



# *CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT*

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MEETING DATE: AUGUST 15, 2006

ITEM NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT: AMEND STREETScape AND MEDIAN DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

**DATE: AUGUST 3, 2006**

**FROM: PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**PRESENTATION BY: WILLIAM J. MORRIS, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICES**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: BRUCE A. HARTLEY, MAINTENANCE SERVICES MANAGER, 714-754-5123**

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## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

1. Adopt a resolution (Attachment 4) amending the Streetscape and Median Development Standards, Section 6.04 and Exhibit 'H' to enhance the planting palette for the medians on Mesa Verde Drive East and West.
2. Adopt a resolution (Attachment 5) amending the Streetscape and Median Development Standards, Section 1.0, to authorize the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve future amendments to the Streetscape and Median Development Standards without City Council action.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City Council, through the adoption of Resolution No. 99-60, established the Streetscape and Median Development Standards (Standards) on September 7, 1999. The Standards represent the adopted "vision" for the future of the City of Costa Mesa streetscapes. The Standards were created to meet the goal of providing a cohesive urban design for the City, to enhance recreational opportunities, and to improve and protect the future visual quality of Costa Mesa. The Standards have been amended by City Council Resolution on nine prior occasions, keeping the document current with changes in policy or procedures governing arterial walls, the removal of trees or adjusting planting palettes for major arterial streets within the City.

At the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting of June 28, 2006, the Commission approved proposed amendments to the Streetscape and Median Development Standards and recommended the City Council adopt a resolution confirming the amendments. See Attachment 1.

## ANALYSIS

There are two proposed changes to the Standards recommended by the Commission. The first, if approved, would add one additional Median Tree species and two Median Accent Tree species to the existing planting palette for Mesa Verde Drive East and West. The second proposed change recommended by the Commission would authorize the Commission to approve amendments to the Streetscape and Median Development Standards without City Council action. See Attachment 2.

Mesa Verde Drive Planting Palette: The proposed changes to the planting palette for Mesa Verde Drive East and West reflects a request made by a Parks and Recreation Commissioner for staff to evaluate the success of the current tree species and make recommendations for additional tree species to beautify the suburban streetscape along the secondary arterial with an enhanced planting palette of trees. The existing street tree species for Mesa Verde Drive East and West are Canary Island Pine and London Plane trees. The median tree is London Plane tree. The Standards do not currently designate any Median Accent Trees. See Attachment 3.

The London Plane trees in the Mesa Verde area experience a fungal disease which affects the health and vigor of the trees. This has resulted in slower growing trees, with dead twigs or branches and a thinner canopy as compared to similar trees growing in areas with less relative humidity and coastal influence. The disease attacks the trees annually in the early spring and is very difficult to control, requiring the repeated application of fungicides with precise timing to achieve even minimal control. Additional pruning and fertilization is necessary to maintain the vigor of the trees. Typically, the trees are provided proper irrigation and bi-annual fertilization to achieve an acceptable level of growth.

The additional tree species recommended by the Commission would include: Camphor Tree as the additional Median Tree and Purple Orchid Tree and Gold Medallion Tree as the Median Accent Trees. The Camphor Tree would provide an evergreen canopy tree that would be appropriate along the secondary arterial, and would compliment the area similar to the Fair Drive parkways where Camphor Trees have been successful. The Purple Orchid Tree has recently been planted in conjunction with City projects (Skate Park) along arterial streets (Fairview Road) and in parkways (Columbia Drive) to add color and diversity. The trees have been successful in a variety of planting situations and provide a very unique, long-lasting purple color. The Crown of Gold Tree is a new species to the City's planting palette. It has been included recently in the planting palette for the Theater and Arts District and will add a distinctly vibrant yellow flower color to the Mesa Verde Drive corridor. See Photographs included in Attachment 2.

Amendments to the Streetscape and Median Development Standards: Currently, all proposed amendments to the Standards are first considered by the Parks and Recreation Commission and if approved, are forwarded to the City Council for consideration and adoption. Due to frequent changes to planting palettes, arterial wall programs or tree removal processes contained in the Standards, staff is proposing to eliminate the requirement for the City Council to consider amendments. By authorizing the Commission to consider and approve all amendments to the Standards, the process could be simplified and not add to the full agenda of the Council. With nine amendments to the Standards in the past five years, staff believes the Commission could address the need for changes to the Standards in a more efficient manner. As provided by municipal code, City Council

would still have the ability, upon the request of a councilmember, to call up for review any actions taken by the Commission in regards to amendments to the Standards.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

1. The Council could approve both of the proposed amendments as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission.
2. The Council could approve one of the proposed amendments as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

## **FISCAL REVIEW**

There are no direct fiscal impacts associated with the proposed amendments to the Streetscape and Median Development Standards as proposed. Costs savings associated with the authorization of the Commission to approve amendments to the Standards are unknown. The addition of trees to the planting palette for Mesa Verde Drive East and West will not result in any increase in costs to the City. Funding for the planting of trees throughout the City is included in the Maintenance Services Division budget on an annual basis.

## **LEGAL REVIEW**

The City Attorney's office has reviewed the attached resolutions and approved it as to form.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the proposed amendments to the Streetscape and Median Development Standards and received public input. The proposed amendments were approved by the Commission as presented. The proposed change in planting palette will enhance the Mesa Verde Drive East and West corridor and will compliment the existing tree species in that area. It is recommended that the Council adopt a resolution amending the Standards to authorize the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve changes to the Standards and to incorporate the changes in planting palette as proposed.

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BRUCE A. HARTLEY

Maintenance Services Manager

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WILLIAM J. MORRIS

Public Services Director

- ATTACHMENTS:
1. [Action Minutes from June 28, 2006 Parks and Recreation Meeting](#)
  2. [Agenda Report - Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting of June 28, 2006](#)
  3. [Table of Proposed Enhancements to Existing Plant Palette](#)
  4. [Resolution No. \\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#)

5. Resolution No.

DISTRIBUTION: City Manager  
Public Services Director

File NameMesa Verde Palette & Stds

Date7/31/06

Time10:00 a.m.