

CITY OF PASADENA  
City Council Minutes  
March 23, 2026 – 5:00 P.M.  
City Hall Council Chamber

**OPENING:** Mayor Gordo called the regular meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.  
(Absent: Councilmembers Hampton and Madison)

**CLOSED SESSION** On the order of the Mayor, the regular meeting recessed at 5:00 p.m.  
to discuss the following closed session items:

**CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL**  
regarding pending litigation pursuant to Government Code  
Section 54956.9(d)(1)

**Name of Case: Camacho, A., et. al. v. City of Pasadena, et. al.**  
**Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 24NNCV04351**

**CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE** regarding public employee  
employment pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)  
and 54957.6

**Position: City Manager**

**Agency Designated Representative: Victor M. Gordo**

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

**CONSIDERATION OF INITIATION OF LITIGATION** pursuant to  
Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(4): One potential case

**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 two closed session items were not discussed.

On the order of the Mayor, the regular meeting reconvened at 6:17  
p.m. The pledge of allegiance was led by Vice Mayor Rivas.

**ROLL CALL:**  
Councilmembers:

Mayor Victor M. Gordo  
Vice Mayor Jessica Rivas  
Councilmember Rick Cole  
Councilmember Tyron Hampton (absent)  
Councilmember Justin Jones  
Councilmember Jason Lyon  
Councilmember Steve Madison  
Councilmember Gene Masuda

Staff:

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

CEREMONIAL MATTERS

Councilmember Madison arrived at 6:27 p.m.

Mayor Gordo and Christopher Page, Economic Development Project Manager, presented a Legacy Business Recognition to Rusnak Automotive Group. Mayor Gordo congratulated the Rusnak team on being Pasadena’s longest-standing family-owned automotive business for 60 years, and thanked them for their community leadership. Andrew Arizmendi, Vice President of Rusnak Auto Group thanked the City for the recognition and acknowledged his late wife, Liz Rusnak, for her philanthropy and giving back to the community.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Sonja Berndt, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns relating to the City’s general fund allocation to the Housing Department and advocated for the City to fund an additional security guard for the safe parking program at All Saints Church.

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

- Kate E., Pasadena resident
- Lucinda Wills, Pasadena resident
- Marianne Albina, Los Angeles resident
- Hedab Tarifi, Pasadena resident

Les Hammer, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns relating to mainstream media and the independent journalism of the Pasadena Star News.

CONSENT CALENDAR

City Manager/ Executive Director

Item discussed separately

**AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH MARK THOMAS & COMPANY, INC., FOR COLUMBIA STREET MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT, PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING AND FINAL DESIGN SERVICES FUNDED THROUGH MEASURE R MOBILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (MIP) FUNDS FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$1,209,789 (Transportation Dept.)**

**AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH AMERICAN GLOBAL SECURITY, INC. (“AGS”) FOR SECURITY GUARD SERVICES FOR A GRAND TOTAL AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$3,579,455 FOR UP TO FIVE YEARS (Water & Power Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council:  
(1) Find that the action proposed in the agenda report is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 21065 and within the meaning of Section 15378(b); and  
(2) Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract, as a result of the competitive selection process, as specified by Section 4.08.047 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, with American Global Security, Inc. for Security Guard Services for three years with the

option for two additional one-year extensions subject to the approval of the City Manager for an annual amount of \$715,891 and a grand total amount not-to-exceed \$3,579,455, which includes the base contract amount of \$3,254,050 and a contingency of \$325,405 to provide for any necessary change orders. Competitive price bidding is not required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(F) contracts for professional or unique services. (Contract No. 33564)

**AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO AMEND CONTRACT NO. 32093 WITH HATHAWAY-SYCAMORES CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES TO INCREASE THE FUNDING BY \$79,952 TO A NOT-TO-EXCEED TOTAL OF \$479,873 TO PROVIDE YOUTH EMERGENCY SHELTER SERVICES (Housing Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the recommended actions in the agenda report are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines per Section 15061(b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA only applies to projects that may have an effect on the environment;
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to amend Contract No. 32093 with Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services, dba The Sycamores, to increase the contract by \$79,952.26 thereby increasing the grant total to a not-to-exceed amount of \$479,872.74, and extend the term through June 30, 2028 (Contract No. 32093-7);
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to execute no-cost amendments to Contract No. 32093 which extend the term beyond June 30, 2028; and
- (4) To the extent the amendments to Contract No. 32093 could be considered a separate procurement subject to the Competitive Selection Process, grant an exemption pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) Section 4.08.049(B), contracts for which the City's best interests are served. Competitive price bidding is not required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(F) contracts for professional or unique services.

**AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS WITH CRAFTWATER ENGINEERING; TETRA TECH, INC.; PACIFIC ADVANCED CIVIL ENGINEERING, INC.; DUDEK; AND GEOSYNTEC CONSULTANTS, INC. FOR ON-CALL STORMWATER ENGINEERING AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE SUPPORT SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$1,500,000 FOR EACH CONSULTANT (Public Works Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find the authorization of contracts proposed 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) Authorize the City Manager to enter into individual contracts, as the result of a competitive selection process specified by Section 4.08.047 of the Pasadena Municipal Code with Craftwater Engineering; Tetra Tech, Inc.; Pacific Advanced Civil Engineering, Inc.; Dudek; and Geosyntec Consultants, Inc. for On-Call Stormwater Engineering and Regulatory Compliance Support Services for a total amount not-to-exceed \$1,500,000 for each consultant over a three-year term. Competitive price bidding is not required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(F) (contracts for professional or unique services) (Contract No. 33595 – Craftwater Engineering) (Contract No. 33597 – Tetra Tech, Inc.) (Contract No. 33608 – Pacific Advanced Civil Engineering, Inc.) (Contract No. 33598 - Dudek) (Contract No. 33599 – Geosyntec Consultants, Inc.); and

(3) Authorize the City Manager to extend the term of the contracts as necessary without increasing the not-to-exceed amount.

City Clerk Jomsky reported that one letter expressing concerns with the proposed contracts and one letter in opposition to the staff recommendation and/or providing comments on the item 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.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$432,959 FOR THE CALIFORNIA CLEANUP AND EMPLOYMENT PATHWAY GRANT AND AMEND THE DEPARTMENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2026 OPERATING BUDGET BY RECOGNIZING REVENUE AND APPROPRIATING \$432,959 IN THE GENERAL FUND (Housing Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council:

(1) Find that the recommended actions in the agenda report are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines per Section 15061(b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA only applies to projects that may have an effect on the environment;

(2) Authorize the City Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the acceptance of the California Cleanup and Employment Pathway (CCEP) grant in the amount of \$432,959 to improve public spaces and expand workforce opportunities in the MASH Division (Contract No. 24,405);

(3) Authorize the City Manager to execute, and the City Clerk to attest, all related documents, agreements, and amendments; and

(4) Amend the Housing Department's Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Operating Budget by recognizing revenue and appropriating \$432,959 in the General Fund (101) for the CCEP grant. (Budget Amendment 2026-29)

In response to Councilmember Jones' inquiry regarding the use of the funding, City Manager Márquez reported that the City will be using the grants to supplement the work that the Public Works Department is doing for bulky item and graffiti removal. Councilmember Jones also advocated for the City to utilize district liaisons to disseminate information and to see if staffing flexibility is possible for increased clean up.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE: AMEND THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2026 OPERATING BUDGET BY APPROPRIATING \$28,897 IN THE GENERAL FUND AND \$309,697 IN THE GENERAL FUND PROJECTS FUND FOR THE PURCHASE OF REPLACEMENT VEHICLES FOR THE MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE, SOLUTIONS, AND HIRING (MASH) PROGRAM (Housing 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 State CEQA Guidelines Section 21065 and within the meaning of Section 15378(b); and
- (2) Amend the Housing Department's Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Operating Budget by appropriating \$28,897 in the General Fund (101) and \$309,697 in the General Fund Projects Fund (105) for the purchase of replacement vehicles for the Municipal Assistance, Solutions and Hiring (MASH) program. (Budget Amendment No. 2026-30)

**FINANCE COMMITTEE: QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT – QUARTER ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025 (Finance Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** The agenda report is submitted for information only. The City Council may, however, take action relating to this item as it deems appropriate following consideration and discussion of the matter.

