



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

February 9, 2009

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

RE: **CONTRACT AWARD TO GRACE BUILDING MAINTENANCE CO., INC.,
FOR THE PLANTING OF STREET TREES ON COLORADO
BOULEVARD FROM LOS ROBLES AVENUE TO LAKE AVENUE, FOR
AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$130,000**

At its meeting on February 2, 2009, City Council entered into discussion regarding the rescission of the contract awarded on January 12, 2009, to Grace Building Maintenance Co., Inc., for the Planting of Street Trees on Colorado Boulevard from Los Robles Avenue to Lake Avenue which called for the removal of 35 existing Ficus and Carrotwood trees and the planting of 77 Ginkgo and Mexican Fan Palm trees. A copy of the agenda report for the contract award and a copy of the memo to City Council dated February 2, 2009, are attached.

Following staff's presentation and the comments from the public regarding this issue, the City Council had very thoughtful communication regarding the issue of implementing the final phase of the Pasadena Playhouse Streetscapes, Walkways and Alleys Plan (Playhouse District Plan). The City Council took into consideration the merit of the Playhouse District Plan that took many years to develop and the merit of retaining the mature and healthy street trees considered for removal under this final phase.

The discussion included review of our current policies regarding public street trees under the City Trees and Tree Protection Ordinance which was adopted in 2002. Staff has prepared a memo detailing the authority and procedures established for the removal of public trees under this ordinance. (Exhibit A)

There was also discussion regarding the established community vision for Colorado Boulevard from Pasadena Avenue to Lake Avenue. The City, and a team of designers, took this vision into consideration when establishing the Playhouse District Plan. The Design Development Elements approved on November 18, 1996, were based on community views gathered during the Concept Plan phase, City staff feedback, a

project Steering Group which included residents, Playhouse District business and property owners, representatives from the Pasadena Arts Council, Planning Commission, Pasadena Heritage, and Transportation Advisory Commission, and the design expertise of The Arroyo Group, Urban Design and Project Management, and EPT Landscape Architecture.

As was requested at the January 26, 2009, meeting, the following is a timeline showing City Council action and/or information items regarding the street trees within the Playhouse District, as well as action and/or information items taken to the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee. Prior to these steps, the Design Elements were presented to the Design Commission on November 12, 1996, where they acknowledged the work and effort that had gone into the development of the plan, particularly “the citizen-led involvement in its development,” and recommended that the City Council adopt the plan. (Exhibit B)

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| November 18, 1996 | City Council approved Design Development Elements for the Playhouse District Plan. |
| October 19, 1998 | City Council approved revisions to the Master Street Tree Plan, including the Playhouse District Plan approved November 18, 1996. City Council also directed staff to meet with the appropriate community stakeholders including Pasadena Playhouse District Association, Pasadena Beautiful Foundation, and Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) to identify a consensus plan of action for a phased tree planting in the District. |
| April 26, 1999 | Information item to City Council reporting the results of community stakeholder meetings and the Consensus Plan that was developed for the phasing of the street trees in the Playhouse District. |
| May 17, 1999 | City Council awarded the first contract for the Playhouse District Plan. 12 trees along Colorado Boulevard were removed and street lighting was installed. |
| March 6, 2000 | City Council awarded the second contract for the Playhouse District Plan. 5 trees were removed on El Molino Avenue, 18 trees (10 Ficus, 7 Carrotwood, and 1 Cupaniopsis) were removed on Colorado Boulevard, and 58 Ginkgo trees were planted on Colorado Boulevard. |

- October 4, 2000 A purchase order was issued for the third contract for the Playhouse District Plan. 4 trees were removed and 26 palms were planted on El Molino Avenue.
- December 4, 2006 Staff Update to UFAC – information item only. Staff presented an update on the status of the Consensus Plan.
- November 5, 2007 Staff recommended and received support from UFAC for the removal of 8 trees along north/south streets, in the Playhouse District. These trees were not part of the Consensus Plan.
- September 12, 2008 Green Sheet, Item No. 3, Playhouse District Tree Removals.
- October 27, 2008 City Council awarded a contract for the north/south streets of the Playhouse District Plan. 8 trees were removed and 71 trees were planted.
- January 12, 2009 City Council awarded the final contract for the Playhouse District Plan. This project includes the removal of 35 trees (20 Carrotwoods, 13 Ficus, and 2 London Plane trees), and the planting of 77 trees (60 Mexican Fan Palms and 17 Ginkgos).

