

Stayner Architects

8 September 2025

CREEC Coalition  
Outward Bound Adventures  
Charles Thomas, Executive Director  
Post Office Box 202  
Pasadena, CA 91102

RECEIVED

2025 SEP -8 PM 3: 31

CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA

**Regarding: Viability of the Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center (CREEC) at Hahamongna Watershed Park**

Dear Charles,

We are writing to provide professional observations regarding the adaptive reuse of the six existing Forest Service buildings within the Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex into a new **Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center (CREEC)**.

As you have described, CREEC is an initiative to transform an abandoned compound in Hahamongna Watershed Park into a resilient resource for paid environmental restoration workforce development, outdoor education, and community stewardship. CREEC will serve all of Los Angeles, with a local focus on the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, fire-impacted communities in Altadena and Northwest Pasadena, and disadvantaged communities of color from South Los Angeles. CREEC will expand Outward Bound Adventures' mission to involve youth and adults from demographics excluded from the conservation field. In addition, it will serve as a community hub for partners like the Pasadena Audubon Society, Side Street Projects, My Tribe Rise, Arlington Garden, and Friends of the LA River.

**Based on our initial investigations, the proposed use for these existing structures is not only viable but offers significant environmental benefits. We believe these existing structures are worthy of a comprehensive feasibility study.**

The following memo outlines our initial findings:

- ***Adaptive reuse of portions of the existing structures has significant environmental benefits relating to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and solid waste reductions.*** The average building's initial manufacturing and construction phase emits more GHG emissions than during its operational phase.<sup>1</sup> It can take up to 80 years for energy

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, M. *et al.* (2024) *AIA-CLF Embodied Carbon Toolkit for Architects*. Available at: [https://www.aia.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/AIA\\_CLF\\_EmbodiedCarbonToolkit\\_Part1.pdf](https://www.aia.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/AIA_CLF_EmbodiedCarbonToolkit_Part1.pdf)

- Flood Mitigation: Adding raised floors within the structures at lower elevations.
- ***Extensive demolition of the existing structures in proximity to heritage oak trees will negatively impact their health.*** An assessment by International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist® Matt Ribarić from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority on August 29, 2025, identified two trees in proximity to four structures with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of over 60 inches that qualify as heritage oaks. The largest of these is already stressed and needs immediate care.
  - Soil Health: Using heavy machinery will compact the soil around the trees, reducing their access to water, oxygen, and nutrients. Debris from the demolition will contaminate the soil.
  - Invasive Species and Fire Risk: The widespread presence of invasive mustard seed on the site is competing with oak trees for resources and disrupting the essential relationship between oak roots and beneficial fungi, making the trees vulnerable to disease, drought, and fire. A large pile of dead wood and mulch further increases fire risk and can introduce invasive beetles like the Goldspotted Oak Borer and Invasive Shothole Borer, identified by UC IPM as a significant threat specifically to mature oaks.
- ***The use appears to be consistent with the adopted 2010 Addendum to the Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan for the Hahamongna Annex, General Plan (Open Space: Parks), and Zoning (OS).***
- ***It appears feasible to adapt the existing structures into a new nature center that is appropriate to the new use, space needs, and public-facing presence in the park.***

Stayner Architects is a Los Angeles-based practice specializing in serving non-profit and cultural institutions to realize landmark civic projects that create spaces for learning, culture, and equity in the region. Our process centers on robust community and stakeholder engagement, passive sustainability strategies, and adaptive reuse designed with circularity and material reuse in mind.

Best regards,

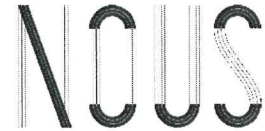
Christian Stayner, AIA, NCARB, LEED-AP  
 Principal, Stayner Architects  
 California Architect License C-37583  
 California General Contractor License 1126180 (Sum of All Parts)



September 8, 2025

Christian Stayner  
Stayner Architects  
4362 Melrose Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90029 US

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CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA



Nous Engineering  
5050 Eagle Rock Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California 90041

**RE: Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex Structural Assessment**

Dear Christian:

On August 28, 2025, I attended a site walk at the Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex Area in Pasadena with representatives from Stayner Architects and CREEC. The purpose of the site walk was to observe the condition of several small existing structures that have fallen into disrepair and to consider the feasibility of a proposal to renovate and reuse these buildings to support a mix of environmental education, workforce development, and cultural programming.

