarnish the crown with parking meters or a device. Keep Balboa free.

LuAnn Benton - I'm President of the San Diego Mineral & Gem Society in Balboa Park, a nonprofit 501(c)(3). We have approximately 40-60 volunteers who are officers, board of directors, instructors or those with special assignments. No one is paid. Many are elderly with limited income who pull a cart with workshop supplies, making parking a distance away a major issue. Our oldest is 92. We offer 30 workshops a week in a variety of lapidary skills. They typically run three to six hours long, averaging six students, who pay a nominal fee which goes toward upkeep and maintenance on equipment. We have a junior's division for 12-17-year-olds and give tours. We're open seven days/week 11-4pm and hold three public meetings a month with speakers. We are an integral part of what brings visitors to the park and to penalize the volunteers who run the workshops throughout the seven days by making them pay for parking or have to park a distance from where they instruct is cutting at the core organizations who support Balboa Park this way. Please do not cut off those who contribute to what makes Balboa Park a wonderful and pleasant place to come and enjoy the day.

Itziar Parramon - Dear Balboa Park Committee,
My name is Itziar Parramon. I serve as an instructor and board member of the San Diego Mineral & Gem Society (SDMG). I am writing to express serious concern about the proposed installation of parking meters in Balboa Park.

SDMG is a nonprofit organization that has been serving the San Diego community for over 80 years. We provide accessible, hands-on educational programs in earth sciences, all made possible by a team of dedicated volunteers. Our classes and workshops are open to all, and we take pride in fostering curiosity and learning across generations.

The introduction of parking fees in Balboa Park will create a significant financial burden for our members, instructors, and students—many of whom are seniors, youth, or individuals with limited incomes. This change threatens to reduce participation, increase barriers to community engagement, and undermine the inclusive, educational mission that both SDMG and Balboa Park stand for.

We respectfully urge the Committee to reconsider this decision or create exemptions for nonprofit, volunteer-run organizations like ours. Supporting accessibility ensures that Balboa Park remains a vibrant and welcoming space for all.

Sincerely,

Itziar Parramon

San Diego Mineral & Gem Society

Angela Barnes - In regard to possible parking fees, please consider the financial strain that has occurred as a result of tremendous cost of living increases in the San Diego area in recent years. Balboa Park offers a priceless resource for people in the San Diego area as a place to relax and release stress with the beautiful gardens and scenery, opportunities for exercising outdoors, and access to life-enriching art and culture. Parking fees at Balboa would be a detriment to the well-being of the community, hindering many from accessing these much-needed resources. As a parent of five children who have enjoyed many trips to Balboa Park since their babyhoods, I urge you, please do not add another financial obligation to an already financially strained community.

Please keep free parking in Balboa Park and ensure accessibility to all who benefit from its many gifts.

Larry Shute - Paid parking for Balboa Park and environs is a bad idea. The purpose and spirit of public spaces is not to generate revenue but to serve as a community resource. Parking fees will restrict access for many who can't or won't pay for parking. Please reconsider. Additionally, the changes to Park Boulevard roadways are very dangerous and confusing with bus only lanes changing to parking and going on-and-off, sometime bus only then switching to parking and/or stripped non-use islands. This effectively removes half of the roadway to already congested park traffic. Restripe and return Park Blvd. to a full two-lane roadway and maybe add pullouts to the existing roadway for bus only use.

Marilyn McKeegan - We are residents on Sixth Ave. Our apartment complex does not provide parking, so all 18 units must find street parking every day. The addition of meters will make it extremely difficult to afford parking in our neighborhood. Currently there is limited free parking that is difficult enough to find now. Will the city provide residents like us the ability to purchase a permit, so we won't have to feed a meter every 4 hours every day (except Sunday)? At the time of the survey, there were 3 large construction sites in the area, and workers found parking along Sixth and in the park. Therefore, the data from this survey on parking availability is not an accurate reflection of the normal state of parking in the community. It is commonly stated by developers, city council members, etc. that there is adequate public transportation for our use, which is definitely not the case. This is not New York City or San Francisco. We would appreciate your attention to our concerns, and assistance in solving this problem for us and our neighbors.

Julie Cuevas - I live in Carlsbad and commute down to Balboa Park to dance with SDCDA because it is one of the best and most affordable dance programs, I have found in all of San Diego County. It provides such a valuable service not only to our vulnerable youth but also to our active and aging adults. We form a community that brings health, happiness, and creativity into our lives and artistry to the city as a whole. In this day and age where physical and mental health issues loom large, these services are vital to any community.

If you start charging dancers of SDCDA or other nonprofit organizations to pay to park, I guarantee you will have many members stop taking classes or volunteering their time. It simply won't make sense to come anymore if parking costs more than the classes or events themselves. I worry that many organizations like SDCDA might need to close down due to low enrollment or participation. Balboa Park is a special place for many different reasons, but the presence of these groups and their performances add to the colorful ambience that makes the park so special. Balboa Park would not be the same without these many diverse groups....please work with them to make this parking situation manageable.

My personal story.... I'm a 49-year-old performing female dancer of SDCDA and rehearse every Thursday evening from 8-10pm at War Memorial plus many added weekend rehearsals and workshops. During shows in October, December, January, February, and June I'm often in the park anywhere from 4-12 hours a day at the Casa del Prado Theater either performing or volunteering. This easily adds up to 175+ hours a season. I do not get paid for my participation but do it because I love dancing and the SDCDA community...and up until now it has been affordable. I would like to offer some ideas to keep it affordable:

Solutions:

1. Free parking passes for all members/employees/volunteers of programs like SDCDA.
2. Half price parking for all members/volunteers of programs like SDCDA & free for employees.

3. Free parking anywhere in the park after 4:00pm for everybody to help at night.
4. Scrap this paid parking idea completely...it is not too late. San Diego residents do not want it.

