



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: JULY 24, 2014

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: TREE REMOVAL REQUEST - 914 OAK STREET

DATE: JULY 11, 2014

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

Deny the request for the removal of one (1) City-owned parkway tree located in the public right-of-way at 914 Oak Street.

BACKGROUND

The Maintenance Services Division was contacted on May 28, 2014, by the property owner of 914 Oak Street notifying the City of tree roots found in the sewer line, as reported by the Costa Mesa Sanitary District, following inspection and maintenance of the main sewer line.

ANALYSIS

The City Arborist conducted a site inspection the same day. The parkway tree being considered for removal is a Fern Pine, *Podocarpus gracilior*, growing in a ten foot (10') wide public right-of-way, with a four and one half foot (4.5') sidewalk immediately adjacent to the curb. The City Arborist found the tree to be in good condition. The tree is approximately forty-five feet (45') in height with a trunk diameter of twenty-two inches (22"). The tree has been regularly maintained on a 3-year cycle for the past thirteen years. See Attachment 1. The tree is growing in an open turf area with irrigation. The curb and gutter at this location was replaced in the past; no concrete damage or trip hazard was observed and the tree did not appear to have any detrimental impacts as a result of the work. No damage to the driveway that could be attributable to the tree was observed.

Prior to the most recent service request from the property owner, there have been three previous work requests. See Attachment 2. In 2008, the Applicant called to request something be done about the fruit that the tree produces. In 2010, the same complaint was made. In 2014, the Applicant requested that low growing branching be removed over the sidewalk.

The sewer lateral for this property runs along the east property line and is located approximately twenty feet (20') away from the City tree. However, there is a European White Birch tree growing on the property directly above the sewer lateral line. With the

City tree growing outside of the ten foot (10') zone typically used to establish the parkway tree as the offending tree; no further action was taken.

The tree does not meet the criteria for a staff level authorization for removal (Category 1 or 2 removal criteria), as stated in the Streetscape and Median Development Standards. The Applicant was informed of that decision and was provided the removal criteria. The City Arborist evaluated the tree for possible relocation, but believes that due to the size and cost of relocating the tree, relocation is not recommended nor needed. The value of the tree is estimated to be \$3,260.

The City received a letter from the Applicant dated June 20, 2014, requesting the City remove the tree. See Attachment 3. The Applicant's letter provided the following reasons for the removal request:

- The tree is extremely messy and is causing plumbing problems exceeding \$2,000.
- The fruit is problematic in that it is impossible to rake out of the turf and must be hand picked off of the lawn.
- The roots of the tree are starting to lift the driveway.

The Applicant has been notified of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting and has been sent a copy of this staff report.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. The Commission could authorize the removal of the tree as a Category 3 – Discretionary Removal, with the Applicant paying the cost for removal and the 3:1 replacement costs. One 24" box-size tree would be replanted at the location and two 15 gallon size trees would be planted elsewhere on public property.
2. The Commission could authorize the removal of the trees as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal. The City would pay all removal and replacement costs. One 15 gallon size tree would be replanted at the location.

FISCAL REVIEW

There would be no fiscal impact to the City if the request to remove the tree were either denied or approved as a Category 3 - Discretionary Removal, as the Applicant would pay all costs.

If approved as a Discretionary Removal, where the Applicant pays the removal and replacement costs, the cost for removing the tree would be \$440. The cost for the required three-to-one replacement (mitigation) trees would be \$425; for a total cost of \$865. Costs are based on current City contract prices.

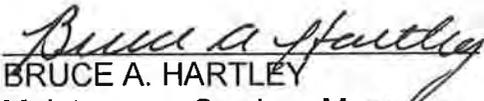
If approved as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal, the estimated costs to the City to remove the tree would be \$440; a replacement 15 gallon size tree would cost \$100, for a total cost of \$540.

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this item.