The community vision for Colorado Boulevard, from Pasadena Avenue to Lake Avenue, also included the Old Pasadena and Civic Center Districts. The Design Elements for the Old Pasadena Streetscapes and Alley Walkways Plan, approved on March 18, 1996, were established by representatives from the Old Pasadena Business and Professional Association, Cultural Heritage Commission, Pasadena Heritage, Design Commission, Community Development Committee, and Arts Commission, residents, City staff, and a team of experts including Melendrez Associates, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design.

The Design Elements for the Pasadena Civic Center/Mid Town District Design Project, approved on December 15, 2003, were established by representatives from the Pasadena Center Operating Company, Community Development Committee, Planning Commission, Design Commission, Cultural Heritage Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and Arts Commission, Civic Center property owners, City staff, and a team of experts including The Arroyo Group and EPT Landscape Architecture.

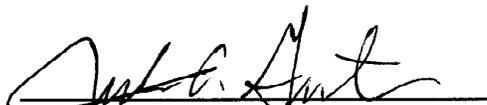
It is apparent through these three City Council approved district plans that many experts and community representatives have worked long and diligently in establishing the design elements to maintain the vision for Colorado Boulevard. In its discussion on February 2, 2009, the City Council acknowledged this extensive work and involvement of so many in our community.

The arguments presented to protect the trees are also sound and justified, but the reality is that we have two mutually exclusive policies that are in conflict with each other. First there is the policy to protect and maintain healthy trees. Secondly we have an adopted plan to create a unified destination along the Colorado Boulevard corridor. The district plan represents the culmination of many citizen and community groups coming together over several years to create and define the Playhouse District. In acknowledging the conflict of the policies and the principled arguments on both sides, an appropriate conclusion is to offer a sound compromise. Staff is therefore recommending the following for City Council approval.

Recommendation:

At this time, staff recommends to immediately remove the 20 Carrotwood trees and the 2 London Plane trees along Colorado Boulevard from Los Robles Avenue to Lake Avenue. The removal of the 11 remaining Ficus trees would occur in the future when the growth of the Ginkgo trees and Palm trees on Colorado Boulevard exceeds the value of the current inventory before removal as determined through a Street Tree Resource Analysis Tool for Urban Forest Managers (STRATUM) analysis. A STRATUM uses peer reviewed modeling techniques to quantify the value of annual environmental and aesthetic benefits provided by the urban forest. The growth of the newly planted Ginkgo trees would set the phasing for these removals in the future.

Respectfully submitted,


6.2 MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachments

EXHIBIT A
February 9, 2009

PUBLIC TREE REMOVALS

Based upon the discussion of February 2, 2009, an explanation of the tree removals within the Tree Protection Ordinance, Section 8.52.15 Item B of the Pasadena Municipal Code states it is the purpose of this ordinance to “Safeguard the City’s Urban Forest by providing for the regulation of the protection, planting, maintenance and removal of trees in the City”. Section 8.52.060 of the Pasadena Municipal Code states that “It shall be the policy of the City to protect and maintain mature and healthy trees”.

Section 8.52.030 of the PMC outlines the City Manager’s responsibilities under the Tree Protection Ordinance including the responsibilities as they relate to tree removals. Item F under this section states the City Manager shall “make determinations on public tree removals based upon tree reports prepared by certified arborists, other relevant facts, and upon established public tree removal criteria.”

Staff frequently receives requests to remove public trees on a regular basis. These requests come from residents, business owners, developers, and other staff members for a variety of purposes including tree health, nuisance trees, conflicts with plans from homeowners or property developers, conflict with utilities, streetlights, and traffic signals.