Located on the annex property are six single-story buildings constructed of reinforced concrete masonry (CMU) walls and timber-framed roofs. Each building has an interior concrete floor slab. From the site walk, here are my observations:

- Existing roofs have deteriorated and, in some cases, collapsed, to what appears to be beyond a state of repair.
- Existing exterior CMU walls are in a satisfactory condition from a structural perspective. There are no signs of uneven settlement, out-of-plane tilt, or cracking in the walls. The exterior surface of the buildings is generally intact, without the tell-tale signs of spalling due to deterioration, water intrusion, or vandalism.
- Existing slabs, where visible, were in decent condition. There were no signs of cracking or spalling, which might occur if standing water were present for an extended period. There did not appear to be signs of cracking due to uneven settlement.

Based on these observations, it is structurally feasible to consider renovating these buildings and reusing them. Although the roof structures will need to be replaced, the load-bearing CMU walls can be preserved. Furthermore, and in part due to their small sizes, extensive strengthening of the walls to meet current code requirements is not anticipated. If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Matthew Melnyk, SE  
Principal

9/8/2025  
Item 11



Matthew Ribarich  
ISA Certified Arborist #WE-13471A  
matthew.ribarich@mrca.ca.gov

7 September 2025

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CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council of Pasadena

**Regarding: Support for adaptive reuse of existing buildings for the Climate Resilience  
Environmental Education Center (CREEC) at Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex**

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

On August 29, 2025, I had the opportunity to walk with representatives from Outward Bound and Stayner Architects to learn about the proposed adaptive reuse of the existing annex-area buildings at Hahamongna Watershed Park. I was impressed by their vision to rehabilitate the site while minimizing unnecessary disturbance.

Several mature coast live oaks grow in close proximity to the existing buildings. These native trees are highly valuable for their shade, wildlife habitat, and resilience in our local climate. They also form a living canopy that cannot be quickly or easily replaced. Demolition and new construction would put these oaks at significant risk of decline or loss, even with standard tree protection measures, due to their proximity to structures and their current condition. Other mature tree species on site also grow near buildings and contribute canopy as well as environmental and aesthetic benefits.

Adaptive reuse of the buildings provides a much better path forward, greatly reducing impacts on these trees. This approach not only preserves the existing canopy but also offers opportunities to use the trees themselves as teaching tools: helping students and visitors learn about tree care, preservation, and the importance of native species in our region.

For these reasons, I support the proposed adaptive reuse of the site and encourage the Council to prioritize a plan that retains and protects these trees. Preserving mature trees aligns with the Pasadena Climate Action Plan and demonstrates environmental stewardship to future generations.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you would like further details.

Respectfully,



Matthew Ribarich  
ISA Certified Arborist #WE13471-A



CAPITOL OFFICE  
1021 O STREET, SUITE 6720  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
TEL (916) 851-4025

DISTRICT OFFICE  
215 N MARENGO AVE., SUITE 380  
PASADENA, CA 91101  
TEL (626) 304-1086

# California State Senate

SENATOR  
**SASHA RENÉE PÉREZ**  
TWENTY-FIFTH SENATE DISTRICT  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION  
CHAIR



COMMITTEES  
BUDGET AND FISCAL REVIEW  
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE 1 ON  
EDUCATION  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
HUMAN SERVICES  
PUBLIC SAFETY  
JOINT COMMITTEE  
ARTS

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**CITY CLERK**  
**CITY OF PASADENA**

July 31, 2025

Speaker Robert Rivas  
California State Assembly  
1021 O Street, Suite 8330  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire  
California State Senate  
1021 O Street, Suite 8518  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, Chair  
Assembly Budget Committee  
1021 O Street, Suite 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair  
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee  
1021 O Street, Suite 8620  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Steve Bennett, Chair  
Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4  
1021 O Street, Suite 4710  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Ben Allen, Chair  
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #2  
1021 O Street, Suite 6610  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **RE: Letter of Support for Outward Bound Adventures Prop 4 Funding Request- Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center at Hahamongna Watershed Park (CREEC)**

Dear Legislative and Budget Leadership:

As the State Senator representing communities impacted by the recent Eaton Fire, I am writing in support of a \$3 million allocation in 2024-25 Proposition 4 funding for the creation of the Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center at Hahamongna Watershed Park (CREEC) by Outward Bound Adventures (OBA).

OBA was established in 1962 and serves as the oldest non-profit in the nation dedicated to connecting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) youth with nature and diversifying environmental conservation careers. Among its more recent efforts is this proposed Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center at Hahamongna Watershed Park. This is a multi-phase restoration project that integrates workforce development with ecological revitalization

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of the environmentally significant Arroyo Seco Watershed. This initiative benefits the local community on several fronts. Specifically, it will contribute to creating a sustainable workforce development, provide for environmental education, and establish an eco-cultural center to engage youth and adults from demographics historically excluded from conservation and restoration education and stewardship activities.