CONCLUSION

The City-owned street tree that is being requested to be removed is located in the public right-of-way at 914 Oak Street. The Applicant is requesting removal of the tree because it is messy, requires physically challenging cleanup of the fruit and has roots that have entered the sewer lateral resulting in costly plumbing bills. The City tree is located twenty feet measured horizontally from the sewer lateral. A private tree owned by the Applicant is growing directly above the sewer lateral. No conclusive evidence was provided by the Applicant that would confirm that it is the roots of the City tree causing the sewer problems. It is more likely the roots of the White Birch tree located much closer to the line that are creating the blockages. The City tree is in good condition and does not meet the criteria for removal as stated in the Streetscape and Median Development Standards (Standards). The cost of removing the birch tree would be significantly less than removing the City tree. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission deny the request to remove the tree.


BRUCE A. HARTLEY
Maintenance Services Manager


ERNESTO MUNOZ
Public Services Director

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Tree Information and Work History
2. Costa Maintenance Work Orders
3. Letter from Applicant
4. Photographs

C: Rosemary Lee
914 Oak Street
Costa Mesa, CA 92627-4010

City of Costa Mesa
Maintenance Services Division
FIELD INSPECTION – TREE INFORMATION

ATTACHMENT #1

Date Request Received: 7/8/14
Name of Resident: Rosemary Lee Requesting Party: _____
Address: 914 Oak Street Address: _____
Home Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Date Inspected: 7/8/2014
Inspected By: Doug Kokesh – City Arborist #WC-1637A
Parkway Maintenance Report:

Tree Species: Podocarpus gracilior F-1 Removal Cost: (DBH x \$20.00)= \$ 440.00
Height: 45 Feet Width of Sidewalk: 4.5 Feet
Trunk Diameter: 22 Inches Size of Right-of-Way: 10 Feet

Health: Good Fair Poor Date of Last Pruning: 5/13/2013

Is the Tree a good candidate for Relocation? Yes No

Likelihood of survival: Good Fair Poor

Comments: **Size of this tree makes it an unsuitable candidate for transplant. The likely cost for transplant will also well exceed the tree's value of \$3,260.00**

Concrete Damage: Yes No

If Yes, describe damage: **Sidewalk has been replaced in the past. Tree was root pruned at that time. As of the date of inspection, there has been no visible detrimental effects to the tree associated with the hardscape repairs. *Note, sewer lateral 20' from trunk center.**

Can the Tree be Root Pruned: Yes No Date: _____

Root Pruning Comments:

Date of Response to Resident: _____

Date Information Packet Mailed: _____

Photos Taken: Yes No Date Photos Taken: 07/08/2014

Photo #1: Street view looking north

Photo #2: Street view looking west

Photo #3: Street view looking east

Photo #4: Basal (trunk flare) view of tree



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[Edit Tree Site](#) - [Insert History](#) - [Calls](#) - [Street View](#) - [Photo Album](#) - [Notes](#)

Site Detail (33.650268820549,-117.93732588847)

District	Address	Location	Species	DBH	Height
21	914 OAK ST	Front-1	Podocarpus gracilior FERN PINE	13-18	30-45

Condition	Maintenance	Removal Priority	Estimated Value	Parkway Type	Parkway Size
Good	Grid Trlm	N/A	\$3,260	Monolithic	99

Utility	Valid
No	Yes

[Select a list](#)

[Create a list](#) - [Add site to list](#)

Work History

Crew	Work Date	Work Type	Job #/Acct #	Amount
WCA	5/31/2013	Grid Prune	22986	\$46.00
WCA	4/20/2010	Grid Pruning	14385	\$46.60
WCA	3/9/2007	Grid Pruning	10489	\$43.50
WCA	9/17/2003	Grid Trimming	6173	\$41.50
WCA	10/19/2000	Grid Trimming	3569	\$40.10

ATTACHMENT #2

Subject:

Tree Roots in Sewer

Detailed description:

Notified of tree roots in the sewer at this location via the CMSD. Contact resident on tree removal criteria the week of 6/1/14.