Requests for removals are reviewed and approved by the City Manager or designees after each situation is assessed on a case by case basis using the following removal criteria:

- 1) Condition of the tree in regards to health, age, visibility, and performance;
- 2) Tree consistency with the Master Street Tree Plan;
- 3) Project consistency with the General Plan policies and objectives;
- 4) The project will enhance the urban design strategy set forth in the General Plan, Specific Plan, or applicable long-term planning documents adopted by the City Council.

When public trees are approved for removal, the trees are posted with a letter of the removal intent for at least ten days prior to removal. When there are three or more public trees to be removed in one location, the removals are presented to the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee as an information item to advise of the need for removal and provide pertinent background information as it relates to the removals.

All tree removals that are requested that are not based on condition are evaluated by staff for a staff position. The staff position on the removals is then presented to the Urban Forestry Advisory Commission for their advisory input to the City Manager. When the removals are supported by the UFAC that support is included in all removal notices prior to the removal of any tree.

EXHIBIT B
February 9, 2009

MEMORANDUM—CITY OF PASADENA

TO: Karen Balchunas, Housing & Development

FROM: Brian Goeken, Design & Historic Preservation *BJ*

DATE: November 13, 1996

RE: **DESIGN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL ON
"RECOMMENDED DESIGN ELEMENTS" (NOVEMBER 7, 1996 DRAFT)
Pasadena Playhouse District Streetscapes, Walkways & Alleys Plan
(Design Development Phase)**

At its regular meeting of November 12, 1996, the Design Commission reviewed the "Recommended Design Elements" workbook (dated November 7, 1996) for the Pasadena Playhouse District Streetscapes, Walkways & Alleys Plan and, following public comment, voted (4 for, 1 against, 3 absent) to:

- (1) Acknowledge the work and effort which have gone into the streetscape plan by the project team, and particularly the citizen-led involvement in its development;
- (2) Find that the selected streetscape elements identified in the "Recommended Design Elements" Workbook (November 7, 1996):
 - (a) recognize and protect the character of the Pasadena Playhouse District, complimenting the architectural and historic qualities of the district in developing, as called for by the streetscape plan, an identity based on a "sense of place," "romance," and the "blending of day and night";
 - (b) are consistent with the adopted design guidelines, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, the Urban Design Plan, the Urban Design Guidelines, the City-Wide Design Principles of the General Plan, and the Purposes of Design Review.
- (3) Recommend that the City Council adopt the "Recommended Design Elements" (November 7, 1996) with the following additional comments:
 - (a) the design and location of the post-top pedestrian-scaled **street lights** (modified single-globe historic-type fixtures, taller than the standard fixtures) proposed for **El Molino Avenue**, in particular, should return to the Commission for further review as part of the 100% design development package (*consider the location of the fixtures relative to the palm trees in front of the playhouse and the proportions of the new fixtures, with the proposed added height*);
 - (b) Retain the **existing pendant fixtures** mounted on the palm trees in front of the playhouse, as these are historic fixtures;
 - (c) the **remaining historic street lights** (poles and globes) in the district (not retained as part of the streetscape plan) shall be salvaged and used for replacement elsewhere in the plan area or, alternatively, in the city;
 - (d) the historic **Playhouse District pole sign**, originally with neon letters, should be restored (proposed under Phase I) using *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and the State Historical Building Code; and
 - (e) consider a simpler and less-ornamental type of **bicycle rack** than the type proposed.

cc: Al James, Planning & Permitting Director
Marsha Rood, Housing & Development
Jan Furey Muntz, Chair, Design Commission
Chronological file
Project file



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

February 2, 2009

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

RE: CONTRACT AWARD TO GRACE BUILDING MAINTENANCE CO., INC.,
FOR THE PLANTING OF STREET TREES ON COLORADO BOULEVARD
FROM LOS ROBLES AVENUE TO LAKE AVENUE, FOR AN AMOUNT
NOT TO EXCEED \$130,000.

At its meeting on January 26, 2009, City Council made a motion to bring back for reconsideration the contract awarded on January 12, 2009, to Grace Building Maintenance Co., Inc., for the Planting of Street Trees on Colorado Boulevard from Los Robles Avenue to Lake Avenue which called for the removal of 35 existing Ficus and Carrotwood trees and the planting of 77 Gingko and Mexican Fan Palm trees. A copy of the agenda report for the contract award is attached for your review (See Attachment A).