Please do not suggest I park at Inspiration Point and shuttle back there from War Memorial or the theater when I exit a rehearsal or show at 10-10:30pm. I already worry for my safety as it is parking right next to those venues and the thought of parking so far away and possibly traveling alone to my car scares me. I predict you might see an increase in assaults and crime if employees, volunteers, and performers are asked to travel long distances to return to their cars during late night hours. Plus, won't the city need to pay for shuttle service or extra security into the late-night hours?

Srinivas Reddy - The Rainbow Drum Circle meets at Marston Point in Balboa Park every Sunday from 10am to around 5pm. It is a welcoming environment that anchors the community with vibrant rhythms that literally every single person enjoys. Drummers come from all over San Diego to participate and enrich the environment and this has been going on for decades. Unfortunately, your latest Parking Rules and meters may cause the drum circle to fall apart. Most drummers can barely afford gas to come to the circle and the burden of parking fees will most certainly cause them to stay away. Please rethink your decision and let us preserve our cultural treasures!

Kathleen Fleming - I am writing regarding the proposed parking fees at Balboa Park and the potential impact on SDCDA Dancers and Volunteers. SDCDA currently utilizes facilities in Balboa Park and at the War Memorial Building daily for classes for recreational and company level dancers. In Spring 2025, there was a total of 1,076 dancers and staff who utilized Balboa Park. The performance level dancers and volunteers represent the City at events throughout the community. SDCDA strives to offer affordable opportunities for the San Diego city residents and visitors who value arts programming. Company level dancers rely on being able to practice at Balboa Park facilities. Recreational dancers participate in classes that might otherwise be outside of their budget. The cost of paying for parking would exceed \$600 a year to attend classes twice a week, which does not include the additional costs for rehearsals and performances. The parking cost would result in a great reduction in the number of people able to afford to attend classes (e.g. working-class families, retired seniors, and single adults. I am advocating that all SDCDA dancers and volunteers have free parking for all program related items and for free parking passes for all attendees at SDCDA performances.

Anna Stovall - Over the last year, I have taken dance classes at Balboa Park through the San Diego Civic Dance Arts program. My classes bring me to Balboa Park two nights a week, and they have rekindled my love and passion for dance and introduced me to wonderful, creative, hardworking people. However, this paid parking plan for Balboa Park puts my ability to continue participating in this program in jeopardy. With everything else in life increasing in cost, I don't know if I can afford an extra \$12-\$24 a week for parking before the resident discount pilot program begins. (Since my dance classes are at Casa del Prado at night, I prefer to park as close as possible for safety reasons so that I am not walking as far to my car in the dark.) These costs would also provide additional barriers to other city residents to be able to visit and enjoy the park. At the very least there could be hourly rates in these lots so that visitors don't have to pay a full day's rate for only an hour or two of time at the park. I also object to this plan's limiting of park employee and volunteer free parking to lower tier lots. I say this with my dance teachers in mind; under this plan they would potentially have to walk farther to their cars by themselves at night. Please include Level 1 lots in the free parking provided to employees and volunteers for their convenience and safety. Doing so would support your stated plan to "ensure secure, streamlined access" for them. I understand that the city is having budget shortfalls, and that maintaining the park and its infrastructure costs money. These concerns need to be balanced with the needs of the city's

residents who are already struggling with one of the highest costs of living in the nation, who enjoy Balboa Park as a free or low-cost place to exist in public, who find joy and enrichment in many of the programs offered at the park, and the people who work hard to keep the park a wonderful place to be. Some tweaks to the proposed plan would make it more equitable for the citizens of San Diego.

Tricia Gray - I understand that the agenda for your next Council Meeting includes discussion on the proposed parking fees for Balboa Park. I am reaching out to share how that proposal will negatively affect your constituents, including my family, residents of Point Loma/Ocean Beach. My 2 daughters and I dance with San Diego Civic Dance Arts (SDCDA), part of the San Diego Parks and Recs Department, a program I started with in 1988 as a preschooler. The program offers dance classes at rec centers throughout the city. For whatever reason, no SDCDA classes are offered at any of the three rec centers (OB, Cabrillo, and Presidio) in our area. This means that Balboa Park is the closest location for us to pursue our passion for dance. I wanted to share the impact of the proposal on my family as an example of the burden this plan will have on families that use the park for city sponsored programs. As I mentioned above, we are at the park five days a week for dance classes and based on the proposal maps, all of the parking near the dance studios is Zone 1, which means it will cost \$12 per day to park. This amounts to \$60 a week for my family. Dance sessions are typically 10 weeks with three sessions per year, so imposing paid parking in Balboa Park is going to potentially cost my family an additional \$1,800 per year. This is more than the cost of the dance classes through the city's program. Some of the other students in my daughter's classes are on fee waivers, meaning their family incomes are low enough that they do not pay fees for classes. Charging these families to park is going to make dance classes inaccessible for low-income families. I see the proposal includes lots with lower fees, but the distance between those lots and the dance studios at Casa del Prado are not feasible for families trying to rush dancers to class after a full day at work and school. Thinking ahead, I have considered that maybe dropping my daughters off without parking would be a solution, but unfortunately, the park has its fair share of mentally unstable and drug abusers, who are allowed to loiter and reside in the park, and I'm not willing to compromise my daughters' safety. To be blunt, this is a shortsighted and terrible proposal. Once again, citizens of San Diego are being forced to foot the bill because the city government cannot manage their budget in a fiscally responsible manner. I hope you speak up for your constituents and oppose this plan.

Rebecca Marie Eusey - Do not charge for parking at balboa park.

Anne Haugh - I find the proposed parking fees absolutely reprehensible. As a member of the SDMG, I attend classes there once a week and would attend more if I were able. This wonderful organization provides low-cost educational opportunities and programs, a free museum, and a place for people of all ages and backgrounds to learn from volunteer instructors, as well as from each other. On the whole, these are not wealthy people, and I am certain these outrageous parking fees will affect at least 80% of the members AND VOLUNTEERS -- they will no longer come to the "Club" and this 90-year-old Club will not be able to exist. We are not tourists with extra money to spend on vacation -- and many of us are too old to possibly haul our own tools from far away parking lots. Charge SMALL fees if you must, but these fees are totally unreasonable and ridiculous for those of us who have supported the park for YEARS! Shame on you!

