

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
(Action Items Displayed in Italics)
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026 — 3:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Fegraus, Vice Chair McCary, and Members Orgill (left at the end of Item VI.A), Osborne, Norton, and Felder were present. Members Clark, Lee, Conners, Jones, and Foley were absent.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

At this time, members of the public may address the Authority on items of public interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Authority and are not contained in today's agenda.

David Browning, Orange County Mountain Bike Association President, spoke about possible future agenda items such as trails in the Dartmoor section of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, idea to rehabilitate section of Moulton Meadows by involving volunteers, expertise of Laguna Canyon Foundation and the Emerald Ribbon Project.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR (ITEM(S) A)

The following item on the consent calendar will be approved by one motion unless an Authority Member requests to pull a specific item.

A. APPROVE AUTHORITY MINUTES FOR THE JANUARY 14, 2025 MEETING.

*Motion: Vice Chair McCary
2nd: Member Orgill
Unanimous vote to approve*

IV. AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES (ITEM(S) A–H)

A. LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION (LCF) UPDATE

Scott Thomas, LCF Executive Director, shared the following:

Introduction of interns from Fullerton College who are at LCF for an 8-week program involving trails, outreach and education programs; introduction of Jamie Spataro, new Director of Development & Communications.

Education – Our title 1 School Field Trip season started last October, and although the rain and muddy trail conditions forced us to reschedule 8 field trips, we are expecting to exceed our goal of 3,500 Title 1 students with over 3,800 students from 136 classes scheduled to attend 85 field trips this school year. LCF participated in a Land to Sea pilot educational program led by Crystal Cove Conservancy and included LCF, Laguna Ocean Foundation and Crystal Cove Conservancy to help 4th grade classes at Title 1 schools learn about the coastal wilderness lands and their relationship to the sea. Program with “Kids in the Wild Task Force” - LCF is coordinating with Laguna Beach Unified School District to

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help its students connect with the environment. Barbara Norton helped with the guided interpretive hikes for the high-school students. Kelly Osborne conducts a class called Eco Challenge II for Gate 4th & 5th grade students at El Morro Elementary School. LCF participated in this after-school program with students learning about and planting native plants at El Morro Elementary School.

Nix Nature Center Interpretive Exhibits – LCF and OC Parks are working with Laguna College of Art & Design (LCAD) to update 2 exhibits, just starting now with design ideas.

Mayor Orgill, City of Laguna Beach, invited LCF to assist in its new stewardship initiative, including participation in the new film by Visit Laguna to help educate visitors to respect the environment, culture and heritage of Laguna Beach.

Added bilingual Spanish/English hike at Aliso & Wood Canyons Wilderness Park.

50 events cancelled due to weather-imposed conditions.

Volunteers – collecting seeds for Native Plant Nursery, trail days continue every Saturday for general volunteers as well a mid-week workday with trained volunteers.

Assisting Natural Communities Coalition with Trail Monitoring Study – level of use on trails.

In process of obtaining permission to restore the Sea to Sea Trail near Moulton Meadows Park.

Working with City of Laguna Beach on removal of many invasive plants in the city's open space lands.

Wildlife Conservation Board is scheduled to hear LCF's Parcel 5 grant application at their May meeting.

Continuing camera study at Big Bend during the LCAD construction to add to previous data.

CA Coastal Conservancy didn't approve a second grant for Pectin Reef restoration LCF Board to tour Aliso & Wood Canyons Wilderness Park Visitor Center and the Aliso Creek and Pectin Reef area on March 18th.

Earth Day Celebration event – “Bluegrass, Brews & Blooms” is scheduled for April 26th from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Nix Nature Center, Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. <https://givebutter.com/bluegrass-brews-blooms-fq8amz>

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B. LAGUNA BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE

Member Orgill noted the City of Laguna Beach is looking at possible open space acquisitions, also reviewing enrolling the its open space lands in the Nature Reserve of Orange County (NROC).

C. NATURAL COMMUNITIES COALITION (NCC) UPDATE

Darin Loughrey, NCC Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, shared the following: implementation of a Trail Monitoring Study Project in coordination with LCF, Crystal Cove State Park, and OC Parks. This is Year 1 of a five-year process. It is a science-based process to help make future decisions on Trails – safety, monitoring future use, coordination of remedial restoration and to work with the landowners to help fund the restoration. Visitation data will be collected – type of visitor, points of entry. “Streetlight” will be used to identify parking use information. Data from 2024 and 2025 to date shows the increased usage. Will also study unauthorized trail use, define sensitive habitats, talk with trail users about trail conditions and their experiences. Also, working with a national trails program and with other scientists.

