

OPENING:

Mayor Gordo called the regular meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
(Absent: None)

Councilmember Madison reported that he is participating remotely under the Government Code Section 54953.8.3 "just cause" provision on the basis of a contagious illness and stated that no one over the age of 18 is in the room with him.

CLOSED SESSION

On the order of the Mayor, the regular meeting recessed at 5:03 p.m. to discuss the following closed session items:

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8
Property: 300 E. Colorado Blvd.
Under negotiation: Price and terms
Agency negotiator: Miguel Marquez
Negotiating Parties: Onni Paseo, LLC

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6
Agency Designated Representatives: Miguel Márquez and Tiffany Jacobs-Quinn
Employee Organization: Pasadena Police Officers Association

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8
Property Addresses:
1. 721 Pasadena Avenue, Pasadena, CA
2. 275 Arlington Drive, Pasadena, CA
Agency negotiator: Miguel Márquez
Negotiating parties: State of California, Department of Transportation
Under negotiation: Price and Terms of Payment

CONSIDERATION OF INITIATION OF LITIGATION pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(4): Three potential cases

Of the three cases listed above, one case was discussed with no reportable action at this time. Two cases were not discussed.

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL regarding significant exposure to potential litigation pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2): One potential case

The above closed session items were discussed, with no reportable action at this time.

On the order of the Mayor, the regular meeting reconvened at 6:47 p.m. The pledge of allegiance was led by Councilmember Jones.

Councilmember Madison reported that he is participating remotely under the Government Code Section 54953.8.3 "just cause" provision on the basis of a contagious illness and stated that no one over the age of 18 is in the room with him.

ROLL CALL:
Councilmembers:

Mayor Victor M. Gordo
Vice Mayor Jessica Rivas
Councilmember Rick Cole
Councilmember Tyron Hampton
Councilmember Justin Jones
Councilmember Jason Lyon
Councilmember Steve Madison (via teleconference at 6:49 p.m.)
Councilmember Gene Masuda

Staff:

City Manager Miguel Márquez
City Attorney/City Prosecutor Michele Beal Bagneris
City Clerk Mark Jomsky

CONSENT ITEM
DISCUSSED
SEPARATELY

Councilmember Jones stated a potential conflict of interest with the item, recused himself from the item, and left the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO RENEW A FIVE-YEAR GENERAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES (Public Works Dept.)

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the proposed actions in the agenda report do not constitute a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21065 of CEQA and Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and as such, no environmental document pursuant to CEQA is required;
- (2) Adopt a resolution approving renewal of the General Services Agreement with the County of Los Angeles (Resolution No. 10181);
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to enter into a five-year renewal on behalf of the City, and to request various functions or services from the County of Los Angeles as needed and in accordance with applicable City ordinances and policies. Neither Competitive Bidding nor Competitive Selection are required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(H) and Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.049(A)(3), contracts with other governmental entities (Contract No. 24,391); and
- (4) Authorize the City Manager or his designee to request from time to time, various functions and services from the County of Los Angeles, in accordance with applicable City ordinances and policies

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Hampton, to approve Consent Calendar Item 3.

AYES: Councilmembers Cole, Hampton, Lyon, Madison, Masuda, Vice Mayor Rivas, Mayor Gordo

NOES: None

ABSENT: Councilmember Jones

ABSTAIN: None

CONSENT CALENDAR

City Manager/ Executive Director

Councilmember Jones returned to the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS WITH CERAGON NETWORKS INC., CROSSTOWN ELECTRICAL & DATA, INC., AND ANIXTER, INC., FOR FIBER MATERIALS, SPLICING AND TESTING, AND WIFI EQUIPMENT, INSTALLATION, AND MAINTENANCE FOR A COMBINED TOTAL AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$2,272,020 (DoIT)

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

(1) Find that the proposed actions in the agenda report are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1 – Existing Facilities) and that there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class, and therefore, there are no unusual circumstances;

