

**CITY OF DUARTE  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

Regular Meeting  
July 14, 2025

7 PM

**ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:**

**PRESENT:** Eddie Olague, Jennifer Luna-Nguyen, Alex Streff, James Finlay  
**ABSENT:** Michael Powers  
**STAFF LIAISON:** Manuel Enriquez, Department Director  
**STAFF:** Andres Rangel, Assistant to the City Manager; Alberto Castaneda-Salazar, Fitness Center Supervisor; Alyssa Rico, Parks and Recreation Manager, Pam Romero, Administrativa Secretary  
**AUDIENCE:** None

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Streff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Luna-Nguyen motioned, and Olague seconded to approve the May 13, 2025, minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

Enriquez introduced Andres Rangel, Assistant to the City Manager, who will give an update regarding the Strategic Plan Initiative.

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS:**

A. Strategic Plan Update

Andres Rangel gave an update on the City of Duarte Strategic Plan draft framework and provided a PowerPoint presentation. Some information included:

- The Strategic Plan is to help identify what the City should look like in 10 years and how to achieve those goals.
- The plan is to align with the City's values, unifying principles, and mission statement.
- The process started with a survey in March that went out to the community and staff, one-on-one meetings with council, and a council workshop where council went over the findings and came up with framework.

- This month, staff and council are looking for feedback from all its commissions.
- A second council workshop will be held in August where they will go over the framework and feedback.
- The final step will be having council finalize and adopt the Strategic Plan.
- The survey utilized social media, the City's website, and postcards were also sent to residents for their input.
- A total of 892 surveys were received.
- Some reoccurring themes included:
  - Residents like the small-town feel of Duarte
  - Duarte's proximity to nature
  - Its well-maintained parks and fields
- Some issues residents presented were:
  - The need for a downtown area
  - The need to increase walkability
  - The need for more dining and entertainment options
  - Another prominent issue is homelessness
- When asked what residents value most about Duarte, answers included:
  - The small-town feel
  - The many outdoor park spaces
  - How we embrace our neighboring communities
  - Safe neighborhoods
- When asked what types of businesses people would like to see in Duarte, the overwhelming majority said more food and grocery options along the commercial corridor
- When asked about people's preferred communication preferences, there was a balance between printed media and digital outlets such as social media and the city's website
- With these findings, city staff, as well as the consultant, worked on drafted the framework: Vision, Values and Goals
- Rangel asked commissioners if they had any feedback.

Luna-Nguyen asked if education fell under any of these.

Rangel replied that it could be under Health and Wellbeing/Quality of Life as an action item.

Commissioners stated that they feel it's pretty complete.

Finlay asked if this information would be going out to the community at large.

Rangel stated that it already has and that getting input from Commissioners is another step in the process.

Finlay asked if there was a matrix-based way to measure views.

Rangel stated that yes, that is part of the remaining steps once goals are taken care of.

Streff stated he would like to see an expansion to surrounding communities to improve the awareness of the City of Duarte and feels that should be part of the goals.

Luna-Nguyen stated that she would like to know what people who filled out the survey like about the small town feel of Duarte.

- Rangel stated the next workshop would be in August where they would work on what the actions would look like and that he would invite commissioners.

B. Update: Duarte Community Garden Grand Opening

Enriquez gave an update on the Community Garden Grand Opening. Some information provided included the following:

- At the close of the application process, a total of 65 applicants applied for the garden.
- There are 20 regular beds and 2 ADA beds available for members of the public.
- Applications are still coming in with three more received today.
- All applicants have been residents
- Perimeters given to contractor included: beds will be distributed with all districts being represented, multi-unit vs. single family homes, number in household, and their reason for wanting a bed as a consideration.
- Some districts had an overwhelming response.
- All beds have been awarded
- Waitlist has been prioritized
- Everyone was notified as to whether or not they were chosen. Additional information about workshops and more was included.
- The Community Garden Grand Opening will be held July 26 at 10 AM and Enriquez invited commissioners to attend.
- Following up on a question posed at the last commission meeting on whether workshops could be recorded, Enriquez was told by Food Ed that they really are not set up to record workshops. Staff would have to see the logistics of providing that service.

Finlay asked if the workshop is the same day as the City Picnic.

Enriquez replied that it is the date the contractor selected.

Finlay inquired as to whether anyone has complained about not being selected for a bed.

Enriquez replied that not at this time and that the city will post out that the application process for October 2026 – October 27 will start in June of 2026.

Olague asked if people who were not chosen know where they are on the waiting list.

Enriquez replied that they do not.

Enriquez stated that he is proud that in our community the contractor stated this is the largest garden to date with the largest response.