Member Orgill asked when the data will be available to landowners. City of Laguna Beach will be invited to the next meeting about the program even though the city has not yet enrolled their open space lands in NROC.

D. IRVINE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

E. NEWPORT BEACH OPEN SPACE UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

F. ALISO VIEJO OPEN SPACE UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

G. LAGUNA NIGUEL OPEN SPACE UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

H. CRYSTAL COVE CONSERVANCY UPDATE

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items IV.A–H.

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Motion: Vice Chair McCary
2nd: Member Norton
Approved 4–0 (Member Orgill was absent for this vote)

V. OC PARKS STAFF UPDATES (ITEM(S) A–B)

A. PARK OPERATIONS — ALL DEPARTMENTS UPDATE

Derrick Ankerstar, OC Parks Operations Manager, noted that there 11 park ranger positions to fill, new Park Ranger Academy starts in late May; OC Parks staff is still reviewing the Authority’s submittal of the Historical Update and Goal Summary as an Addendum for the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park’s General Development Plan.

B. LAGUNA COAST WILDERNESS PARK (LCWP) AND ALISO AND WOOD CANYONS WILDERNESS PARK (AWCWP) SPOTLIGHT

1. AWCWP Update

Annelise Gannaway, OC Parks Supervising Park Ranger I, shared the following: currently filling the maintenance position – will have 3 maintenance staff members; Junior Ranger Program – 159 children have completed the program to date; many upcoming programs – check the websites. Question about unauthorized trails and concern by the Top of the World Neighborhood Association. No information from OC Parks at this time.

2. LCWP Update

Brad Barker, OC Parks Supervising Ranger II, shared the following: interviewing to fill 2 maintenance positions; heavy equipment working on trails impacted by adverse weather conditions; rainfall from July 1, 2025 to March 11, 2026. at 17.4 inches, double the amount last year. On January 28, 2026, a hike with 4th and 5th grade GATE students at El Morro Elementary School who are part of the after-school Eco Challenge class around the coastal sage scrub, identifying important plants and animals in the ecosystem.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and File Agenda Items V.A–B.

Motion: Member Orgill
2nd: Member Osborne
Unanimous vote to receive and file Agenda Items V.A–B

VI. DISCUSSION CALENDAR (ITEM(S) A–F)

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026 — 3:00 p.m.

A. LAGUNA CANYON ROAD WIDENING AND SAFETY PROJECT UPDATE

Caltrans' staff, if available, will share an update on Caltrans' Laguna Canyon Road Widening and Safety Project.

Ahmed Elsadek Manhy, Caltrans Project Manager, presented the item and answered the Members' questions. Key project points included:

- *Project between many agencies/companies – City of Laguna Beach, County of Orange, OC Parks, and utility companies.*
- *It is a safety project to improve traffic flow with an added a lane, concrete check dam, drainage channel restoration, shoulder widening, Class II bike lane, undergrounding of all overhead utility lines.*
- *Total Cost \$43.9 million with Caltrans commitment of \$33.4 million and County of Orange \$10.5 million.*
- *Worked with property owners at corner of Laguna Canyon Road and El Toro Road – State of California, Anneliese Pre-School, and County of Orange to improve safety and traffic movement.*
- *Project is 95% complete.*
- *Remaining work includes minor electrical by March 26, 2026, irrigation and landscaping by April 26, 2026, plant establishment - July 2026, 5 years for all plants, 10 years for oak trees.*
- *Remove orange and other temporary fencing by July 2026.*
- *Question of who will maintain the drainage channel and retention basin. CALTRANS will provide the maintenance.*

Frank Luna answered Members' questions.

Bassem Barsoum answered the Members' questions.

Authority Chair and Members expressed their appreciation to the Caltrans staff for the helpful and informative presentation.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Approved 4–0 (Member Orgill was absent for this vote)

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B. CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH BIKE PUMP TRACK

The City of Laguna Beach is considering the construction of a bike pump track at a location adjacent to Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park. Authority Members will discuss any potential impacts to Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park and any needed response to the proposal.

