



Altadena Town Council

Meeting Minutes – October 21, 2025

Start time – 7:02 pm, End time – 9:52pm

1. CALL TO ORDER – meeting called to order at 7:00pm – Victoria Knapp, Chair

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance – Armen Balikyan-Bekian, high school student from St. Francis and a community supporter organizing a tennis tournament to help his neighbors and fellow Altadenans.

1.2 Roll Call - Kim Yu, Recording Secretary

1.2.1 The following Councilmembers were present: Victoria Knapp, Nic Arnzen, Milissa Marona, Dorothy Wong, Isis Moulden, Pat Sutherlen, Reggie Wilkins, Kim Yu, Diane Marcussen, Japhena Musson, Jon Carmody, Sylvia Vega, Justin Mahramas, Vi-Yvette Stewart Gordon, Darlene Greene, and Connor Cipolla

1.3 Approve October 21, 2025, Meeting Agenda - Nic Arnzen, Vice Chair

1.3.1 Meeting agenda was approved with the following changes: 2– Strike 2.2, 2.5, 3- 3.3 is changed to Chief Brian Douty, 4 – 4.3 is updated to Sarah Dusseault, 8 – add 8.2 – 4603.02

1.3.2 Motion – Arnzen, second – Cipolla, all approved

2. OFFICERS' REPORTS

2.1 Chair - Victoria Knapp

2.1.1 Rebuild: ~400 permits issued; ~400 pending; 262 builds underway; 216 new homes.

2.1.2 Community events: First Responder Dinner, Autry Block Party, Habitat “Raise the Roof” Gala, Taste of Dena, ATC 50th Anniversary.

2.1.3 Economic Recovery: Altadena Cookie Company grand opening Oct 29 (Lincoln Ave).

2.1.4 Community’s resilience and commitment driving strong recovery.

2.1.5 Governor’s Office—Cal Assist mortgage program expanded, new guidelines live.

2.2 Recording Secretary, Approve September 2025 meeting minutes - Kim Yu

2.2.1.1 Minutes approved with no corrections.

2.2.1.1.1 Abstained due to absences – Cipolla

2.3 Treasurer - Milissa Marona

- 2.3.1 Opening balance: \$7256.25
- 2.3.2 Spent \$563.23 and received \$630.00 in election fees
- 2.3.3 Closing balance is: \$7,332.02

3 PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS

3.1 Altadena Sheriff's Station - Captain Ethan Marquez

- 3.1.1 CERT meeting: Nov 5, 4–6 pm, restarting community emergency response team.
- 3.1.2 Altadena Forever Run: Jan 4; 10K/5K/1K; fundraiser for fire survivors and Sheriff Foundation.
- 3.1.3 Crime: Burglaries steady; catalytic converter thefts increasing (Prius most targeted); recent arrests made.
- 3.1.4 Rebuild security: Homeowners encouraged to email station for security checks during construction.

3.2 California Highway Patrol - Officer Keller

- 3.2.1 September: 13 crashes; one injury; two hit-and-runs; no DUIs; no pedestrian/bike crashes.
- 3.2.2 Safety: Check tires before winter; officers continuing proactive enforcement.
- 3.2.3 Reporting concerns: Email location/time/vehicle details; pedestrians should wear reflective gear after time change.

3.3 L.A. County Fire – Deputy Chief Brian Douty

- 3.3.1 Upcoming: Christmas Tree Lane event Dec 6; large turnout expected.
- 3.3.2 September: 199 total calls; two small fires; 152 EMS; five traffic collisions.
- 3.3.3 Halloween safety: Light-colored costumes, flashlights/glow sticks, cross at corners, keep homes lit
- 3.3.4 Rebuild support: Habitat (25 homes funded, up to 100 goal), Samaritan's Purse (70 homes funded); several homes expected to be completed by Halloween/Thanksgiving.

