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Protect HB Files Lawsuit to Halt “Symphony of Flowers” Project in Huntington Central Park Residents Demand Environmental Review and Protection of Public Park Space and Wildlife

HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA — Today, Protect HB, a grassroots coalition of Huntington Beach residents, filed a lawsuit against the City of Huntington Beach for violating the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in its approval of the “Symphony of Flowers” project—an expansive, private, ticketed light-and-sound installation slated to occupy over six acres of Central Park for at least six months each year.

Despite overwhelming public opposition, the City Council voted unanimously on February 18, 2025, to approve a three-year agreement with Flowers of the Sky, LLC without conducting the required environmental review. The City short circuited CEQA by relying on a 25-year-old Master Environmental Impact Report (EIR) from 1999 that did not contemplate a project of this scale, intensity, or duration.

“Our public park is not for sale,” said Protect HB spokesperson Cathey Ryder. “The community deserves transparency, meaningful input, and a legal and proper environmental review.” “Central Park is one of the last remaining open spaces in our community,” she continued. “This project would close off public access to over six acres of cherished parkland for most of the year, disrupting sensitive wildlife habitat—including that of bald eagles and monarch butterflies—and replacing it with 500,000 LED lights, amplified symphonic music, and concrete installations. That’s not what our community wants, and it’s not what CEQA allows.”

The proposed Symphony of Flowers would construct bleachers, concessions, a 180-foot artificial water feature, and sound systems across the park, operating from dusk to 11 p.m., four nights per week, for at least four months annually. The installation and dismantling would block public use for at least an additional two months.

Protect HB’s lawsuit seeks to vacate the City’s approval of the project and its accompanying Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) Addendum, which was released to the public just days before the Council’s vote. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has also submitted substantial comments objecting to the City’s environmental review, citing the potential for illegal harm to endangered species and a lack of consultation.

“Our city has a responsibility to protect public lands and wildlife,” said Gina Clayton-Tarvin, a member of Protect HB, a CA Credentialed Biology teacher, and Trustee of the Ocean View School District, which includes the area where this event will take place. “Instead, they’ve rushed to greenlight a private spectacle without the transparency, study, or public engagement required by law.”

Protect HB is calling on the City to set aside its unlawful approval and conduct the proper environmental review as required by CEQA; one that accounts for the project’s impacts and allows for meaningful public participation.

About Protect HB

Protect HB is a local, volunteer-led organization dedicated to preserving the integrity of public spaces, protecting local wildlife, and ensuring transparency and community engagement in city governance. It is a project of Citizens for Good Governance (FPPC #1454094).