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Member Norton

Approved 3–1 (Member Osborne voted “Nay,” Member Orgill was absent for this vote)

C. CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION REGARDING IRVINE BOWL DECIBEL OUTPUT ADJUSTMENTS

The City of Laguna Beach is considering an item regarding a potential regulation of the Irvine Bowl’s decibel output at concerts and events outside of the festival period. If available, the Authority will receive any new information and the potential impacts to LCWP.

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item

Motion: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Member Norton

Approved 3–1 (Member Osborne voted “Nay,” Member Orgill was absent for this vote)

D. LAGUNA CANYON ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

City of Laguna Beach Staff, if available, will share an update on its Laguna Canyon Road Improvement Project and its potential impacts on LCWP following a report presented at the November 15, 2022 City Council Meeting and further planning.

Representative not available to provide an update at this time.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item, if appropriate.

Motion: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to receive and file the item.

E. IRVINE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR UPDATE

Receive information about the Science Advisors Series, Partner Charter, and other activities.

Chair Fegraus gave an update on the activities including camera studies, tours, and future grant opportunities.

Scott Thomas, LCF Executive Director, answered a Member's question.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to receive and file and continue the item.

F. REVIEW OF THE 1998 LCWP GENERAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Authority Members reviewing the LCWP General Development and Resource Management Plans will present the schedule for completing an update for the Nix Nature Center and the final document of the References.

Chair Fegraus noted that the Committee is working on securing documents mentioned in the Historical Update and will start to review updates for the Nix Nature Center document. OC Parks staff noted their comments are not ready yet on the Historical Document.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file and continue the item.

Motion: Member Osborne

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to approve the recommended action.

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VII. AUTHORITY COMMENTS AND REPORT

At this time Authority Members may comment on agenda or non-agenda matters, provided that no action may be taken on off-agenda items unless authorized by law. Members may also suggest items for the May 13, 2026 meeting agenda.

Member Osborne thanked Brad Barker for leading the field hike for the El Morro 4th & 5th graders and Scott Thomas and LCF for helping with the planting of seeds and transplanting them.

Vice Chair McCary shared information about the Woods End project – new monument sign, restoration and new trees. Behind schedule due to weather but hope to complete by end of April 2026.

Discussion of possible agenda item on unauthorized trail at Nestall Road and Alpine Way. Work with OC Parks staff to determine best timing for an agenda item.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO MAY 13, 2026 MEETING 4:50 p.m.

Motion: Chair Fegraus

2nd: Vice Chair McCary

Unanimous vote to adjourn to the May 13, 2026 Meeting.



**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MEETING
STAFF REPORT**

May 6, 2026

Case No: Coastal Development Permit 26-0831

Project Location: 650 Laguna Canyon Road | APNs: 496-101-01, 496-101-02

Applicant: City of Laguna Beach
949-497-0398 | aviera@lagunabeachcity.net

Property Owner: City of Laguna Beach

Prepared By: Community Development Department
Shaveta Sharma, Senior Planner
(949) 715-0958 | ssharma@lagunabeachcity.net

Coastal Zone: Non-Appealable Area

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Community Development Director Determination 26-0831 (Attachment 1) approving Coastal Development Permit 26-0831 for a change to the intensity of use of land as it relates to an update to the Irvine Bowl Sound Policy to allow for an increase in the sound limit at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary at and around the Irvine Bowl located at 650 Laguna Canyon Road, and finding said action exempt from CEQA under Sections 15304 and 15323.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Laguna Beach ("City") and Festival of Arts of Laguna Beach ("Festival") previously entered into a lease agreement for certain City-owned property, including the Irvine Bowl (the "Lease"). The Irvine Bowl Policy Committee ("Committee"), which is made up of two members of the City Council and two members of the Festival Board of Directors, is tasked with prescribing policies for use of the Irvine Bowl, including the management of the buildings and structures on the premises, and approved the existing sound policy on May 30, 2023 (the "Sound Policy").