Brad Eisenberg - My family has been coming to the park for nearly 50 years for recreation, education, and entertainment. We've been members of the non-profit San Diego Gem & Minerals Society, the Zoological Society and art guilds. Our children have participated in Junior Theater and museum camps as well as sports at Morley Field. The free parking has allowed unfettered access to the important cultural center for decades. The City has been reducing parking

availability around Balboa Park for several years now under the auspices of the climate action plan, making it more difficult to access the shopping and restaurant areas. Parking fees at the public space will further reduce the quality of life of people living around the park especially lower income people.

Regan Savalla - Balboa Park is a crown jewel of San Diego, a sprawling urban oasis cherished by residents and visitors alike. It is crucial to recognize paid parking would fundamentally alter the park's character, eroding its value as a free and accessible public space. This is not a solution to traffic; it is a deterrent that restricts access for locals, threatens the park's role as a community gathering place, and ultimately diminishes the essence of what makes it San Diego's treasure. The most direct and damaging consequence of is the creation of a financial barrier that disproportionately impacts the San Diego community. For decades, locals have enjoyed the freedom to visit the park spontaneously—to walk their dogs, exercise, read on a bench, or simply escape the urban hustle. This daily, casual use is the lifeblood of the park. A policy of paid parking would impose a continuous financial burden on these dedicated residents. For someone who currently visits almost every day after work, the cumulative cost would be prohibitive, forcing me to abandon a cherished routine and lose a vital part of my well-being. The financial barrier is not merely an inconvenience; it represents a regressive tax on a cherished public resource, disproportionately affecting those with lower incomes, as well as students, families, and seniors who rely on free access for their recreation and well-being. For these community members, the park is a vital and cost-effective escape. For a family or an individual visiting multiple times a week, a small hourly fee can quickly add up to an unsustainable expense. It turns a spontaneous, joyful outing into a calculated, budget-straining decision. Moreover, implementing paid parking sends a powerful and negative symbolic message. It transforms a public space—historically a gift to the city—into a commercial enterprise. The park's identity as a free and open sanctuary would be compromised, alienating the very people it was intended to serve. This policy would not just deter casual visitors; it would alienate the people who consider it “their park.”

The true value of Balboa Park is not measured in the number of museums or attractions, but in its profound and enduring role in the lives of San Diegans. It is a place of community, a venue for local events, and an essential part of the city's identity. The decision to implement paid parking is a choice between prioritizing revenue and preserving the park's identity as a jewel for its residents. Rather than imposing this barrier, San Diego should explore more thoughtful and equitable solutions. Investing in expanded public transportation routes, offering free shuttle services from peripheral lots, and promoting carpooling could all effectively manage traffic flow without punishing daily visitors. These solutions would address the root problem of congestion while preserving the fundamental principle of free and open access. By maintaining free parking, the city affirms its commitment to its citizens, ensuring that Balboa Park remains a truly public space—a place where everyone is welcome, and its gates, and the freedom to access them, are always open.

Adriane Levy - Re: Parking Meters in Balboa Park:

1. The Zoo must maintain free parking for its visitors: it should not follow the example of the rest of the Park. It is a separate entity and already costs a lot to visit.
2. For many San Diegans free access to the Park may be their only way to enjoy the area: they are not dining in the restaurants nor are they going into exhibits. Having a few distant free spots is unfair. One of the beauties of the Park is that access is free.
3. It is also rude to ask visitors to pay the maximum in parking fees and the idea of giving residents a discount does not make the meters acceptable. If meters are going to be installed at the very least the charges should be less than those at other metered spots. And the metering should

end at 6 pm. San Diegans have enough financial burdens without free access to the Park being compromised.

Natalie Milling - Many community groups meet at Balboa Park after the museums and tourist attractions close at 5pm. Just an example: the Freeskate Thursday lessons and practice from 5-7pm every week in front of the Air and Space Museum. Freeskaters in the community come together to practice, learn, and teach this rare form of skating. This location is a perfect incline to learn such a skill and has been for over 4 years of weekly community gatherings. Why not revise the paid parking hours to end at 5pm rather than 8pm? What is the average occupancy rate of each lot after 5pm? Is the revenue after 5pm such that paying parking enforcement those extra 3 hours, creating 2-shifts instead of 1, worth the amount of evening patrons? How many of those patrons are tourists and how many are community members gathering and enjoying our favorite park? These are the questions that need answering before approving the current plan in the Balboa Park Paid Parking Implementation Update.

James F Newland - I am a member of San Diego Mineral and Gem. I am a senior on a fixed income. My only social activity I have is going to class one day a week at SDMG, Parking fees would put this out of my budget.

Anne Stoup - I work at The Old Globe Theatre, am 65 and currently have mobility issues not severe enough to merit handicapped parking. Your proposals would not allow people like me to park for free in the Alcazar or Organ Pavilion lots. And asking employees to add unspecified extra commute time to their day to take a tram into the park proper is just not right. Also, your current proposed paid hours window will negatively impact the patrons of The Old Globe. Parking is already difficult, and you would force everyone attending an evening performance to pay for parking. If you have to implement paid parking in Balboa Park, I believe it should end at 6 pm, not 8 pm. The park should be open to all and paid parking will negatively impact poorer families who had a free place to enjoy themselves. Shame on the City of San Diego for not taking better care of its own.

Megan Woodley - This plan punishes the workers and volunteers that work in the park daily. We have older workers and volunteers- asking them to walk long distances is cruel. There is also no guarantee that employees will get parking since these are public lots. Employees don't come in at the same time every day and parking is already an issue. Employees and volunteers should have passes that give them free access to all lots. Parking is already a problem in the park. Solutions: 1. build up/out/ down alcazar and make that an employee parking lot. 2. Buy the parking structure from the zoo that's behind the Globe/zoo/art museum and turn that into an employee lot 3. Give all employees free parking passes. Employees and volunteers do so much already.

