

FINAL DRAFT HARBOR, BAY, AND BEACHES ELEMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT, AND RECREATION ELEMENT

Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission Meeting

March 3, 2026

Ben Zdeba, AICP, Acting Deputy Community Development Director



OUR GENERAL PLAN



- Last comprehensive update was 2006
- 10 Elements
- 7 required by law
- Comprehensive update initiated 2019
- Focused on Housing and Circulation to address RHNA in 2020

UPDATE PROCESS

Table 1, General Plan Update Process

Phase 1 (Background Analysis + Visioning)	Phase 2 (Policy Development + General Plan Amendment)	Phase 3 (California Environmental Quality Act)	Phase 4 (Hearings)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement and Outreach Plan • Research and Data Analysis • Online Survey • GPAC + GPUSC Meetings • Pop-up Events • Paid Advertisements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of General Plan • Online Survey • GPAC+GPUSC Meetings • Community Workshops • Paid Advertisements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Open House • In-Person Open House • GPAC + GPUSC Meetings • Environmental Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Boards, Commissions, and Committees • City Council Adoption
Completed late 2024	Completed late 2025	Open houses completed late 2025; Environmental analysis in progress	In progress



PB&R INVOLVEMENT: QUICK RECAP

August 5, 2025. Introduced the Draft Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element; Draft Natural Resources Element; and Draft Recreation Element

September 2, 2025. Ad Hoc Committee formed (Daruty, Kirby, and Malouf)

September 2025. Ad Hoc Committee met twice

October 7, 2025. Ad Hoc Committee recommendations shared with full Commission and forwarded onto GPAC/GPUSC for review and consideration



GPUSC/GPAC REVIEW

December 3, 2025. GPUSC/GPAC met to review comments from City Boards, Commissions, and Committees, and community members

- ✓ Went over 56 comments from City BCCs; 69 comments from community members
- ✓ Provided direction to City staff and Dudek on how to revise

January 21, 2026. GPUSC/GPAC met to review revised Elements and supported them moving forward as part of the Final GPUSC/GPAC Draft General Plan Update



PB&R COMMENTS AND REVISIONS

See Tables provided as Attachment D

City Boards, Commissions, and Committees Feedback
GPAC/GPUSC Revisions from December 3, 2025

Table 1, PB&R Commission Feedback – Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element			
Element	Goal/Section	Comment(s)	GPAC/GPUSC Revisions
Harbor, Bay, and Beaches	HBB-9: Cost-efficient servicing and managing of Newport Harbor	N/A	N/A
Harbor, Bay, and Beaches	HBB-10: Safe and accessible beach and harbor access points	We believe the safety of people on foot versus motorized and other non-foot traffic should be a balancing factor in the Preamble to HBB-10 and where otherwise applicable. Especially in consideration of prioritizing safe access to parks, beaches, & other recreation facilities.	See Page HBB-8. A responsive sentence has been added to pr as follows: "As active mobility opportunities are provided, safe pedestrian access should always be prioritized."
Harbor, Bay, and Beaches	HBB-11: Multifaceted and integrated coastal access	N/A	N/A
Harbor, Bay, and Beaches	HBB-12: Protection of the visual and ecological resources of Upper Newport Bay	Who exactly is the Newport Bay Watershed Executive Committee? Also, should the Newport Bay Conservancy be referenced as a coordinating entity in HBB-12.2 , as the Upper Newport Bay is their area of specialty and there is longstanding coordination with the City?	See Page HBB-10. Policy HBB-1 (Interagency Coordination) has been updated to remove references to specific groups to ensure the G Plan remains relevant.

