

**City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report**

Meeting Date: 01/25/10		Item Number: <u>A-3</u>	
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission's Recommendation to Substitute the Camphor Tree in Lieu of the Victorian Box as Recommended in the City's Adopted Street Tree Master Plan Along the 4100 and 4200 Blocks of Baldwin Avenue.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Eric Mirzaian		Phone Number: (310) 253-6410	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☒ No ☐	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☐ Attachments: ☐	
Commission Action Required: Yes ☒ No ☐ Date: 12/01/2009 Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Commission			
Public Notification: (E-mail) Meetings and Agendas – City Council (12/30/09); Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission			
Department Approval: Charles D. Herbertson (12/22/09)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (01/20/10)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Mark Scott (by M. Noller) ()		City Manager Approval: Mark Scott (01/21/10)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends that the City Council consider the Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission's (PRCSC) recommendation to substitute the Camphor tree in lieu of the Victorian Box as recommended in the City's adopted Street Tree Master Plan (STMP) along the 4100 and 4200 blocks of Baldwin Avenue. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> In June of 2009, the Public Works Department evaluated the Victorian Box (<i>Pittosporum Undulatum</i>) and Queensland Pittosporum (<i>Pittosporum Rhombifolium</i>) trees along the 4100 and 4200 blocks of Baldwin Avenue. Of the 38 trees that were analyzed, 13 were identified to be in an advanced state of decline and were subsequently removed to protect the public health and safety. The state of decline has been attributed to a weak root system which may lead to branch failures, the susceptibility to pest infestation, excessive defoliation, and canopy decline due to a weak immune system. <u>DISCUSSION:</u> The STMP was adopted by the City Council on November 11, 2002 and is the guiding document that determines the appropriate trees for planting in the public rights-of-way throughout Culver City. The STMP stipulates that the PRCSC can only			

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provide recommendations pertaining to the STMP. Any modifications made to or deviations from the adopted STMP must be approved by the City Council after considering the PRCSC's recommendation.

Per the STMP, the recommended tree species for this area is the Victorian Box; however, due to the problems indicated above with this species, the Public Works Department has determined that replacing the removed trees with the currently recommended species (Victorian Box) is not advisable. Based on its performance on other nearby streets, the Camphor tree (*Cinnamomum Camphora*) is recommended as the replacement tree. (The Camphor tree has done quite well on neighboring streets including Elenda Street, Jasmine Street, La Salle Avenue, Le Bourget Avenue, Lincoln Avenue, Madison Avenue, and Park Avenue). The suggested Camphor tree has a much stronger root system and aromatic leaves and, unlike the Victorian Box, it is not susceptible to pest infestation.

At its December 1, 2009 meeting, the PRCSC approved the staff recommendation to substitute the Camphor tree in lieu of the Victorian Box by unanimous vote (5-0) and recommended such substitution be adopted by the City Council.

This substitution is a temporary change for the planting of trees on these blocks. In the future, staff will be conducting a comprehensive review of the entirety of the STMP and will be recommending amendments as necessary.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The cost to plant Camphor trees in this area will be paid from the Public Works Department tree maintenance budget (10161600 – Tree Maintenance Division). The trees will be planted by the Public Works Tree Maintenance crew. Staff will plant the number of trees this current fiscal year's budget will allow and complete the planting of the remaining trees in fiscal year 2010-11. The approximate cost for a Camphor tree is approximately \$125/tree.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.

MOTION:

That the City Council:

Approve the Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission's recommendation of the substitution of the Camphor tree in lieu of the Victorian Box as recommended in the City's adopted Street Tree Master Plan along the 4100 and 4200 blocks of Baldwin Avenue.