Allison Dries-Padilla - I deplore the City of San Diego to keep parking in and around Balboa Park free. As a life-long resident of San Diego I disagree with the implementation of paid parking in Balboa Park. Balboa Park has always been a free and accessible gathering place for many San Diegans. Charging for parking would limit access to the park and completely tarnish the culture and community value of Balboa Park. Also being a student of the SDCDA, I am concerned that requiring paid parking in and around the park would lead to the downfall of this and other similar programs. The draw for continuing to take classes with SDCDA was the accessible price point of ~\$50 per class. Having to pay \$6 per class would put the cost of parking higher than the cost of the class itself (10 classes per session x \$6 per class = \$60). Not only would this deter other students from joining the program, it would also limit the staffing of these programs. For many of the staff at SDCDA, the cost of parking would be greater than their wage. We as humans and residents of San Diego crave third spaces. Paying for parking is regressive and gives residents a

negative moral at the future of the City. Sure, charge non-residents of SD that come and use our city as a playground; but don't charge the tax-paying, hard-working residents of San Diego County. Balboa Park serves as the primary third space for many and parking at Balboa should remain FREE for SD County residents.

Christian Juarez - Implementing costly hourly paid parking meters in a public park will hinder park visits. The hourly cost will be a detriment to those who have classes, museum goers, and outdoor enthusiasts. Zoo visitors will suffer paying almost the same price as a zoo ticket for parking alone. Additionally, implementing expensive hourly rates will incentivize visitors to park in nearby already-crowded residential streets, which will impact local residents. The purpose of a public park is to have free public parking.

Bozier Demaree - I am a volunteer in Balboa Park at the Old Globe's three theaters and at the San Diego Mineral and Gem Society and am often there several days a week. If parking is charged in the park and near the SD Mineral and Gem Society, I will be unable to continue to volunteer. You must make exceptions for the hundreds of volunteers that help staff museums, rose garden and many other organizations or you will destroy many of them. They cannot continue (a) without volunteers and (b) without the thousands of residents unable to afford to park when they come with their families to spend the day in the park. Balboa Park is a jewel that all residents deserve to use, especially low-income families who have nothing else to enjoy but this park. Do not take that away from our residents who have relied on this park to entertain their children for generations. That is how the park was intended. Don't destroy it because you messed up with Ash Street and are just trying to find a way to make the residents pay for your mistake!

Karina Plascencia - For the love of art and accessibility for all, please do not implement paid parking at Balboa Park. Growing up this was one of the only places my low-income family could actually have fun recreational outings without hurting my parents' budget and we had a blast going on walks and seeing the beautiful buildings, fountains and built a community with local vendors and families. If we had to pay for parking and worry about a parking meter expiring or the possibility of a parking ticket we couldn't afford, we just wouldn't risk going there. Please continue to keep this beautiful park accessible to all!!! I understand the point is to increase funding for park maintenance but there has to be other ways to do so. The local families and children that love the park's beautiful playgrounds, greenery and architecture will no longer be able to frequently enjoy them. It will forever become a strictly tourist attraction and not be as locally loved as it is now. Please please please, I urge you to think about the impact this will have on the community in which many surrounding places are already inaccessible to many; don't take away one of the last accessible AND walkable places. The beauty of balboa park was one of the first places I was exposed to art and history as well as small business vendors. Not only will this deter people from visiting the park itself but vendors and small businesses that set themselves up inside of balboa park will also suffer financially from the reduction of foot traffic in the area. It's a beautiful community and forcing visitors to pay for parking will tarnish and take away from the community so much. With the current state of the world, economy, job market, and living costs residents have too many stressors; global distress, sociopolitical stress, climate anxiety and most of all financial stress. We need a space to decompress, distract, exercise, and admire nature, art, history, architecture etc without having to think how much it will cost to go there. It takes away from how enjoyable it is. PLEASE DO NOT FORCE LOCAL RESIDENTS & OTHERS TO PAY FOR PARKING AT BALBOA PARK. :(

Cara Lantz - Paid parking in Balboa Park is economically discriminatory to low-income residents, as well as the Parks and Rec department and San Diego Civic Dance Arts (SDCDA), and the proposed "free parking areas" are UNSAFE for our community. SDCDA is a core function of the

City of San Diego, with teachers who are City of San Diego employees. What studies have been done as to how paid parking will affect the 154 City staff and dancers (on average) who are on site in Balboa Park DAILY? SDCDA employees and dancers utilize the park daily and will be extremely negatively affected by paid parking. In Spring 2025, SDCDA had approximately 1,100 dancers and staff utilizing Balboa Park and War Memorial each week for classes. The proposed parking options (inspiration point) are incredibly UNSAFE for our dancers, which are primarily young women and girls. Some classes run until after 10pm. How will the City plan to SAFELY provide parking for these dancers and city employees? What is the city's budget for the legal consequences of this action? It is guaranteed that the City of San Diego will be sued for economic discrimination and lack of due diligence in this matter. How is the City planning to mitigate these costs in an effort to raise money through parking? Has there been an economic impact report done to assess the impact on the neighboring communities? The residents in the surrounding neighborhoods will be immensely impacted by parking. How is the City planning to provide SAFE parking and transportation to SAFE parking for City employees and SDCDA dancers and volunteers which will cover ALL available hours of their operation? How is the City planning to monitor these SAFE parking options? Will there be SAFE transportation and security to these parking lots provided for students and teachers leaving class at 10pm? SDCDA strives to offer affordable and FREE opportunities to the City of San Diego residents and visitors to enjoy arts programming. Low income and fee-waiver students will be unable to participate with the current parking changes. Many families will be forced to leave a long-standing involvement with the SDCDA program due to the inability to SAFELY park near their classes and the Casa del Prado theater. In 2025, we welcomed over 13,000 individuals (not including December Nights) to our ticketed events. We are asking for free parking for all SDCDA dancers (recreational and performance level) and the family volunteers who support our programming in the Balboa Park community. Additionally, we are asking for free parking passes for attendees at our performances. Again, we strive to offer affordable and FREE opportunities, and our concern is that our program will shrivel without the city's support in this matter.

