

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

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |                                                                                                   |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Meeting Date: 01/26/09                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  | Item Number: <u>A-4</u>                                                                           |  |
| <b>AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Updated Ficus Tree Pruning Standards in Accordance with Best Management Practices Established by the International Standards of Arboriculture (ISA) and Consideration of a Related Budget Amendment if Necessary.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |                                                                                                   |  |
| Contact Person/Dept.:<br>Eric Mirzaian/Public Works                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |  | Phone Number: (310) 253-6410                                                                      |  |
| Fiscal Impact: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  | General Fund: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                 |  |
| Public Hearing: <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  | Action Item: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attachments: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Public Notification: Master E-Mail Notification List (01/07/2009); West Coast Arborists, Inc (01/05/2009)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |                                                                                                   |  |
| Department Approval:<br>Charles D. Herbertson (12/24/08)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  | City Attorney Approval:<br>Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (01/05/09)                                  |  |
| Chief Financial Officer Approval:<br>Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (01/07/09)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  | City Manager Approval:<br>Jerry B. Fulwood (01/20/09)                                             |  |
| <p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION:</u></b></p> <p>Staff recommends the City Council approve updated Ficus tree pruning standards in accordance with the Best Management Practices as established by the International Standards of Arboriculture (ISA).</p> <p><b><u>BACKGROUND:</u></b></p> <p>Culver City has 1,550 Ficus trees that are on a four-year pruning cycle. This equates to approximately 398 Ficus trees pruned each year. The City's tree trimming contractor, West Coast Arborists, Inc. (WCA), currently utilizes a "crown reduction" pruning method. Under this method, the majority of the pruning is done at the top of the tree, thus giving the tree a more "round" or "canopy" appearance. Additionally, this method consists of the removal of dead and broken branches, as well as minor tree raising from the bottom for vehicular and pedestrian clearance.</p> <p><b><u>DISCUSSION:</u></b></p> <p>At its August 28, 2006 meeting, the City Council approved the award of a new five year agreement (7/1/2006-6/30/2011) with WCA in the amount of \$480,317 per year. The original bid specifications on which the contract is based stipulates that all trees trimming shall be in accordance with ISA standards. WCA has informed the Public Works Department that the ISA has modified the current pruning methods of Ficus</p> |  |                                                                                                   |  |

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

trees. The proposed method includes thinning the interior of the trees and the selective removal of dead/diseased branches. Additionally, crown reduction is not included.

In a letter to the City dated May 1, 2008, WCA proposed the following options.

**OPTION 1**

Utilize the proposed pruning method in accordance with the new standards for all 1,550 Ficus trees throughout Culver City at the current unit rate for tree pruning of \$171.60. This option would not result in any increase to the current contract price but will result in less foliage removed compared to the current pruning method.

**OPTION 2**

Continue utilizing the current pruning method at a unit cost of \$336.60 (\$171.60 plus 1.5 hours of current crew rental). The increase in the unit cost is attributed to the longer amount of time it takes to prune under the current method. To continue pruning the trees utilizing the current pruning method on the existing pruning schedule at the higher unit cost would require a budget amendment to the contract with WCA for an additional \$41,250 for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2008/09; \$82,500 for Fiscal Year 2009/10; and \$82,500 for Fiscal Year 2010/11.

WCA recently trimmed several Ficus trees on Lucerne Avenue to demonstrate the proposed method and for evaluation purposes by Public Works staff. Attached to this report are photographs depicting both the current and proposed methods.

Due to budget constraints, staff is recommending that the City Council select Option 1 above.

**FISCAL ANALYSIS:**

Option 1 will not result in a contract price increase. Option 2 would result in a contract price increase and will therefore require approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$41,250 for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2008/09; \$82,500 for Fiscal Year 2009/10; and \$82,500 for Fiscal Year 2010/11. If Option 2 is recommended, it is proposed the budget amendment to increase funding for the remainder of fiscal 2008-09 would be from the General Fund Unappropriated Reserve, and subsequent fiscal year increases would be included during the corresponding fiscal year's budget process. Funding for those year's would be appropriated using General Fund monies. Funding for both internal and contracted tree trimming operations is through the General Fund's Tree Maintenance account (10161600.619800).

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

1. May 1, 2008 letter from WCA to the City of Culver City
2. Photographs depicting both the current and proposed methods

**MOTION:**

That the City Council:

1. (Staff Recommendation) Select Option 1 and authorize staff to inform WCA that they should utilize the proposed pruning method (as described by current ISA standards) at no change in costs;

OR

- 2A. Select Option 2 and authorize staff to direct WCA to continue utilizing the current pruning method as described and authorize the execution of a contract amendment to effect this change ; and; and
- 2B. Authorize the City Attorney to review/prepare the necessary documents and authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City; and
- 2C. Approve a budget amendment appropriating \$41,250 from the General Fund for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2008/09 (\$82,500 for Fiscal Year 2009/10 and \$82,500 for Fiscal Year 2010/11 would be included in the proposed budgets for those future fiscal years.

A Budget Amendment requires a 4/5<sup>th</sup> vote