The site for the CREEC project is the 6.65-acre former US Forest Service Compound in the City of Pasadena's Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex that includes 6 abandoned buildings that have been deteriorating for 20 years. These buildings will be adaptively reused and transformed into premier models of sustainable, fire-resilient, and water/heat-conserving designs. OBA needs funding to cover portions of the approximately \$10 million rehabilitation cost, as well as financing for improvements and upgrades to the site infrastructure to reach its potential as a premier learning center.

An allocation of \$3 million in Proposition 4 funding will allow for OBA to begin three phases to realize the project. The first is to launch the Arroyo Seco Watershed Workforce Development Project including providing paid, on-the-job training in restoration work for community members impacted by the Eaton Fire, and supporting ecological education of local black and brown youth. Second, begin native landscape restoration at the CREEC site by the natural fall deadline of native planting season, with the guidance of the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians. Lastly, this funding will allow OBA and the CREEC coalition partners to begin the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of the 6 buildings within 9 months. Funding these three immediate phases allows CREEC to develop an operable site to implement our dynamic array of programming for the community.

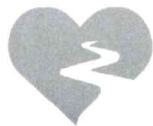
Central to the programming at CREEC, OBA will run an innovative training center on-site that will provide paid, on-the-job training for careers in conservation and restoration. This funding will allow the training center to utilize the landscape and architectural restoration of the site as hands-on learning projects, and the entire Arroyo Seco, as a world-class ecological learning laboratory. This center will be a regional environmental education and workforce training hub serving all of Los Angeles, and locally serving the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians (SGBMI), fire-impacted communities in Altadena and Northwest Pasadena, as well as disadvantaged communities of color from South Los Angeles.

Thank you for the consideration. If you have any questions, please contact my office at (916) 651-4025.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sasha Renée Pérez', with a stylized, cursive script.

SASHA RENÉE PÉREZ  
Senator, 25<sup>th</sup> Senate District



FRIENDS OF THE  
LA RIVER

RECEIVED

2025 SEP -8 PM 4: 20

570 W. AVE 26 #250  
LOS ANGELES  
CA 90065  
323.223.0585  
CONTACT@FOLAR.ORG

To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is being sent to your agency in support of the revitalization of the Annex in Hahamongna Watershed Park for the Climate Resilience Education and Environmental Center (CREEC).

CREEC is proposed by a coalition of seven nonprofits led by Outward Bound Adventures (OBA), including the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, Pasadena Audubon Society, Side Street Projects, Arlington Garden, Friends of Los Angeles River and My Tribe Rise. Restoration of this site for an environmental education center aligns with the goals outlined in both the Hahamongna Watershed Master Plan (HWP) and the City of Pasadena's General Plan.

By transforming the Annex into an environmental education center, the City will provide a unique space for learning about climate adaptation, sustainability methods, and health benefits to all members of the community. CREEC will provide the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians the opportunity to have its first educational center in the region designed to inform the public about Traditional Ecology Knowledge, tribal cultural heritage and history of the area from a Native American perspective. By advancing this project, Pasadena has the opportunity to honor the land's cultural history while ensuring its ecological health and accessibility for generations to come.

Friends of the LA River and Pasadena Audubon Society will add scientific-based research on the endangered native trout species, as well as local native plant monitoring, native bird species identification, habitat restoration, and providing field work training on conservation methods, water resource management and the impact of climate change on our ecosystems.

Providing workforce development, particularly for urban youth of color, in careers in conservation, wildfire prevention, habitat restoration, life sciences, and other STEM fields is an essential component of the CREEC vision. And it aligns with the City of Pasadena Economic Development Strategy's Guiding Principle: Champion Life Sciences and Cultivate Deep Tech Ecosystem in Pasadena. By addressing community workforce development and capital improvement priorities, this project will create jobs and foster economic growth for underrepresented groups in environmental and conservation fields while preserving the ecological and cultural significance of the Hahamongna watershed.

We recommend that the Pasadena City Council take action to restore the Annex in Hahamongna Watershed Park to the Climate Resilient Education and Environmental Center by signing a lease or MOU with OBA as the lead organization facilitating CREEC.

We thank you for considering this project proposal and for recognizing its potential benefit not only to Pasadena and Altadena, but to the surrounding region.

