

Agenda Report

June 22, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Planning & Community Development Department

SUBJECT: **AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS WITH J LEE ENGINEERING, INC., JASON ADDISON SMITH CONSULTING SERVICES, INC., AND TRUE NORTH COMPLIANCE SERVICES, INC. FOR \$450,000 EACH FOR BUILDING AND FIRE PLAN REVIEW SERVICES WITH AN OPTIONAL ONE-YEAR EXTENSION AND ADDITIONAL \$450,000 EACH FOR A NOT TO EXCEED TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$900,000 FOR EACH FIRM.**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the actions proposed herein are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3);
2. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract for building and fire plan review services following a competitive selection process, pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.047 with J Lee Engineering, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$450,000 for an initial one-year term;
3. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract for building and fire plan review services following a competitive selection process, pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.047 with Jason Addison Smith Consulting Services, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$450,000 for an initial one-year term;
4. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract for building and fire plan review services following a competitive selection process, pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.047 with True North Compliance Services, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$450,000 for an initial one-year term; and
5. Authorize the City Manager to extend each contract for an additional one-year period with an additional not to exceed amount of \$450,000 each.

BACKGROUND:

The City's Planning & Community Development Department and Fire Department review construction plans for new construction within the City. The demand for these services fluctuate over time in response to a variety of factors. To meet peak demand for plan review services, the City contracts with multiple outside consultants, on an as-needed basis, to augment internal staff resources which allows for additional flexibility in the distribution of plan review workloads and to meet plan review turn-around times. Demand for plan review services is presently at an all-time high evidenced by the valuation for project applications received and year-to-date plan review revenues.

Historically, the City has contracted with multiple outside consultants for plan review services. In prior years, the City had contracts for plan review services with CSG, Scott Fazekas and Associates, Jason Addison Smith Consulting Services, Inc. DBA JAS Pacific, J Lee Engineering, and True North Compliance Services.

Most recently, the Planning and Fire Departments have held contracts with JAS Pacific, JLee Engineering, and True North Compliance Services. As of June 2026, JAS Pacific has expended \$1,321,522 of its authorized \$1,610,772 contract amount. J Lee Engineering has spent \$1,367,403 of its \$1,629,555 contract. True North Compliance Services has utilized \$164,708 of the \$249,999 allocated under its current contract. True North also held a prior contract, which expired in December 2025, under which \$1,433,932 of the \$1,436,479 total was expended.

Given the continued demand to send building and fire plans out for review, a Request for Proposal ("RFP") for building and fire plan review services was issued on May 28, 2026, with 15 responsive proposals received by the proposal due date, provided below:

Firm	Score
J Lee Engineering Inc.	94.2
Jason Addison Smith Consulting Services, Inc.	88.3
True North Compliance Services, Inc.	84.7
Cornerstone Municipal Services	83.1
Bureau Veritas North America, Inc.	77.3
TRB and Associates, Inc.	75.5
The Code Group, Inc. (VCA Code)	74.5
BPR Consulting Group	73.0
M6 Consulting, Inc.	71.8
Shums Coda Associates, Inc.	71.8
Interwest Consulting Group, Inc.	70.0
Transtech Engineers, Inc.	69.7
Stantec	68.1
CSG Consultants, Inc.	66.0
4LEAF, Inc.	60.1

To be considered for selection, proposals were to demonstrate substantial knowledge and experience in completing plan reviews for public and private development projects, verifying compliance with California Building Standards Code, California Fire Code,

Pasadena Municipal Code, and other related codes and ordinances applicable to development projects in the City of Pasadena. Proposals were also to demonstrate cost-effectiveness, have expertise in building construction and building codes, ability to provide high quality plan review services, and meet the City's expected plan review turnaround times.

A panel of City staff evaluated proposals based on the criteria set forth in the RFP, and in accordance with the City's competitive selection process for professional services. Based on staff analysis of the proposals received, J Lee Engineering, JAS Pacific, and True North Compliance Services were determined to be the most qualified to provide the services as required by the City.

As such, it is recommended that contracts be awarded to J Lee Engineering, JAS Pacific, and True North Compliance Services for building and fire plan review services in the amount not to exceed \$450,000 per consultant for an initial one-year term, with an optional one-year extension and additional \$450,000 each for a not to exceed total amount of \$900,000 for each firm.

The Building & Safety Division continues to experience challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified plan review staff, particularly for senior-level positions. Currently, one Plans Examiner II position has remained vacant for more than two years. Several other long-standing vacancies were successfully filled within the past year; however, recruitment for experienced personnel remains highly competitive.

To enhance the City's ability to attract, develop, and retain plan review professionals, the following initiatives have recently been implemented:

- Increased compensation for the Plan Review classification series based on the findings of the 2024 salary study.
- Established a Senior Plan Reviewer (Professional Engineer) salary range to maintain competitiveness with comparable positions in the public and private sectors.
- Created Plans Examiner I, II, and III classifications to provide a structured career progression pathway from entry-level to senior positions.
- Added a supervisory position, Principal Plans Examiner, with a dedicated focus on staff training, mentoring, and technical development.
- Implemented an internal training program to support employee advancement and broaden technical knowledge and skillsets.
- Allocated funding for external training, certification programs, and continuing education to ensure staff maintain and enhance their professional qualifications.

In accordance with Assembly Bill 339, Pasadena Management Union ("PMA") was provided the required 45 days' notice prior to issuance of the RFP. Following meet-and-confer discussions, PMA agreed to a one-year contract term with one optional one-year extension, subject to PMA approval. A not-to-exceed amount was not required as part of the contract approval.

As a condition of PMA's approval of the proposed contract services, the City will complete an operational and staffing analysis of the Plan Review positions prior to the contracts' expiration. This analysis will evaluate workload, turnaround expectations, and staffing levels to determine the long-term staffing needs.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The proposed contracts further the City Council's strategic plan goals of ensuring public safety and furthers the City's mission to deliver exemplary municipal services.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Find that the recommended actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines per Section 15061(b)(3). The contract award is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only 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 the provisions of CEQA.

FISCAL IMPACT:

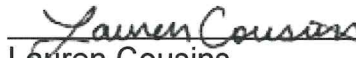
The proposed contracts with J Lee Engineering, JAS Pacific, and True North Compliance Services will not have a fiscal impact on the City's General Fund. The total proposed contract expense is \$2,700,000, which includes the option of an additional one-year \$450,000 extension for each contract. The FY 2027 Operating Budget includes sufficient appropriations in the Building Fund for contract plan review services, and all expenses are paid from fees generated from building and fire plan review revenues.

Respectfully submitted,



JASON MIKAELIAN, AICP
Acting Director of Planning & Community
Development Department

Prepared by:



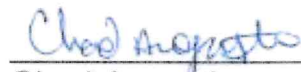
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Concurred by,



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MATTHEW E. HAWKSWORTH
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