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE: 2025 REPORT REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH STATE-MANDATED FIRE INSPECTIONS (Fire Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the proposed action in the agenda report is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption; and
- (2) Adopt a resolution acknowledging receipt of the Pasadena Fire Department's report on its level of compliance with state-mandated annual fire inspections as required by Senate Bill 1205 and California Health and Safety Code Section 13146.4. (Resolution No. 10183)

**City Council**

**REAPPOINTMENT OF PETER J. BOYLE TO THE FIRE & POLICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM BOARD EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026 (At Large Nomination/District 7)**

APPOINTMENTS, REAPPOINTMENTS, & RESIGNATIONS

**City Clerk/ Secretary**

February 2, 2026	City Council Special Meeting
February 2, 2026	City Council
February 2, 2026	Successor Agency to the Pasadena Community Development Commission
February 9, 2026	City Council
February 9, 2026	Successor Agency to the Pasadena Community Development Commission
February 16, 2026	City Council
February 16, 2026	Successor Agency to the Pasadena Community Development Commission
February 18, 2026	City Council Special Meeting

MINUTES APPROVED

CLAIMS RECEIVED AND FILED

<b>Claim No.</b>	<b>Claimant</b>	<b>Claim Amount</b>
2026-0227	ATT	\$ 10,000.00+
2026-0228	Mercury Insurance a/s/o Josefina Rangel	3,527.98
2026-0229	Christina Maldonado	35,000.00+
2026-0230	Christopher Elliott	10,000.00+

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Jones, seconded by Councilmember Masuda, to approve all items on the Consent Calendar, with the exception of Item 1. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

**CONSENT ITEM DISCUSSED SEPARATELY**

**AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH MARK THOMAS & COMPANY, INC., FOR COLUMBIA STREET MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT, PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING AND FINAL DESIGN SERVICES FUNDED THROUGH MEASURE R MOBILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (MIP) FUNDS FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$1,209,789 (Transportation Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the action proposed in the agenda report is not a "project" subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 21065 and within the meaning of Section 15378(b); and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Mark Thomas & Company, Inc., as the result of a competitive selection process, as specified by Section 4.08.047 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, for Columbia Street Multimodal Improvements Project Conceptual Development, Preliminary Engineering and Final Design Services funded through Measure R Mobility Improvement Project

(MIP) funds in the amount not-to-exceed \$1,209,789 which includes the base contract amount of \$436,875 to develop conceptual and preliminary design (Phase 1), the option for additional services to deliver final design including Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) in the amount of \$662,933 (Phase 2), and a contingency amount of \$109,981 for any necessary change orders subject to City Manager approval. Competitive price bidding is not required pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(F) (contracts for professional or unique services). (Contract No. 33601)

Councilmember Cole expressed concerns related to a patchwork approach to transportation improvements. In response to Councilmember Cole's inquiry regarding the role of the Transportation Advisory Commission ("TAC") going forward, Joaquin Siques, Transportation Director, reported that the role of the TAC is to review the City's projects from a policy standpoint and provide recommendations to the City Council. He also reported that the proposed project scope was reviewed by TAC and includes potential for protected and buffered bike lanes designed as part of the adopted Bicycle Transportation Action Plan.

In response to Councilmember Madison's inquiry regarding whether the grant funds could be redirected to other projects, Transportation Director Siques reported that the City could decline funding or propose alternative projects that have undergone public outreach.

