

# Agenda Report

December 8, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Finance Committee (November 24, 2025)

**FROM:** Police Department

**SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT TO LEASE PURCHASE TWO (2) MISSION-EQUIPPED HELICOPTERS AND TO ENTER INTO TWO FIVE-YEAR SERVICE CONTRACTS WITH CNC TECHNOLOGIES, LLC, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$12,574,760 AND AMEND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2026 OPERATING BUDGET BY APPROPRIATING \$4,000,000 FROM THE ASSET FORFEITURE FUND (207)**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposed action herein is not a "project" subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to state CEQA Guidelines Section 21065 and within the meaning of section 15378(b); and
2. Award contract to lowest responsive and responsible bidder dated November 14, 2025, submitted by CNC Technologies, LLC, in response to the specifications for Pasadena Air Operations Helicopter Procurement, authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract to purchase two (2) mission-equipped helicopters and to enter into two service contracts for five years, in an amount not to exceed \$12,574,760, which includes the base contract amount of \$11,431,600 and a ten percent contingency of \$1,143,160; and
3. Authorize the City Manager to extend the service contracts for up to three additional one-year periods; and
4. Amend the Police Department's Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget by appropriating \$4,000,000 from the unappropriated fund balance in the Asset Forfeiture Fund (207).

**BACKGROUND:**

The Pasadena Police Department currently operates a mixed fleet of military surplus and civilian helicopters, including Bell OH-58, Bell Jet Ranger, and MD 500 models. These aircraft are equipped with mission specific tools such as mapping, imaging technology, and searchlights. They play a vital role in supporting law enforcement, fire response, and mutual aid operations across Pasadena, the Foothill Air Support Team (FAST), and the Tri-Cities Mutual Aid Agreement. This City's Air Operations Unit serves about 880,938 residents across 175 square miles.

Additionally, our Air Operations Section supports a wide range of city departments, including Fire, Water and Power, Public Works, Transportation, the City Prosecutor's Office, Planning, and Code Compliance. Ensuring a reliable and modern fleet is essential to maintaining this high level of service and responsiveness across all city functions.

While our current fleet remain airworthy, they require significantly more maintenance, and are increasingly difficult and costly to repair due to the limited parts and availability of discontinued components. To enhance operational efficiency, safety, and technological capability, the Department proposes selling aging aircraft thereby reducing our current fleet from 5 to 4 helicopters. The Department will be following City salvage guidelines and will be selling the MD 500 Helicopter. The proceeds of the MD 500 sale will help offset the cost of the new helicopters.

Standardizing the fleet through the purchase of two identical helicopters will streamline operations and reduce long-term costs. It will minimize the variety of spare parts that must be stocked, simplify maintenance procedures for our maintenance staff, and reduce the number of emergency protocols that flight crews must memorize. This will ultimately improve crew confidence and competency while improving safety for the crew and public. A consistent fleet also enhances training and efficiency of operational readiness.

The proposed new helicopters were designed to reduce their noise signature. By slowing the main rotor's speed, and utilizing swept-tip main rotor blades, the noise signature was reduced. They also implement a dual-channel engine control system, resulting in optimized engine performance for quieter operation. These helicopters have undergone significant engineering challenges to meet the stringent standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which were designed to mitigate noise impact on residents.

On October 14, 2025, the City issued an Invitation for Bids (IFB) for the procurement of two new mission-equipped helicopters, along with two five-year contracts to provide real-time aerial video downlink services and technical support for both the new and existing helicopter fleet. The IFB closed on November 14, 2025. The IFB was posted on



Open gov, the City's online procurement hub. The IFB was downloaded by 18 companies. Three companies submitted bids. The selection was based on the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

The following table details the cost from each vendor's bid.

**Table 1: Bid Tabulations**

Vendor	Location	Total Bid Amount
CNC Technologies, LLC	Oak Park, CA	\$11,431,573
Century Helicopters, Inc.	Fort Collins, CO	\$11,613,505
Bell Textron, Inc.	Fort Worth, TX	\$12,607,991

CNC Technologies, LLC, was the lowest priced responsive and responsible bidder.

At the conclusion of the two, initial five-year service contract terms, the Police Department Command Staff will evaluate the performance of the aerial downlink service and support contracts. The proposed agreement includes the option to extend the services for up to three additional one-year periods, subject to the approval of the City Manager.

Staff is recommending the City Council authorize the City Manager to purchase two (2) mission-equipped helicopters and to enter into a contract with CNC Technologies, LLC, to provide aerial downlink services and technical support for 5 years for both the new and existing helicopter fleet, for a total not to exceed \$12,574,760.

#### **COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

The proposed action is consistent with the City Council's Strategic Plan Goals to ensure public safety and maintain fiscal responsibility and stability.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

CEQA excludes, from environmental review, actions that are not "projects" as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 21065 and within the meaning of Section 15378(b). Sections 21065 and 15378(b) define a project as an action which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Section 15378 excludes from the definition of "project" continuing administrative or maintenance activities, such as purchases of equipment, and government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

The actions proposed herein, authorizing the City Manager to purchase two helicopters and amending the Police Department's FY 2026 Operating Budget, are administrative activities for the purchase of equipment and governmental fiscal activities that do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment, and therefore is not a "project" as defined by CEQA. Since the action is not a project subject to CEQA, no environmental document is required.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

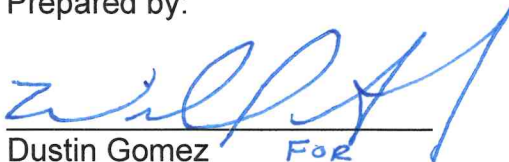
The total cost of this action is an amount not to exceed \$12,574,760 for the purchase of two (2) helicopters and two five-year service contracts. Approval of the recommended action will amend the Police Department's FY 2026 Operating Budget by appropriating \$4,000,000 from the unappropriated fund balance in the Asset Forfeiture Fund (207). Staff proposes a \$4,000,000 down payment and to arrange lease-financing for this purchase prior to delivery to the City. Actual financing costs will be based on prevailing market rates at the time financing has concluded. Once the terms have been determined, staff will return to City Council for authorization to enter the lease financing and request a budget amendment for the Asset Forfeiture Fund (207) and the Foothill Air Support Team Fund (108) for the corresponding debt service payments. Issuance of the purchase order at this time will guarantee the City a place in the production schedule with delivery of the helicopters anticipated in Summer 2027.

Respectfully submitted,



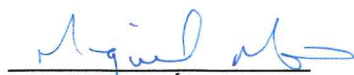
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