



## CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Honorable City Council **Item No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Interim City Administrator

**SUBJECT:** The City of Commerce Ficus Tree Replacement Program

**MEETING DATE:** August 15, 2017

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

City Council approval of a resolution authorizing a supplemental appropriation of \$6,000 from Measure AA, Category A – one-time infrastructure projects/capital items to increase the size of replacement trees as part of the City's Ficus Tree Replacement Program.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The City adopted a revised Tree Policy and Master Street Tree Plan List for City-owned public right-of-ways and parks on April 19, 2016. The purpose was to plant more appropriate species of trees in narrow residential parkways, median islands, and open spaces and reduce sidewalk displacements and encroachment of tree roots onto private property.

The revised Tree Policy and Master Tree Plan List uses California native and/or drought tolerant type trees and arranged in three categories based on their growth and root structure needs as follows:

1. Parkway based on narrow (2'-3' wide) to medium (4'-5' wide) – 31 tree species.
2. Open space such as parks where large tree species can grow naturally up to 70 feet in height with canopy's 25-60 feet wide depending on species – 4 tree species.
3. Open space also suitable for median islands, which will vary depending on island width – 18 tree species.

There are a total of 53 approved tree species for the City. In addition, the City currently maintains 393 Ficus trees planted throughout the City (183 in parkways, 9 in median islands, and 201 in open space/parks. Staff is focused on replacing residential parkway Ficus trees since those parkways are not able to accommodate the Ficus species root structure. For this reason, Council authorized a long-term replacement schedule over the course of 10 years and spread throughout the three neighborhoods gradually over the years to minimize the aesthetic impact. The new trees are selected from the City's Master Tree Plan List and based on location. Ficus trees in commercial areas which can accommodate their root structure and size will remain in place. Council approved replacing

a maximum of 30 Ficus per year at a cost of approximately \$30,000 annually. This cost includes removal of existing trees, roots, and stumps, replacement of trees, and a 12-month watering, pruning, and fertilizing service. To date, 60 Ficus trees have been replaced throughout the City.

The City is currently replacing the Ficus trees with either a 15-gallon or 24” box tree, depending on availability and location. Trees typically can take up to 20 years on average to fully mature. Should Council desire replacing the Ficus with larger trees, staff can attempt to plant 36” box trees where feasible with a minimum size of 24” box trees and discontinue planting 15-gallon trees. The cost of which is described below under fiscal impact.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve staff recommendation
2. Disapprove staff recommendation
3. Provide further direction to staff

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The current fiscal impact is approximately \$30,000 annually. Should Council direct staff to increase the size of the replacement trees to a 36-inch box tree where feasible, a supplemental appropriation will be needed in the amount of \$6,000 for Fiscal Year 17/18 from Measure AA, Category A – one-time infrastructure projects/capital items.

**RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOALS:**

This item is related to a specific 2012 Strategic Goal to “improve and maintain infrastructure and beautify our community.”

Approved by: Maryam Babaki, Director of Public Works and Development Services

Prepared by: Gina Nila, Deputy Director of Public Works Operations

Reviewed by: VilkoDomic, Finance Director

Approved as to form: Eduardo Olivo, City Attorney

Respectfully submitted: Vilko Domic, Acting City Administrator

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Tree Policy and Master Street Tree Plan List
2. Resolution