4 COMMUNITY REPORTS

4.1 LA County Parks and Rec – Guillermo Portillo

- 4.1.1 Teen program operates Monday–Friday, 3–9 p.m., recent Girls Empowerment Conference participation at East LA College.
- 4.1.2 Everybody Plays after-school program runs Monday–Friday, 2:30–6 p.m. (extended hours).
- 4.1.3 Tiny Tots session runs through Nov 7; winter session planned late December–April.

- 4.1.4 Aging & Disabilities programs temporarily relocated to Loma Alta community room for approximately two years due to fire damage.
- 4.1.5 “Dealing with Disasters” therapeutic support group available at Loma Alta Park.
- 4.1.6 Halloween/Seasonal: Trick-or-Treat Village moved to Halloween evening (5–8 p.m.); Día de los Muertos event on Nov 1, 1–4 p.m. in the gym with community ofrenda.
- 4.1.7 Harvest Festival/Thanksgiving: Large community dinner (300+ people) with Tony Talks; Brotherhood Crusade Thanksgiving food distribution on Nov 8, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
- 4.1.8 Holiday in the Park scheduled for Dec 13, 1–5 p.m., including snow day.
- 4.1.9 Recreation & Sports:
 - Basketball gym and courts open; schedules vary by partner use.
 - Basketball clinics: Thursdays, Nov 6–Dec 11, 5–8 p.m.
 - Open gym: Mondays and Fridays.
 - Tennis lessons ongoing Monday–Saturday.
 - New fitness classes (iCandy Fitness): Mon/Wed 6:30–7:30 p.m., Sat mornings.
 - Urban Ballroom Dance: Saturdays 9–10:30 a.m.
- 4.1.10 Online registration available via QR code.
- 4.1.11 Sheriff’s Station is *not* hosting trunk-or-treat at Loma Alta; all events coordinated through Parks & Rec.
- 4.2 Eaton Fire Collaborative – Bree Jensen
 - 4.2.1 Collaboratory open at 540 W. Woodbury Rd. - Hours: Mon/Wed 9–5, Thu 9–7, Fri 9–1
 - 4.2.2 Survivor distribution store open Thursdays by appointment; booked through December - Volunteers needed to expand hours/services
 - 4.2.3 Recovery & Staffing - Community recovery group active. Three-month “chief of staff” contract position to be posted (local preference)
 - 4.2.4 Background - Coalition of 200+ organizations coordinating recovery
 - 4.2.4.1 Site includes offices, store, and resilient-materials showroom
 - 4.2.4.2 Governor recently toured
 - 4.2.4.3 Residents encouraged to visit during open hours
- 4.3 ARCC (CORE ADU Sample Lot on Lincoln) – Sarah Dusseault

- 4.3.1 Showcase Overview - Opens November 1 at 2231 Lincoln Ave (county-owned site). Runs one month, Wednesdays–Sundays
- 4.3.2 Partners: CORE, ARC, Community Women Vital Voices, UCLA CityLab, LA County, LA for LA, Department of Angels. Coordination with POSTFIRE and philanthropic partners
- 4.3.3 Multiple units on-site, including a ~1,200 sq ft model and smaller ADU-scale units
- 4.3.4 Vendor selection focused on companies with built units and direct-to-consumer capacity
- 4.3.5 Vendor Tent & Resources - Soil testing info and sample drop-off
Additional vendor materials and permitting/rebuild guidance
On-site and online “how-to” manual developed with the One-Stop Center
- 4.3.6 Parking coordinated with nearby churches and organizations, formal plan forthcoming
- 4.3.7 LA County is leasing the site to CORE; property will serve community uses after the showcase
- 4.3.8 Showcase includes multifamily stackable options, ADUs, and interim housing—useful for faith-based sites with available land
- 4.4 LA County Department of Public Works – Josh Svensson – Emergency Preparedness
 - 4.4.1 Public Works manages roads, flood control, building and safety, waterworks, catch basins, and sewers. 24/7 dispatch available for potholes, signals, trash, flooding, graffiti, and illegal dumping.
 - 4.4.2 Residents encouraged to use the LA County Public Works app (photo reporting and Service Locator).
 - 4.4.2.1 Promoted Ready LA County preparedness steps: plan, supplies, stay informed, get involved.
 - 4.4.3 Hazard page includes alerts and Mud Flow Protection Map; at-risk areas should have received door hangers. Postfire mudflow risk remains elevated for several years.
 - 4.4.4 Safety Resources - Emergency Survival Guide available in 15 languages. Recommended Watch Duty app for real-time fire updates.
 - 4.4.5 Lincoln Ave Bridge Update – Lee Miller
 - 4.4.5.1 Concrete for bridge abutments completed, remaining concrete/retaining wall work finishing this week.
 - 4.4.5.2 Steel truss installation scheduled for Oct 27–Nov 7.
 - 4.4.5.3 Asphalt paving, railing, and fencing planned for Nov 10–24.
 - 4.4.5.4 Pavement striping set for Nov 25; goal is to open the bridge by Thanksgiving, weather permitting.