Elizabeth Nelson - Keep balboa parking free. Budget deficit should come out of the San Diego Police Department instead.

James Parrish - San Diego Mineral and Gem Society is a 501(c)(3) organization. We have served the San Diego community since 1934. The paid parking proposal for Balboa Park may curtail all of our non-profit, volunteer and educational programs, effectively shutting down all of our Society's programs, which are available to the community at low or no cost. Please bear in mind the following considerations when drafting your final recommendation to the City Council: SDMG has approx. 700 members. Approx. 55 instructors, assistants, curators, maint. docents who volunteer their time to teach 26 classes per week. Approx. 300 students, including seniors, kids, handicapped, and low-income individuals, carry tools and equipment for their classes from their cars. Our classes are priced to support seniors, kids, handicapped, and low-income individuals. Prices barely cover our overhead to operate classes. SDMG hosts at least two educational meetings or presentations per month. They start at 7pm and are open to the public. We operate an educational museum that is open 363 days per year. It is free of charge and attracts thousands of visitors every year, including during our December Nights open house. People visit our museum from all over the world. We are a member of SMMP Society of Mineral Museum Professionals. SDMG supports two scholarships for San Diego State University students per year from funds raised by special events -- all with volunteers. Our instructors and students (some handicapped) use the following parking lots: Spanish Village rear parking lot. (Very Important) S.D. Zoo parking lots 1,2,3 (Very Important) South Carousel parking lot Village Place street parking.

Elise Korican - The proposed parking fees will dramatically and irreparably damage the nonprofits operating throughout Balboa Park. These nonprofits, such as the Gem and Mineral Society and many others, serve critical low-income citizens, providing invaluable skills and social activities not available elsewhere in the city. The fees charged by these nonprofits are minimal for the purpose of ensuring these activities remain open for the largest number of citizens, filling a critical cultural societal need. If participants are required to pay a fee to park this will essentially kill these nonprofits. The proposed fees exceed many of these nonprofits' attendance fees for classes. Furthermore, Balboa Park has been a publicly accessible historical landmark in San Diego for its entire existence. To suddenly start charging fees to park there is unfair to the citizens of San Diego who want to enjoy this public park. We already pay steep costs for utilities, gas, property, sales and income tax, etc. We should at least be able to continue to visit historically significant places without paying hefty parking fees. This, however, pales in comparison to the damage and inequity such fees will cause to the non-profits operating throughout Balboa Park, most notably Spanish Village. Additionally, the zoo remains one of the few paid attractions that does not charge to park. If the proposed plan is enforced, the zoo will be forced to regulate parking and will likely begin charging too. Otherwise, the public will simply fill the zoo's lot and walk over to Balboa Park. So, to infer or imply the zoo would be exempt is ridiculous. **NO PARKING FEES FOR BALBOA PARK.**

Tex Kubacki - Designating massive new paid-parking zones in Balboa Park is an absurd proposal. The 6th Ave and Park Blvd parking zones are **ALREADY** underutilized. Charging more for an abundant resource (like parking) is a way to **DISCOURAGE** use. I've never seen those spots full to begin with, and this proposal will simply lead to more empty parking spaces. The proposal claims this will will "enhance the overall experience for park visitors." I'm sorry...what!? Paying more for overabundant parking spots will enhance my experience??? Discouraging financially disadvantaged people from visiting the park will enhance my experience??? I take my one-year-old child to a daycare co-working space near the 6th Ave zone, and often rely on free parking at Balboa Park to be able to work and afford childcare. If parking becomes more expensive, my family will no longer be able to attend this daycare, work in the area, or patronize any of the local restaurants for lunch. I strongly oppose the proposition to create metered parking zones.

Robert Krug - The San Diego Mineral & Gem Society has approximately 700 members. This "Club" offers a museum, many classes, informational meetings, consists of many volunteer activities, and serves many youth and seniors. To start a \$12 parking fee will greatly reduce people from coming to enjoy and conduct these activities, especially with the parking fee hours of 8am-8pm. At the least it should not be in effect after 5pm. Many of us are already taxed heavily, rent and food has skyrocketed, the cost of living is so high, and our wages and income have not increased. Our Quality of Life is decreasing with each additional money grab and inconvenience the Govt imposes. Govt seems to always want to collect more money but does not want to audit itself to find out where it can decrease its spending to help the Public. Try that!

Oliver - The Old Globe has almost 2,000 volunteers. About 80% of those 2,000 people are retirees. Implementing paid parking hurts the already vulnerable population that lives on a fixed income and donated their time and effort to running the institution. Volunteers are the lifeblood of Balboa Park. This decision kills the park. It excludes thousands of people who regularly enjoy and invigorate this public space.

Steven Freitas - To Whom It May Concern,

I've lived in Banker's Hill for several years, and parking has never been a serious issue here—unless it's a big event like Pride or December Nights. After long workdays, I can usually find a spot nearby.

That's why your proposal for 7-day-a-week, 8AM–8PM metered parking on 6th Avenue feels completely out of touch with the reality of this neighborhood. It's not just unnecessary—it's harmful to the people who actually live here.

We already have plenty of metered parking on 5th Avenue and the cross streets. On top of that, residents already deal with visitors going to places like Mr. A's and nearby bars and restaurants who take up the limited spots we do have. By adding meters to 6th, you're giving visitors more convenience while making daily life harder for the people who call Banker's Hill home.

Our building is nearly 100 years old, and like other historic buildings in this neighborhood, it doesn't come with private parking. We rely on street parking. What you're proposing leaves us with no real options other than circling the block, hoping to get lucky. Imagine coming home after a long day and not knowing if you'll be able to park anywhere near where you live. That's what this plan creates.

If you're going to move forward, then two things have to change:

Shorten the meter hours. There is no reason to meter until 8PM. After 6PM, this area is almost entirely residents.