Sincerely,

Candice Dickens-Russell  
President & CEO

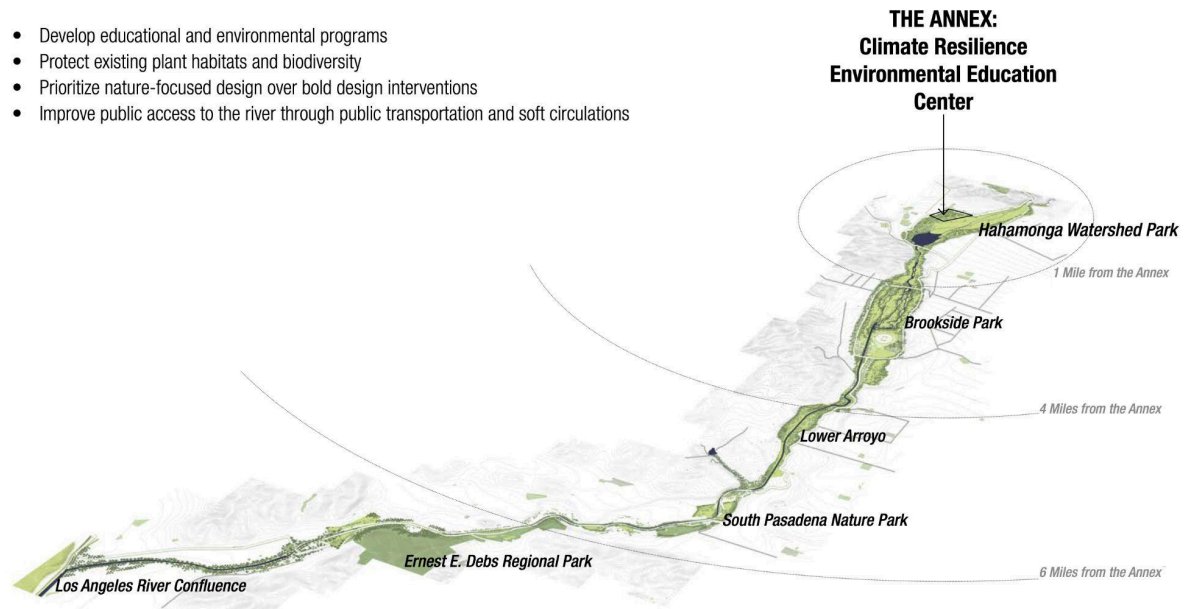
9/8/2025  
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# SPATIAL DESIGN #1: THE ANNEX

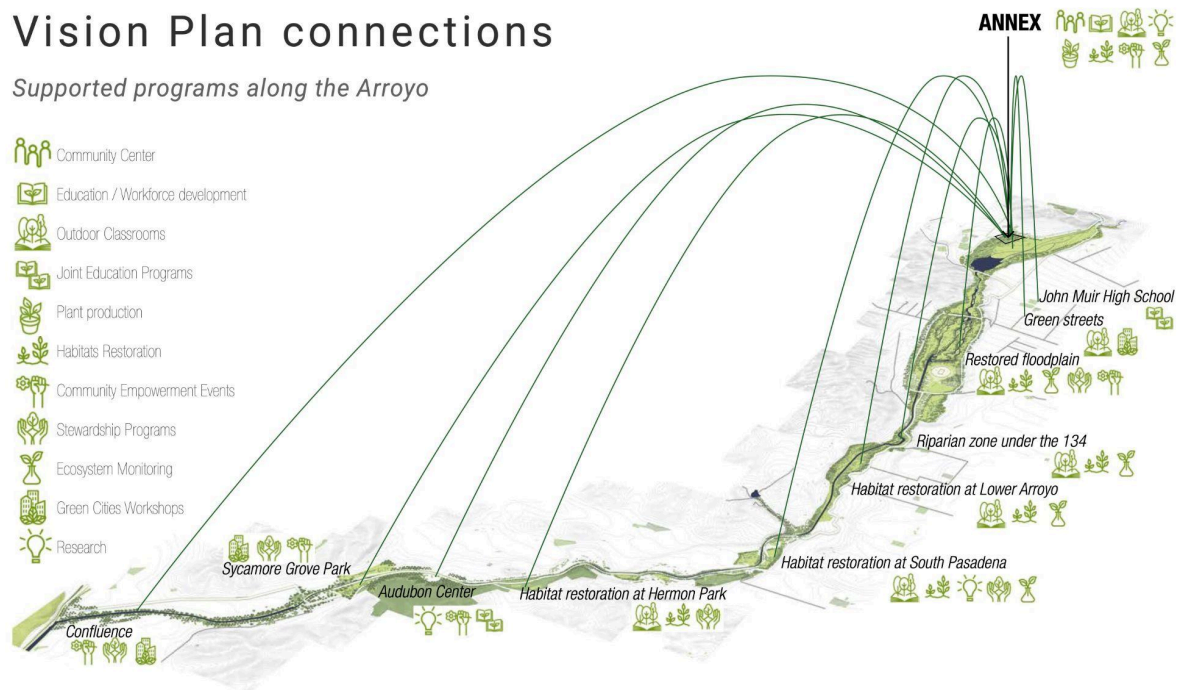
Objectives and Community Engagement Input related to Hahamongna Watershed Park:

