

# Agenda Report

June 16, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Planning & Community Development Department

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE BUNGALOW HEAVEN  
LANDMARK DISTRICT CONSERVATION PLAN (LD-1)**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Find that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15308, Class 8 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment) and that there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class and, therefore, there are no unusual circumstances;
2. Find that the proposed amendments to the Bungalow Heaven Landmark District Conservation Plan meet the following criteria for Conservation Plan amendments as specified in Section 17.62.070.H.5 of the Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC):
  - a. The proposed amendments are consistent with the purposes of PMC Chapter 17.62;
  - b. The proposed amendments are in conformance with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan; and
  - c. The proposed amendments would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare of the City; and, therefore,
3. Approve the Conservation Plan amendments for the Bungalow Heaven Landmark District, LD-1.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

At a public hearing on December 17, 2024, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) determined that the proposed Bungalow Heaven Conservation Plan

amendments meet the criteria in §17.62.070.H.5 of the Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) and unanimously recommended that the City Council approve the amendments.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Landmark District Conservation Plans were adopted in conjunction with the designation of the City's first three landmark districts: Bungalow Heaven (1989), Garfield Heights (1999) and Banbury Oaks (2002). Conservation Plans were intended to assist homeowners with restoration, alterations, or additions to buildings to ensure preservation of a landmark district's architectural qualities and outline what types of development projects require review of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). After the establishment of the Banbury Oaks Landmark District, the Historic Preservation Ordinance (HPO) was amended to create a uniform procedure and thresholds for review of applications for COA in all future landmark districts and since then, Conservation Plans are no longer adopted for new landmark districts. However, the Conservation Plans that were created for the first three landmark districts remain in effect and the HPO includes procedures for amending or rescinding those three Conservation plans.

The HPO also clarifies that where a Conservation Plan conflicts with the HPO, the Conservation Plan prevails, except for appeal and call for review procedures. The Bungalow Heaven Conservation Plan (BHCP) was adopted in 1989 with the original designation of the landmark district and was amended in 1993 when the landmark district boundaries were modified to include additional properties. The process to amend a Conservation Plan includes an Eligibility Review, with the Director as the review authority and, if determined eligible by staff, a Formal Review, with the HPC as the recommending body and the City Council as the review authority. Conservation Plan Amendments do not require written support from a majority of property owners in the landmark district.

On November 16, 2023, the Bungalow Heaven Neighborhood Association (BHNA) submitted an application for Eligibility Review of proposed amendments to the BHCP. The proposed changes include expanding the period of significance from 1885 to 1956 (it is currently from the turn of the century through the 1930s). The following page includes a detailed description of the proposed amendments. Staff conducted an informational meeting, which was noticed to all property owners within the district boundary, on June 20, 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to present the proposed changes to property owners and residents. Staff then evaluated the amendments according to the landmark district/conservation plan amendment criteria in PMC Section 17.62.070.H.5 and on July 1, 2024, issued a Notice of Decision (Attachment A) that determined that the amendments meet the applicable criteria for approval.

On July 10, 2024, two appeals were filed by two Bungalow Heaven residents one of whom disagreed with expanding the period of significance and another who wanted additional time to understand the ramifications of the proposed amendments and how they may affect property values (Attachment B). The HPC heard the appeals on



October 1, 2024 and voted to deny the appeals and uphold staff's eligibility determination (Attachment C).

On October 15, 2024, the BHNA initiated the Formal Review of the amendments to the BHCP. On December 17, 2024, the HPC conducted a public hearing and recommended that the City Council approve the proposed amendments (Attachment D).

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSERVATION PLAN AMENDMENTS:**

The proposed amendments to the BHCP include:

Period of Significance: The established period of significance for the Bungalow Heaven Landmark District, as stated in the Conservation Plan and designation report, is "the turn of the century through the 1930s." The proposed amendments will more clearly define and extend the period of significance to be from 1885 to 1956. This extended period of significance will capture the last significant wave of development for the district. There are no proposed changes to the existing landmark district boundaries. See Attachment E for the applicant's justification of the period of significance expansion.

Contributing and Non-Contributing Status: There is not a current formal list of contributing and non-contributing properties within the landmark district boundaries. The proposed Conservation Plan amendments include a complete list of all properties within the established boundaries indicating contributing and non-contributing statuses based on the updated period of significance and a review of all properties' historic integrity. See Attachment F for the full list of contributing and non-contributing properties.

