

# Agenda Report

June 22, 2026

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department

**SUBJECT:** **AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A PRE-DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AND NEGOTIATE FINAL DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATING AGREEMENTS WITH OUTWARD BOUND ADVENTURES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF PUBLIC LAND IN THE HAHAMONGNA WATERSHED PARK**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the action proposed herein is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21065 and within the meaning of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378; and
2. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a Pre-Development Agreement and negotiate final Development and Operating Agreements, with Outward Bound Adventures for the development and operation of public land in the Hahamongna Watershed Park based on a competitive selection process pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.047. Competitive bidding is not required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(F) for professional or unique services.

## **BACKGROUND:**

At the September 8, 2025, City Council meeting, the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department (PRCS) presented a report outlining the allowable uses and eligibility criteria for entities seeking to submit proposals for the buildings within the Hahamongna Watershed Park (HWP) Annex Area. The recommended actions included authorizing the potential demolition of the six vacant buildings in the Annex, reaffirming the allowable site uses as defined by the HWP Master Plans and applicable legal restrictions, and directing staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for future uses of the area.

The recommendations also established the qualifications for entities permitted to propose demolition / reconstruction or rehabilitation and operation of facilities within both the HWP Annex and the Oak Woodlands Natural Open Space. The City Council unanimously approved the staff recommendations, added a requirement that proposers fund a feasibility study evaluating potential reuse of the existing buildings, and directed staff to release the RFP by the end of the calendar year.

On December 18, 2025, the RFP for development and operation of public land in the Hahamongna Watershed Park was published on OpenGov and posted on the City of Pasadena’s website. Notices were sent to 1,488 potential vendors and 44 downloaded the RFP. The City received one proposal on February 27, 2026, in response to the RFP.

Based on the evaluation procedures and criteria specified in the RFP, the proposal was evaluated, scored, and ranked by a selection committee comprised of staff from PRCS, Public Works, and Finance departments.

<b>Proposer</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Score</b>
Outward Bound Adventures	Pasadena, CA	81

Outward Bound Adventures (OBA) demonstrated substantial experience in environmental education, habitat restoration, conservation, workforce development, and public land stewardship. The proposal presented a strong conceptual vision aligned with the HWP Master Plan goals and the public-serving objectives of the RFP. However, implementation of the proposed project remains dependent upon future feasibility analysis, environmental review, permitting, and the successful acquisition of external funding sources.

OBA is a Pasadena based 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 1962 and recognized as the oldest environmental justice organization in the U.S. focused on nature based education for underserved youth and families. OBA positions itself as the lead organization for the Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center (CREEC), which would transform the former U.S. Forest Service compound at the HWP Annex into a community-centered hub for environmental education, ecological restoration, workforce development, and public programming. The organization emphasizes a “community first” model, with pending partnerships with local and tribal organizations, and deep alignment with the HWP Master Plan, the City’s Climate Action Plan, and environmental justice goals.

The proposal relies heavily upon future grant funding, philanthropic support, and external fundraising efforts that have not yet been secured. As such, staff recommends that any agreement include milestone-based implementation requirements tied to demonstrated funding commitments, environmental clearance, feasibility review, and City approval of future development phases.

Key Terms To Be Negotiated

As the City proceeds toward a Development Agreement with OBA, the following core deal points may be included:

- Define the project as the development of the Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center (CREEC), utilizing adaptive reuse of the six existing buildings and comprehensive landscape restoration.
- Require completion of a Feasibility Study, including structural and seismic evaluations, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, hazardous materials testing, and baseline ecological assessments.
- Require completion of a detailed Site Restoration Plan addressing invasive species removal, tree protection, erosion control, drainage improvements, revegetating with hyper-local native species, and stormwater infiltration design.
- Establish “adaptive reuse” and “low embodied carbon” design principles as binding project objectives.
- Require OBA to provide evidence of secured or pending funding from state, federal, philanthropic, and corporate sources.

Similarly, the following terms may be incorporated into the Operating Agreement:

- Maintain standard public operating hours (9 a.m.–5 p.m.) and manage peak-season visitation levels of up to approximately 300 visitors per day.
- Maintain preventive maintenance programs, emergency procedures, wildfire and extreme heat protocols, and habitat protection practices.
- Comply with “leave no trace” principles, firesafe landscaping standards, dark sky lighting practices, and long-term habitat management requirements.
- Submit quarterly reports covering site maintenance, operations, accessibility, environmental stewardship, community participation, and financial status.
- Track and report performance indicators tied to educational impact, workforce development, stewardship activities, and overall community benefit.

#### Milestone Based Phasing

Both agreements will include phased commencement tied to achieving key milestones, for example:

- CEQA clearance
- Issuance of required permits
- Demonstration of adequate funding commitments

Should OBA seek early occupancy of the site, the following requirements must be satisfied before any authorized activities may begin.

- Secure proper insurance with indemnification language
- Identify and submit for City approval the proposed outdoor areas to ensure site safety for occupancy and programming
- Board existing buildings and secure areas with perimeter fencing and signage
- Complete parking lot, walkway and tree assessments
- Submit sanitation plan for City approval
- Set up utility accounts

Next Steps

Contingent upon completing the Feasibility Study, staff recommends the City enter into a contract with OBA for an initial term of 20 years, with two additional ten-year renewals. As a condition of a grant award in 2019 by the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) for habitat restoration, RPOSD shall review and approve any successful proposer(s) that operate at the Hahamongna Watershed Park Oak Grove Area Improvement Project site. City staff has already commenced this process.

**COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

This action is consistent with the City Council's goals to improve, maintain, and enhance public facilities and infrastructure, and to support and promote the quality of life and the local economy.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

CEQA excludes, from environmental review, actions that are not “projects” as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21065 and within the meaning of CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. Sections 21065 and 15378 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(b) excludes from the definition of “project” organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. The actions proposed herein, authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and enter into pre-development and/or operating agreement framework, is an administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in 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.

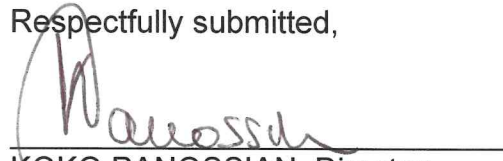
Any future development activity, site improvements, building rehabilitation, discretionary approvals, or entitlements associated with the project would be subject to separate environmental review in accordance with CEQA.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No direct capital funding is proposed as part of this action. Pursuant to the RFP, the proposer would be responsible for all costs associated with planning, environmental review, permitting, development, operations, and maintenance of the site.

Existing and future staff time associated with contract negotiations, project oversight, environmental review coordination, and ongoing administration would be absorbed within existing departmental operating budgets. No General Fund appropriation is requested at this time.

Respectfully submitted,



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Parks, Recreation and Community Services

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Parks, Recreation and Community Services

Approved by:



MATTHEW E. HAWKESWORTH  
Interim City Manager

Attachments:

Attachment A – RFP Evaluation Tabulation

Attachment B – TPA