



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: MAY 26, 2016

ITEM NUMBER: **10b**

SUBJECT: TREE REMOVAL REQUEST - 3260 IDAHO LANE

DATE: MAY 12, 2016

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 to remove one (1) City owned parkway tree growing in the public right-of-way at 3260 Idaho Lane as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal.

BACKGROUND

The Maintenance Services Division was initially contacted by the resident who lives across the street from the Applicant at 3261 Idaho Lane on January 9, 2016, to review a complaint about a tree and sidewalk issue. The resident wanted the City Arborist to review the tree located at 3260 Idaho Lane. The City Arborist provided his business card to the resident to provide to the homeowner of 3260.

The City Arborist inspected the tree and evaluated the reported problems associated with the tree. The City Arborist determined that tree did not meet the criteria to be removed as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal, according to the Streetscape and Median Development Standards. The arborist determined that root pruning and installing 18" root barrier panels was a viable option to alleviate the roots growing and damaging the sidewalk.

The Maintenance Services Division was initially contacted by the Applicant via telephone on February 9, 2016. The Applicant stated that the tree in front of their home was damaging the sidewalk. The City Arborist contacted the resident on February 11, 2016, to notify the resident that he would contact the City's Street Maintenance Section to see if they could address the sidewalk issue and would notify the Engineering Division to seek a longer term repair. The City Arborist also informed the Applicant that root pruning and installing 18" root barrier panels was scheduled to be performed by the City's tree contractor to stop any further damage to the sidewalk.

The City Arborist was notified on March 2, 2016, by the City's tree contractor that they could not safely root prune due to concrete in the parkway and the water meter being too close to the sidewalk to safely operate machinery. The City Arborist left a message with the resident stating that the root pruning could not be performed.

The Street Maintenance Section installed two (2) temporary asphalt ramps, following up on March 15, 2016, performing two (2) sidewalk grinds to eliminate any potential trip hazards. The Engineering Division subsequently replaced the sidewalk on April 14, 2016.

The Applicant submitted a letter dated May 3, 2016, requesting the tree be removed. See Attachment 1. The reasons for removal, as stated by the Applicant in the letter are:

1. "Although the City of Costa Mesa repaired in April the cracked sidewalk due to the tree, the sheer size of the tree promises that the work done will only be undone by more uncontrolled roots".
2. "Most significantly, my wife, Rachel Hovorka, tripped and fell due to the roots breaking the concrete. This fall occurred during March 2016. We want to be sure that nothing like this ever happens again and eliminate the risk to us and other citizens. Therefore, we request permanent removal of the liquidambar tree".

ANALYSIS

The tree is an American Sweetgum, *Liquidambar styraciflua*. The tree was found to be in good health with no apparent structural issues or diseases present. The tree is approximately thirty-five (35') in height with a trunk diameter of ten inches (10"). It is growing in an irrigated turf parkway five foot (5') in width. The tree has been maintained by the City on an approximately three-year cycle and was last trimmed on January 29, 2015.

At the time the sidewalk was replaced, roots affecting the sidewalk were removed. Although no root barrier appears to have been installed, the construction eliminated concrete that prevented root pruning. Root pruning and the installation of root barriers would allow the tree to remain and would provide several years of protection from roots affecting the sidewalk. The Streetscape and Median Development Standards specifically list this as a viable method to preserve mature trees.

The tree is not currently a risk to health and safety, is not dead, diseased or dying and does not appear to be creating any significant exposure to liability for the City or a hazard to the public, since the sidewalk has been replaced. The tree does not meet the criteria for a staff level authorization for removal, as stated in the Streetscape and Median Development Standards.

The City Arborist evaluated the tree for possible relocation, but believes due to the size, low probability of success and the high cost of relocating the tree, relocation is not recommended.

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

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. The Commission could authorize the removal of the tree as a Category 1 – 'Health and Safety' removal with all removal and replacement costs paid for by the City and determine if a replacement tree is to be planted.

2. The Commission could authorize the removal and replacement of the tree, per the Streetscape and Median Development Standards, as a Category 3 – Discretionary Removal, which would require the replacement of the tree with one (1) twenty-four inch box-size tree and two (2) fifteen gallon-size trees to be planted elsewhere on City property. The Commission would determine if a tree is to be replanted at the location and if the Applicant or City would pay removal and replacement costs.

