

Agenda Report

December 4, 2017

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Department of Public Works
SUBJECT: MASTER STREET TREE PLAN AMENDMENTS FOR POOR PERFORMING TREE SPECIES

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposal to replace poor performing tree species from the City Master Street Tree Plan (MSTP) as described herein is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15304(b) – Minor Alternations to Land; and
2. Adopt the proposed amendments to the MSTP to replace the following tree species Silver Maple, *Acer saccharinum*; Tulip, *Liriodendron tulipifera*; and Purple Leaf Plum, *Prunus cerasifera* as described herein.

URBAN FORESTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 10, 2017, the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) supported the staff recommendation to replace Silver Maple tree as described. UFAC also supported the recommendation to replace Tulip tree and Purple Leaf Plum Tree as described on August 9, 2017, and on October 11, 2017, respectively.

DESIGN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On November 28, 2017, the Design Commission considered the Department of Public Works' recommendation to replace Silver Maple tree, Tulip tree, and Purple Leaf Plum tree as described, and amend the MSTP accordingly. The recommended replacement tree species that were presented to the Design Commission, were recommended from the previous UFAC meetings. During the Design Commission meeting, public comment was received regarding the recommended replacement tree species. After deliberation, the Design Commission made a motion to support staff's recommended replacement tree species as presented, with an amendment to change the recommended species on

Arden Road, from Fern Pine to Crape Myrtle; and the recommended species on Miles Street, from Crape Myrtle to Chinese Pistache. The current list of replacement tree species noted on Table 1 was unanimously supported by the Design Commission to replace Silver Maple tree, Tulip tree, and Purple Leaf Plum tree, respectively.

BACKGROUND:

In an effort to maintain a healthy and sustainable urban forest, the Department of Public Works reviews the performance of tree species to identify poor performing species that should be removed from the City’s planting efforts. Accordingly, the Department will propose amendments to the MSTP for designated street trees that have been identified as a poor performing species. The Department has withheld planting any tree vacancies where the designated tree species has been designated as a poor performing species.

The three tree species that the Department is proposing to replace have all been identified to be poor performing. The three tree species that are being proposed to be replaced are the designated species for 15 different street segments. The tree species, their locations, and recommended replacement species are shown in Table 1. Instances where the recommended replacement species is more than one, are intended to be planted in an alternating pattern along the respective street.

| TABLE 1 - MSTP AMENDMENT PROPOSAL | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|
| STREET | FROM STREET | TO STREET | District | Existing | Replacement |
| Emerson St | N Mentor Ave | N Wilson Ave | 5 | Silver Maple | Chinese Pistache |
| Medford Rd | E Sierra Madre Blvd | Dead End (Don Benito School) | 4 | Silver Maple | Fern Pine |
| S Marengo Ave | E Glenarm St | E Green St | 6/7 | Tulip | Brisbane Box |
| Startouch Dr | Hastings Ranch Dr | Carriage House Rd | 4 | Tulip | Golden Rain |
| Topsfield St | San Gabriel Blvd | City Limit | 4 | Tulip | Brisbane Box |
| Victoria Dr | Loma Vista St | E Mountain St | 2 | Tulip | Golden Rain |
| Arden Rd | S El Molino Ave | S Oak Knoll Ave | 7 | Purple Leaf Plum | Crape Myrtle |
| Brooks Ave | Clinton St | Barthe Dr | 3 | Purple Leaf Plum | Crape Myrtle |
| Miles St | S Los Robles Ave | S Oakland Ave | 7 | Purple Leaf Plum | Chinese Pistache |

| STREET | FROM STREET | TO STREET | District | Existing | Replacement |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| N St John Ave | W Walnut St | W Colorado Blvd | 1 | Purple Leaf Plum | Fern Pine; Golden Rain (alternating) |
| S St John Ave | W Colorado Blvd | W Del Mar Blvd | 4 | Purple Leaf Plum | Fern Pine; Golden Rain (alternating) |
| S St John Ave | W California Blvd | Bellefontaine St | 4 | Purple Leaf Plum | Fern Pine; Golden Rain (alternating) |
| Steuben St | S Wilson Ave | S Michigan Ave | 7 | Purple Leaf Plum | Golden Trumpet |
| W State St | Hillside Rd | S Orange Grove Blvd | 4 | Purple Leaf Plum | Western Redbud |
| W State St | S Fair Oaks Ave | S Pasadena Ave | 4 | Purple Leaf Plum | Golden Trumpet |