Req'd date:

2014-05-28 (Request entered by: Daniel Dominguez III)

Req'd by:

Rosemary Lee

Location:

914 Oak Street

Phone:

949-645-7414

Work Order Nr:

14050913

District:

21

Supervisor:

City Arborist

Employee:

Dominguez, Dan

Call back needed:

N

Contacted date:

0000-00-00

OSHA safety concern:

N

Status:

In Progress

Completion date:

0000-00-00

Inspection date:

2014-05-28

Hours:

0 Minutes: 15

Material cost:

0.00

Action taken:

5/28/14 F1 Podocarpus gracilior 22"dsh x 45' in good condition. Tree growing in an open turf area with irrigation, sidewalk adjacent to curb. Sidewalk, curb & gutter replaced in the past. Sewer lateral runs along east property line 20' away from the base of the tree. On site Betula pendula growing on top of the sewer lateral. Tree does not meet Cat 1 or 2 removal criteria or sewer lateral root intrusion criteria. Call resident on 5/5/14 after they have received a letter from CMSD. PENDING DD 6/26/14 Left voice message with resident. PENDING

Password:

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Subject:

Sidewalk overgrowth from trees

Detailed description:

Resident called and stated trees are overgrown an impeding sidewalk at 911 Victoria on the National Street side, 874 Oak, and the west end of Oak St.

Req'd date:

2014-04-04 (Request entered by: Daniel Dominguez III)

Req'd by:

Victor Lee

Location:

914 Oak

Phone:

949-645-7414

Work Order Nr:

14040493

District:

21

Supervisor:

City Arborist

Employee:

Dominguez, Dan

Call back needed:

N

Contacted date:

0000-00-00

OSHA safety concern:

N

Status:

Closed

Completion date:

2014-04-11

Inspection date:

2014-04-11

Hours:

0 Minutes: 20

Material cost:

0.00

Action taken:

4/11/14 911 Victoria on the National Street side property owner has overgrown Pitts that need to be trimmed back. Spoke to resident and informed him of what needed to be done and he indicated that he will comply. 874 Oak had the same issues. Spoke to the resident and he also was willing to comply. Did not observe any overgrown trees at the west end of Oak. No additional action required at this time. DD

Password:

Costa Maintenance©2006 - 2014- City of Costa Mesa

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Subject:

Tree drops tons of berries; concerned about safety hazard.

Detailed description:

Podocarpus tree drops tons of berries; concerned about safety hazard; offered to trim. Previous work order for same request dated 11/20/08.

Req'd date:

2010-02-18

Req'd by:

Victor Lee

Location:

914 Oak Street

Phone:

949-645-7414

Work Order Nr:

10020332

District:

21

Supervisor:

Dean Rodia

Employee:

Rodia, Dean

Call back needed:

Y

Contacted date:

2010-02-18

OSHA safety concern:

N

Status:

Closed

Completion date:

2010-04-20

Inspection date:

2010-02-18

Hours:

0 Minutes: 50

Material cost:

0.00

Action taken:

This tree is in District 21 and it is scheduled to be trimmed in April 2010. Was last trimmed in 2007. Trimmed 4/20/10 by WCA.

Password:

Subject:

Tree drops tons of berries; concerned about safety hazard.

Detailed description:

Tree drops tons of berries; concerned about safety hazard.

Req'd date:

2008-11-20

Req'd by:

Rosemary Lee

Location:

914 Oak Street

Phone:

949-645-7414

Work Order Nr:

08111490

District:

21

Supervisor:

Dean Rodia

Employee:

Rodia, Dean

Call back needed:

Y

Contacted date:

2008-11-20

OSHA safety concern:

N

Status:

Closed

Completion date:

2008-11-20

Inspection date:

2008-11-20

Hours:

0 Minutes: 50

Material cost:

0.00

Action taken:

Last trimmed in 2007 and will monitor. Can't do much for the berry/seed pod drop. Declined to take it to the P&R Commission for a removal request.