- Develop educational and environmental programs
- Protect existing plant habitats and biodiversity
- Prioritize nature-focused design over bold design interventions
- Improve public access to the river through public transportation and soft circulations



## Vision Plan connections

*Supported programs along the Arroyo*

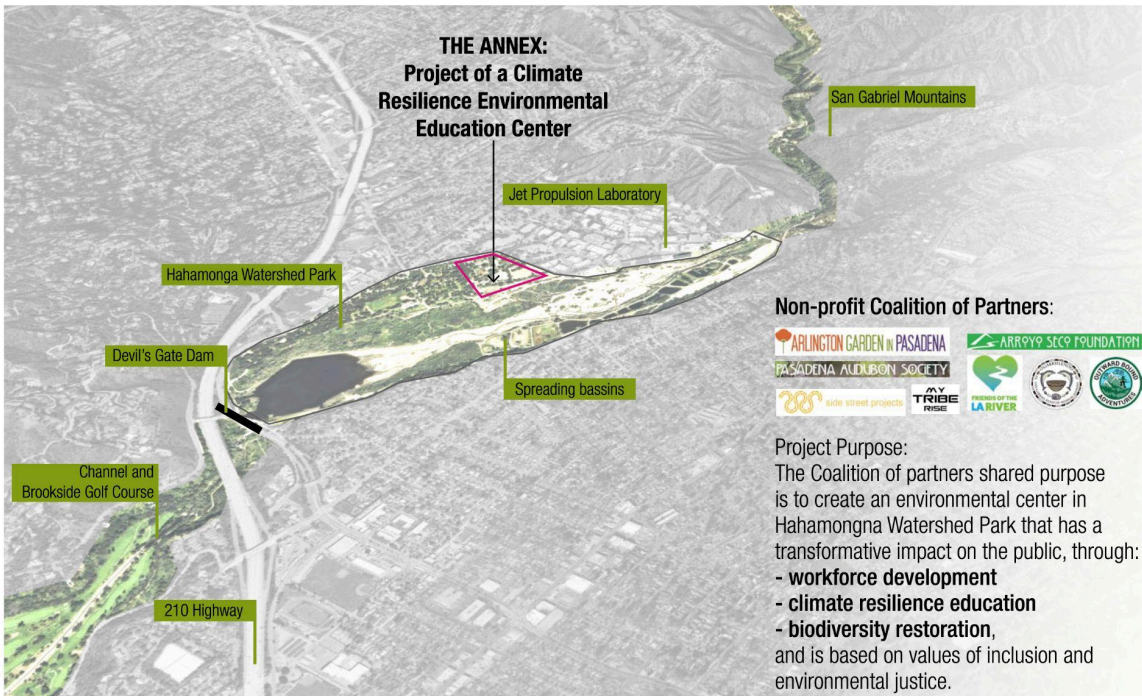


Vision plan connections:

- Connects to Northern Arroyo bicycle and soft circulations network
- Develops and empowers educational programs along the Arroyo
- Monitors and conducts research quality of water, infiltration, biodiversity, and best practices for restoration projects
- Produces plants for habitat restoration programs along the Arroyo
- Offers a base for stakeholders to find consensus and empowers projects