Most recently, on February 20, 2025, the Committee considered revisions to the Sound Policy but reached disagreement. Based on the Lease, such disagreement is resolved by the City Council. On April 8, 2025, the City Council hired a consultant, Rincon Consultant, Inc. ("Rincon") to study sound at and around the Irvine Bowl before the City Council would act on revisions to the Sound Policy. The Irvine Bowl Sound Policy Report prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc., dated April 21, 2026 (the "Rincon

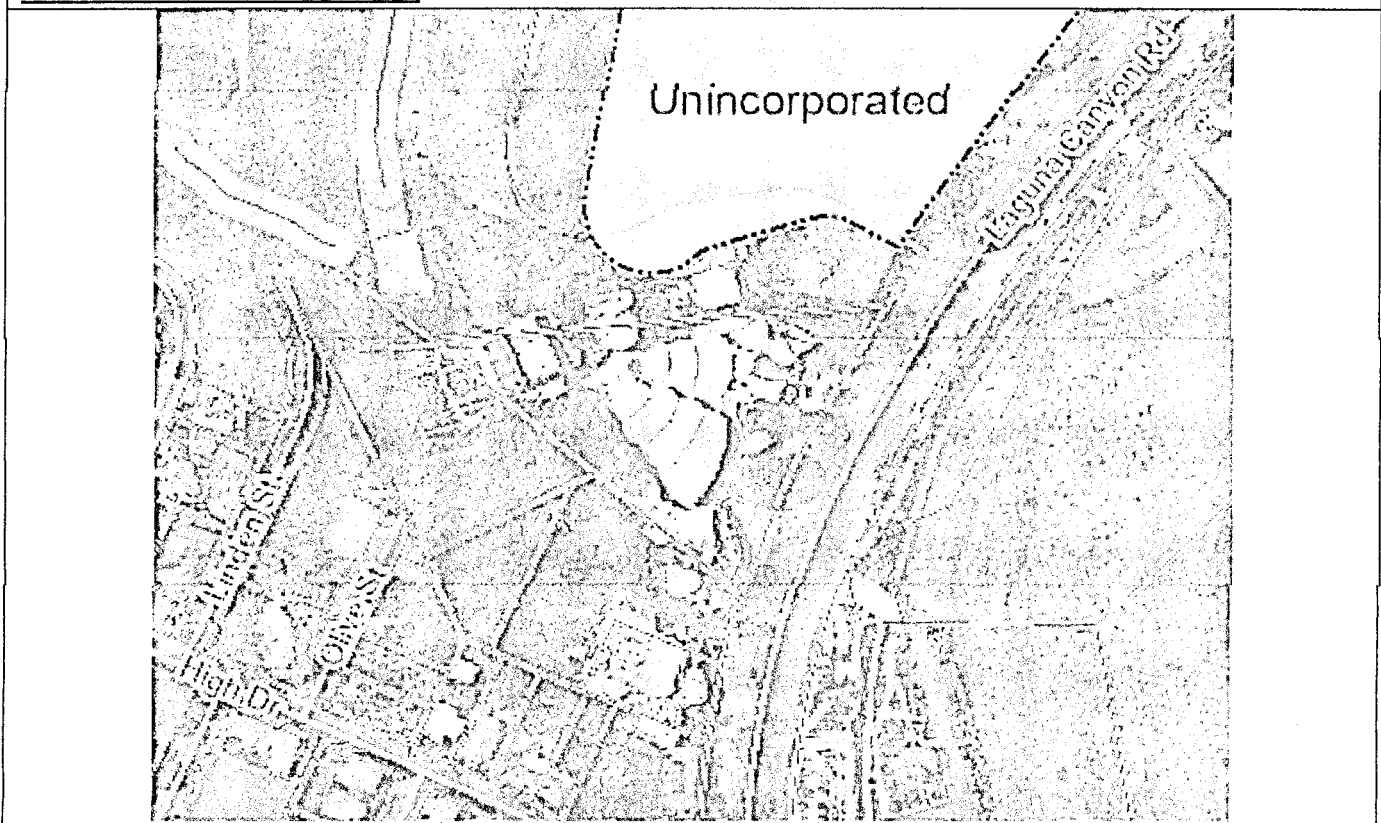
Report”) (Attachment 2) summarizes the existing noise regulatory requirements, including a proposed revisions to the Sound Policy.

Based on the Rincon Report, City staff prepared a draft sound policy (the “Updated Sound Policy”) (Attachment 1, Exhibit B) which implements the Rincon Report recommendation to increase in the sound limit to 75 dBA (one-hour average) at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary at and around the Irvine Bowl located at 650 Laguna Canyon Road.

The City Council will consider the Updated Sound Policy at its June 9, 2026 regular City Council meeting, and the Updated Sound Policy cannot become effective unless and until the City Council approves the Updated Sound Policy. Accordingly, in the interest of the City Council considering all items relating to the Sound Policy at once, the Applicant, City of Laguna Beach, is requesting Coastal Development Permit 26-0831 for the Updated Sound Policy (the “Project”).