(2) Award contract to lowest and best bid dated September 18, 2025 submitted by Ceragon Networks Inc., in response to the specifications to furnish Park Wi-Fi Installation in City Parks, authorize the City Manager to enter into a five-year contract with a total not-to-exceed amount of \$829,972, which includes the base contract amount of \$691,643 and a twenty percent contingency of \$138,329 to provide for any necessary change orders (Contract No. 33578);

(3) Award contract to lowest and best bid dated September 11, 2025 submitted by Crosstown Electrical & Data, Inc., in response to the bid specifications for Splicing and Testing of Fiber Optic Cable, authorize the City Manager to enter into a three-year contract with a total not-to-exceed amount of \$1,103,058, which includes the base contract amount of \$1,002,780 and a ten percent contingency of \$100,278 to provide for any necessary change orders (Contract No. 33577);

(4) Award contract to lowest and best bid dated September 16, 2025 submitted by Anixter, Inc., in response to the bid specifications for Fiber Optic Cable and Microduct, authorize the City Manager to enter into a three-year contract with a total not-to-exceed amount of \$338,990, which includes the base contract amount of \$282,492 and a twenty percent contingency of \$56,498 to provide for any necessary change orders (Contract No. 33579); and

(5) Authorize the City Manager to approve no-cost amendments to the subject contracts including durational extensions and necessary change orders.

ADOPT A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE FINAL TRACT MAP NO. 084019 FOR CREATION OF 60 AIR PARCELS FOR RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUM PURPOSES AT 1880 EAST WALNUT STREET (Public Works Dept.)

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the Final Map is not a project under Section 15268(b)(3) of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines as a ministerial action, and that the project was previously determined Categorical Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (Section 15332, Class 32, In-Fill Development Projects), and that no further CEQA approvals are required for the final tract map;
- (2) Accept the offer of easement for public sidewalk purposes as shown on said map;
- (3) Adopt a resolution to approve Final Tract Map No. 084019 for the creation of 60 air parcels for residential condominium purposes (Resolution No. 10182); and
- (4) Authorize the City Clerk to execute the Certificate on the Tract Map showing the City's approval of said Map.

Recommendation of the Hearing Officer: Final Tract Map No. 084019 (Attachment A of the agenda report), for the creation of 60 air parcels for residential condominium purposes, was reviewed and approved in tentative form by the Subdivision Hearing Officer on May 21, 2025. The exercise of the right granted must be commenced within three years, or by May 21, 2028.

Item discussed separately

AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO RENEW A FIVE-YEAR GENERAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES (Public Works Dept.)

AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A FIVE-YEAR CONTRACT WITH FLEETCREW, INC., FOR BIENNIAL INSPECTION OF TERMINALS IN AN AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$470,580 (Public Works Dept.)

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the proposed action in the agenda report is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21065 of CEQA and Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and as such, no environmental document pursuant to CEQA is required;
- (2) Award contract to lowest and best bid dated January 21, 2026, submitted by Fleetcrew, Inc., in response to specifications for Biennial Inspection of Terminals, authorize the City Manager to enter into a five-year contract for an amount not-to-exceed of \$470,580, which includes the base contract amount of \$427,800 and a contingency of \$42,780 to provide for any necessary change orders (Contract No. 33561); and
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to approve no-cost amendments to the subject contract including necessary change orders.

AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXTEND CONTRACT NO. 32548 FOR TWELVE MONTHS WITH TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC., TO PROVIDE CONSULTING SERVICES TO UPDATE THE PASADENA TRANSIT SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN (Transportation Dept.)

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the proposed action in the agenda report is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21065 of CEQA and Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and as such, no environmental document pursuant to CEQA is required for the project;
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to extend Contract No. 32548 with Transportation Management & Design for twelve months for a total contract period of May 22, 2023 through May 22, 2027, to provide consulting services to update the Pasadena Transit Short Range Transit Plan within the current not-to-exceed contract amount of \$348,056 (Contract No. 32538-1); and
- (3) Grant the proposed contract extension an exemption from the Competitive Selection process pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.049(B) contracts for which the City's best interests are served.