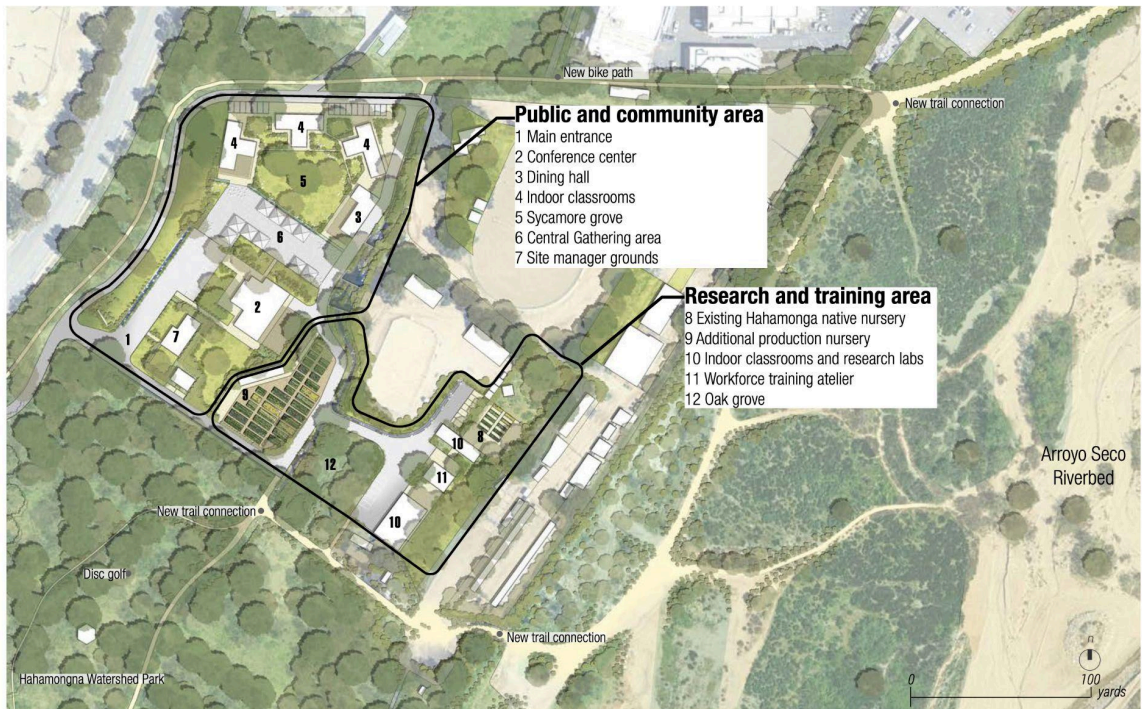
# The Annex

Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center at Hahamongna Watershed Park



## Master Plan

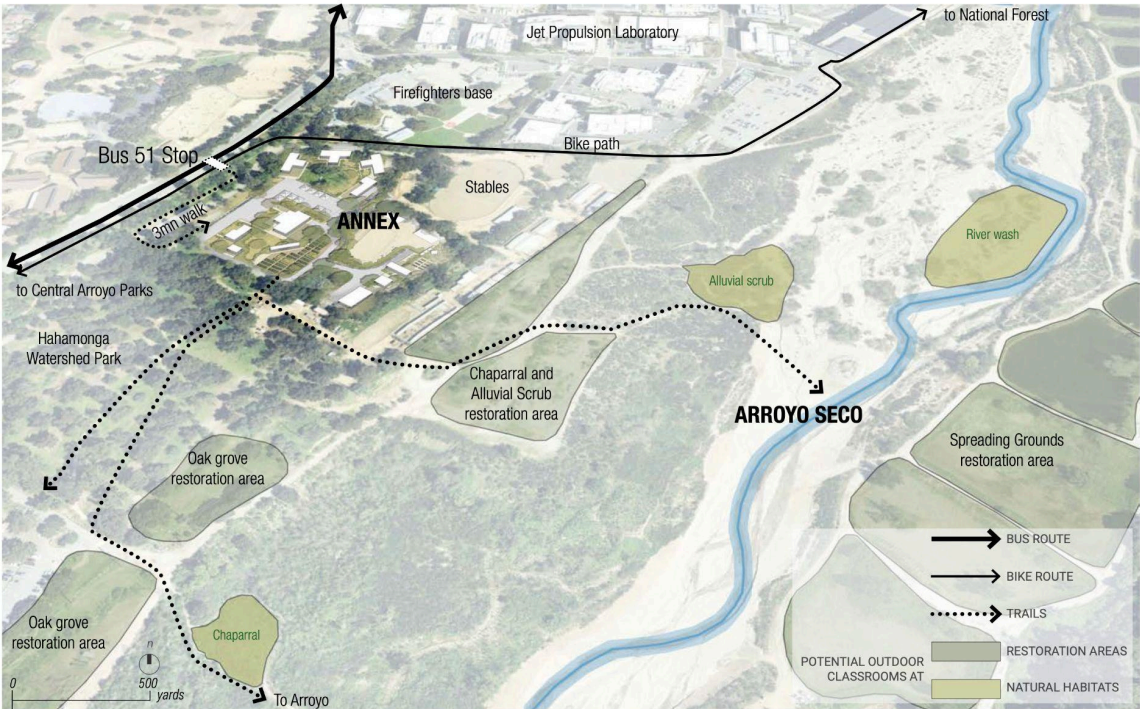
The Annex Environmental Center





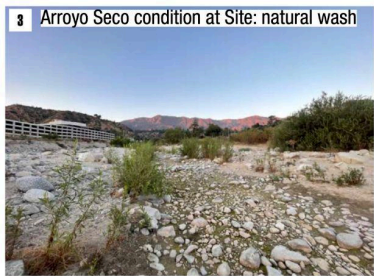
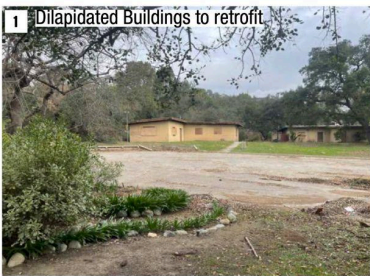
# Connections beyond the Annex boundary