Pro Forma and Terminology Updates: The Conservation Plan amendments also include proposed updates to capture the 2004 expansion of the landmark district and to make the plan consistent with the 2021 revision to the City's HPO.

See Attachment G for a redlined version of the proposed Conservation Plan changes.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Pursuant to PMC Section 17.62.070.H, the procedures for amending a Landmark District or Conservation Plan shall follow the same procedures for designating a new Landmark District. As such, pursuant to PMC Section 17.62.070.H.5, the following criteria shall apply to amendment of a conservation plan:

- a. The proposed amendments are consistent with the purposes of this Chapter;
- b. The proposed amendments are in conformance with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan; and
- c. The proposed amendments would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare of the City.

The proposed amendments are consistent with the purposes of PMC Chapter 17.62 and in conformance with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan, in that they will allow for updates to bring the plan into greater consistency with the updated HPO, which furthers the preservation efforts of the City. The proposed expansion to the period of significance will ensure that all of the buildings that represent the full historical development pattern of the district are protected and inclusion of a formal list of contributing and non-contributing structures will provide definitive status information for staff to use when evaluating and reviewing projects and will ensure that property owners are more aware of requirements and guidelines that will apply to their properties.

Staff agrees with the applicant's justification of the period of significance outlined in Attachment E as well as with the determination in the contributing and non-contributing properties list in Attachment F. The proposed amendments would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare of the City because they will further ensure protection of all of the resources that make up the Bungalow Heaven Landmark District. Based on this analysis, staff finds that the proposed amendments meet the criteria for approval.

#### **RESULTS OF CONSERVATION PLAN AMENDMENTS:**

Approval of the proposed conservation plan amendments will result in an update/expansion of the period of significance for the district, the status of approximately 67 properties will change from non-contributing to contributing based on the updated period of significance, and pro forma and terminology updates will be made to the current conservation plan. The procedures and COA review thresholds outlined in the conservation plan would not change.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15308, Class 8 exempts from environmental review actions taken by regulatory agencies to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. The amendments to the conservation plan will retain and further clarify the procedures by which new structures, or changes to existing structures within the landmark district, are reviewed for consistency with the historic character of the district.

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

The proposed amendments will be consistent with General Plan Land Use Element – Guiding Principle 2: “Pasadena’s historic resources will be preserved. Citywide, new development will be in harmony with and enhance Pasadena’s unique character and sense of place. New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will be compatible with, and differentiated from, the existing resource;” and Goal 8: “Preservation and enhancement of Pasadena’s cultural and historic buildings,



landscapes, streets and districts as valued assets and important representations of its past and a source of community identity, and social, ecological, and economic vitality.”

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

In some instances, owners of designated properties may apply to the City for a Historic Property Contract (Mills Act), which allows an alternative and often lower property tax assessment. The City Council reviewed the projected loss of property tax revenue from this program in 2002 when it adopted the local Mills Act ordinance. As a result of this program, the reduced property tax amount which comes out of the City’s local share amount from the State, is a small percentage of the City’s overall property tax revenue. The Conservation Plan amendments will result in approximately 67 new contributing properties, which would become eligible to apply for a Historic Property Contract.

Respectfully submitted,



JENNIFER PAIGE, AICP  
Director of Planning & Community  
Development Department

Prepared by:



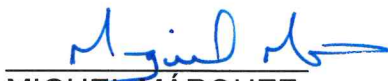
STEPHANIE CISNEROS  
Senior Planner

Reviewed by:



KEVIN JOHNSON  
Principal Planner

Approved by:



MIGUEL MÁRQUEZ  
City Manager

Attachments: (8)

Attachment A – July 1, 2024 Eligibility Review

Attachment B – Appeal Applications

Attachment C – October 1, 2024 HPC Staff Report (Appeals)

Attachment D – December 17, 2024 HPC Staff Report (Amendments)

Attachment E – Proposed Amendment Narrative

Attachment F – List of Contributing and Non-Contributing Properties

Attachment G – Proposed Conservation Plan Amendments (Redlined Version)

Attachment H – Map of Existing Landmark District