**MOTION:**

Following discussion, it was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Madison, to approve the staff recommendation for Consent Calendar Item 1. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**CONDUCT A TAX EQUITY AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT (TEFRA) PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION FOR THE CALIFORNIA MUNICIPAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (CMFA) FOR THE BENEFIT OF COLORADO CREST, LP LOCATED AT 1756-1776 EAST COLORADO BOULEVARD (Finance Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council continue the public hearing to April 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

**CONDUCT A TAX EQUITY AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT (TEFRA) PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION FOR THE CALIFORNIA MUNICIPAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (CMFA) FOR THE BENEFIT OF COLORADO GRAND OAKS LP, APARTMENT PROJECT LOCATED AT 2155-2193 EAST COLORADO BOULEVARD (Finance Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council continue the public hearing to April 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

**CONDUCT A TAX EQUITY AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT (TEFRA) PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION FOR THE CALIFORNIA MUNICIPAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (CMFA) FOR THE BENEFIT OF 600 NORTH ROSEMEAD, LP (Finance Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council continue the public hearing to April 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Masuda, seconded by Councilmember Lyon, to continue the three public hearings to April 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

**APPROVAL OF SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO THE 2025 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP ACT FUNDS (Housing Dept.)**

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the recommended action in the agenda report is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines per Section 15061(b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA only applies to projects that may have a significant effect on the environment;
- (2) Approve the submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development of a Substantial Amendment to the 2025 Annual Action Plan as described in the report for a grant allocation increase of \$512,416 in non-committed HOME Partnership Act funds; and
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate staff recommendation.

City Clerk Jomsky reported that the public hearing notice was published on March 5, 2026 in the Pasadena Press and that two letters in support of the staff recommendations 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.

Jim Wong, Housing Director, briefly provided background information on the item.

Sonja Berndt, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns related to the cost of the Ramona Senior Housing affordable housing project and provided comments on affordable housing.

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Jones, seconded by Councilmember Cole, to close the public hearing. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Jones, seconded by Councilmember Cole, to approve the staff recommendation. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

**QUASI-JUDICIAL ACTION: APPEAL OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION'S DECISION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION FOR CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW (DHP2024-00261) FOR A NEW FOUR-STORY, 56,019 SQUARE-FOOT 46-UNIT MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROJECT WITH ONE LEVEL OF SUBTERRANEAN PARKING AT 511 S. OAK KNOLL AVENUE (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 the 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 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, and the Design Guidelines in the Central District Specific Plan and that the removal of the two protected trees meets finding #6 of Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) Section 8.52.075.A (Tree Protection Ordinance); and
- (3) Deny the appeal and approve the applications for Concept Design Review and Private Tree Removal 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 327 post cards were mailed, and 60 notices were posted on March 9, 2026. He also reported that 22 letters in opposition to the project, including one letter with 34 signatures expressing concerns with the proposed project, and 24 letters in support of the proposed project, 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.

City Attorney Bagneris briefly provided an overview of the legal proceedings for this matter. She also clarified that 5 affirmative votes of the City Council are required to approve the proposed project.

Councilmember Lyon reported that he had conversations with both the applicants and the neighbors, and that he organized a community meeting between the developer, residents on Oak Knoll Ave, and the project team during the Design Commission process. He stated that he has not met with any of the parties since the Design Commission decision.

Jennifer Paige, Planning Director, provided introductory comments on the item. Stephanie Cisneros, Senior Planner, presented a PowerPoint Presentation on the item, highlighting background of the project, concept design review, project scope and guidelines, and appeal points. Senior Planner Cisneros also stated that the City

Council's review is limited to environmental review, design review (specifically project consistency with the applicable design guidelines), and tree removals.

In response to Councilmember Cole's inquiry regarding project compliance with the City of Gardens standards, Planning Director Paige confirmed that the project follows traditional City of Gardens principals including the courtyard-focused design that is visible from the public right-of-way. Kevin Johnson, Senior Planner, also reported that the design of the exterior circulation corridors are influenced by site constraints and to mitigate noise impacts from the substation along the south elevation.

