

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** AUGUST 13, 2007
FROM: CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE CIVIC CENTER/MID-TOWN DISTRICT DESIGN PROJECT ("PROJECT") FOR THE DESIGNATED TREE SPECIES AND SPACING FOR HOLLY STREET AND PAVING IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE CIVIC AUDITORIUM FORECOURT AREA

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council approve the following design modifications as Plan Amendments to the approved Civic Center/Mid-Town District Design Project dated 12/15/2003:

- A. Civic Auditorium Forecourt. Find that the paving plan, pattern and materials proposed for the Civic Auditorium forecourt as part of the Pasadena Center Expansion project, is consistent with the intent and design parameters set forth in the approved Project.
- B. Holly Street Trees:
1. Approve the selection of *Quercus engelmannii*, Engelmann Oak as the designated tree species for Holly Street (between Marengo and Garfield Avenues) to replace *Platanus acerifolia* "Bloodgood", the London Plane tree, originally recommended in 2003; and
 2. Maintain the historic number and tree planting pattern of the original Bennett Plan, with 18 trees to be aligned in a double alleé on each side of Holly Street, for a total of 36 trees.
 3. Keep the original 35-foot tree spacing between each Engelmann Oak tree for the width and length of Holly Street. This spacing plan will allow for the planting of thirty-six 48-inch-box Engelmann Oak trees along the length of Holly Street, the same number of trees originally planted in 1928.

Recommendation of City Center Implementation Task Force:

The City Center Implementation Task Force recommended that the City Council make the following amendments to the Civic Center/Mid-Town Public Improvements Plan:

- A. Find that the paving design, including the decorative pattern/layout and materials proposed for the Civic Auditorium forecourt/sidewalk area is consistent with the intent and parameters set forth in the approved Civic Center/Mid-Town Design Project, and
- B. Approve the selection of *Quercus engelmannii*, Engelmann Oak, as the tree species designation for Holly Street (between Marengo and Garfield Avenues, and direct City staff to review the growth pattern and spacing of this tree and provide City Council with a recommended planting plan with sufficient spacing to ensure the longevity of the Engelmann Oaks (*Staff recommendation includes the space plan which the Task Force asked be developed*).

BACKGROUND

In July 1997, the City Council appointed an ad-hoc group to serve on the initiation of the Civic Center/Mid-Town Area Programming Effort. The group represented city advisory bodies, community leaders and adjacent property owners. Their charge was to develop a recommended program for the Civic Center/Mid-Town Area and to advise the City Council regarding actions required to implement the Program. From this group came the City Center Implementation Task Force ("Task Force") to guide and oversee the design of the public improvements plan and its implementation program.

In July 2003, the Task Force prepared a final recommendation on the plan elements and forwarded the plan for City advisory body review and recommendation. In December 2003, City Council approved the Design Development Plan elements for the Pasadena Civic Center/ Mid-Town District Design Project. Since that time, the Task Force has not been active.

On February 5, 2007, City Council reestablished the Task Force to address the following two specific issues pertaining to the Civic Center/Mid-Town approved project and to present their recommendations to City Council.

1. Street trees on Holly Street (between Marengo Avenue and Garfield Avenue) in the Civic Center:

The approved tree species for this area is the London Plane Tree (*Platanus acerifolia*). In December 2006, the Urban Forestry Advisory Commission recommended that the Engelmann Oak (*Quercus engelmannii*) also be included on this segment of Holly Street in some configuration. Introduction of a new tree species, and/or a change in the planting plan and spacing of the trees would require a change in the Task Force's original plan approved by City Council in 2003.

2. Civic Auditorium Forecourt Area Paving.

The Project called for the design of the Civic Auditorium forecourt and sidewalk to include new paving inspired from the historic paving pattern found in Centennial Square, adjacent to City Hall (Attachment 'A'). However, the pattern and materials for this area were not further developed as a part of the Project. As the Pasadena

Center expansion project is now under construction, resolution of the paving design at the Civic Auditorium forecourt area became time-sensitive to the Pasadena Center Operating Company.