It is recommended that the Director of Community Development adopt Community Development Director Determination 26-0831 (Attachment 1) approving Coastal Development Permit 26-0831 for a change to the intensity of use of land as it relates to the Updated Sound Policy, and finding said action exempt from CEQA under Sections 15304 and 15323. Staff has analyzed the Applicant’s request and believes that all of the findings of fact necessary for approval can be made for the requested entitlement.

PROPERTY AERIAL PHOTO



DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The Property, Background and Proposed Project

The proposed project site encompasses approximately 15.3 acres across two existing parcels that are identified as Assessor's Parcel Numbers 496-101-01, 496-101-02. The subject property is located along Laguna Canyon Road. Originally constructed in 1941, the Irvine Bowl is an outdoor amphitheater and established cultural and visitor-serving venue which hosts events and is home of the Festival of Arts and the Pageant of the Masters.

On February 20, 2020, the Committee approved a policy that provides advanced approval for off-season events and a motion was made to amend the existing Sound Policy to create an exception for events that meet certain conditions (i.e., "minor events"). The existing Sound Policy identifies a 70-decibel limit at the "Neighborhood Boundary," which is a line at the approximate property boundary of the Irvine Bowl with nearby residential single-family residential neighborhoods.

On February 25, 2025, the Committee considered amendments to the Sound Policy; however, the vote resulted in a 2-2 tie. Pursuant to the Lease, unresolved matters before the Committee must be referred to the City Council. On April 8, 2025, the City Council voted 5-0 to proceed with awarding a contract to Rincon Consultants, Inc, ("Rincon") for conducting an assessment to amend the existing Sound Policy. On June 13, 2025, Rincon simulated a concert at the Irvine Bowl and measured the sound at various locations. The results from the study revealed that a concert by a band similar to The Beach Boys would stay within the existing Sound Policy but other unstudied variables could impact sound. Based on Rincon's measurements and analysis, additional study of a real-life concert was required before making any recommendation on a change to the Sound Policy.

On July 8, 2025 the City Council voted 5-0 to suspend the Sound Policy and allow Rincon to monitor and measure a real-life concert to allow sound measurements and analysis by Rincon of the effects of a real-life concert to better inform whether any changes to the existing Sound Policy are necessary and to avoid any inadvertent violations. City staff coordinated with Coast Film Foundation, and the organization to allow Rincon to study the sound at its real-life concert in November 2025.

The Irvine Bowl Sound Policy Report prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc., dated April 21, 2026 (the "Rincon Report") (Attachment 2) summarizes the existing noise regulatory requirements, including a revised policy for events held at and around the Irvine Bowl. The Rincon Report evaluated the effectiveness of the City's existing 70 dBA noise limit and recommended updates to better balance event viability while balancing the interests of the residential neighborhoods to the north and west. Sound monitoring from both the simulated concert and a live event demonstrated that while the current limit can be met under controlled conditions, real-world concerts frequently exceed 70 dBA at nearby residential areas. The Rincon Report recommends an increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average), which aligns with industry standards and would allow for successful events while maintaining acceptable indoor noise levels for residents. Additional recommendations include requiring third-party sound monitoring, strengthening enforcement through fines, maintaining existing hour restrictions, and improving communication and enforcement tools for nearby residents.

Overall, the proposed changes aim to support expanded use of the Irvine Bowl while minimizing community noise impacts.

COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT ENTITLEMENT:

The proposed intensification of use requires the approval of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP). (See Laguna Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) Section 25.07.004.) CDPs are governed by LBMC 25.07. A CDP is considered by the Director of Community Development at a duly noticed public hearing where the following findings are considered in relation to the proposed development:

Finding No. 1: The project is in conformity with all the applicable provisions of the certified local coastal program, including the following review criteria:

- 1. The proposed development will not encroach upon any existing physical accessway legally utilized by the public or any proposed public accessway identified in the adopted local coastal program land use plan.*

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

Additionally, there are no changes to the site’s layout, grading, or physical infrastructure. The site is located inland of the first public roadway and does not affect any existing or proposed coastal accessways. As such, the project will not encroach upon or obstruct any existing or planned public accessways.