*Programs and paths at the Arroyo*



## Existing conditions

*At the Edge of the Natural Wash*





# Existing conditions

Dilapidated building to retrofit to classroom



Objectives:

- Heat Resilience
- Fire Resilience
- Indoor/Outdoor classroom experience

## Resilient grounds



Shade native plants



California native shrubs and undergrowth



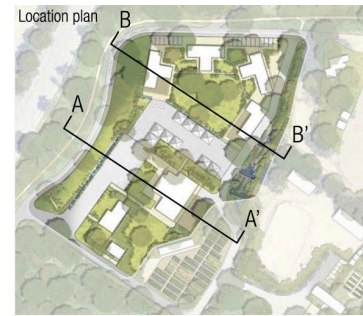
Alfadena trees greening after the fire





# Classrooms

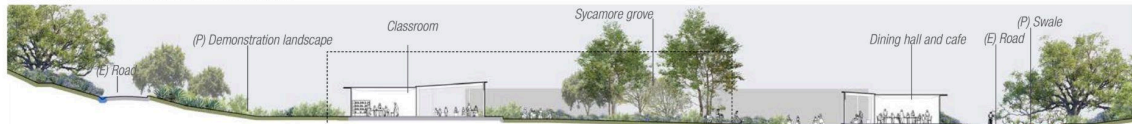
*Indoor outdoor experience*



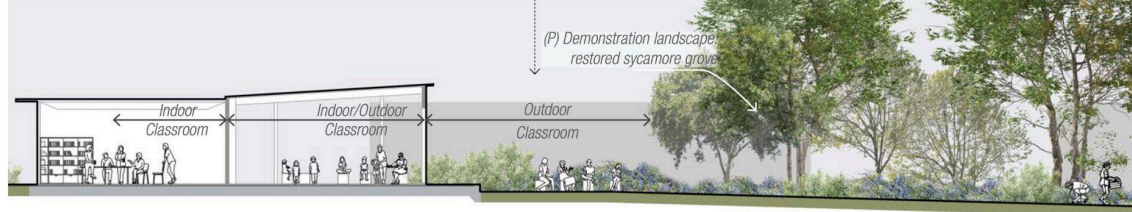
**AA' - Section on Conference Center and demonstration landscape**



**BB' - Section on Indoor/Outdoor classrooms**



**INTERFACE INDOOR/OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS**



(E) Existing  
(P) Projected



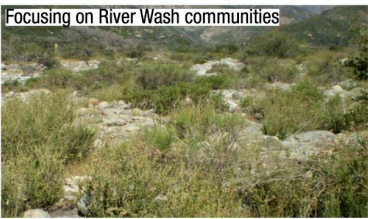
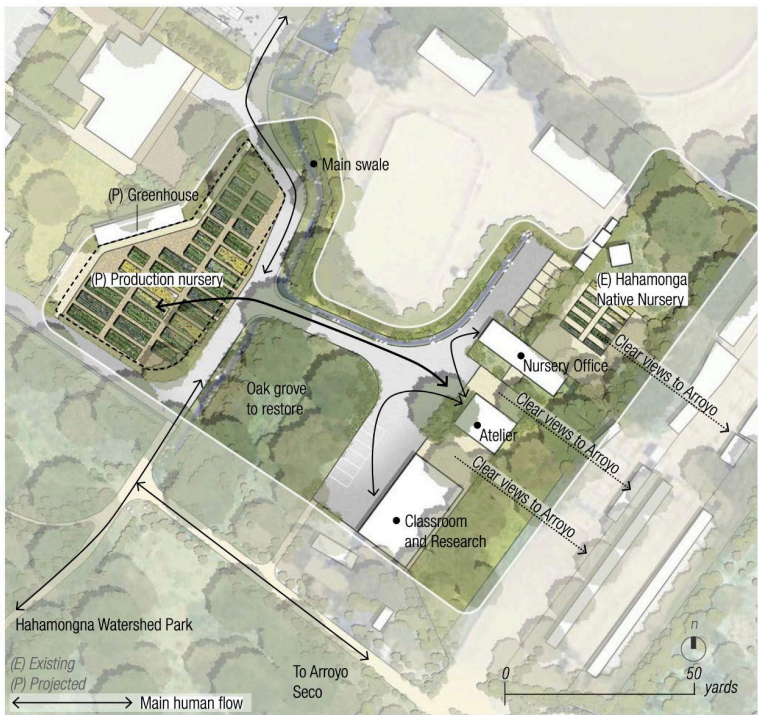
All graphics attributed to:

