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**Title:** Actions pertaining to Ground Lease at 735 N. Glenn Avenue:  
 1. Adopt a finding of Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.  
 2. Approve Three-Year Ground Lease Agreement to continue administration of a charter school operating on the property located at 735 N. Glenn Avenue under the auspices of Big Picture Educational Academy (formerly VASA). (District 3)

**Sponsors:** Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Serv

**Indexes:**

**Code sections:**

**Attachments:** 1. BPEA GROUND LEASE AGREEMENT.pdf, 2. BPEA Exhibit A.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
11/9/2017	1	City Council	approved	Pass

**REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

**November 9, 2017**

**FROM:** KRISTINA CHAMBERLIN, Assistant Department Director  
Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services Department

**BY:** KYLE JEFFCOACH, Recreation Manager  
Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services

**SUBJECT**

Actions pertaining to Ground Lease at 735 N. Glenn Avenue:

1. Adopt a finding of Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.
2. Approve Three-Year Ground Lease Agreement to continue administration of a charter school operating on the property located at 735 N. Glenn Avenue under the auspices of Big Picture Educational Academy (formerly VASA). (District 3)

**RECOMMENDATION**

The PARCS Department recommends the City Council approve and continue the Ground Lease Agreement with the Big Picture Educational Academy for the purpose of continued operation of a charter school on the

property located at 735 N. Glenn Avenue, Fresno, CA in Fresno, California.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Since 2007, Big Picture Educational Academy (BPEA) (formerly known as Valley Arts and Science Academy - VASA) has operated a charter school on City property adjacent to the Ted C. Wills Community Center, located at 735 N. Glenn Avenue. The original agreement was for a five year maximum term. In 2012, the City Council approved an additional five year term that expired in August 2017.

BPEA has requested a renewal of the Ground Lease Agreement for another five-year term. Staff recommends that the Council approve the request to extend the current agreement on an annual basis, effective July through June of each year through June 2020.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2007, the PARCS staff was approached by members of the Board of The Valley Arts and Science Academy (VASA), who were interested in leasing the vacant lot adjacent to Ted C. Wills Community Center. Their intent was to develop the property for the purpose of operating a charter school emphasizing science and the arts. As the property was vacant, the improvement and intended use by VASA was considered to be a positive addition to the community. It would enhance, rather than interfere, with the programs (i.e., Head Start; Senior Hot Meals and activities; and after school programming for neighborhood children) at the Ted C. Wills Community Center.

The initial Ground Lease Agreement was approved by the City Council on February 27, 2007 for a maximum of five years, terminating in 2012. The agreement included conditions requiring VASA to pay monthly rent to the City and payment for all utility expenses at the site.

In 2012, upon formal request, the City Council granted another extension with an option for annual renewals for up to an additional five (5) years, 2012 through August 2017.

In May 2015, the PARCS Department Director approved the requested VASA Expansion Project. The approval granted permission to proceed with adding a building and relocating the administration office, both of which were within the area currently being leased from the City of Fresno. The expansion project was funded entirely by VASA and the City of Fresno did not incur any expenditures. Because of the expansion however, VASA incurred additional utility expenses that required an addendum to their agreement.

In 2016, VASA lost their charter through Fresno Unified School District. They were subsequently able to reclaim their charter through the Fresno County Office of Education as the Big Picture Educational Academy Charter School.

Additionally in 2016, PARCS staff was approached by board members from BPEA, who were interested in assuming the responsibility of the lease from VASA and transferring it to BPEA for the remainder of the lease agreement. Upon receipt of the formal and legal "Assignment and Assumption of Lease", the City of Fresno transferred in name the agreement between VASA and the City of Fresno to Big Picture Educational Academy and the City of Fresno. The agreement allowed the continuation of the charter school on the property located at 735 N. Glenn Avenue with no break in service. All conditions outlined in the original agreement remained in place.

The current agreement with BPEA expired in August 2017; BPEA is interested in renewing the lease for an additional five years. Big Picture Elementary Charter School is located on the east side of the Ted C. Wills property at 735 N. Glenn Avenue. The charter school currently has an enrollment of 1,228 students for FY-18 and they will continue with an emphasis on science and the arts.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

The Charter School occupies approximately 2 of the 6+ acres of the Ted C Wills park site green space [Exhibit A]. There have been no concerns or issues relating to their occupancy or operations. The continuation of this charter school remains a positive addition to the neighborhood community.

## **LOCAL PREFERENCE**

Local preference is not applicable to this item because this item does not include the award of a construction or consultant contract.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The lease generates approximately \$21,000 in annual income for the City. All operational and maintenance expenses of their occupied area are paid for by BPEA directly.

Attachments:

BPEA Ground Lease Agreement  
Exhibit A