If the tree removal is approved by the Commission, and determined to be at the expense of the Applicant, payment for the removal of the tree and any required mitigation trees must be provided to the City prior to removal and within one year from the date of final approval, after which the approval expires.

FISCAL REVIEW

There would be no fiscal impact to the City if the request to remove the tree was denied or approved as a Category 3 – Discretionary Removal, with the Applicant paying all costs.

For the Commission's information, removal cost for this tree would be \$150. The replanting costs for the mitigation trees (1 – 24" box-size and 2 – 15 gallon container-size) would be \$425. Costs are based on current City contract prices. The total cost for removal and replacement would be \$575.

If approved as a Category 1 – Health and Safety Removal, the cost to the City for the removal would be \$150; with a cost of \$225 for the installation of one 24" box-size replacement tree. Total cost would be \$375.

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this item.

CONCLUSION

The City-owned tree that has been requested to be removed at City expense is located in the public right-of-way at 3260 Idaho Lane. The tree is in good condition, has been maintained appropriately on a regular schedule and is no longer causing damage to the sidewalk; it does not meet the criteria for a 'no-cost' removal.

It is recommended that the Commission deny the request to have the tree removed.



BRUCE A. HARTLEY
Maintenance Services Manager



ERNESTO MUNOZ
Public Services Director

- ATTACHMENTS:
1. Letter From Resident
 2. Tree Information & Maintenance History
 3. Photographs

C: Anthony Hovorka
3260 Idaho Lane
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

May 3rd, 2016

Mr. Bruce Hartley
Maintenance Service Manager
PO BOX 1200
Costa Mesa CA, 92628-1200

RE: Removal of Liquid Amber Tree in front of 3260 Idaho Lane, Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Dear Mr. Hartley:

We request permanent removal of the tree located on the grass between the sidewalk and street in front of our home.

Although the city of Costa Mesa repaired in April the cracked sidewalks due to this tree, the sheer size of the tree promises that the work done will only be undone by more uncontrolled roots.

Most significantly, my wife, Rachel Hovorka, tripped and fell due to the roots breaking the concrete. This fall occurred during March 2016. We want to be sure that nothing like this ever happens again, and eliminate the risk to us and other citizens. Therefore, we request permanent removal of the liquid amber tree.

Please agenda our request into the next Parks and Recreation meeting Wednesday, May 25th. Rachel Hovorka and I will attend.

Of course, contact us anytime at [REDACTED] or 3260 Idaho Lane, Costa Mesa CA 92626.

Sincerely,



Anthony and Rachel Hovorka

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

ATTACHMENT #2

Date Request Received: May 3, 2016
Name of Resident: Anthony Hovorka Requesting Party: Same
Address: 3260 Idaho Lane Address: Same

Date Inspected: May 12, 2016
Inspected By: Jim Ortiz

Tree Species: American Sweetgum Removal Cost: (DBH x \$ 15.00)= \$ 150.00
Height: 35 Feet Width of Sidewalk: 4 Feet
Trunk Diameter: 10 Inches Size of Right-of-Way: 10 Feet

Health: Good Fair Poor Date of Last Pruning: 1/29/15

Is the Tree a good candidate for Relocation? Yes No

Likelihood of survival: Good Fair Poor

Comments:

Concrete Damage: Yes No

If Yes, describe damage: **Sidewalk recently repaired by the Engineering Division**

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

Root Pruning Comments: **Tree can be root pruned.**

Date of Response to Resident: _____

Date Information Packet Mailed: _____

Photos Taken: Yes No Date Photos Taken: 5/12/16

Photo #1: Front of Tree

Photo #2: Looking South

Photo #3: Looking North

Photo #4: Base of Tree

Site Detail (33.689847321723,-117.92953767084)(WCA InventoryID: 4788300)					
District	Address	Location	Species	DBH	Height
4	3260 IDAHO LN	Front-1	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> AMERICAN SWEETGUM	07-12	15-30
Condition	Maintenance	Removal Priority	Estimated Value	Parkway Type	Parkway Size
Good	Grid Trim	N/A	\$1,380	Parkway	5
Utility	Valid				
No	Yes				
Work History					
Crew	Work Date	Work Type	Job #/Acct #	Amount	
WCA	1/29/2015	Grid Prune - 15% thinning	28318	\$46.00	
WCA	4/14/2011	Grid Pruning	16780	\$46.60	
WCA	7/16/2008	Grid Pruning	12656	\$46.60	
WCA	7/12/2005	Grid Pruning	8470	\$41.50	
Notes					

6