City Council

APPOINTMENTS,
REAPPOINTMENTS, &
RESIGNATIONS

APPOINTMENT OF MICHAEL ROSS TO THE ROSE BOWL AQUATICS CENTER BOARD (City Nomination)

APPOINTMENT OF STEVEN OLIVAS TO THE ROSE BOWL OPERATING COMPANY BOARD (District 2 Nomination)

RESIGNATION OF DIANNE ROMERO CHAVEZ FROM THE PASADENA RENTAL HOUSING BOARD (District 2/Tenant Nomination)

RESIGNATION OF JANE HADERLEIN FROM THE SENIOR COMMISSION (Mayor Nomination)

City Clerk/ Secretary

CLAIMS RECEIVED AND
FILED

| Claim No. | Claimant | Claim Amount |
|------------------|---|---------------------|
| 2026-0214 | Candince Kim | \$ 2,039.72 |
| 2026-0215 | Jerardo Javier Sanchez | 35,000.00+ |
| 2026-0216 | Duplicate to Claim No. 2026-0215 | N/A |
| 2026-0217 | Chantrese Janae Wright | 10,000.00+ |
| 2026-0218 | 21 st Century Casualty Company | 1,979.51 |
| 2026-0219 | Octavio David Saenz de Maturana | 853.79 |

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Hampton, to approve all items on the Consent Calendar, except for Item 3.

AYES: Councilmembers Cole, Hampton, Jones, Lyon, Madison, Masuda, Vice Mayor Rivas, Mayor Gordo
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

CEREMONIAL MATTERS

City Manager Márquez requested that the City Council adjourn the meeting in memory of two City employees who recently passed away, Victor Andujo and Jose "JC" Chavez. He spoke on Mr. Andujo's unwavering dedication and contributions to the City as a Water System Mechanic II on the Pasadena Water & Power team, and extended sincere condolences to his family.

City Manager Márquez also spoke on Mr. Chavez, whose kind demeanor and dedication to the City as a Parking Enforcement Representative on the Transportation team was remembered by his City friends, and extended sincere condolences to his family.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The following individuals spoke on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and/or advocated for the City to divest from specific companies:

Kate E., Pasadena resident
Rob Muthiah, Pasadena resident
Ruth Landsberger, Pasadena resident
Marianne Albina, Pasadena resident

Les Hammer, Pasadena resident, provided comments regarding crimes committed by illegal immigrants.

Humaira Afzal, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns regarding wrongful uses of mass surveillance and the delayed start times for City Council meetings.

Frances Myers, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns relating to burglary and a pharmaceutical facility nearby St. Philip's church.

Teri Stein, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns regarding data sharing between the City's Flock cameras and federal immigration enforcement agencies.

Dyatanie Flores, California Department of Insurance, requested for the City Council to support three wildfire recovery and insurance reform bills that are currently under consideration by the State.

OLD BUSINESS

AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO AMEND CONTRACT NO. 33313 WITH PCL CONSTRUCTION SERVICES, INC., TO INCREASE CONTRACT AMOUNT BY \$177,533,815 FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT-RISK PHASE 2 CONSTRUCTION SERVICES FOR THE CENTRAL LIBRARY SEISMIC RETROFIT AND RENOVATIONS PROJECT FOR A

**REVISED TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED
\$186,186,155 (Public Works Dept.)**

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the recommended action in the agenda report be categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15301, Class 1 – Existing Facilities, and Section 15302, Class 2 – Replacement or Reconstruction, and that there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class, and therefore, there are no unusual circumstances; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to amend Contract No. 33313 with PCL Construction Services, Inc., as a result of the competitive selection process specified by Section 4.08.136 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, increasing the contract amount by \$177,533,815 from \$8,652,340 to a total not-to-exceed amount of \$186,186,155, which shall not exceed the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP), inclusive of all contingencies, for Construction Manager At-Risk (CMAR) Phase 2 construction services necessary to complete the Central Library Seismic Retrofit and Renovations project. Competitive bidding is not required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(l) (Contracts utilizing alternative project delivery methods, as approved by the City Council, including, but not limited to, design-build and construction manager at-risk). (Contract No. 33313-1)

David Klug, Economic Development Director, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the City's First Source Hiring Program and reported information on the differences between projects where first source hiring is mandatory versus discretionary, how projects are monitored, and local utilization reports.