In response to Councilmember Cole's inquiry regarding substituting specimen trees for native trees, Planning Director Paige reported that the tree substitution is a waived due to physical constraints on the development.

In response to Councilmember Lyon's inquiry regarding the traffic analysis and traffic patterns with adding Eliot Arts Magnet students to the McKinley site, Joaquin Siques, Transportation Director reported that the situation is treated as temporary and not analyzed as a long-term condition since the number of students at McKinley is not a permanent condition. He also noted that the school pick-up and drop-off times occur outside of peak traffic hours, thereby reducing overall impact in the traffic study.

In response to Councilmember Masuda's inquiry regarding efforts to save the appellant's tree, Planning Director Paige reported that the City worked with three arborists, one for the applicant, one for the appellant, and one independent arborist retained by the City. She reported that the City relied on recommendations from the independent arborist to modify increased ground clearance for the tree base. She also noted that City staff follows tree protection guidelines and standard code procedures when working with mature trees.

Brian Taylor, project manager for the applicant, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the project scope, the design build, the minor revisions to the conditions of approval, and reiterated their commitment to compliance and continuous collaboration.

In response to Councilmember Lyon's inquiry regarding the interior corridor design and the design studies, Mr. Taylor reported that the team studied alternative layouts and chose to follow the City of Gardens code rather than rely heavily on state density bonus waivers.

In response to Councilmember Lyon's inquiry regarding the applicant's redesign efforts, Adele Chang, LCRA architect for the project, reported that a number of alternative designs were studied including placing the gardens outside which would reduce unit size and count and potentially add a fifth floor.

In response to Councilmember Cole's inquiry regarding why the corridors could not be relocated internally, Ms. Chang clarified that internal corridors would result in outward facing units which could reduce desirability and create nose impacts. She also reaffirmed that the current project design meets the City of Gardens intent and that all units are oriented towards a main garden. Senior Planner Johnson clarified that City of Gardens requirements can be satisfied in various approaches (i.e. the main garden can be adjacent to large trees or other exceptional features, etc.)

In response to Councilmember Cole's inquiry regarding that City Council's ability to request changes to the project design, Planning Director Paige reported that the City Council can require design changes if tied to design guidelines. She also stated that procedurally the initial concession/waiver would have to be denied, then the City Council would require a different concession/waiver that the applicant would have to agree to. Assistant City Attorney Monroy added that the applicant has requested a particular concession and waiver, and in order to deny that concession or that waiver, the City Council must make written findings.

In response to Vice Mayor Rivas' inquiry regarding the proposed project meeting standards, Planning Director Paige clarified that the proposed project meets the City's standards and that there are various ways to meet the City of Gardens standards. Vice Mayor Rivas expressed reservations about denying the proposed project simply because it does not meet certain preferences.

Amanda Elioff and Brian Fulcher, appellants, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the appeal of the project, noting that the design does not comply with the design guidelines for neighborhood, commercial, and multi-family residential districts, the City's tree protection ordinance, and environmental impact guidelines.

In response to Councilmember Lyon's inquiry regarding traffic and noise studies conducted by the appellant, Ms. Elioff reported that only informal studies were conducted.

The following individuals expressed support for the proposed project and advocated for the City Council to deny the appeal:

Alexander Wagner, West Covina resident  
Michael Canavan, Pasadena resident  
Thomas Tai, Pasadena resident

Humaira Afzal, Pasadena resident  
Sam Alcorn, Pasadena resident

The following individuals spoke in opposition to the proposed project, urged the City Council to uphold the appeal, and/or advocated for modifications to be made to the proposed project design to address concerns relating to traffic, noise, and environmental impacts:

Nicole Roberts, Pasadena resident  
Scott Reitz, Pasadena resident  
Deborah Tennenbaum, Pasadena resident  
Suzy O'Neal, Pasadena resident  
Ellen Yu, Pasadena resident  
Erika Foy, Pasadena resident  
Mike Polka, Pasadena resident  
Douglas Ewing, Pasadena resident  
Dimitrios Gerasimatos, Pasadena resident  
Lisa Jacobs, Pasadena resident  
Christina Saylor, Pasadena resident

Les Hammer, Pasadena resident, expressed opposition to the proposed project and Senate Bill 79.