- 2. The proposed development will not adversely affect marine resources, environmentally sensitive areas, or archaeological or paleontological resources.*

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon

Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

Additionally, the site is located within a primarily developed residential and commercial corridor that would not adversely affect marine resources, environmentally sensitive areas, or archaeological or paleontological resources, as none are known within the project site or vicinity.

3. The proposed development will not adversely affect recreational or visitor-serving facilities or coastal scenic resources.

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

The Irvine Bowl is itself a visitor-serving cultural venue, and the proposed updates are intended to support its continued use for concerts and events. No existing recreational facilities, public gathering spaces, or visitor amenities will be removed, reduced, or obstructed. The Rincon Report recommends maintaining limits on hours of operation, ensuring that use remains compatible with surrounding community and recreational uses.

The project does not include any physical changes such as new structures, lighting, grading, or signage that could alter visual character or scenic views. All improvements are policy-based and do not modify the visual environment of the Irvine Bowl or surrounding coastal setting. The existing scenic qualities of nearby open space areas and public viewpoints remain unchanged.

4. The proposed development will be sited and designed to prevent adverse impacts to environmentally sensitive habitats and scenic resources located in adjacent parks and recreation areas, and will provide adequate buffer areas to protect such resources.

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including

open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

The project does not alter the siting or footprint of the Irvine Bowl or introduce any new structures that could encroach into adjacent parks and recreation areas, open space, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, or scenic resources. Existing separation distances between the venue and nearby open space areas (including park and wilderness areas evaluated in the Rincon Report) remain unchanged and continue to function as effective buffers. No vegetation removal, habitat disturbance, or changes to landform or visual character will occur.

Additionally, the Updated Sound Policy strengthens protections through inclusion of third-party acoustic monitoring at key off-site locations, including areas near open space; immediate adjustment requirements if sound levels approach or exceed limits; and enhanced enforcement mechanisms, including fines and potential loss of future event approvals.

5. The proposed development will minimize the alterations of natural landforms and will not result in undue risks from geological and erosional forces and/or flood and fire hazards.

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

Additionally, the Irvine Bowl is an existing, developed facility that was developed with consideration of geological and erosion constraints and well as flood and fire risks. The Updated Sound Policy does not intensify physical use of the site in a manner that would create new or heightened exposure to natural hazards. The project maintains existing site conditions and does not create a mechanism for adverse impacts related to landform alteration or geologic, erosional, flood, or fire hazards.

6. The proposed development will be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and where feasible, will restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its

surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

The Irvine Bowl is an established cultural venue that is already visually integrated into its hillside setting. The Updated Sound Policy does not alter this condition and therefore remain fully compatible with the character of the surrounding community and scenic coastal environment.

7. The proposed development will not have any adverse impacts on any known archaeological or paleontological resource.

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

Additionally, the project does not modify the footprint or intensity of physical development at the site. No changes to site access, utilities, or infrastructure are proposed that could result in inadvertent disturbance to archeological or paleontological resources. Additionally, no known archaeological or paleontological resources are on site. All activities remain confined to the existing developed footprint of the Irvine Bowl facility, which has been previously constructed and utilized.

8. The proposed development will be provided with adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and other necessary facilities.

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as “discernible,” but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including

open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

The Updated Sound Policy is limited to sound management measures and do not introduce new physical demands on infrastructure systems. Accordingly, the project will continue to rely on and be supported by existing, adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and other necessary facilities and infrastructure, and no deficiencies or adverse impacts related to ongoing use of the facilities will occur.

9. Other public services, including, but not limited to, solid waste and public roadway capacity have been considered and are adequate to serve the proposed development.

The project does not include any physical development but involves the Updated Sound Policy that is limited to operational sound management within the existing Irvine Bowl venue and its surrounding environment. The Updated Sound Policy, which includes an increase in the sound limit by 5 DBA at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary, will create a slight intensification of use, which Rincon has described as "discernible," but which is not out of character with the existing use of the Premises. The Rincon Report evaluates sound levels in surrounding areas, including open space, and the recommended increase to 75 dBA (one-hour average) remains within a range intended to balance event activity with protection of nearby receptors. The Rincon Report does not find any significant adverse effects to biological or natural resources associated with these operational changes.

Other public services, such as solid waste and public roadway capacity, have been evaluated and the Updated Sound Policy will not disturb capacity and the existing public services are adequate to serve the increase in the intensity of the use of land resulting from a 5 DBA sound limit increase at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary.