C. Overview: City News Summer 2025

Enriquez gave an overview of the current City Newsletter. Some information provided included:

- Stated that we are halfway through summer.
- Announced that this month is Parks Make Life Better month and thanked commissioners for all that they do.
- Started summer with our Summer Kick Off and Neon Foam Party on Friday, June 20 with great attendance, and the In-N-Out truck was a big hit.
- The Splash in the Park event at Duarte Park also had a great turnout. It had great water slides, super soakers, other water activities for children, and the event was finished off with ice cream.
- Our July 3<sup>rd</sup> event went well with just under 7,000 attending.
  - A great video of the event is available on the City's webpage.
  - This is the first year we incorporated mechanical rides such as a Ferris wheel, slide, and gator rollercoaster for children.
  - \$5 wristbands could be purchased to enjoy the mechanical rides.
  - Free inflatable attractions and lawn games were also available for children to enjoy.
  - Many residents were thankful that the city moved forward with the event instead of cancelling due to the environment.
  - No injuries were reported
  - Staff incorporated a new public safety component in having a trained canine unit at every gate entrance.
  - The Public Safety Department appreciated the extra assistance of the canine units.

- The Summer Concert Series kicked off last Thursday at Beardslee Park.
- A Latin-style band will be performing this Thursday.
- Concerts begin at 6 PM with a DJ entertaining the crowd before concerts.
- Last Friday the Dive In Movie event was held at the Fitness Center featuring Moana 2.
- The competition pool is up and running after all leaks were fixed with just a few mechanical things that need addressing.

Finlay asked if there has been any consideration for reducing pool hours since there is no down time for any needed repairs.

Enriquez replied that they are studying it and will bring forward a recommendation to commissioners and then council.

- The Splashtacular Water Carnival will be held Wednesday, July 30.
- National Night Out and the Touch-A-Truck event will be held in August.
- Parks and Recreation will close out summer with Pickleball After Dark at Royal Oaks Park on Thursday, August 14 with live demonstrations, music, giveaways, and a food truck.

Luna-Nguyen asked when and where the Touch-A-Truck event will be held and the date of National Night Out.

Enriquez replied that Touch-A-Truck will be held in the parking lot at the Duarte Civic Center on Saturday, August 2 from 10 AM – 12 PM and that National Night Out will be held Thursday, August 7 from 6 – 10 PM at Beardslee Park and the movie will be Toy Story.

Olague inquired as to whether we were getting feedback from the survey at the July 3 event regarding the volume level.

Enriquez replied that this was the first time we did a survey and that last year attendees mentioned that they could not hear in the back. This year, speakers were staggered for better range and that if you're near the stage it is loud. Staff will again look at how to disperse the sound better.

Luna-Nguyen asked if the tables at the July 3 event are first come, first serve or reserved.

Enriquez replied that the VIP tables are available online for \$150 when registration goes live at the end of May for summer registration. One person will be selected by random drawing from the survey to receive a table for next year's event.

Finlay mentioned using a transmitter set up in the back of the park so people can bring their own radio to be able to hear the music.

ITEMS FROM  
DIRECTOR/STAFF:

1. September is Childhood Cancer Awareness month and traditionally the commission has given permission to the Rosales family to hold their event on the Donald and Bernice Watson Trail in which they honor their child, and other children who have had cancer, by displaying painted rocks along the trail with the children's names on them. This is something the City will continue to do and will present a Proclamation at a council meeting.

Luna-Nguyen asked if they have ever asked for donations of rocks or paint supplies.

Enriquez replied that they never have asked for any contribution from the city, but that he will ask.

2. Rico announced that she created a geocache account, purchased a bird house for it, and set up all the coordinates, but was getting emails that it couldn't be found. She will check it out with Maintenance Supervisor, Jeff Risley, to check things out and verify it's still there.

Finlay asked what level the geocache is listed as.

Rico stated that it is the free, very basic level.

ITEMS FROM  
COMMISSIONERS:

Luna-Nguyen:

- Stated that she and her child had a fun time at the Summer Kick Off Event and Foam Party.
- Congratulated staff on the remodeling of the Fitness Center and stated that it looks awesome.
- Stated that she wasn't able to attend the Fireworks show at the park but found a spot to watch them and thought the show was awesome.

Finlay:

- Stated he really liked the foam party too and that it was a lot of fun with a great turnout.

- Mentioned that he was bummed that he missed the July 3 event due to a family commitment.
- Announced that a couple people asked him about restrictions of e-bikes on the trail and asked if there were any updates regarding this.

Enriquez stated that it is a Public Safety issue and that they have been meeting on this subject and that he will follow up on it.

- Stated that we have great large parks but wanted to give a shout out to our smaller neighborhood parks like Glenn Miller Park.

Olague:

- Nothing to report

Streff:

- Stated he has enjoyed all the recent events he's attended and is sorry he missed the foam party.
- Attended the recent city council workshop regarding the Donald & Bernice Watson Trail.
- Announced that he has been working on the Route 66 Parade that will be held on September 27 at 10 AM and passed out flyers. Some of the information provided included:
  - The route will be shorter this year than in past years. It will be from Grocery Outlet to the new BP charging station on Bradbourne.
  - This is the 99<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Route 66 and they are gearing up for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year.
  - The committee has been selling 50/50 raffle tickets.
  - If anyone is interested in having a float, band, or car in the parade to send an email to the address on the flyer.

Enriquez stated that as a collaborator with the committee, applications are also available at City Hall in the Parks and Recreation Department.

ADJOURNMENT: Luna-Nguyen motioned, and Finlay seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 PM. The motion was carried unanimously.

Commissioner  
Streff

ATTEST:



Pamela Romero, Secretary