**CPPMLA LEAD Studio.** (2025). *Beyond the Channel: Connecting Water, Land, and Community Along the Arroyo Seco*. Faculty Advisors: Li, Weimin & Hunter, N. Jade. Students: Nicole Lee, Chris Murphy, Francisco Ojeda, and Sarah Ouvray. Community Partner: City of Pasadena, Parks and Recreation Department. Department of Landscape Architecture, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA, United States.



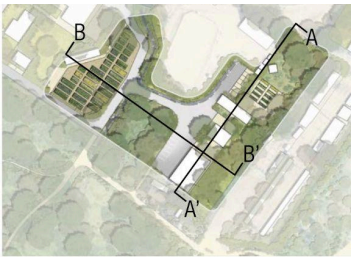
# Research and Training area

Extended nursery and connection with workforce and R&D facilities

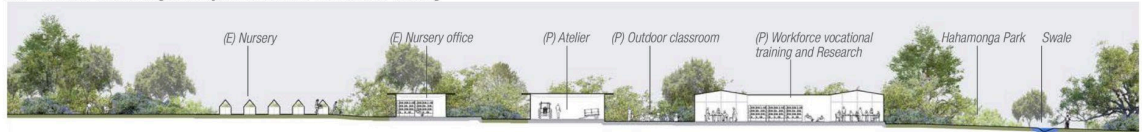


# Research and Training area

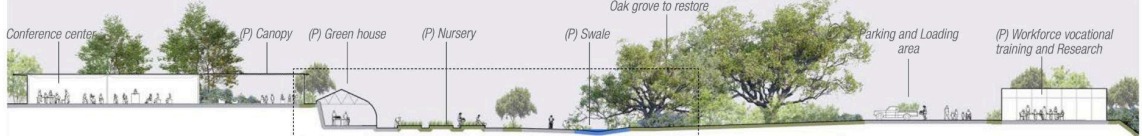
Classrooms, ateliers, and site specific training



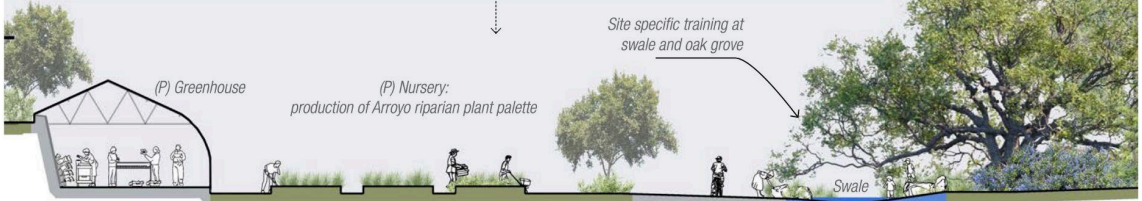
AA' - Section on Existing nursery, research and vocational training



BB' - Section on Conference center, production nursery, oak grove and vocational training



NURSERY/SWALE/OAK GROVE INTERFACE



(E) Existing  
(P) Projected



# Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center

At Hahamongna  
Watershed Park

## Connecting Community

- Engage youth and adults from demographics historically absent from conservation and restoration education, strengthening their connection to nature through active stewardship
- Develop environmental leadership skills:
  - Riparian ecosystem field-science, conservation advocacy, innovation in sustainability and resilience, transformational experiential environmental education facilitation
- Providing physical access and guidance into the Hahamongna Watershed Park and the Upper Arroyo Seco

## Workforce Development

Providing paid, on-the-job training through hands-on learning projects:

- Ecological restoration of the Arroyo Seco Watershed
- LEED level architectural design
- Adaptive reuse construction

Creating pathways to careers in conservation for:

- Community members impacted by the Eaton Fire
- Local youth and adults with an emphasis on marginalized communities

## Premier Learning Center

- 9 acres of land
- 6 abandoned buildings
- 3 acres of oak woodland



- Native landscape restoration
- Innovative models of architectural sustainability, fire-resilience, water/heat-conserving designs
- Low-Impact campsite



MY  
TRIBE  
RISE



side  
street  
projects



bhammerli@obainc.org