



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

PALOMA AGUIRRE  
First District

JOEL ANDERSON  
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER  
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE  
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND  
Fifth District

**DATE:** April 22, 2026

**08**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

### **SUBJECT**

**RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT AND RELATED CEQA DETERMINATION (DISTRICT: 2)**

### **OVERVIEW**

On December 6, 2023 (3), the County of San Diego (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the Alpine Community Park Project (Project) and certified the associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The unincorporated community of Alpine encompasses approximately 108 square miles with a population of 17,609. Alpine currently has no County-managed parks and only 1.83 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, falling well short of the County General Plan goal of providing 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

The Project consists of a 25-acre park on an undeveloped 98-acre property, approved by the Board for purchase by the County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in 2019. The addition of the 25 acres of parkland would increase the parkland ratio to about 3.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The Project is the result of over a decade of work in partnership with community stakeholders and evaluating hundreds of properties. The Project site, which is next to and north of South Grade Road and east of Tavern Road, was acquired to develop a portion as an active park and conserve most of the property as open space. Active recreation is planned for 25 of the 98 acres and will connect to trails located on Wright's Field, a publicly accessible nature preserve owned and managed by Back County Land Trust. The remaining 73 acres will remain as an open space preserve and will serve as a natural barrier between the park and non-accessible areas of Wright's Field. The active park is expected to be constructed in phases, with the initial phase including amenities such as a dog park, playgrounds, picnic areas, an equestrian staging area, a community garden, sports courts, a park office and restrooms, a volunteer pad, and parking.

On January 5, 2024, the Cleveland National Forest Foundation and the California Native Plant Society (Petitioners) filed a lawsuit, alleging approval of the project violated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the California Planning and Zoning Law, and County Ordinances. The Petitioners also sought declaratory relief, or clarification on the parties' rights

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT AND RELATED CEQA DETERMINATION (DISTRICT: 2)**

and obligations, regarding the County’s Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO), including whether the Project is exempt from the BMO as an essential park project.

The Superior Court of the State of California (Superior Court) ruled in the County’s favor for all issues except for the CEQA claim regarding the EIR’s analysis of potential impacts related to Western Spadefoot Toad, Pallid Bat, Wildfire, and Vehicle Traffic Public Safety. On January 20, 2026, the Superior Court entered a judgment granting the petition for writ of mandate solely as to these CEQA issues.

On January 23, 2026, the Superior Court issued a peremptory writ of mandate, ordering the County to set aside the Board’s certification of the EIR for the Project and rescind all Project approvals, including but not limited to the County’s adoption of Environmental Findings and Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program. The writ also ordered the County to suspend all ministerial approvals in furtherance of the Project that could result in any change or alteration to the physical environment.

To comply with the court’s writ of mandate, today’s request is for the Board to adopt a resolution to set aside its certification of the EIR for the Project and rescind all Project approvals. DPR intends to revise the EIR in accordance with the court’s ruling and anticipates returning to the Board with the revised document for consideration in Fiscal Year 2026-27.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

1. Find that the proposed actions are not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378(b)(5).
2. Adopt proposed Resolution titled, RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT to accomplish all of the following:
  - a. Set aside the County Board of Supervisors’ December 6, 2023 certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Alpine Community Park Project (Project) (State Clearinghouse #2021030196);
  - b. Rescind the findings concerning mitigation of significant environmental effects pursuant to Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines;
  - c. Rescind and vacate the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program prepared in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21081.6 and CEQA Guidelines 15091(d);

**SUBJECT:** RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT AND RELATED CEQA DETERMINATION (DISTRICT: 2)

- d. Rescind and vacate the “Statement of Location and Custodian of Record of Proceedings”;
- e. Rescind and vacate findings that an all-way stop control at the intersection of South Grade Road and Calle de Compadres in Alpine is appropriate to support an equestrian/pedestrian/bicycle crossing through the intersection;
- f. Rescind and vacate Resolutions entitled: RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO AMENDING TRAFFIC RESOLUTION NO. 299 RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ALL-WAY STOP INTERSECTIONS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY and RESOLUTION AMENDING TRAFFIC RESOLUTION NO. 205 RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THROUGH HIGHWAYS IN THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO;
- g. Rescind and vacate authorization of the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to advertise and award a construction contract and take any other action authorized by Section 401 et seq. of the Administrative Code and Public Contract Code section 22160-22169, with respect to contracting for the construction of the Project;
- h. Rescind and vacate designation for the Director, Department of Parks and Recreation, as the County of San Diego Officer responsible for administering the construction contract for the construction of the Project in accordance with Section 430.4 of the County Code of Administrative Ordinance and Board Policy F-41, Public Works Construction Projects; and
- i. Direct staff to suspend all ministerial approvals in furtherance of the Project that could result in any change or alteration to the physical environment and to not make any physical changes to the environment in furtherance of the Project, pending discharge of the writ in accordance with the terms of the writ.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

This action impacts access to recreation for residents of the Alpine community by rescinding the approvals to build a park. A subsequent action to reapprove the project and revised environmental document is anticipated to be presented to the Board of Supervisors in Fiscal Year 2026-27.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with today’s request to adopt a resolution to set aside certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and rescind all project approvals.