City Attorney Bagneris reiterated that the state law as set forth in the California Government Code, states that when a proposed housing development project complies with applicable standards, including design review standards, the local agency can only disapprove or condition the project to be developed at a lower density if the City makes written findings supported by a preponderance of the evidence that, 1) there would be specific adverse impact based on objective public health and safety standards, and 2) there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the adverse impact, except through disapproving or conditioning of a lower density project (Government Code Section 65589.5.J1). She also reported that when a concession is requested, as is the case with this project, the City shall grant the concession unless the it makes a finding supported by substantial evidence that the concession does not result in an identifiable cost reduction to provide affordable costs for affordable housing costs or rents, or the concession would have a specific adverse effect on public health and safety, or an adverse impact on any real property that's listed in the Register of Historical Resources and there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the impact without making the development unaffordable, or the concession or incentive would be contrary to state or federal law (Government Code Section 65915.D1). She added that because the City staff has not prepared written required findings for denial, City staff would need to return at a continued public hearing, if the City Council desires to, and that applicants can request a waiver or reduction of development standards that will have the effect of

physically precluding the construction of a qualifying development (Government Code Section 65915.E1).

Brian Fulcher, appellant, thanked the City staff for their guidance throughout the process and provided rebuttal comments, emphasizing their intentions to collaborate with the applicant to improve the project. He advocated for the project to return to the Design commission to address concerns.

Brian Taylor, applicant, provided rebuttal comments, reaffirming that the proposed project meets the City of Gardens standards and minimizes reliance on state density bonus waivers. He advocated for the City Council to approve the project as submitted.

Councilmember Cole suggested that the City Council support the denial of the appeal with an added condition of approval to address the exterior courtyard in a way to help mitigate the impact on the historic tree at the project site.

Councilmember Lyon stated that the proposed project meets City's design standards and the City of Gardens standards in which he is unable to find a basis to grant the appeal. He also expressed concerns regarding certain elements of the project, such as the lighting, and proposed that a condition be added to address the lit interior corridor at night. Planning Director Paige suggested adding a condition related to excessive lighting so as to mitigate and reduce visual impacts at night.

Vice Mayor Rivas agreed with Councilmember Lyon's comments and acknowledged the importance of community input. In response to Vice Mayor Rivas' inquiry regarding the possibility of denying or modifying the project to better meet preferred design interpretation or whether precedent exists for such action, Planning Director Paige reported that there is no precedent for denying based on preferred design interpretation when standards are met. She noted that the City Council may add conditions of approval to refine compliance. She also noted that Housing Accountability Act constraints apply to the project, such as the 5-meeting rule.

Councilmember Cole reiterated that while the proposed project is technically compliant, it does not meet the intent of the City of Gardens ordinance and does not demonstrate efforts to optimize light and air. He suggested that the City Council could consider a motion to eliminate the enclosed exterior circulation to maximize access to light and air, and ensure facade treatments on the sides and rear related to the interior program, unless it can be definitively demonstrated that doing so would reduce the number of units or the square footage of livable space.

Mayor Gordo expressed concerns that the proposed project may have potential health and welfare impacts on surrounding properties, and noted that such impacts are mitigable through design changes. He also noted that while the project may meet minimum requirements, it does not guarantee a high-quality design outcome of creating a visually and functionally meaningful open space.

In response to Councilmember Cole's condition of removing the exterior corridor, Mr. Taylor, applicant, stated that they will not be able to accommodate the condition of approval as it would place them against the state density bonus law, therefore, the applicants would prefer to keep the current design.

Councilmember Cole suggested a revision to his original language: to eliminate all or some of the enclosed exterior circulation corridors to maximize light and air, and ensure facade treatments on the sides and rear relate to the interior program, unless it can be demonstrated to City staff that doing so would reduce the number of units, or the square footage of livable space. Additionally, he spoke in favor of modifying the two fire conditions, and as an alternate condition if the corridors cannot be moved, that the corridor lighting shall be minimized to the greatest extent feasible while meeting safety requirements, and shall include study of the pattern of lighting, application of film, or other measures as deemed appropriate.

The City Council proposed a feasibility study condition, requesting the applicant to work with City staff to study options to eliminate or modify enclosed exterior corridors with parameters that the project must not reduce total square footage, unit size, or the number of units, and that the applicant must demonstrate infeasibility if changes cannot be made. Mr. Taylor consulted with the applicant team and reported that they are unable to accommodate the condition.

In response to Councilmember Madison's inquiry regarding findings for the motion, Planning Director Paige reported that an additional condition is not required to make the findings, however, if the City Council adds conditions, it must justify how they support the findings.

Discussion ensued regarding required findings to support the motion, state law limits on density, height, and concessions/waivers, definition of feasibility, and cost as a part of feasibility analysis.

MOTION: It was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Lyon, to close the public hearing. (Motion unanimously approved)  
(Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

MOTION: Following discussion, it was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Lyon, to approve the staff recommendation, with the added condition that the applicant eliminate or reduce the enclosed exterior circulation corridors to

maximize light and air and ensure facade treatments on the sides and rear related to the interior program unless it can be demonstrated to City staff that it would reduce square footage of the project, the number of units of the project, or the size of the units thereof, or impose unreasonable costs, and to modify the two fire Conditions Nos. 70 and 72 (as recommended by staff to add "if applicable" to each), and the change to Condition No. 9 to remove the certificate of compliance (as requested by the applicant). As an alternate condition if the corridors cannot be moved, that the corridor lighting shall be minimized to the greatest extent feasible while meeting safety requirements, and shall include study of the pattern of lighting, application of film, or other measures as deemed appropriate. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

**CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING FOR RECOMMENDED ELECTRIC RATE ADJUSTMENTS AND ELECTRIC UTILITY RATE RESOLUTION (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;
- (2) Close the public hearing 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");
- (3) Adopt the Electric Utility Rate Resolution with proposed electric rate adjustments and pricing schedules (Resolution No. 10184); and
- (4) Conduct a first reading to amend the Light and Power Rate Ordinance, Title 13, Chapter 13.04 of the Pasadena Municipal Code. (*To be discussed and considered concurrently with Item No. 17, including for public comment purposes.*)

City Clerk Jomsky reported that 33 letters in opposition and/or expressing concerns with the proposed electric rate increases and 5 letters in support of the electric rate increases were received by the City Clerk's Office, distributed to the City Council, posted online, and made part of the public hearing for this item.

David Reyes, General Manager of Water and Power, provided introductory comments on the item. Lynn Chaimowitz, Assistant General Manager of Water and Power, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the item and responded to questions. She provided information on the three-phase rollout for the rate increases, noting a 21% increase over the span of one year and multiple energy rebate programs to help mitigate the impacts. Councilmember Jones also

reported on the discussions had by the Municipal Services Committee in creating the proposed rate increase schedule.

In response to Councilmember Masuda's inquiry regarding future rate increases after 2027, General Manager Reyes reported that future electric rate increases are undetermined and will depend on renewable energy goals, different technologies, and policy decisions made by the City Council. City Manager Márquez added that the City last performed a comprehensive rate study in 2016.

Tom McLoughlin, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns regarding public transparency and advocated for increased clarity, consistency, and transparency in financial reporting and justification for the proposed rate increases.

Paul Little, Pasadena resident, expressed opposition to the proposed staff recommendation due to its size and timing and urged the City Council to consider a more gradual approach.

John Leano, Pasadena resident, spoke on the impacts of the proposed rate increases on middle class families and marginalized groups.

David Kang, Pasadena resident, urged the City to adopt a three-year phase implementation that balances necessary infrastructure investments with affordability and long-term resilience for the community.

