

City of Culver City, California
A Joint City Council/Redevelopment Agency Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 11/05/07		Item Number: <u>J-2</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: A Joint Item of the City Council and the Redevelopment Agency to Provide Input and Direction Regarding Holiday Celebrations and Authorize Acquisition of an Artificial Tree for the Holiday Season.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Todd Tipton		Phone Number: (310) 253-5783	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Downtown Business Association on (10/31/07); Culver City Chamber of Commerce (10/31/07); Master Notification List (10/31/07).			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (10/25/07)		City Manager/Executive Director Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (10/31/07)	
Fiscal Impact Review: Marlee Chang (by N. Kimball)(10/31/07)			

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council (the "Council") provide input and direction regarding holiday celebrations and that the Redevelopment Agency (the "Agency") authorize the expenditure of approximately \$15,000 to acquire an artificial tree for the holiday season.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2006, the City Council considered the renewal of the downtown Business Improvement District ("BID") and Downtown Business Association's ("DBA") Management Agreement. During the meeting it was determined that the BID would not have sufficient funds to provide a holiday tree due to their focus being diverted from marketing downtown to better maintaining it. Upon learning there wouldn't be a holiday tree in downtown, City staff partnered with the DBA to obtain, install and decorate a tree.

In early October 2007, staff learned the DBA did not have the funds needed to purchase and decorate a tree. Shortly thereafter staff met with the DBA to discuss alternatives. During the meeting the DBA informed staff that a large commercial tree had been reserved and of the need to replace the existing decorations (that hang from the light poles).

The Economic Development Subcommittee was consulted and supports staff's and the DBA's recommendation to acquire an artificial tree. During the discussion the subcommittee questioned why a holiday celebration was conducted at the Veteran's

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Auditorium and another in downtown. The subcommittee believed both events would be improved if combined and the process of producing the event would be made more efficient because a duplication of effort would be eliminated.

The subcommittee supported the idea of combining the events and coordinating the lighting of the tree on Veteran's Auditorium, and the lights and tree in downtown. City and Agency staff have discussed this and believe it would streamline staff's efforts if the events were combined and believe it possible to combine the events this year if the Council/Agency so desires.

DISCUSSION:

- **Tree**

Staff and the DBA have identified the following options related to a tree for the Agency to consider:

- Option 1 - Purchase a live tree through a commercial vendor and then contract with a commercial provider that installs, decorates and removes the tree after the holiday season.
- Option 2 - Purchase an artificial tree through a commercial vendor and then contract with a commercial provider to install, decorate and remove the tree after the holiday season.
- Option 3 - Purchase a live tree, plant it in the vicinity of Town Plaza, and contract with a commercial provider to install, decorate and remove the tree after the holiday season.
- Option 4 - Purchase a smaller tree.
- Option 5 - Do not purchase any tree.

Staff prepared and has included a cost comparison for the options identified above in the Fiscal Analysis section of this report. Staff considered both the initial cost and ongoing cost in its analysis. The analysis indicates a permanently planted tree would have the highest initial, but the lowest ongoing cost.

Staff consulted with LRM, the landscape architect working on the Town Plaza expansion, to address a concern with the permanency and long-term appearance of a permanently planted tree. Staff and LRM believe it paramount that the tree's location remains flexible in order to accommodate varying demands of the space and that the tree looks its very best over time. Staff and LRM believe an artificial tree best addresses staff's belief and, therefore, recommends the Agency consider pursuing an artificial tree.

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It is noted for the Agency's information that it will take approximately two weeks after ordering for an artificial tree to be delivered.

- **Pole Mounted Decorations**

The decorations in question are those installed during the holiday season on the existing light standards located in the Culver and Washington Boulevard medians. Over the prior four years the decorations have become worn. Considering the decoration's condition, the DBA is recommending they be replaced. New decorations are expected to last approximately four to five years.

Staff and the DBA have identified the following options for the Agency to consider:

Option 1 - Replace the existing decorations with Light Emitting Diodes ("LEDs").

Option 2 - Replace the existing decorations with non LED illumination.

Option 3 - Reuse the existing decorations.

Staff has inspected the decorations and agrees they are worn. However, due to the Agency's cash flow, staff is recommending the existing decorations be reused and that this item be revisited in June 2008 when the two-year budget update is presented to the Agency for consideration.

Should the Agency Board prefer to purchase new decorations, the Agency must determine how many decorations will be purchased. This is necessary because that portion of Washington Boulevard adjacent to Town Plaza, where decorations have been installed historically, will no longer exist when Washington Boulevard is rerouted to Ince Boulevard. Staff believes installing decoration only in the Culver Boulevard median will be sufficient. This will require the acquisition of approximately 32 decorations (two per pole).

It is noted for the Agency's information that when the DBA researched replacing the existing decorations, they studied the possibility of retrofitting them with LEDs. They learned the cost to retrofit was nearly identical to purchasing new decorations with LEDs already installed. Utilizing LEDs is beneficial because energy consumption would be reduced and the decoration's visibility would be improved.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The DBA has offered to share in the cost to acquire an artificial tree by soliciting donations from its members. The subcommittee believes it would be best if the DBA focused on its maintenance efforts and the Agency purchased the tree.

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Attachment 1 provides a detailed cost matrix for each option. If the Agency directs staff to acquire an artificial tree, the total expenditure (including tax and a 10% contingency) will be approximately \$14,000. Staff anticipated some holiday decoration participation by the Agency during budget preparation; therefore, funds are available in Administration – Contract Services (59190400.619800) for this expenditure.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Tree and decoration option cost matrix.
2. Detailed information describing the artificial tree.

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Provide input and direction regarding the combination of holiday celebrations.

That the Redevelopment Agency;

1. Authorize the expenditure of \$14,000 (maximum) from account 59190400 to acquire an artificial tree for the holiday season.