Password:

June 20, 2014

Bruce Hartley, Maintenance Service Manager



RE: Parkway Tree

Dear Mr. Hartley,

Your name was given to me by Mr. James Ferryman, President of the Costa Mesa Sanitary District .I am hoping you might be just the man who can help us with our awful problems brought on by the City owned Parkway Tree.

We moved into our home at 914 Oak St. Costa Mesa in June 1955.....6 months after my husband, Victor Lee, was honorably discharged from the US Navy after 4 years service during the Korean War. Our four children (2 were born during Navy duty and 2 born at Hoag Hospital) were raised in this small home with one bathroom.

In all the past years we have lived in our home we never had the messy "fruit "droppings and plumbing problems as we've had with this City Owned Parkway Tree. I don't remember the year it was planted to replace the original tree because the first tree had destroyed the sidewalk. When I questioned the men who planted the new tree and asked if the roots would do the same thing, I was assured it would be fine.

I called City Hall a few years ago and talked to a person about the fruit (about the size of an apricot) that drops, by the hundreds at times, are impossible to rake up and must be hand picked off the grass. My husband has done this chore for years , but, at 83 and facing knee surgery soon, finds it more difficult to do. The man to whom I spoke with at City Hall about the fruit mess and asked if something could done replied, "Well Mrs. Lee, that's the nature of the tree" and could/ would offer no solution.

The City Tree continues to grow larger, the Mess grows larger, AND naturally, the Tree root system, according to our plumber, has grown larger and has filled our front yard and is starting to lift our driveway!

The City replaced the sidewalk again but who will fix our driveway and pay for our continuing plumbing costs?

Over the past six years the City owned Tree Roots have cost us \$3775. Twice we received checks from the Costa Mesa Sanitary District's Sewer Lateral Assistance Program (after having a verification Video)\$350 on 06-01-2012 and \$1250 on 05-02-2014. That means WE have paid \$2175 out of our meager retirement savings.

All four of our children are grown and long gone from home. We two Seniors do not use baby wipes nor wear disposable (yet) diapers which could end up in the sewer system as with younger families!

We have proof, via Videos and several (yearly) plumber's receipts, that The Parkway Tree, owned by the City is the Root of our continuing problem.

The damage to our property, to our finances, to our stress level, and our physical ability to maintain the mess by THE TREE, is taking it's toll on us!

Please, Please, Please do something!

Sincerely,



Rosemary (and Victor Lee)

914 Oak St., Costa Mesa 92627 [REDACTED]

Email... [REDACTED]



Costa Mesa Sanitary District

...an Independent Special District

May 27, 2014

Rosemary T. Lee
914 Oak Street
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

RE: Parkway Tree

Dear Mrs. Lee:

On behalf of the Costa Mesa Sanitary District Board of Directors, I want to thank you for participating in the District's Sewer Lateral Assistance Program (SLAP). I'm glad to hear that you received the program's full amount of \$1,600.

I believe most people would agree that trees in an urban environment create wonderful benefits to communities, but as you know, some urban trees can create challenges to local infrastructure such as sidewalks, streets, sewer and water pipes. I'm sorry to hear that the tree adjacent to your home is causing root infestation in your sewer lateral. One way to prevent roots from entering your sewer lateral is by installing an epoxy resin liner inside your pipe; however, this method can be expensive.

The Costa Mesa Sanitary District does not have the authority to remove City trees. The City of Costa Mesa's Parks and Recreation Commission makes the determination for removing, planting, and/or retaining City trees. Please send your tree removal request to Bruce Hartley, Maintenance Service Manager, of the City of Costa Mesa at 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California 92628.

Again, thank you for your participation in the Sewer Lateral Assistance Program and please don't hesitate to contact District staff at (949) 645-8400 if you have any questions or need assistance.

Sincerely,

James Ferryman
President

C: Board of Directors

Board of Directors
James Ferryman
Michael Schlegel
Arthur...
Robert...
Arlene...
Scott G. Carr...
General Manager
Alan...
District Council
Marius...
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