5 SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

5.1 LA County Public Health – Noise and Construction Survey – Charlene Contreras

- 5.1.1 Public Health enforces noise rules; post-Eaton Fire variance allows Sunday construction 7 a.m.–7 p.m.
- 5.1.2 Department is gathering community input on further adjusting construction hours.
- 5.1.3 Anonymous survey (QR code) open to residents and builders to weigh earlier/late hours and limited holiday work.
- 5.1.4 ATC will share the survey link broadly to support policy decisions for the next two years.

6 COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Land Use Committee – Diane Marcussen, Chair

6.1.1 McDonalds Rebuild - CUP RPPL2023004561- 1306 N. Altadena Dr.

- 6.1.1.1 Project proposed with larger dining room/kitchen and a dual-lane drive-thru to reduce traffic queuing. Includes 4,142 sq ft building, ~40 seats, 17 parking stalls, bike/EV amenities, and improved signage and landscaping.
- 6.1.1.2 Staffing 70–80 employees; same operating hours as before.
- 6.1.1.3 Land Use Committee recommended approval of the CUP; ATC unanimously supported sending a letter of support.

6.1.2 Bar Betsy - CUP RPPL2024-003530 – 871 E. Mariposa St.

- 6.1.2.1 Café-style restaurant requesting beer and wine sales for on-/off-site consumption; community outreach showed no opposition.
- 6.1.2.2 Land Use recommended approval **with conditions** related to hours, alcohol service, and safety.
- 6.1.2.3 ATC unanimously supported the CUP and will send a letter to Regional Planning.

6.2 Election – Isis Moulden, Chair

- 6.2.1 Candidate statements were made by each candidate running in the election
- 6.2.2 Election instructions and call for polling volunteers were presented after statements
- 6.2.3 The following are candidates whose statements were provided:

Census Tract 4601

Courage

Brandon Perez

Ian Mcfitt
Morgan Whirledge

Census Tract 4602

Kim Yu
Katherine Stroud Donovan (dropped out a few days after tge meeting)

Census Tract 4603.01

Brandon Smith
Dorothy Wong

Census Tract 4603.02

Heidi Luesy
Jon Jason Carmody
Matthew Lorscheider (Dropped out of election)

Census Tract 4610

Anton Anderson
Jose Ortega
Nicole Galvan Ortega
Torin Joseph Floyd

Census Tract 4611

J.D. Angel
Pat Sutherland

Census Tract 4612

Lori Juma
Reginal (Reggie) Wilkins

Census Tract 4613

Alexandra Kershner
Sylvia Vega

6.3 Holiday Party – Victoria Knapp, Chair

- 6.3.1 Chair Knapp announced that the December 19, 2025, ATC meeting will be held at the Rose Bowl in the UCLA Bruins locker room through a partnership with the Rose Bowl.

6.3.2 Attending Altadena residents will receive a stadium and museum tour and have an opportunity to go onto the field; light refreshments will be provided.

6.3.3 Chair Knapp noted this will be her final holiday meeting as Chair.

6.4 Education – Councilmember Moulden, Chair

6.4.1 Chair Isis Molden reported that PUSD open enrollment timelines are set (sibling priority begins Oct 21; lotteries in Jan–Feb 2026).

