



CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

TO: Honorable City Council

Item No. _____

FROM: City Administrator

SUBJECT: Tree Maintenance on Private Property in the Village Residential Community

MEETING DATE: July 1, 2014

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing:

1. Therelease of a notification letter to property owners within the Village residential community (the Village) offering to remove Ficus trees on their private properties
2. Removal of the trees with the property owners consent; and
3. Discontinuance of ongoing private tree maintenance within the Village.

ANALYSIS:

The City received a request from a property owner in the Village residential community (the Village) to cut roots back and/or remove the Ficus tree in their front yard. The City has in the past maintained these privately owned trees in the Village apparently as a longstanding practice. In its research, Staff could not establish formal policy approval for this practice. The developer planted Ficus trees in the front yards of many of these homes. Ficus are known for their invasive root structure. The City has cut roots and on many occasions removed the trees in the Village with the owner's consent. There are twelve residences with the subject trees remaining. Each tree was inspected and its diameter measured to obtain a quote for removal. The City's interim tree maintenance contractor quoted a total cost of \$4,833.60 for removal of all twelve trees.

Staff recommends, in the best interest of the City and affected residents, that the City notify the property owners of the end of this practice and extend a "final" opportunity to remove the Ficus trees. The owners may choose to remove or keep the tree. If the owner decides to keep the tree, it is the owner's responsibility to maintain the tree from this point forward including any trees planted on private property in the future. In so doing staff recommends that the City discontinue future ongoing tree maintenance in the Village. Privately owned tree maintenance increases the City's liability and this practice does not apply consistently to all private property within the City. The letter of notification is attached.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve staff recommendation.
2. Decline staff recommendation and provide further direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact for removal of the Village Ficus trees is \$4,833.60. There are sufficient funds in Fiscal Year 2014/15 in account number 10-5165-55021, Tree and Turf Maintenance for the proposed tree removals.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOALS:

This item is related to the specific 2012 Strategic Goal to develop a tangible environmental mitigation plan.

Respectfully submitted by: Jorge Rifa, City Administrator

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

Prepared by: Gina Nila, Environmental Services Manager

Reviewed by: Vilko Domic, Finance Director

Approved as to form by: Eduardo Olivo, City Attorney

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Notification letter to Village residential community property owners.