

RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION FOR THE PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

CITY-BROOKS PARK MASTER PLAN + LAKES VISION SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Minutes Amended 08/17/2026

The City-Brooks Park Master Plan + Lakes Vision Special Committee met at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 18, 2025, at the Eugene A. Young Administrative Offices at Milton J. Womack Park, Room 1800, 6201 Florida Blvd., Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

I. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by BREC Superintendent Janet Simmons, at 9:00 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Committee Members present: Cricket Gordon, Rob Stuart, Zach Corbin, Christina Melton, Jason Andreasen, Randy Albarez, and Janet Simmons. Meeting Minutes amended 08/17/2026 to reflect Mike Polito present.

Committee Members absent: Carl Stages, Chris Meyer, and Michael Raby.

Other staff present: Angela Harms, Maurice Velasquez, Brendan Nestor, members of Sasaki, Mark Goodson, Devon Camarota, Sophie Neuhaus, Blake Rambo, and Terri Dreyer.

III. City-Brooks Community Park Master Plan & University Lake Governance Plan

a. Introductions

b. Overview of Committee's Role

BREC and Sasaki introduced the Steering Committee, project team, and overall planning process. Committee members discussed their role in guiding the project, ensuring it stays on schedule, reflects community input, and remains grounded in realistic funding and implementation strategies. Members also emphasized the importance of integrating the park with its surrounding environment, activating underutilized spaces, and maintaining clear, proactive communication with the public throughout the planning process.

c. Project Timeline & Mile Markers

Sasaki presented the overall project structure, schedule, and key milestones for the unified planning effort, including the University Lakes System Governance and O&M Plan, the Wampold Beach Concept Design, and the City-Brooks Park Master Plan. The presentation outlined the project's phased approach, highlighting major deliverables, public engagement opportunities, stakeholder meetings, and key decision points through project completion.

Committee members emphasized the importance of early brainstorming and inclusive public engagement. The discussion highlighted the need for dedicated opportunities to generate ideas before the planning process becomes more focused, as well as outreach strategies that engage a broad cross-section of the community, including residents who may not be reached through online surveys alone. A public meeting was planned for mid-March, a project celebration and concept reveal anticipated in mid-May.

d. Project Deliverables – Governance and O&M Plan

Sasaki presented the framework for the University Lakes Governance and O&M Plan, outlining a process to develop a unified governance structure that aligns operations, maintenance, funding,

and long-term stewardship. The presentation reviewed existing partnerships, ownership and maintenance responsibilities, governance options, funding strategies, and implementation planning, while identifying opportunities to improve coordination and establish a sustainable management model.

Committee members emphasized that the governance framework should support long-term stewardship through sustainable funding, operations, and maintenance while promoting public education about the lakes and their environmental significance. The discussion highlighted the importance of engaging schools, families, and community organizations to foster stewardship and ensure governance recommendations are practical, implementable, and sustainable.

e. Community Engagement

The committee reviewed the proposed stakeholder engagement strategy and discussed the importance of involving a broad range of partners throughout the planning process. Members also discussed documenting existing investments and contributions made by participating organizations to better understand current funding commitments and help prioritize future project implementation and funding needs.

f. Project Deliverables – Wampold Beach Concept Plan

Sasaki presented the initial direction for the Wampold Beach Concept Design, building on the 2021 concept while incorporating current dredging conditions. The presentation reviewed key proposed amenities and outlined the goal of developing a shovel-ready concept that aligns the original vision with updated site conditions and infrastructure needs.

g. Project Deliverables – City-Brooks Master Plan

Sasaki introduced the City-Brooks Park Master Plan, highlighting the opportunity to transform the park into a connected regional destination that better links its diverse amenities and surrounding communities. The presentation included a preliminary site analysis focused on history, circulation, programming, hydrology, and ecology, identifying key opportunities to improve connectivity, address infrastructure and environmental challenges, and create a more cohesive park experience.

Committee members identified key challenges for City-Brooks Park, including unsafe pedestrian and bicycle connections, parking, flooding, erosion, stormwater management, and the railroad and Dalrymple Drive as significant barriers to accessibility. The discussion also highlighted opportunities to improve connectivity through safer crossings, greenway links, and stronger connections to surrounding neighborhoods and destinations while enhancing stormwater management and environmental resilience. Members explored ways to better activate underutilized areas, expand recreational and educational opportunities, thoughtfully integrate the golf course into the broader park experience, and create a more inclusive, connected, and welcoming regional park.

IV. New Business and Open Discussion

a. Baton Rouge Gallery Contemporary Arts Center

Committee members discussed the BRG Contemporary Arts Center as an important project to coordinate with the broader City-Brooks Park Master Plan. The discussion emphasized preserving mature trees, incorporating community feedback, and maintaining clear, proactive communication to help the public understand how the Arts Center supports the park's long-term vision.

b. Other Questions / Open Discussion

The committee discussed the importance of developing a proactive public relations strategy to communicate project goals and updates through local media and community partners.

Members also emphasized the value of engaging younger residents throughout the planning process to ensure the park reflects the needs and interests of future generations.

Committee members expressed confidence in the project team, noting that “we got the right team,” while also emphasizing that the voices of young people who live in the surrounding community should be among the most important voices in the process.

V. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 11:00 p.m., Approved by unanimous consent

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Harms", followed by a horizontal line.

Angela Harms
BREC Director of Planning & Engineering