Create a residential parking pass. Give people who live here an annual option to park without paying meters. Require proof of residency and make it secure, but give us a way to live here without being punished for it.

If you really want to improve the situation, you should also consider making the alphabet streets around these older apartment buildings residential only.

Without that, metering 6th is just pushing residents further out and making life harder for working professionals and families.

This proposal, as it stands, feels like it's been written with visitors and commuters in mind—not the people who live here every single day. If it goes through unchanged, I can promise you that it will influence how I vote in the future, because this decision directly impacts me and my neighbors.

Do better for the people who actually live in Banker's Hill.

Margaret Allen - I am a Balboa Park employee at the Old Globe Theatre. The current parking proposal would cause an undue burden for the employees. Firstly, the listed tier 2 parking lots, although free for employees, provide no guarantee of parking as they are also open to the public. Secondly, the Old Globe theatre in particular is a significant distance from the tier 2 lots, and many employees are not physically capable of walking that distance. Lastly, as a theatre, we work late nights, often ending between 11:30pm - 2am. Having the walk across the park at that hour is not safe. Please do NOT vote for this current proposal and keep parking free.

Kailana Zuri Jensen - Please do not implement paid parking at Balboa Park!! It is one of the last places I can go to enjoy a beautiful day, have lunch, go for a long walk without having to spend a single cent. It seems every place in San Diego meant for recreation costs so much money and with the worsening economy and increased cost of living, it feels like Balboa Park is one of the last

freely accessible place to relax and decompress and build community. I have friends that bring their kids to the playgrounds there multiple times a week and I know for a fact this will impact their routine and they'll visit less often. I can't imagine how hard that will be on the little ones as they don't understand the concept of being stressed about financial matters; they'll be so confused on why they can no longer go to their favorite playgrounds or see the pretty fountains. I feel for the kiddos of the community because I can imagine most parents are looking to save as much as they can for their own children's future and this will hit them and all Balboa Park visitors hard. Everything is already expensive as is, please don't add another barrier for visitors and keep Balboa Park accessible!! We love the park so much, there has to be another way to raise money for its maintenance.

Jazmine Choi - I work at balboa park at the Old Globe theatre 5-6 times a week. Sometimes I am here from the early mornings all the way until midnight. I do not want to have to pay for parking just to come to work. If the lot that is free for employees is also open to the public there's no guarantee we will have parking. If I have to come into work in the afternoon on a weekend, I already struggle to find parking. The current ideas for free employee parking are also very very far from the Old Globe and would be very difficult for me and other globe employees to get to work and also get back to our cars. Last night we left work at 11:45pm and we park in the lot closest to Spanish village and it's already a decently far walk for us at the end of the night. I already don't feel safe walking through Balboa Park at night but if I have to walk even further then I really don't feel comfortable walking that far or even being so far away from my car in case of any emergencies. Please keep parking free and in lots closer to the Globe. I also know a few employees of the Globe that would not be able to walk as far as those "free" employee lots.

Sunny Haines - I have been working at the Old Globe in Balboa Park for 20 years. Parking is always a struggle even on good days. I cannot afford \$12 a day to park. My shifts usually end between 1130 and 1am and I feel unsafe walking at that late hour to where the proposed free parking is. I also have coworkers that are not able to walk that far. It is unfair for the City to take away our access to closer free parking. Please consider a free parking pass option for Globe Employees so we can keep parking in the Spanish Village or Alcazar lots. Thank you.

In Person:

David Walters – Propose a permit system for the West Mesa. Stakeholders on West Mesa are not accommodated. Anticipates losing attendance by more than 50% once meters are installed. Permits of \$150-\$200 annually would generate revenue and preserve attendance for nonprofits on the West Mesa. Permits would be limited to Monday-Saturday from 9am-4pm for members of the nonprofits. The West Mesa nonprofits serve only the nearby community and not everyone like the museums.

Cesar Javier – The City is our home and should not be politicized. Leadership of the City is failing. \$85 million deficit is a crisis and needs to be solved.

Punita Javier – Air pollution is a problem. City Council is protecting industrial and manufacturing business. Make park a safe location.

Peter Comiskey – Balboa Park Cultural Partnership is against paid parking. It will disrupt ability of patrons to enjoy the park. Recommends the mayor adopts 4 elements. 1. Assign team member parking to the South Carousel Lot. Lot is close to facilities and ensures safety and security. 2. Keep parking affordable for residents. Residents need to get their discounts before parking is implemented. 3. Ensure meaningful free access. 2 hours in the farthest parking lot is not enough.

4. 8pm performance does not make sense. Want to encourage people to visit the park in the evening and having enforcement until then would be a deterrent. Working with City staff has been encouraging, but there is a wall keeping the City from considering these proposal.

Manuel Aguilar – Frustrated that the cost of coming to working will increase. Concerned that staff parking will be at the farthest parking lots where there have been the most incidents.

Chad Heatherly – Square Dance Association has 220 dances who meet 6 times a week. COVID-19 reduced participations from 400 dancers. Proposal is ill conceived and rush through and discriminates against the poor and elderly.

Jim Kidrick – City is not listening to public. Everyone in the meeting should attend the City Council meeting.

Andrea Zinco – City Council made bad decisions for years. Should everyone else pay for this. There is always ways to reopen the budget. Where is the money for all the installs coming from. Should be relooked at. Thanks to everyone who came today.

Jill Soto – Representing Civic Dance Arts. Paid parking would make attending the program unaffordable and take the program away from them.

Christopher “R” – Volunteered at the park since 1974. Treasures every moment spent in the park. The solution to parking is far beyond simple solutions. Urges parking remains free.

Ramses Lara – Discount program will not help East County residents. At City Council all the time and park in Balboa Park and rides bike downtown to avoid paid parking. Doing it in Balboa Park would not help decrease carbon footprint. Council is going to pass this. This should only make about \$15 million, but Police budget increased by \$30 million.