Councilmember Lyon expressed concerns that the City would not be able to reach the goal for organized local labor without a community benefits agreement ("CBA") in place. Councilmember Hampton and Mayor Gordo noted that the City cannot impose a community benefits agreement because the project was not bid with a CBA included as part of the project.

Mayor Gordo expressed the need for the City to create a CBA for future projects and advocated that the matter be agendaized for City Council discussion. Vice Mayor Rivas also expressed support for discussion on a future CBA for City projects.

Councilmember Cole advocated for monthly reports being calibrated to achieve the projected 12% local contract spending. City Manager Márquez clarified that the goal for local contract spend, as stated in the contract, is 10%, noting that it is PCL's intention to exceed the goal.

Ricky Pickens, residence not stated, advocated for the City to hold contractors and developers accountable when it comes to prioritizing the hiring of local labor for City projects.

In response to Councilmember Hampton's inquiry regarding whether PCL is amenable to a 5% payroll goal for Pasadena-based workers, Chris Miller, representing PCL construction, stated that the project has an aspirational goal of 10-15% of local worker hours. Councilmember Hampton expressed concern that tracking only hours could mask wage inequities if higher-paid roles are not filled by local labor. Mr. Miller confirmed that PCL would be amenable to the 5% payroll goal as part of the 10-15% labor hours tracked using the LCP tracker, with PCL TO grant City staff admin rights to directly monitor labor hours, track labor compliance, and access workforce data.

In response to Councilmember Jones' inquiry regarding outreach efforts to employ individuals facing employment barriers and/or that are justice-impacted, Breanna Weaver, PCL Construction, reported that PCL is partnering with MC3 training programs, the Flintridge Center, and the Anti-Recidivism Coalition, to help identify formerly incarcerated individuals and offer them pathways to employment.

MOTION:

Following discussion, it was moved by Councilmember Hampton, seconded by Councilmember Jones, to approve the staff recommendation.

AYES: Councilmembers Cole, Hampton, Jones, Lyon, Madison, Masuda, Vice Mayor Rivas, Mayor Gordo

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PUBLIC HEARING FOR RECOMMENDED ELECTRIC RATE ADJUSTMENTS (Water & Power Dept.)

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

(1) Find that the proposed action in the agenda report is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21065 of CEQA and Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and as such, no environmental document pursuant to CEQA is required for the project; and

(2) Open a public hearing to receive public comment, and continue for no less than two weeks, regarding the recommended electric rate adjustments and amendments to the Light and Power Rate Ordinance, Title 13, Chapter 13.04 of the Pasadena Municipal Code ("PMC").

City Clerk Jomsky reported that 3 letters advocating for the City Council to restrict the allowed electric rate increase to 2.25% per year, and/or provided comments in opposition to the City Council increasing electric rates, which were received by the City Clerk's Office, distributed to the City Council, posted online, and made part of the public record for this item.

In response to Councilmember Cole's request for additional information on the impacts of the proposed electrical rate adjustments, David Reyes, General Manager of Water & Power, briefly recapped discussions had by the Municipal Services Committee (MSC). He stated that the City's electric rates have not been significantly raised since 2019, and that the City would not be able to maintain service levels on the operational side and the capital improvement side at the current rate structure. He reported that MSC proposed three tranches of increases, with each tranche a 7% increase phased in over a 2-year period.