CITY CENTER IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE:

Upon the recommendation of City Council, the following advisory body and community representatives were appointed to serve on the Task Force:

<u>Arts & Culture Commission:</u>	Lonette Rappoport
<u>Community Development Committee:</u>	Daniel Estrada
<u>Design Commission:</u>	Susanna Bautista
<u>Historic Preservation Commission:</u>	Andrea Rawlings
<u>Pasadena Center Operating Company:</u>	Tom Seifert
<u>Planning Commission:</u>	Diana Peterson-More
<u>Transportation Advisory Commission:</u>	Julianna Delgado
<u>Chamber of Commerce:</u>	Lynne Hess
<u>Paseo Colorado/DDRC:</u>	Michael DeLeon

PROPOSED PROJECT PLAN AMENDMENTS (2007):

On July 17, 2007, the Task Force convened a meeting to address the Holly Street trees and Civic Auditorium forecourt paving issues as directed by City Council. Staff representing the Public Works and Planning and Development Departments presented the following design-related information to the Task Force for review and recommendation:

1. Civic Auditorium Forecourt/Sidewalk Paving.

Staff presented an overview of the approved Civic Center project, including technical information, photographs and renderings showing the historic paving types and patterns for Civic Center district sidewalks. Representatives of Fentress-Bradburn, architects of record for the Pasadena Center project, presented the Task Force with the proposed paving design and materials for the Civic Auditorium forecourt (Attachment 'B').

2. Holly Street Trees:

City staff presented the Task Force with an overview of the approved tree selection criterion identified in the 2003 approved plan (Attachment 'C'), described the characteristics of each of the six original Holly Street tree species (considered by the Task Force in 2003) and the new Engelmann Oak tree (recommended by the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee [UFAC] in December 2006), and explained each tree species' level of compliance with the selection criterion.

Following comments by the public, the Task Force further discussed the merits of the seven trees and their compliance with the selection criteria. The Task Force

agreed that the recommended tree for Holly Street should have the following characteristics: a) good looks and form; b) be water-wise/drought-tolerant, c) is low maintenance (leaves/litter), and d) has a non-invasive root system, one that will not damage public infrastructure.

In terms of proposed spacing for the Engelmann Oak trees (Attachment 'D'), staff informed the Task Force that Holly Street, including its formal, Beaux-Arts-style tree planting pattern, is an integral part of the Civic Center National Register Historic District which should be maintained. The first two of the Project's seven tree selection criteria specifies that the chosen tree should: 1) "Respect the view corridor of the Bennett Plan" and 2) "Repeat the historic tree planting plan - a uniform alleé on the north and south sides of Holly Street."

In response to questions regarding the planting pattern and spacing needs of the Engelmann Oak, the Task Force asked that staff review the tree's growth pattern and spacing requirements with the following goals in mind: *1) providing ample space to ensure a maximized canopy for shade purposes, and 2) preserving the historic Bennett Plan's view corridor*, and directed staff to present its findings to City Council with a recommended tree spacing plan for the Engelmann Oak trees on Holly Street that meets the goals above and will ensure the longevity of the trees.

Review of the approved plan for the London Plane tree showed a spacing of 30 feet on center (between the center lines of each tree). However, the original Carob trees planted in 1928 had a spacing of 35 feet on center. In reviewing the height, spread, and spacing needs of the Engelmann Oak, and the dimensions of the existing planting area, a 35-foot spacing between trees would adequately provide for the required canopy spread of the Engelmann Oak and allow for 36 trees to be re-planted along Holly Street, the original number of trees planted with construction of Pasadena City Hall in 1928. Staff recommends that the City Council :

- 1) Maintain the historic number and tree planting pattern of the original Bennett Plan, with 18 trees to be aligned in a double alleé on each side of Holly Street, for a total of 36 trees.
- 2) Keep the original 35-foot tree spacing between each Engelmann Oak tree for the width and length of Holly Street (Attachment 'E'). This spacing plan will allow for the planting of thirty-six 48-inch-box Engelmann Oak trees along the length of Holly Street, the same number of trees originally planted in 1928.

The recommendations outlined above are refinements to the Civic Center/Mid-Town Plan which require adoption by City Council in the form of Plan amendments.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Civic Center/Mid-Town Public Improvements Project was the recipient of an MTA Transportation Improvement Project grant (2001) in the amount of \$2.8 million, with the Community Development Commission providing an additional \$1 million in

matching funding for the project. This project is identified in the City's Capital Improvement Plan budget, with the design phase to start in FY2008 and construction in FY2009.

Funding for the pavement improvements within the Civic Auditorium forecourt area is included in Pasadena Center Operating Company's (PCOC) construction budget for the Pasadena Convention Center project. The PCOC is responsible for all costs associated with the installation and repair of utilities in the public right-of-way and for the ongoing repair and maintenance of sidewalks surrounding the Pasadena Convention Center.

Respectfully submitted,



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City Manager

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Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner
Director of Planning & Development

Concurrence:



Martin Pastucha
Director of Public Works

Attachments: Attachment 'A': Site Plan – Civic Center Mid-Town District Plan (2003)
Attachment 'B': Civic Auditorium Forecourt Paving
Attachment 'C': Tree selection criteria for Holly Street (2003 plan)
Attachment 'D': Engelmann Oak tree description
Attachment 'E': Recommended Holly Street planting pattern and Photographs of Existing Conditions