



# NEWPORT BEACH

## City Council Staff Report

September 10, 2019  
Agenda Item No. 19

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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**TITLE:** Recommendation of Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission  
with regard to Marine Avenue Tree Maintenance

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### **ABSTRACT:**

City Council held a Study Session on August 13, 2019, regarding the tree trimming & maintenance status of the City street trees along Marine Avenue on Balboa Island. At the conclusion of the study session, City Council requested that the Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission review the trees and report back to the City Council their recommendations.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- a) Find that the action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3 because it will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- b) Receive and file the report.

### **FUNDING REQUIREMENTS:**

The approved actions by the Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission will be implemented by a combination of City staff and a Contractor. The current adopted budget includes sufficient funding for these services. It will be expensed to the Contract Services account in the Public Works Department 0109032-811017.

### **DISCUSSION:**

City Council held a Study Session on August 13, 2019, regarding the tree trimming and maintenance status of the City street trees along Marine Avenue on Balboa Island. As part of this tree maintenance discussion, the City Arborist advised that based on his review of the trees' condition and several recent consultant Arborist reports, he recommended removal and replacement of up to 10 trees. After consideration by the City Council, the Council directed staff to have the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission hear the matter at their September 3, 2019 meeting.

On September 3, 2019, staff presented this item to the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission (PB&R) with the following recommendations:

- 1) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines because the removal of a dead, damaged, and/or diseased tree is a minor alteration of the condition of land and/or vegetation and none of the exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption set forth in the Guidelines apply;
- 2) Approve the removal and replacement of four (4) Special City Eucalyptus Gum trees located at 210, 217, 224, and 315 Marine Avenue with a mix of new Eucalyptus Gum trees species, including Lemon-Scented Gum and Silver-Dollar Gum, as there is consensus by staff and consultant arborists on these four trees. The removal of these four trees would take place in September. Replacement of these four trees as well as the planting of the five current vacant tree wells would follow as soon as the affected sidewalk and curb reconstruction work is completed; and
- 3) Determine if Level III testing should be conducted prior to the removal of the of six (6) Special City Eucalyptus Gum trees located at 220, 300, 301, 312, 319, and 326 Marine Avenue. If determined necessary, staff would recommend the additional testing for these six trees be conducted in the next couple months. Upon further detailed review and evaluation of this additional testing information by the consulting Arborist and the City Arborist, the City Arborist will determine which of the six special trees, if any, can remain. The other trees (possibly up to all six) not approved to remain will be scheduled for removal and replacement (with a mix of new Eucalyptus Gum tree species, including Lemon-Scented Gum and Silver-Dollar Gum) this coming winter. Replanting of these trees would follow as soon as the affected sidewalk and curb repair work is completed.

The PB&R Commission reviewed staff's presentation, and also had the opportunity to review a presentation from Ms. Jodi Bole, representative of the Balboa Island Preservation Association (BIPA), their various Consulting Arborists and other individuals on behalf of the BIPA. After a thorough discussion and additional input from public comments, the PB&R Commission approved the above recommendations with the following modification and additional direction:

- Remove the existing three "Alternative Trees" (Ginko Biolba, African Tulip, and Water Gum) located at 326, 316, and 213 Marine Ave and replant with 24" Lemon Scented Gum Eucalyptus trees.
- All tree replacements shall consist of 24-inch box "Lemon Scented Gum Eucalyptus trees and will be selected and approved in partnership with the BIPA.
- Install tree grates on all tree wells containing the newly planted trees.
- Explore feasible alternatives for more sustainable watering (Install irrigation systems, volunteer watering from neighboring merchants, etc.).

- Conduct Level III Risk Assessment Testing of the other six trees of concern by a third party, independent Urban Forester as selected and mutually agreed upon in partnership with the City Arborist and the BIPA.
- Keep an open line of communication with the BIPA with regards to City's schedule of annual as-needed trimming/pruning and inspections when scheduled.
- Report back to PB&R within 6 months to provide status update and results of Level III Risk Assessment Testing.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Staff recommends the City Council find this project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

**NOTICING:**

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).

**ATTACHMENT:**

Attachment A – September 3, 2019 PB&R Staff Report