Lynn Chaimowitz, Assistant General Manager, briefly reported on alternative methods of raising rates for residential customers that were reviewed by MSC. General Manager Reyes noted that even with the proposed electrical rate increases, the costs for electrical services would be equal to or lower than that of neighboring cities.

Barbara Bullard, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns regarding a potential Amazon artificial intelligence data center that may come to Pasadena, the impacts of rising electrical and water rates, and requested that the City Council require a full environmental impact and air quality report, resulting from such a facility.

In response to public comment, Councilmember Jones noted that MSC will be discussing data centers at a future meeting.

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Masuda, to continue the public hearing to March 23, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

AYES: Councilmembers Cole, Hampton, Jones, Lyon, Madison, Masuda, Vice Mayor Rivas, Mayor Gordo
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

QUASI-JUDICIAL ACTION: APPEAL OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION'S APPROVAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW (DHP2025-00258) FOR A NEW FOUR-STORY, 93,539 SQUARE-FOOT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT WITH 260 AT-GRADE AND SUBTERRANEAN PARKING SPACES ON PROPERTY OWNED BY CALTECH AT 1364 EAST GREEN STREET (Planning Dept.)

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the action proposed in the agenda report is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15332 (Class 32, In-Fill Development Projects), and that there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class, and therefore, there are no unusual circumstances;
- (2) Adopt the findings in Attachment A of the agenda report, finding that the project will comply with the purposes of design review, the design-related goals and policies of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the Design Guidelines in the 2022 East Colorado Specific Plan, and the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-family Districts; and
- (3) Deny the appeal and approve the application for Concept Design Review subject to the conditions in Attachment B of the agenda report, which shall be further reviewed by the Design Commission during Final Design Review.

City Clerk Jomsky reported that 62 postcards were mailed and 42 public hearing notices were posted on February 9, 2026. He also reported that 728 letters expressing concerns and/or opposition to the proposed project and providing comments on the matter, with 483 letters being from Pasadena residents and 229 letters from non-residents, and 31 letters in support of the proposed project and/or providing comments on the matter, which were received by the City Clerk's Office, distributed to the City Council, posted online, and made part of the public record for the item.

Jennifer Paige, Planning Director, provided introductory comments on the item. Kevin Johnson, Principal Planner, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the project background, the design guidelines applied to the project, the appellant's appeal points and City staff's response, and the design evolution of the project.

Nancy Moses, from Trammell Crow Company representing the applicant, provided information on project design, concept design, project commitments to environmental sustainability, and neighborhood engagements.

Richard McDonald, on behalf of the appellant, expressed concerns regarding the proposed project being a high-intense use facility adjacent to a school and church. Grant Johnson, traffic engineer on behalf of the appellant, reported on insufficiencies of the traffic

studies presented by the City, noting increased traffic impacts that will occur around residential driveways and the school along Holliston Avenue during peak hours. Joe Parker, appellant, spoke on the safety measures that are needed to mitigate potential impacts of biohazards and compounds. Robert Montano, appellant, advocated for a more thorough impact analysis of the proposed project on adjacent communities, especially among the elderly and youth.

The following individuals expressed support for the proposed project and/or provided comments on the opportunities for workforce and economic development because of the project:

Chris Garcia, residence not stated
Jonathan White, Pasadena resident
Eric Eide, Pasadena resident
Mike Giardello, Pasadena resident
Dave de Csepel, Altadena resident
Nicolas Reyes, residence not stated
Dan Gober, from Biocom
Raj Surin, South Pasadena resident
Karina Edmonds, Pasadena resident
Becky Hernandez, Pasadena resident
Gorana Kolar, residence not stated
Nick Hooper, Pasadena resident
Farzanch Afshinmanesh, Pasadena resident
Dr. Nick Goeden, Claremont resident
Jennifer Jackson, residence not stated
Lauraine Quenee, residence not stated
Armand Bernardi, Los Angeles resident
Clare Yarka, North Hollywood resident
Taylor Lenton, Pasadena resident
SK Sharma, residence not stated
Maral Gharib, residence not stated
Frederic Faring, La Cañada resident
Mory Gharib, residence not stated
Hampton Cantrell, Pasadena resident
Silvia Themudo, Pasadena resident
Pasha Bank, Pasadena resident
Amanda Wu, residence not stated
Cameron Jackson, residence not stated
Viviana Gradinary, Pasadena resident
Andre Faraon, Pasadena resident
Alice Lee, Pasadena resident
Andy Wilson, Pasadena resident
Bassil Dahiyat, Pasadena resident
James Rawitsch, Pasadena resident
Richard Lee, Pasadena resident
Dennis Ko, Pasadena resident