Prepared by Ben Zdeba, Acting Deputy Community Development Director



City Boards, Commissions, and Committees Feedback
GPAC/GPUSC Revisions from December 3, 2025

Table 3, PB&R Commission Feedback – Recreation Element			
Element	Goal/Section	Comment(s)	GPAC/GPUSC Revisions
Recreation	R-1: A community with high-quality recreation programs	N/A	N/A
Recreation	R-2: Programs for older adults that benefit and are used by residents	N/A	N/A
Recreation	R-3: New parks and connections that increase resident access to recreation, parks, and open space opportunities	Would it be relevant to include something about assessing the use of parks and how under-utilized areas might be repurposed for public use? (i.e. the back corner of Sunset Ridge Park behind the playground)	See Page R-7. New Policy R-4.8 (Usage and Need-Based Enhancements) added as follows: "Evaluate park and recreational facility usage and needs to identify needed enhancements."
Recreation	R-4: Parks and recreation facilities that are preserved, upgraded, and well-maintained	We like the idea of promoting more dog parks. We believe this should have its own bullet point as opposed to being a part of Policy R-4.2. The bullet point prioritizing new dog parks might mention the frequency of infractions related to dogs off leash, dogs in protected areas, etc., and that additional dog parks would not only provide dogs a safe place to recreate, but reduce the dangers to people of dogs off leash and to wildlife and more of dogs in protected open spaces.	See Page R-6. New Policy R-3.10 (Dog Parks) added as follows: "Encourage the incorporation of dog parks to provide opportunities for residents to let their dogs off leash in protected areas."
Recreation	R-5: Parks and recreational facilities that are adapted to meet a variety of needs for existing and future residents	Policy R-5.8: Use reasonable efforts to evaluate tree canopy cover in parks and the public right-of-way, considering shade and priority active transportation corridors. (Policy S-7.1.5) What is meant by this highlighted portion?	See Page R-7. Policy R-5.8 (Shade Enhancements) has been revised for clarity as follows: "Evaluate the availability of shade in parks and the public right-of-way to identify areas that could be enhanced with more shade to improve the user experience on hot days. Public parks and active-transportation corridors should be prioritized for any identified enhancements. To the extent reasonable, evaluation could occur through the development of a Parks Master Plan or similar citywide effort or through a site-specific project such as a Capital Improvement Program project."

Prepared by Ben Zdeba, Acting Deputy Community Development Director

TODAY'S RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS

Recommendation:

Review the Final GPUSC/GPAC Draft Elements, revised to incorporate PB&R's input from October 2025. PB&R may provide additional input and should conduct a vote recommending the City Council adopt them as part of the comprehensive General Plan Update anticipated in May or June 2026.

Next Steps:

- Harbor Commission (Harbor, Bay, and Beaches) – March 11
- Planning Commission Study Session – March 19
- Airport Land Use Commission – March 19
- WQ/CT Committee (Harbor, Bay, and Beaches; Natural Resources; Safety) – April 2
- City Council Study Session – April 14 (Tentative)
- Planning Commission Hearing – April 23**
- City Council Hearing – May or June**

HARBOR, BAY, AND BEACHES ELEMENT

State Requirements:

- Element not required and is unique to Newport Beach
- General Plan and Local Coastal Program must be consistent
 - HBB addresses coastal access

What's New:

- Beaches added by name, Upper Newport Bay enhanced
- Multifaceted and integrated coastal access
- Minimized risk of displacement from coastal hazards
- Emphasizing Harbor's economic strength and vitality



NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

State Requirements:

- SB 272 (2023) requires a Sea Level Rise Plan by 2034
- AB 1889 (2024) Wildlife and Habitat Connectivity

What's New:

- Clean energy charging infrastructure to serve clean vehicles
- Transition of oil and gas resources as deemed appropriate
- Awareness of clean energy incentives for existing buildings to reduce natural gas emissions
- Native/naturalized species habitats in parks and open space



RECREATION ELEMENT

State Requirements:

- SB 1425 (2022) - must address open space access for all communities and demographics; co-benefits of open space (i.e., buffers from source pollutants and wildlife connectivity)

What's New:

- Encourage new parks where needed and connections that increase resident access to recreational opportunities
- Parks and recreational facilities that are adapted to meet a variety of needs for existing and future residents
- A city that protects public beach access