Finding No. 2. Any development located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea is in conformity with the certified local coastal program and with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

The project is not located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea and, therefore, this finding is inapplicable. Nevertheless, the project will not conflict with the public access and recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

Finding No. 3. The proposed development will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

As discussed further herein, the proposed project will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act as the

project is exempt pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15304 and 15323, in the alternative.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, the project is categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15304 - Minor Alterations to Land consisting of "minor public or private alternations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes." Examples of the Class 4 categorical exemption include "[m]inor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment, including carnivals, sales of Christmas trees, etc." (Id., §15304(e).) Here, the project does not involve any expansion of the Irvine Bowl's physical facilities, grading, construction, or other ground disturbance. Similar to carnivals or Christmas tree sales, this project concerns the manner in which an existing site is used for public activity without resulting in any permanent physical change to the land or surrounding environment. The project consists solely of an update to the operational sound policy applicable to the existing outdoor venue by allowing a limited 5 dBA increase at the existing Neighborhood Sound Boundary. The project would not require removal of any trees or vegetation. Rather, it is a minor modification to the manner in which the existing facility may operate. Therefore, this action falls with the Class 4 categorical exemption.

In addition, and in the alternative, the project is also categorically exempt pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15323 – Normal Operations of Existing Facilities for Public Gatherings [Class 23].) The Class 23 exemption consists of the normal operations of existing facilities for public gatherings for which the facilities were designed, where there is a past history of the facility being used for the same or similar kind of purpose. (State CEQA Guidelines, §15323.) The Irvine Bowl is an existing public gathering facility designed and historically used for amphitheater performances and similar events involving amplified sound and audiences. The proposed update to the sound policy would not change the fundamental use of the facility, increase its physical capacity, or authorize any new type of activity inconsistent with its historic and intended function as an outdoor performance venue. Instead, the project concerns the ongoing operation of an existing amphitheater used for public gatherings and would allow a modest adjustment to the sound limit in connection with those same longstanding uses. Therefore, this action falls within the Class 23 categorical exemption.

There is no evidence of any unusual or special conditions that would result in a significant effect on the environment. The project site is located on Laguna Canyon Road and is within a developed commercial and residential neighborhood. Here, the project consists of an update to the Irvine Bowl Sound Policy to allow for an increase in the sound limit at the Neighborhood Sound Boundary at and around the Irvine Bowl from 70 dBA to 75 dBA, and include requiring third-party sound monitoring, strengthening enforcement through fines, maintaining existing hour restrictions, limiting the number of off-season events to ten (10), and improving communication and enforcement tools for nearby residents.

Further, none of the exceptions outlined in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply. The project site does not contain any environmentally sensitive areas. The project will not impact on an

environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies. The project will not result in a cumulative impact from successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time, as there are no other similar venues near the Irvine Bowl. Moreover, there are no unusual circumstances surrounding the project that would result in a reasonable possibility of a significant effect on the environment, as the project involves only a modest operational adjustment at an existing amphitheater that has long been used for public performances and gatherings. Additionally, the project will not damage scenic resources, including trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, because the project involves no construction, grading or other physical alteration of the site or its surroundings.

There will be no damage to scenic resources, including trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. The existing site is developed with a concert venue located along Laguna Canyon Road and abuts commercial development to the south and west and residential development east and north of the site. The project is not located on a hazardous waste site or any other site included on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5. There is no indication that the project site features and/or conditions indicating the presence or likely presence of hazardous substances and/or petroleum products at the Site that are considered to have the potential to adversely impact the site were identified during the completion of this assessment. The project will not result in significant adverse impacts to historical resources as defined by CEQA. Thus, both the Class 4 and Class 23 exemptions apply, and no further environmental review is required.

Staff will cause to be filed a Notice of Exemption (NOE) with the County Recorder's Office and State Clearinghouse should the project receive final approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Community Development Director Determination 26-0831 (Attachment 1) approving Coastal Development Permit 26-0831 for the project and finding said action exempt from CEQA under Sections 15304 and 15323 .

NOTIFICATION:

Pursuant to Title 25 (Zoning) Public Notice, a public hearing notice was mailed on April 21, 2026 at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the hearing date in accordance with Title 25. In addition, a public hearing notice has been posted on the project site on April 23, 2026 at least 10 days in advance of the hearing date.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Determination No. 26-0831
Attachment 2 – Irvine Bowl Sound Policy Report