



Agenda Item #: _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Ward and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Richard Thompson, Interim City Manager

FROM: Richard Gill, Director of Parks and Recreation
Idris J. Al-Oboudi, Recreation Services Manager
Brianne Sternad, Recreation Supervisor

DATE: September 7, 2010

SUBJECT: Consideration of the Parks and Recreation Commission Recommendation to Expand the List of Drought Tolerant Trees in the City of Manhattan Beach Tree and Bench Donation Program

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that City Council approve the recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Commission to expand the list of drought tolerant trees available for the City's tree and bench donation program.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

The City's Tree and Bench donation programs are fully funded by residents donating the trees or benches. There is no cost to the City.

BACKGROUND:

The City currently has a program whereby residents can donate a tree or a bench to the City under specific guidelines approved by the City Council (Attachment A).

For the tree donation program, a list of trees was compiled that are suitable for the eco-climate of each park and open space. This list contained mostly ornamental trees and a few drought tolerant trees.

DISCUSSION:

During the April 26, 2010 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, a resident approached the Commission and requested that the Commission require only drought tolerant trees be allowed for the City's tree donation program. The Commission passed a motion recommending that only drought tolerant trees be allowed for the donation program.

Public Works staff met with an arborist to expand the list of drought tolerant trees based on location, function and maintenance. Each park in Manhattan Beach has its own micro-climate that works better with certain species of trees.

During staff's research with an arborist, staff expressed the concern for the need of ornamental flowering trees which add to the beauty of Manhattan Beach parks. Staff also believes that many donors will be disappointed if there are not ornamental trees on the list.

During discussions with the arborist, it was noted that, overall, Manhattan Beach has a temperate climate and trees once established do not need additional or separate watering schedules. All trees in our parks, once established, survive from the rain and reclaimed water from sprinklers.

Staff went back to the Parks and Recreation Commission during the August 23 Commission meeting and presented the information from the arborist and staff's concern for the beauty of the parks if all pine and ornamental trees are prohibited.

The commission agreed with staff's concerns and passed a unanimous motion to amend their April 26 motion "to expand the list of drought tolerant trees for the City's tree and bench donation program."

Following is a list of drought tolerant trees that staff and the arborist developed:

- Agonis Flexuosa – Peppermint Tree
- Arbutus Unedo – Strawberry Tree
- Arbutus Marina
- Brachychiton Acerifolius - Australian Flame Tree
- Brachychiton Populneus – Australian Bottle Tree
- Brahea Armata – Mexican Blue
- Callistermon Citrinus – Lemon Bottlebrush
- Chiranthodendron Penadactylon – Monkey Hand Tree
- Eucalyptus Ficifolia – Red Flowering Gum
- Ficus Macropylla – Moreton Bay Fig
- Ficus Rubiginosa – Rusty Leaf Fig
- Melaleuca Nesophylla – Pink Melaleuca
- Melaleuca Quinquenervia – Cajeput Tree
- Metrosideros Excelsus – NZ Christmas Tree
- Leptospermum Laevigatum – Australian Tea Tree
- Lophostemon Confertus (Tristania Conferta)
- Olea Europaea – Olive
- Pinus Torreyana – Torrey Pine
- Prunus Lyonii – Catalina Cherry

Price list of drought tolerant trees provided by Public Works:

- 24 inch boxed size - \$295
- 36 inch boxed size - \$850

Staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend that the additional list of drought tolerant trees be incorporated into the existing list of trees for the City's tree donation program.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Tree & Bench Donation Program Guidelines (digital copy not available)