In FY17, eight Silver Maple trees were removed based on their condition; 29 Tulip trees were removed based on their condition; and 39 Purple Leaf Plum trees were removed based on their condition. Silver Maple trees are susceptible to breakage, cavities and rot. Both Tulip trees and Purple Leaf Plum trees are sensitive to drought conditions. In addition to Purple Leaf Plum's sensitivity to drought conditions, staff has noted the tree to exhibit a short natural life cycle. Due to the number of condition-based removals of the subject trees, and characteristics noted by staff, the Department recommends replacing the subject trees by amending the MSTP accordingly. As part of the existing *Tree Replacement/Planting – Citywide FY 2017 – 2021 CIP* project, the Department will replant viable tree vacancies with the replacement tree species. Viable tree vacancies may be dependent on current site factors including: surrounding landscaping, and the adjacency of driveways, utility boxes, traffic signage, etc.

The Department selected the recommended replacement tree species through a series of UFAC and Design Commission meetings. Staff initially presented three potential replacement species for each of the respective streets to UFAC. The potential replacement species were based on the following selection criteria: overhead utility lines, available planting space, drought tolerance, species diversity, and overall species performance. Staff then gathered input from residents about their preferred replacement tree species choice. Residents were notified and provided input via public notice, communication through their City Council liaison, neighborhood association, and through a web-based survey. Staff received minimal public input, and for some impacted streets, staff did not receive any public input. After deliberation with staff, UFAC recommended either a single or alternating replacement tree species along the impacted streets.

The replacement tree species that were recommended by UFAC were then presented to the Design Commission on November 28, 2017. Prior to the Design Commission meeting, staff conducted additional public outreach to impacted residents about the MSTP proposal at the request of UFAC. In addition to notifying residents through the

City Manager's Newsletter, through City Council liaisons, and through available neighborhood associations, staff left door hangers on the residences impacted by the MSTP proposal. After deliberation, the Design Commission made a motion to support staff's recommended replacement tree species as presented, with an amendment to change the recommended species on Arden Road, from Fern Pine to Crape Myrtle; and the recommended species on Miles Street, from Crape Myrtle to Chinese Pistache. The Design Commission's recommendation for replacement tree species for Silver Maple tree, Tulip tree, and Purple Leaf Plum tree for the 15 respective street segments, is reflected on Table 1.

The proposed action seeks to amend the MSTP only, and does not involve the removal of any healthy trees. Vacant planting sites would be replanted with the newly designated street tree as a result of this amendment.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The proposed action of amending the MSTP supports the City Council's goal to increase conservation and sustainability. Amending the MSTP also supports the Open Space and Conservation Element of the City's General Plan by supporting stewardship of natural resources and conservation.

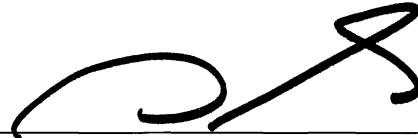
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Planting tree species that are appropriate for their location in the City, and that are aligned with the best practices of arboriculture is the goal of the MSTP. Under CEQA Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15304(b) – Minor Alternations to Land - tree planting is categorically exempt. The proposed MSTP amendment will assist in the enhancement of the urban forest and is a demonstration of the continued commitment to the development of sustainable growth.

FISCAL IMPACT:

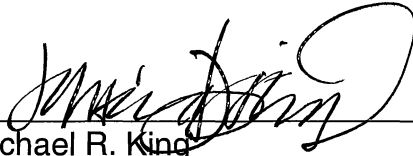
The average plant material unit cost for the existing tree species is the same as the proposed replacement species, which is approximately \$35 per 15-gallon tree. The labor cost to plant the existing tree species and replacement tree species is the same. Therefore, there should be no fiscal impacts as a result of this proposal. Tree planting is funded through the *Tree Replacement/Planting – Citywide FY 2017 – 2021* CIP project (budget account 78958) with a State Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation grant.

Respectfully submitted,



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Approved by:



STEVE MERMELL
City Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – MSTP Amendments – Maps and Street Views
- Attachment 2 – MSTP Amendments – Replacements Tree Species Information
- Attachment 3 – MSTP Amendments – Public Notices
- Attachment 4 –MSTP Amendments – Public Surveys