



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: JULY 28, 2004

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: TREE REMOVAL REQUEST – AVENUE OF THE ARTS – CENTER TOWER PARKING ACCESS

DATE: JULY 21, 2004

FROM: PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT, MAINTENANCE SERVICES DIVISION

PRESENTATION BY: BRUCE A. HARTLEY, MAINTENANCE SERVICES MANAGER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: BRUCE A. HARTLEY, (714) 754-5123

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission approve the request for the removal of five (5) Canary Island Pine trees located within a median on Avenue of the Arts, just south of Sunflower Avenue, with the requirement that the trees be replaced in a three-to-one ratio, with one twenty-four inch box-size tree, and two (2) fifteen gallon-size trees for each City tree removed. All replacement trees are to be provided to the City for planting elsewhere on public property.

BACKGROUND

The City received a letter dated July 2, 2004 requesting approval to remove five (5) City-owned Canary Island Pine trees in conjunction with a traffic circulation improvement intended to improve the movement of vehicles associated with events at the various venues in the Avenue of the Arts/Town Center Drive area. See Attachment 1.

The Center Tower parking structure located at the southwest corner of Sunflower Avenue and Avenue of the Arts has recently been studied in an effort to improve parking access and reduce traffic congestion. This study, conducted by Center Tower Associates and C.J. Segerstrom & Sons, with City oversight, evaluated parking and access conditions during the typical peak traffic periods and during varying high demand events held at the Performing Arts Center and adjacent facilities. Based on the analysis, ingress improvements are proposed on Avenue of the Arts to enable northbound motorists to turn left into the entrance of the parking structure. The proposed access improvement would require modification to the center median and necessitate the removal of the five existing trees as shown in Attachment 2.

The City Council, on February 2, 2004, approved the Town Center Drive Master Plan (See Attachments 3 and 4) and in so doing agreed to the proposed median modifications necessary to meet the recommendations of the study.

City staff in accordance with the City Council approved General Plan and Town Center Drive Master Plan, have assisted in the development of the project design. The City agreed to the median modifications proposed on Avenue of the Arts to allow northbound left-turn access into the Center Tower parking structure. Should the abandonment of

Town Center not be formalized within two years, Center Tower Associates/C.J. Segerstrom & Sons would be obligated to eliminate the left-turn movement and reconstruct the median to match current geometric conditions. The staff of the Transportation and Planning Divisions concurred with the proposed median modifications to meet the recommendations of the study as stated a letter to Center Tower Associates/C.J. Segerstrom & Sons, dated June 21, 2004. See Attachment 5.

ANALYSIS

The trees affected by this project are Canary Island Pine trees, *Pinus canariensis*. See Attachment 6. They are growing in a median that is within the public right-of-way of Avenue of the Arts. The trees range in height from approximately twenty-two feet to thirty-two feet (22-32'), with trunk diameters from eight inches (8") to sixteen inches (16"). The trees are in good health. The trees receive regular pruning as part of the City's normal trimming cycle for that area. There are no obvious signs of any hazards or disease in the trees. The trees do not meet any of the criteria that would support a staff approval of the request. However, the City has provided written assurance to the applicant that the proposed traffic circulation improvements have been approved.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. The Commission could approve the request to remove five City-owned trees located within a median on Avenue of the Arts, just south of Sunflower Avenue, with the requirement that the trees be replaced in a three-to-one ratio, with one twenty-four inch box-size tree, and two (2) fifteen gallon-size trees, for each tree removed, to be provided to the City for planting elsewhere on public property. This is consistent with the Streetscape and Median Development Standards. All removal and replacement costs to be paid by the applicant.
2. The Commission could deny the request for the removal of five City-owned trees located Avenue of the Arts, just south of Sunflower Avenue. This would preclude the median modifications from being made for future left turn access into the existing parking structure.
3. The Commission could approve the request for removal of five City-owned trees, with the condition that the trees be relocated at the applicant's expense. However, due to low probability of success, and the age and size of the trees, this alternative is not recommended. If this alternative were chosen the applicant would be responsible for all costs associated with the relocation and care of the trees and would be required to provide three-to-one replacement of any of the trees that did not survive a one-year period.

FISCAL REVIEW

There would be no fiscal impact as a result of the alternatives provided, as all costs would be the applicant's responsibility.

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this item.

CONCLUSION

The trees that are the subject of the request for removal are City-owned trees located within the public right-of-way of Avenue of the Arts. The trees are within a median that will be reconstructed as part of a City supported traffic circulation improvement in the area of the Orange County Performing Arts Center. The request has been brought forward for consideration by the Commission under Category 3 – Discretionary Removals of the Streetscape and Median Development Standards. Based on the information provided by the applicant and other City departments, staff recommends approval of the request with the condition that the City be provided fifteen trees of the specified sizes as mitigation for the loss of the five pine tree.

BRUCE A HARTLEY
Maintenance Services Manager

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Public Services Director

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- ATTACHMENTS:
- 1 [Letter from Tom Carmody, Senior Associate, RBF Consulting, on behalf of Center Tower Association/ C.J. Segerstrom & Sons. to City, dated July 2, 2004, requesting approval to remove five City owned trees.](#)
 - 2 [Tree Removal Exhibit – Existing and Proposed Conditions](#)
 - 3 [City Council Agenda Report – February 2, 2004](#)
 4. [Action Agenda – City Council Meeting of February 2, 2004](#)
 5. [Letter from City to Robert C. Fernandez, Director of Project Development, Center Tower Association, dated June 21, 2004](#)
 - 6 [Photographs of Trees](#)

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