

Agenda Report

DATE: August 10, 2009

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO THE MASTER STREET TREE PLAN FOR REXFORD AVENUE AND ROMNEY DRIVE

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that City Council:

1. Approve an amendment to the Master Street Tree Plan that would allow the planting of the *Zelkova serrata*, Sawtooth Zelkova in lieu of the *Prunus cerasifera*, Purple-Leaf Plum tree on Rexford Avenue between Cartwright Street and Denair Street; and;
2. Approve an amendment to the Master Street Tree Plan that would allow for the planting of the *Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak in lieu of the *Pinus canariensis*, Canary Island Pine on Romney Drive.

URBAN FORESTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

At their regular meeting of February 2, 2009, the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) voted 5 to 1, to recommend to the City Council that a Master Street Tree Plan amendment be approved to allow for the planting of the *Zelkova serrata*, Sawtooth Zelkova trees in lieu of the *Prunus cerasifera*, Purple-Leaf Plum tree on Rexford Avenue between Cartwright and Denair Streets.

At their regular meeting of March 2, 2009, the UFAC voted unanimously to recommend to the City Council that a Master Street Tree Plan amendment be approved to allow for the planting of the *Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak in lieu of the *Pinus canariensis*, Canary Island Pine on Romney Drive.

DESIGN COMMISSION:

At its regular meeting of July 13, 2009, the Design Commission voted unanimously to recommend an amendment to the Master Street Tree Plan to allow for the planting of the *Zelkova serrata*, Sawtooth Zelkova trees in lieu of the *Prunus cerasifera*, Purple-Leaf Plum tree on Rexford Avenue between Cartwright and Denair Streets and to allow for the planting of the *Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak in lieu of the *Pinus canariensis*, Canary Island Pine on Romney Drive.

BACKGROUND:

The poor health of the *Prunus cerasifera*, Purple-Leaf Plum on Rexford Avenue has resulted in a significant number of removals over the past few years on Rexford Avenue. These removals concerned the residents who contacted staff to consider a change in species. The neighbors sought the assistance of staff to identify a tree that would be more appropriate for Rexford Avenue, a street that is limited because of its small parkway, and would be in keeping with the rest of the neighborhood of Upper Hastings Ranch in Northeast Pasadena.

A certified arborist from the Department Public Works met with a small group of residents on June 28, 2008 to discuss possible tree species options for the street. Several options were discussed and the residents settled on the *Zelkova serrata*, Sawtooth Zelkova. The residents were provided a petition that was signed by more than half of the residents on the street indicating their interest in the *Zelkova serrata*, Sawtooth Zelkova. Staff is recommending an amendment to the Master Street Tree Plan to allow for the planting of the *Zelkova serrata*, Sawtooth Zelkova in lieu of the *Prunus cerasifera*, Purple-Leaf Plum on Rexford Avenue between Cartwright and Denair Streets. The Sawtooth Zelkova is planted in many locations around the City and has a good success rate. There are approximately 10-15 vacant sites for trees to be planted on Rexford Avenue in the fall.

Pasadena has recently seen a marked increase of the Bark Beetle infestation, particularly with the pine trees in west Pasadena. Romney Drive has had ten *Pinus canariensis*, Canary Island Pine trees removed due to this recent infestation. Efforts have been undertaken to prune other trees to minimize the furtherance of the infestation. However, the significant number of removals led the residents to inquire about a change in species for their street. The neighbors sought the assistance of staff to identify a tree that would be more appropriate for a street on a steep hillside in southwestern Pasadena.

Staff from the Department of Public Works, who is a certified arborist, met with the residents of Romney Drive on Saturday January 10, 2009 to discuss possible tree species options for the street. The residents were provided a petition that was signed by more than half of the residents on the street indicating their interest in the *Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak tree. Based on their overwhelming response to the *Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak tree, staff is recommending an amendment to the Master

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Street Tree Plan to allow for the planting of the *Quercus agrifolia*, Coast Live Oak in lieu of the *Pinus canariensis*, Canary Island Pine on Romney Drive. There are approximately 10-15 vacant sites for trees to be planted on Romney Drive in the fall.

For both of these locations the change in designation of a new street tree will not result in removal of existing street trees and the new species will be planted only when there are vacancies.

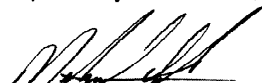
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

Tree planting is categorically exempt under California's' Administrative Code Chapter 14 Title 3 Section 15061 (b)(3). These projects will assist in the renewal of the urban forest and is a demonstration of the continued commitment to the development of the sustainable growth.

FISCAL IMPACT:


The change in species for all locations will not incur any additional installation or maintenance costs. Public funding for the tree plantings will be paid through existing state Environmental and Enhancement Mitigation funds.

Respectfully Submitted,




MICHAEL L. BECK
City Manager

Prepared by:



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Department of Public Works
Division of Parks & Natural Resources

Approved by:



Martin Pastucha, Director
Department of Public Works

City of Pasadena Boundary