6.4.2 Coalition of Northwest PUSD Families drafted a resolution seeking a three-year moratorium on involuntary teacher reassignments at Eaton Fire–impacted schools (Jackson, Altadena Arts, Elliot, John Muir).

6.4.3 Resolution aims to prevent mid-year teacher moves that further disrupt and traumatize affected students; Chair Molden proposed an ATC support letter to the PUSD Board.

6.4.4 Council discussion noted concerns about timing, budget implications, and limited review time, as well as strong support for stability and continuity for students.

6.4.5 A motion to send the letter was tabled; Council Member Chipola’s motion to conduct the vote by email before the Oct 23, 2025, PUSD meeting passed by majority (three opposed, no abstentions).

6.4.6 Main motion remains tabled pending the email vote; members were asked to respond promptly.

6.5 AEFRR – Milissa Marona

6.5.1 On Sept 30, 2025, the Advisory Committee distributed ~240 grants totaling \$225,000 to Altadena residents.

6.5.2 Individual grants ranged from \$500–\$1,000 depending on need and available funds.

6.5.3 Fundraising is ongoing, with plans for additional distributions in early 2026.

6.5.4 Community encouraged to donate at eatenfirefund.com.

7 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

7.1 David Scabinsky –raised concerns about long wait times at the understaffed Permit Center and urged broader recovery support for all Altadenans, noting his own difficulty accessing assistance. He recommended adding siren-based emergency alerts and creating a unified civil defense corp. He also requested the release of CHP, Sheriff, and County Fire after-action reports, expressing frustration that they remain unavailable six months after the fire.

- 7.2 Karen Gibson – from Neighbors Building a Better Altadena thanked the community for the strong and generous response to this year’s ATC candidate process and invited residents to the virtual candidate forum on October 28 from 6:30–8:30 p.m. She requested volunteer tech support for the event and noted that altadena.org will not be available for this election cycle. She encouraged the Council and Education Committee to ensure electronic voting is possible given widespread displacement after the fire. She closed by thanking Chair Isis Molden for her inclusive and tireless work organizing the candidate slate.
- 7.3 Alan Shay - A longtime resident and former Little Red Hen owner, Alan Shay expressed pride in Altadena’s resilience and praised council members for their leadership during the recovery. He offered his media tech company’s support to help ATC candidates share their stories and emphasized the importance of strong, consistent leadership as new members step forward. He recalled his childhood in Altadena as a model of true community and encouraged continued support for emerging leaders in this next chapter.
- 7.4 Bree Jensen - spoke on behalf of more than 600 Altadena residents who signed a petition requesting that one horse be allowed on lots of 9,000 sq ft or larger. She described the strong community response, including memories and historical photos of horses in Altadena, and noted the town’s long equestrian history. She shared that caring for a horse during COVID provided meaningful emotional support for her family and emphasized that horses can aid healing and resilience as the community recovers from the Eaton Fire. She requested that the Town Council place the issue on a future agenda for discussion.
- 7.5 Matthew Lorscheider - representing the Northwest PUSD Parents Coalition, urged support for a resolution to prevent mid-year teacher reassignments at fire-impacted Altadena and Northwest Pasadena schools. He described recent disruptions at Jackson and Altadena Arts Magnet caused by a teacher being moved weeks into the school year, resulting in overcrowding and unstable dual-language classes. He emphasized that students already facing COVID and fire-related trauma need stability, and clarified the coalition is not opposing budget cuts or annual staffing moves—only mid-year changes at affected schools.

8 CENSUS TRACT REPORTS

8.1 CT4603.01 – Wong

- 8.1.1 Altadena community bike ride: Sunday, Oct 26 at 9 a.m., Loma Alta Park.
- 8.1.2 Oak Tree Ordinance update: residents encouraged to complete the survey

8.1.3 Countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan workshop: Tuesday,
Oct 28 at 6 p.m.

8.1.4 Final Zone Zero forestry outreach days: Oct 23 and Nov 3.

9 ADJOURN – 9:52pm