The following individuals expressed opposition to the proposed project and/or provided comments on the project design plan and potential impacts of the project:

Angela Hawekotte, Arcadia resident
Elizabeth Hong, Pasadena resident
Joseph Sanders, Pasadena resident
John Luftus, Pasadena resident
Mike Giardello, Pasadena resident
Greg van Dyke, Pasadena resident
Geoffrey Blum, Pasadena resident
Ahne Ostrander, Pasadena resident
Susan Kun, Pasadena resident
Kristien Helbing, residence not stated
Soprinye Dappa, Pasadena resident
Ava Dappa, Pasadena resident
Heidi Parker, Pasadena resident
Mary Forest, Pasadena resident
Edward C. Roohan, residence not stated
Diane Olivas, Pasadena resident
Vivian Rescalvo, Pasadena resident
Esperanza G. Jorgensen, residence not stated
Matt Dobsin, residence not stated
Marissa Bell, Pasadena resident
Trisha Ortega, Pasadena resident
Sandy Annala, Pasadena resident
Erika Foy, Pasadena resident

Richard McDonald, representing the appellant, noted that a mitigated categorical exemption relating to asbestos is not allowed for the proposed project, and emphasized that the project cannot be determined as categorically exempt without further analysis.

Todd Nelson, on behalf of the applicant, noted that there is substantial evidence in the public hearing record to support the City's determination that the project is eligible for categorical exemption.

In response to Mr. McDonald's concerns related to asbestos, Councilmember Lyon noted that other projects in the City that were advocated by Mr. McDonald are also not subject to conditions of approval for breaking pavement. In response to Mr. Johnson's (appellant) comments regarding school pick-up/drop-off as a primary existing traffic congestion issue, Councilmember Lyon noted that the traffic congestion is a pre-existing condition that is tied to the school and not the proposed project, and raised the question whether the existing traffic congestion prevents all other additional developments from occurring nearby. Mr. Johnson (appellant) suggested that the ingress and egress point to the project be placed on Green Street instead of Holliston Avenue to alleviate some traffic congestion.

Mayor Gordo stated that the proposed project site could be used for alternative purposes, such as a commercial use, which may create more traffic than the proposed research and development project.

In response to Councilmember Lyon's inquiry regarding biosafety levels ("BSL") of the proposed project, Ms. Moses stated that the applicant would allow the City to condition the project that it remains in perpetuity as a BSL 1 or 2 laboratory environment.

Planning Director Paige reported that the proposed project is in a commercial zone that has existed since the 1970s, and after being incorporated into the East Colorado Specific Plan in 2022 as part of the Mid-City Innovation District, the zone allows a wide range of uses including commercial, mixed-use, research and development, and residential development. She also reported information on the City's ordinance, adopted in 2024, establishing special regulations for research and development uses, allowing benefits like additional height, FAR exceptions, and eliminating the need for a major project CUP so projects can proceed by-right with only design review.

In response to Councilmember Lyon's inquiry regarding possible alternatives that could occur on the site, Planning Director Paige and Luis Rocha, Planning Manager, reported that commercial or residential projects, such as a 100% affordable housing project without density maximums, could be developed at the site.

In response to Councilmember Lyon's inquiry regarding the general oversight framework for research and development uses at a local level, Timothy Cell, Deputy Fire Chief, reported that in addition to the oversight from various agencies at the federal and state levels, supplemental regulations are enforced by the City's municipal code, the City's Fire Department, and the City's Environmental Health and Safety Division.