The following is a timeline showing City Council action and/or information items regarding the street trees within the Playhouse District, as well as action and/or information items taken to the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee.

November 18, 1996	City Council approved Design Development Elements for the Pasadena Playhouse Streetscapes, Walkways and Alleys Plan (Playhouse District Plan), which included the installation of Mexican Fan palms and Gingko trees along Colorado Boulevard.
October 19, 1998	City Council approved revisions to the Master Street Tree Plan which included the Playhouse District to reflect the tree type approved November 18, 1996. City Council also directed staff to meet with the appropriate community stakeholders to discuss the issues and concerns that were raised at this meeting regarding the street trees along Colorado Boulevard and El Molino Avenue, and to identify a consensus plan of action for a phased tree planting in the District. (See Attachment B)

02/09/2009

4.A.

02/02/2009

7-B-2.

- April 26, 1999 Information item to City Council reporting the results of community stakeholder meetings. Representatives from the Playhouse District Association, Pasadena Beautiful Foundation and Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) were present at both meetings and, jointly, developed the Consensus Plan for the Phase I Street Tree Implementation which was presented. (See Attachment C)
- May 17, 1999 City Council awarded the first contract for the Playhouse District Plan that included the removal of 12 trees along Colorado that were in conflict with the installation of the street lighting.
- March 6, 2000 City Council awarded the second contract for the Playhouse District Plan that included the removal of 5 trees (4 Magnolias and 1 Ash) on El Molino Avenue, the removal of 18 trees (10 Ficus, 7 Carrotwood, and 1 Cupaniopsis) on Colorado Boulevard, and the planting 58 Gingko trees on Colorado Boulevard.
- October 4, 2000 A Requisition was signed which resulted in a Purchase Order being issued for the third contract for the Playhouse District Plan that included the removal of 4 Queen Palm trees and the planting of 26 Mexican Fan Palm trees on El Molino Avenue.
- December 4, 2006 Staff presents an update on the Consensus Plan to UFAC as an information item only. The Ginkgos planted in 1999 had not grown as fast as anticipated; therefore, staff would delay the implementation of the Consensus Plan and not remove the specified trees on Colorado Boulevard until a later date. The Consensus Plan called for the removal of these trees to take place in 2005. (See Attachment D)
- November 5, 2007 Staff recommended and received support from UFAC for the removal of 8 trees (5 Indian Laurel Figs, 2 Southern Magnolias, and 1 Carrotwood) along north/south streets, in the Playhouse District. These trees were not part of the Consensus Plan. (See Attachment E)

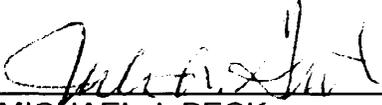
Page Three

- October 27, 2008 City Council awarded a contract for the north/south streets of the Playhouse District Plan. This project included the removal of 8 trees and the planting of 71 trees (43 White Crape Myrtles, 9 southern Magnolias, and 19 Pink Tabebuia).
- September 12, 2008 Green Sheet, Item No. 3, Playhouse District Tree Removals. (See Attachment F)
- January 12, 2009 City Council awarded the final contract for the Playhouse District Plan. This project includes the removal of 35 trees (20 Carrotwoods, 13 Ficus, and 2 London Plane trees), and the planting of 77 trees (60 Mexican Fan Palms and 17 Gingkos).

City Council also requested that staff report on previous practices that relate to the wholesale removal of street trees. Trees were removed in two phases in Old Pasadena in accordance with their streetscapes and alley walkways plan. These phases were approximately ten years apart. Other locations include large development projects along Colorado Boulevard, such as Paseo, Western Asset, Montana I, and Trio Apartments. Trees were removed in these locations and new trees were planted in accordance with approved streetscapes plans.

Staff is also reviewing the contract awarded on January 12, 2009, to determine the impact if the trees proposed for removal were to remain in place as well as the evaluation of some alternatives that will be presented at Monday's City Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,


FR MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachments