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CITY OF IRVINE
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

Memo

To: Sean Crumby, City Manager

From: William Go, Great Park Board Chair *WG*
Mike Carroll, Great Park Board Vice Chair *MC*

Date: February 17, 2026

Subject: **Recommendation to Award Continued Operations of the Great Park Amphitheater to PSQ Productions**

Purpose

After attending a very successful Lunar New Year Celebration on February 7th with over 7,000 attendees and after consulting with numerous community stakeholders, it has become clear that the future success of the Great Park Amphitheater would be benefitted by a seamless transition of operations from the temporary amphitheater through the development and operation of the permanent one. This memorandum recommends that the Great Park Board award the operational management and programming of the Great Park Amphitheater to PSQ Productions, a proven, Irvine-based company with a demonstrated record of success at the Great Park.

Background

For more than a decade, PSQ Productions has been the cornerstone of live event operations at the Great Park, producing over 200 events annually and demonstrating both operational excellence and community alignment. Most notably, PSQ partnered with the City of Irvine to design, construct, and operate Great Park Live—a temporary amphitheater delivered on an accelerated timeline, and successfully operated since its opening in June of 2024.

The real-world experience gained through Great Park Live has generated critical, Irvine-specific lessons that directly inform the efficient design, construction, and long-term operation of the City's permanent amphitheater.

On February 27, 2024, the City of Irvine entered into an **Agreement for Contract Services for Development and Management of Temporary Amphitheater at the Great Park**. This Agreement was Amended March 25, 2025 and has been in operation since. PSQ Productions, LLC has been continuously operating the Venue at Great Park Live in partnership with the City of Irvine and is uniquely situated to transition from a temporary Amphitheater to the future permanent Amphitheater.

Findings and Rationale

1. IRVINE BASED AND PROVEN

PSQ Productions is an Irvine-based company with a ten-year track record of successful operations at the Great Park.

Their continued operation keeps Irvine jobs, revenue, and creative talent within the community.

Locally owned and operated by Irvine residents, PSQ provides direct accountability and rapid responsiveness to City needs while reinvesting profits back into the local economy.

Their “Irvine First” commitment ensures the permanent amphitheater will be delivered efficiently, sustainably, and on time and due to their unique position at Great Park Live, they are the only vendor who can seamlessly transition from the temporary Amphitheater to the Permanent Amphitheater with minimal disruption and lost revenue to the City because they will be able to book acts seamlessly as the operations move locations.

2. PROVEN GREAT PARK BUILDER & OPERATOR

PSQ partnered with the City to design and build the temporary amphitheater, Great Park Live, in just six weeks—a model of efficiency, collaboration, and problem-solving.

The company has successfully operated the venue for two consecutive years with strong attendance, positive community feedback, and seamless coordination with City departments.

PSQ already maintains established systems for booking, marketing, ticketing, parking, safety, and concessions, enabling immediate operational continuity without the delays or learning curve associated with a new operator.

3. LESSONS LEARNED THAT DE-RISK THE PERMANENT AMPHITHEATER

Through the development and operation of Great Park Live and other large scale events taking place at the Great Park for the last 10 years (including Orange County Soccer Club games at Championship Soccer Stadium) PSQ has accumulated institutional knowledge that is critical to the success of the City of Irvine’s permanent amphitheater. These lessons were earned through live execution—not theory—and significantly reduce risk, cost overruns, and operational inefficiencies.

Key lessons include:

Site-specific solutions for traffic flow, parking demand, ingress and egress, and pedestrian circulation unique to the Great Park.

Proven approaches to sound management, neighborhood sensitivity, and community coexistence.

Operational benchmarks for staffing levels, security, public safety coordination, and emergency action planning.

Data-driven insights into audience behavior, ticketing demand, food and beverage throughput, premium seating utilization, and artist operations.

Clear understanding of which infrastructure investments provide the highest public return and which costs can be avoided entirely.

By applying these lessons, the City can design and build the permanent amphitheater smarter, faster, and more efficiently—avoiding the costly trial-and-error period that outside operators would inevitably face.

The current "Agreement for Consulting Services" for the development of the permanent amphitheater (Contract number 21219) ends on May 30, 2026 and the extension of the **Agreement for Contract Services for Development and Management of Temporary Amphitheater at the Great Park** with PSQ will provide an orderly transition from the Pre-Development, Design and Construction services that the City has completed, to the next phase of work on the Amphitheater, where PSQ's unique knowledge of the real-world conditions at the Great Park will be most useful.

4. INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE

PSQ operates without conflicts of interest, focusing solely on providing world-class entertainment for Irvine residents.

They hold no contracts or affiliations with competing Southern California venues. In contrast, corporate operators such as ASM Global and SMG manage or book for multiple competing local venues—including the Greek Theatre, YouTube Theater, Peacock Theater, Toyota Arena, and the Long Beach Amphitheater at the Queen Mary—creating inherent booking conflicts that would disadvantage Irvine.

PSQ's independence ensures that Irvine remains a top priority for artist booking and production resources.

5. ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY IMPACT

PSQ's local operating model ensures that revenue, jobs, and contracts remain within the City of Irvine.

Their operations prioritize local vendors and small businesses, fostering a sustainable economic ecosystem that supports Irvine families and strengthens the broader community.

6. OPERATIONAL CONTINUITY & READINESS

PSQ's deep integration with current Great Park operations ensures a seamless transition to the permanent amphitheater.

Their trained staff, operational systems, and equipment are already in place—eliminating the costly ramp-up, inefficiencies, and operational risk associated with onboarding a national operator unfamiliar with the site.

The existing financial arrangement between the City and PSQ is a beneficial one to the City and by continuing it in its current form, there will be continuity of revenues and less risk of creating a new Agreement which will negatively impact the City's role as partner.

7. COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP

PSQ's leadership and workforce reflect Irvine's diversity, creativity, and civic pride.

Their programming emphasizes education, resident participation, cultural celebration, and family-friendly experiences—ensuring the amphitheater remains authentically Irvine in both form and function.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on PSQ Productions' proven success, operational integrity, independence, and alignment with the City's long-term vision, it is recommended that the Great Park Board award the operational management contract for Great Park Live and the Heart of the Park Amphitheater at the Great Park to PSQ Productions by creating a Second Amendment to the existing **Agreement for Contract Services for Development and Management of Temporary Amphitheater at the Great Park** to become an Agreement for Contract Services for Development and Management of the Amphitheater at the Great Park. The current Agreement with PSQ was sufficient to construct and build an Amphitheater and operate it with a full Agreement between the City/Great Park and PSQ for revenue splits and operations. Extending this current Agreement is the best scenario to ensure that there is an ability to move forward on whatever timeline is preferential for the City without any loss of continuity.

This decision will:

Leverage the critical lessons learned from Great Park Live to reduce risk and accelerate delivery of the permanent amphitheater,

Protect Irvine's interests by maintaining local control over its entertainment future,

Deliver a high-quality, fiscally responsible, and community-centered operation, and

Ensure that every performance, every job, and every dollar continues to benefit the residents of Irvine.

Please place this item on the February 24, 2026, Great Park Board Agenda for discussion and consideration.

cc: City Council
City Clerk
City Attorney