In response to Councilmember Cole's inquiry regarding the City's authority in terms of traffic mitigation, Joaquin Siques, Director of Transportation, clarified that enforceable authority is limited during normal operations because the City does not set conditions on when vehicles may enter/exit a building. He noted that City staff can work with the applicant and neighboring properties to encourage optimal timing but cannot mandate compliance.

Councilmember Cole advocated for the City Council to consider additional regulations to protect the surrounding neighborhood and properties adjacent to the proposed project area.

In response to Mayor Gordo's inquiries regarding Caltech and their biosafety level, Leandra Davis, Caltech Executive Director of Planning, Design & Construction, confirmed that the Caltech facility is a BSL2 facility and that the Children's Center supporting faculty daycare is on the Caltech campus.

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Madison, seconded by Councilmember Hampton, to close the public hearing.

AYES: Councilmembers Cole, Hampton, Jones, Lyon, Madison, Masuda, Vice Mayor Rivas, Mayor Gordo

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Councilmember Cole reported out that he spoke with two parishioners from St. Philip the Apostle Church regarding Mr. McDonald's presentation, including traffic, historic context, and safety context pertaining to the proposed project, and he also spoke with Caltech's Director of Intergovernmental Relations regarding the facility's interactions with the Church.

Mayor Gordo reported out that he spoke with representatives from Caltech regarding several routine matters including the proposed project, and with parishioners from St. Philip the Apostle Church about the combination of traffic and safety concerns expressed during public comment, and he noted that he is also a longtime parishioner of the Church.

Councilmember Lyon reported that he had communications with constituents and leaders from the institutions on the appellant and applicant side, as well as representatives from Caltech and supporters of the proposed project regarding the by-right aspects of the project and the property.

Councilmember Hampton reported that he had spoken to community members and members of the Church regarding the proposed project.

Vice Mayor Rivas reported that she briefly spoke with two parishioners of the Church regarding the proposed project.

Vice Mayor Rivas and Councilmember Masuda thanked the public for expressing their opinions and concerns, and expressed their support for the staff recommendation.

Discussion ensued regarding additional conditions to the project such as restricting the project to BSL 1 and 2, reducing height of the structure, reducing subterranean parking levels, and air quality monitoring.

In response to Councilmember Madison's inquiry regarding BSL designation, Planning Director Paige confirmed that the BSL designation is not part of design review, but clarified that it is a part of the zoning that is allowed at the property. Ms. Paige noted that the applicant has agreed to the BSL 1 and BSL 2 designation.

Caroline Monroy, Assistant City Attorney, clarified that the design review findings that are proposed to be approved could be reached without the conditions of approval, but the applicant is voluntarily agreeing to certain conditions with respect to the BSL limitations, the reduction in parking, etc.

MOTION:

Following discussion, it was moved by Councilmember Hampton, seconded by Vice Mayor Rivas, to approve the staff recommendation, amended to add conditions requiring the applicant to restrict by building covenant BSL1 and BSL2 designated uses in perpetuity, as well as voluntary reductions in height, to limit the project to two stories of subterranean parking instead of three, and to require air quality monitoring during construction.

AYES: Councilmembers Cole, Hampton, Jones, Lyon, Madison, Masuda, Vice Mayor Rivas, Mayor Gordo

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Councilmember Cole suggested that a construction monitoring group consisting of the applicant, the Transportation Department, CalTech, the Church, and neighbors convene on traffic matters, and to have the Planning Commission and the Planning Department re-examine the research and development ordinance to see if in any changes might be needed to limit such projects near schools.

ADJOURNMENT

On order of the Mayor, the regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 12:04 a.m. on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 in memory of Jose "JC" Chavez and Victor Andujo.

Victor M. Gordo, Mayor
City of Pasadena

ATTEST:

City Clerk