



Agenda Report

July 21, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Departments of Public Works

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO AMEND CONTRACT NO. 32526 WITH GRUEN ASSOCIATES BY \$3,452,454 FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$9,556,563 FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR THE CENTRAL LIBRARY SEISMIC RETROFIT AND RENOVATIONS PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find the contract proposed herein to be categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15061, Class 3, the Common Sense Exemption that CEQA only applies to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment;
2. Authorize the City Manager to amend Contract No. 32526 with Gruen Associates by \$3,452,454, increasing the not-to-exceed amount to \$9,556,563 for professional services for the Central Library Seismic Retrofit and Renovations project; and
3. To the extent this transaction could be considered a separate procurement subject to the Competitive Selection Process, grant the proposed contract amendment with Gruen Associates an exemption from the Competitive Selection Process set forth in the Competitive Bidding and Purchasing Ordinance pursuant to the Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.049(B), contracts where the best interests of the City are served.

BACKGROUND:

Designed by Myron Hunt and opened in 1927, the Central Library was the first building completed as part of Pasadena's historic Civic Center Plan and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As the cornerstone of the City's library system, the Central Library functions as a major learning and cultural center, offering specialized resources, digital archives, and technological infrastructure not available at branch libraries. It serves as the primary repository for rare and historic materials and hosts large-scale

public programs, workshops, and cultural events that serve thousands of community members annually.

In 2021, a structural assessment concluded that the building's unreinforced masonry construction posed significant seismic risk. As a result, the library was closed to the public. Prior to the closure, the facility welcomed approximately 1,000 visitors per day and hosted 232 events and 876 community meetings annually. The closure disrupted public access to research tools, educational programming, and community meeting space, reducing the availability of services not offered at branch locations.

To initiate the seismic retrofit and renovation of the Central Library, the City's Public Works Department conducted a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process to select a qualified consultant team. On February 6, 2023, the City Council authorized Contract No. 32526 with Gruen Associates in an amount not-to-exceed \$6,104,109 to provide architectural and engineering design services. Under this contract, Gruen advanced the design through key development milestones, prepared environmental documentation in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and supported the City's public outreach efforts. A Mayor-appointed Technical Oversight Committee (TOC) has provided independent review and guidance throughout the design process.

In November 2024, Pasadena voters approved Measure PL, a \$195 million bond measure to fund construction of the project.

To date, Gruen Associates has completed approximately 90% of the design documents. This work includes structural design for seismic strengthening, restoration of historic elements, accessibility upgrades, and full architectural and engineering design for mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire/life safety, and roofing systems, as well as improvements to the exterior grounds, courtyard and parking lot.

While the original contract scope was developed under the assumption of a traditional design-bid-build delivery method, the City has since elected to proceed using a Construction Manager At-Risk (CMAR) approach. This change in project delivery necessitates consultant services that are different than originally contemplated. Continuing with Gruen Associates is appropriate given their detailed knowledge of the building, prior work under the existing contract, and established coordination with project stakeholders and regulatory agencies. Therefore, this amendment is in the best interest of the City. The proposed amendment will expand the contract to include CMAR selection phase support, coordination with the CMAR during constructability and cost reviews, construction administration services throughout the anticipated construction period, and project close-out activities. With this amendment, the contract will support architectural services through completion of the project under the CMAR model.

Staff has reviewed Gruen's proposed staffing plan, scope of services, and fee schedule, and has negotiated a cost for the additional work. Staff is seeking authorization to amend Contract No. 32526 by \$3,452,454, for a revised total not-to-exceed contract

amount of \$9,556,563. The revised contract amount represents approximately 7.75% of the estimated direct construction cost, which is within the range of typical professional service costs for public projects of this scale and complexity. Construction is anticipated to be completed by 2028.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

This contract is consistent with the City Council's goal to improve, maintain, and enhance public facilities and infrastructure in order to promote quality of life and the local economy; ensure continued operation; and support institutions that serve the needs of Pasadena's diverse residents and families.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the Common Sense Exemption that CEQA only applies to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total cost of this action will be \$3,452,454 for a revised contract amount not to exceed \$9,556,563. Funding for this action will be addressed by the utilization of existing budgeted appropriations in the *Central Library Seismic Retrofit and Renovations* (71922) Capital Improvement Program project. There will be no impact to General Fund. It is anticipated all costs will be expended in fiscal years FY 2026 thru FY 2028.

Respectfully submitted,



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