Mike Polka, Pasadena resident, advocated for the City to look for alternative cost saving measures before raising rates.

The following individuals expressed support for the proposed rate increases due to necessity and advocated for the City to adjust the rate structure to reduce disproportionate impacts on residential customers:

Cynthia Cannady, Pasadena 100

Paul Brown, Pasadena resident

In response to Councilmember Cole's inquiry regarding operating income, Assistant General Manager Chaimowitz reported that the City is projecting a positive net income for Fiscal Year 2026 and that surplus funds will be reinvested into capital infrastructure projects. Councilmember Cole expressed concerns relating to planned capital projects due to potential supply chain delays, contracting issues, etc. He also proposed that the Municipal Services Committee revisit the matter after the second increase is implemented to determine if a third 7% increase is necessary, and see if there is a possibility of postponing the increase if the City generates operating revenue beyond projections or if capital spending is not fully realized.

MOTION: It was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Jones, to close the public hearing. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

MOTION: It was moved by Councilmember Cole, seconded by Councilmember Jones, to approve the staff recommendation, with an added condition that the matter of Electric Rate Increases return to the Municipal Services Committee after the second phased increase to determine if the third rate increase is needed. (Motion unanimously approved) (Absent: Councilmember Hampton)

**ORDINANCES – FIRST READING**

**Conduct first reading of “AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PASADENA, CALIFORNIA AMENDING THE LIGHT AND POWER RATE ORDINANCE, TITLE 13, CHAPTER 13.04 OF THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE”**

*(Discussed and considered concurrently with Item No. 16, including for public comment purposes.)*

The ordinance above was introduced by Councilmember Cole.

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

**Conduct first reading of “AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PASADENA ADDING PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 9, ARTICLE XIII, CHAPTER 100 TO ADOPT AN ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT AND CREATE A PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION FOR AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUALS”**

City Clerk Jomsky reported that one letter with copies of several ordinances from various cities for the City Council to consider was received by the City Clerk’s Office, distributed to the City Council, posted online, and made part of the public record for this item.

The following individuals spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance and advocated for the ordinance to expand definitions by adding “family and relationship structure” as a protected category:

David Carlson, Organization for Polyamory and Ethical Non-Monogamy  
Lawrence Nielsen, Pasadena resident

The ordinance above was introduced by Councilmember Lyon.

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

NOES: None  
ABSENT: Councilmember Hampton  
ABSTAIN: None

**Conduct first reading of “AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PASADENA AMENDING TITLE 17 (ZONING CODE), CHAPTER 61 (PERMIT APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL), SECTION 17.61.030 (DESIGN REVIEW) OF THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE, AND ADDING SECTION 17.50.165 (OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING) TO CHAPTER 17.50 (STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC LAND USES) TO THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING AND MODIFY THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS FOR SUCH PROJECTS”**

Michael Canavan, Pasadena resident, expressed support for the proposed ordinance and advocated for expedited review for projects that offer a substantial amount of affordable housing

City Clerk Jomsky reported that the one letter provided various suggestions to the proposed ordinance was received by the City Clerk’s Office, distributed to the City Council, posted online, and made part of the public record for this item.

The ordinance above was introduced by Councilmember Cole.

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

**INFORMATION ITEM**

Item held; to be heard at a future meeting

**REPORT ON CITY COUNCIL DIRECTION TO MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF FEDERAL CIVIL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT OVERREACH ON CITY RESOURCES, PROPERTY, AND COMMUNITY SAFETY** (Office of the City Manager)

**Recommendation:** This agenda item is presented for information only. The City Council may, however, take action relating to this item as it deems appropriate following consideration and discussion of the matter.

**BRIEF REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES/ REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mayor Gordo requested agendaizing discussion for artificial intelligence stewardship.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Gordo thanked the City's library staff for making the One City, One Story community event a success.

On order of the Mayor, the regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 11:33 p.m.

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ATTEST:

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Victor M. Gordo, Mayor  
City of Pasadena

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City Clerk