Elaine Bloomberg – San Diego County resident for 40 years. Frequent visitor to the park. Volunteers at Old Globe, attend dance class and member of Cactus society. Needs to attend the park multiple times a week. Understands the \$258 million deficit but concerned about the impact of paid parking.

Fred Richter – Member of the Lawn Bowling Club. Club is made up of mostly senior citizens. Many play several times of week and look forward to the socialization. Club has spent \$500,000 over 10 years maintaining their greens. Is not fair they should have to pay a parking meter to play.

Sheree Lawrence – Parent and volunteer for many years with SDCDA. Program has been imperative for family and health. Cost of parking would be unimaginable for all 2800 students. Having to take supplies all the way across park would be almost impossible. Just say no.

Michael Warburton – Representing Model Railroad Museum. Who will go to museum when there are no trains anymore. Museum is entirely run by volunteers. All trains brought by volunteers which are mostly seniors. Would like to have accommodations.

Diana Hyatt – Representing the Model Railroad Museum. Volunteers are lifeblood of museum. 75% of volunteers are over 65. Their time will be negatively impacted. Going from inclusive to exclusive use of park.

James Parrish – Represent San Diego Mineral and Gem Society. Oriented towards educational experience. Every member is a volunteer. All parking will be level 1 which would exclude them. Currently using Zoo, Spanish Village and Carousel parking lot. Need access to them.

Elizabeth Allman – Balboa Park runs deep in family. This parking will drastically affect Bankers Hill. Parking on West Mesa is currently taken over by construction workers. This will take up parking and will not allow family and friends to utilize playground and areas near there. Consider how this will affect residents of Bankers Hill.

Joe Mazares – On House of Pacific Relations behalf have spoken numerous times to BPC and Council. Discussions have not included HPR. HPR represents thousands of diverse voices. The Federal Lot is far from the Cottages and not safe in the evening. Revisit City recommendations and allow volunteers to use Level 1 parking for free.

Ray Potts – Club member of Model Railroad Museum. Volunteer members work 11-6 daily which includes pack out and up. Will generally have to carry 60-75lbs of tools and 30-35lbs model trains to museum and would be difficult to transport that much weight long distances.

Christian Stramaglia – With Campfire San Diego. Service 300 campers and have 50-60 staff. Want to ensure they are considered for free parking.

Deborah Hill – With Redwood Bridge Club. Very happy to be a part of the club, but fearful it will go away. Please influence the Mayor to do away with the parking fees.

Patrick Taylor – Representing school bus industry. There were 180 school buses that serviced the park last year. Where will they be able to park if paid parking is implemented. In opposition to paid parking.

Shoshi Fleury – Old Globe employee and resident of Bankers Hill. Many institutions offer free passes to low-income patrons. Access to arts for underserved communities can be life changing. Kiosks and app-based parking are elitist and add barriers. The real cost of paid parking will be to the community and equity. Do not move forward with measure or at least work to minimize impact on residents.

Ashley Dudley – Disappointed to hear the City has already included projected revenue in budget. Not opposed to paid parking in touristy areas of park. West side daily users are residents that want a green place to go. Paid parking will make it more expensive to visit the West Mesa than the parking lots.

Terri Urban – Is primary caregiver of 93-year young father. Try to keep him stimulated by attending the Bridge Club. Would hate to see the club go away due to paid parking. Please keep parking free.

Ben Kazemi – Represents San Diego Table Tennis Club. Has over 600 members and play several times a week. Cannot afford to pay \$6 every time they come to play.

Joel Butler – This is ridiculous. What are people going to come if there are no volunteers to help service the park. Daughter visits several times a week to dance. How much will that cost. Son is going to have to pay to play baseball. This is not hurting everyone equally.

Nicole Hayes – Daughter dances for SDCDA and son plays baseball at Morley Field. Everyone attending is parked in a space that will require to pay money to park there going forward. Does it make sense to have to pay to voice concerns to committee going forward. There's no reasonable alternative transportation to Balboa Park.

Xavier Amador – Concerned citizen, parent, volunteer and board member of SDCDA. 2,000 students and 70+ staff will be affected by this. The organization relies on volunteers and that is being put in jeopardy. Balboa Park is a public park that already has funds. Should not be responsibility of public to have to pay twice.

Paul Kruger – Everyone has an obligation to be at Council meeting on September 15th. Extremely important to let them know what was heard. Everyone needs to speak and let City Council know who unacceptable it is. Hurts most who cannot afford to pay. Hurts those who come to the park. Those who can pay will have to pay \$10 for four hours but will not be able to stay in the park for the day. People on the West Mesa will have to pay \$10 for 4 hours.

David Swarens – Paid parking is not no cost. Meters, supplies and enforcement all cost. Paid parking will help reduce congestion as residents and community members leave, but does not serve any other purpose.

Bruce Coons – Executive Director of Save Our Heritage Organization. Unconscionable to take away one of the last opportunities to enjoy the park. Just put over \$1 million into the Marston House. Few spaces in the neighborhood will be taken up and make it difficult to visit the Marston House. No institution can afford losing more members.

Paige Turncliff – Everyone has to pay to get into institutions in the park. As a volunteer, even if compensated, still have to pay for fuel and other costs to get to park. Anyone who lives out of the City will be penalized. Currently no concessions or way to validate for customers.

John Ramos – Proposal would make it cheaper to park in the park than to park on the street. This is squeezing its own residents. Charge parking permits around the neighborhoods. People would have to pay for it. Keep it out of the park.

Cecily – Speaking for San Diego Chorus. Finding metered spots are not guaranteed for people who come at 7pm. Attendees would need to pay \$12 a week whenever they visit. Urge to consider discounted rates for club members. There are safety concerns.

Daniele Laman – Still trying to figure out what a volunteer is. Each cottage is supposed to have 25 members and there are 35 cottages. At least 875 volunteers within Balboa Park.

Committee Comment:

Mike Singleton – Represents 50,000 community members of Uptown. Residents rely on West Mesa as a Community Park. Uptown will not be getting any new parks. Will not be meeting park needs. Very little Developer fees are being put into the area. Encourage more visitors to park on the West Mesa.