**SUBJECT:** RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT AND RELATED CEQA DETERMINATION (DISTRICT: 2)

However, there may be costs associated with revisions to the EIR. Funds for these revisions are included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Operational Plan in the Capital Outlay Fund for Capital Project 1021897 Alpine Local Park Acquisition. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

Today's request is for the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors to adopt a resolution to rescind the Alpine Community Park Project approvals to comply with the court ruling. As such, the designated Community Planning Group (CPG) for the Alpine area was not consulted. Consultation with the CPG for the Alpine area will occur ahead of any future project approvals.

**BACKGROUND**

The County of San Diego (County) Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) provides parks and recreational services that enhance the quality of life for San Diego county residents and visitors. The County's park system promotes a stronger, safer, healthier, and thriving region through thousands of recreational opportunities system-wide, including events and activities, recreation programs, parks, and sports facilities.

The community of Alpine currently has 1.83 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, falling well short of the County General Plan goal of 10 acres of local parks per 1,000 residents, and is one of the most park-deficient communities in the County. There are no County-managed parks in Alpine. Some of the available parkland is co-located at public school sites and is only available when not in use by the school. DPR has been working for over a decade, evaluating hundreds of properties, to identify new parkland in Alpine. But the undulating topography found throughout most of the community has made finding suitable land very challenging, as most of the buildable land has already been developed. In 2019, the County identified approximately 98 acres of vacant land available for purchase in Alpine. The property, next to and north of South Grade Road and east of Tavern Road, was acquired to develop a portion as an active park and to conserve most of the property as open space.

On February 27, 2019 (1), the County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved and funded DPR's purchase of the 98-acre parcel of land, with the intent to build an active recreation area on the site. Subsequently, DPR purchased the property from Wright's Field Partnership, LLC on March 4, 2019. The purchase of the property was intended to provide active recreation for the Alpine community. However, of the 98 acres, only about 25 will be developed for that purpose; the remaining approximately 73 acres of the land will be conserved and managed as an open space preserve in perpetuity. The proposed park has been designed so that the proposed active park area is located next to the roadway, and the conserved area will be adjacent to Wright's Field, which is a publicly accessible nature preserve owned and managed by Back Country Land Trust. The design and footprint of the park are consistent with best practices for preserve design, which maximizes

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT AND RELATED CEQA DETERMINATION (DISTRICT: 2)**

the amount of connected open space and clusters the developed park area along an already disturbed roadway to reduce edge effects. Edge effects occur in areas where habitat abuts non-native uses such as roads or developed lands. In this case, by locating the developed park area immediately adjacent to the road and keeping the open space areas connected, edge effects are reduced. Its size, breadth of amenities, and open space trail system are designed to meet both the current and future needs of the Alpine community, with features for residents of all ages, abilities, and interests – and understanding that not all residents have the same access to safe recreation from home. The addition of the 25 acres of active recreation parkland will increase the parkland ratio for Alpine to approximately 3.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Following the purchase of the property in 2019, DPR facilitated an extensive community-driven design process to shape the new park. The initial public meetings were focused on information gathering and discussions on the objectives for the park. The community expressed that playgrounds, passive recreation, mountain biking, restrooms, and access to nature are priorities for development of this space.

In addition to public outreach meetings, DPR has hosted over a dozen stakeholder meetings with groups like the Alpine Community Planning Group and its Parks' Subcommittee, Preserve Alpine's Heritage, Back Country Land Trust, Alpine Fire, the Eastern Alpine Association, the San Diego Mountain Biking Association, and the Alpine Union School District. Feedback collected during these meetings contributed to the park design concept. DPR also hosted several community events in partnership with County Libraries and attended several Alpine community events to share updates and information about the project.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Alpine Community Park Project (Project) was circulated for public review between September 30, 2021 and November 15, 2021. Upon review of the comments received, the Draft EIR was revised and recirculated for public review between December 16, 2022 and February 28, 2023. The Final EIR was posted for public review on November 8, 2023 and was certified by the Board on December 6, 2023.

On January 5, 2024, the Cleveland National Forest Foundation and the California Native Plant Society (Petitioners) filed a lawsuit, alleging approval of the project violated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the California Planning and Zoning Law, and County Ordinances. The Petitioners also sought declaratory relief, or clarification on the parties' rights and obligations, regarding the County's Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO), including whether the Project is exempt from the BMO as an essential park project.

On January 20, 2026, the Superior Court of the State of California entered a judgment granting the petition for writ of mandate solely as to the CEQA claim regarding the EIR's analysis of potential impacts related to Western Spadefoot Toad, Pallid Bat, Wildfire, and Vehicle Traffic Public Safety. The Court denied the writ petition and ruled in the County's favor for all other issues raised in the petition.

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT AND RELATED CEQA DETERMINATION (DISTRICT: 2)**

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**ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

This action to rescind and vacate prior project approvals is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not approve a project and will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment under CEQA Guidelines sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378(b)(5).

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's proposed action supports the Community Initiative in the County of San Diego's 2026-31 Strategic Plan by creating and promoting diverse opportunities for residents to exercise their rights to be civically engaged and find solutions to current and future challenges.

Respectfully submitted,



DAHVIA LYNCH  
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Attachment A – RESOLUTION TO SET ASIDE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND RESCIND ALL PROJECT APPROVALS FOR THE ALPINE COMMUNITY PARK PROJECT