Patty Riddle – Staff has done a great job growing programs at Municipal Gym and Balboa Park Activity Center. Parking fees will squash that enthusiasm. Attendees cannot afford to pay \$6 every day they attend. Zoo has enough money and overpaying their executives. Zoo is not paying their fair share.

Tim Shields – Echoes what Peter Comiskey says. Paid parking should not be implemented. Noted 3 goals in the presentation. City could restore some parking spaces that were removed. Would help enhance revenue. Patrons that arrive later would be forced to pay for entire daily fee. That seem inequitable. 6pm end time for enforcement makes more sense. Using modern payments and enforcement, hourly rates could be charge between 6pm and 8pm. 2-hour free parking is not enough. The tram route takes 30 minutes. Expand start and end times. Tram should run every 10 minutes. Expanded service should start when paid parking starts. Urge South Carousel to be a tram stop. Why exempt December Nights from parking rates? Will robust communication be given to Balboa Park Committee?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Will send monthly report to Allison for the Committee.

Allison Soares – Whole process feels stressful and rushed. Was Mayor agreeing to the fee reduction?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Council still has to vote on it. Revenue was already assumed as part of the budget. If revenue is not met, more cuts to services could happen. Original proposal was to have paid parking start January 2026. Council gave direction to have paid parking implemented by Fall.

Makeda Cheatom – Always thinking about BIPOC community. They will not pay this. Some don't have phones to pay. Very dangerous to put paid parking on Park Blvd. And adjustment needs to be made for safety. Traffic is jammed on Park Blvd. Should postpone and talk to community.

Mandy Brown – Balboa Park Committee was not meaningfully engaged. Find ways to find free parking for volunteers, staff and residents. Why do residents have to pay more and not charged a nonresident fee. Residents should have a discount. Opposed to fees like Councilmember Whitburn.

David Baron – If we are starting paid parking, the resident program should start on the same day.

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Had to informal solicitation to find a vendor for resident discount program.

Allison – Why not use same vendor as the golf course?

Emily Piatanesi (Response)- That vendor was not tied to enforcement and did not have a system in place.

David Baron – What happens if a special event or film permit takes up a parking lot.

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Will take that back. A fee is being considered if they take a whole parking lot.

David Baron – City pre-purchase kiosks before the vote?

Emily Piatanesi (Response)- City needed more kiosks. Wanted to have them in place

David Baron – Is the vote a fair accomplishment?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) - Council still needs to vote on rates.

Allison Soares – What is the Mayor’s response to everyone here?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – There is no simple answer and that was made clear to everyone. Free parking for staff and volunteers is a goal.

Allison Soares – What happens to the clubs in the park?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Members would continue to have to pay.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Thanks to everyone for being here. Parks should be free. Disappointed the Mayor included paid parking in the budget. Golden Hill has no other parks. No City Council staff is here to listen to the outrage. Need to treat non-profit and educational events differently. Are volunteers and parents required to pay to park? How many spots will really be available to employees and volunteers?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Will take the feedback into consideration.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Noticed the parking district includes the East Mesa. Is no paid parking being for East Mesa?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – East Mesa was included so parking revenue could be utilized within the entirety of the park.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Is there a consideration to making Tuesdays completely free on free Tuesdays?

Howard Blackson – Agree with David Swarens that other lots could become paid parking lots soon. Goals are to improve parking management. Don’t see how this is equitable. Seems to make it another stressor when trying to visit the park. Plan doesn’t seem to review 2020 budget analysis report. Seems to be a very unfinished plan. Look at what Tim Shields and BPCP said.

Chris Eddy – This proposal amounts to taxing things that make San Diego America’s Finest City. It is a fait accompli. Seems like City is trying to get this done as fast as possible. City should study how institutions will be affected financially. If this wasn’t approved would there be enough money to manage the park?

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – No. There would have to be additional cuts.

Michael Robinson – Taxpayers do not support this. Parks should be free. This will affect the BIPOC community adversely. You want people to utilize the park as a resource. Listen to groups and community members.

Jake Banfield-Weir – Asked about spillover into the adjacent neighborhood at the previous meeting. Doesn’t seem like that was address. The previous parking study only covered one day. 85% of patrons parking on the West Mesa park for 12 hours. All parking will move towards the neighborhoods.

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Resident parking permits were considered.

Jake Banfield-Weir – This contradicts what was in the parking study. Infrastructure has already been purchased. Are resident passes already in place for staff and volunteers?

Jon Richards (Response) – Currently developing a plan with BPCP.

Jake Banfield-Weir – Should roll out in tandem with the start of paid parking.

David Baron – Suggested that notification for paid parking should go out as an attachment with water bills.

Patty Riddle – Suggested speaking with the Zoo months ago.

Allison Soares – What would a parking pass for staff and volunteers look like? There are not going to be enough spots for all of them.

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Can follow up when plan is further developed.

Jon Richards (Response) – Will be challenging. Goal is to make it happen. Currently working on a hanger system. Can collect license plates and can validate in that manner.

Tim Shields – If a lot is overutilized would hope other lots could be looked at.

Mike Singleton – Having an all-day rate would reduce turnover. Zoo parking lost is most important revenue generator. Should be a validation at museum to help reduce rate. Parking lots on West Mesa should be free. Expand tram services. Resident discount should be used on West Mesa. Technology can be utilized to help with variable rates and direct people to available parking.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Allow people to prepay for premium parking spots as an option.

Emily Piatanesi (Response) – Could look at it in the future. Could be difficult to hold the space. Logistics would need to be worked out.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Have numbered spaces and tie to the plate number.

Jon Richards (Response) – Enforcement component would have to be worked out.

Chris Eddy – If someone prepays and can't go, that space would be one that no one could utilize.

Patty – Coordinate with City College and San Diego High School about parking.

The Committee decided to take a vote and unanimously does not support the proposal by the Mayor's office as presented.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:10 pm

Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting:

October 2, 2025
4:00 P.M.
In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales
District Manager