



# CITY OF SACRAMENTO

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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CROCKER ART MUSEUM DIVISION  
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METROPOLITAN ARTS DIVISION  
MUSEUM AND HISTORY DIVISION  
RECREATION DIVISION  
PARKS DIVISION  
ZOO DIVISION

August 15, 1985

Budget and Finance Committee  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Street Tree Task Force

## SUMMARY

This report responds to the Council's Budget and Finance Committee request of May 14, 1985, and recommends establishment of a Street Tree Task Force. The Task Force function would be to serve as a temporary public hearing body to review policies regarding the Elm Tree Reforestation Program and arterial tree plantings. Staff will report back to Council within a year with Task Force findings.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the City Council's Budget and Finance Committee meeting of May 14, 1985, staff was requested to report back with recommendations regarding citizen review of elm reforestation and tree planting policies. This would provide for greater public participation relative to the City's street tree policies. Together, City tree staff and interested citizens can develop mutually acceptable and technically sound policies. The proposed task force is a way to accomplish this. The task force would consist of five members: two commercial arborists; two degreed horticulturists, arborists, or plant scientists; and one citizen member at large. The Parks Superintendent, or designee, shall be an ex officio member. The five task force members will be appointed by the Director of Parks and Community Services and ratified by the City Council.

Concern has been expressed about the necessity to remove elms and about the aesthetic quality of replacement plantings. The task force would assess existing policies in these two areas and recommend any changes deemed appropriate. Staff would review their findings and submit a final report to the City Council within a year.

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Staff will continue to determine individual elm and street tree replacement programs during the policy review period. The Council approved a \$200,000 Elm Reforestation Program during fiscal year 1985-86. This program identifies expenditures of \$156,000 for elm leaf beetle control and \$44,000 for elm tree replacements as per the adopted 20-year plan.

FINANCIAL DATA

Approval of the proposed ad.hoc Tree Task Force would result in additional staff time utilization and minor support expenditures for meetings. Task Force members would serve without compensation.

RECOMMENDATION

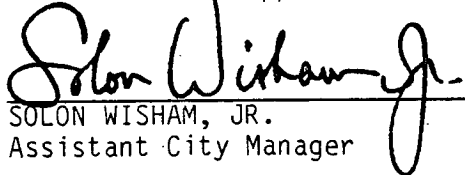
It is recommended that the Budget and Finance Committee approve the formation of the Street Tree Task Force and refer this report to the full City Council for approval.

Respectfully submitted,



ROBERT P. THOMAS, Director  
Parks and Community Services

Recommendation Approved:



SOLON WISHAM, JR.  
Assistant City Manager

RPT:1f

Attachments

August 27, 1985  
All Districts

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
ELM STREET TREE REPLACEMENT POLICY

City staff will continue elm tree evaluation for removal with notification for citizen comment as follows:

1. Trees which are more than 50% dead, split, uprooting, or otherwise imminently hazardous shall be removed immediately to eliminate the hazard and will not require notification of other than those on the scene directly involved with the tree in question.
2. City staff identifies removal candidates other than as noted in item one and notifies adjacent property owner.
3. City staff posts a notice on the tree a minimum of 30 days notice prior to commencement of work.
4. City staff submits a removal list for publication in local newspapers a minimum of 30 days prior to commencement of work.
5. City re-posts two weeks prior to removal if original posting is no longer visible.
6. Citizens notify City staff of any disagreements.
7. City staff and citizens attempt to resolve disagreements.
8. Upon failure to resolve disagreements, the Parks Superintendent reviews the staff recommendation and citizens' concerns on the tree in question, and a decision is then made by the Parks Superintendent.

Removal Standards remain as stated in the staff report presented May 14, 1985:

1. Tree is dead.
2. Tree has significant rot and structural weakness.
3. Tree has lost a significant number of anchoring roots.
4. Tree removal is necessary due to construction. (Note: This is a most objectionable reason to City Tree staff; however, when construction has been permitted which puts driveways through trees or allows excavation which results in tree failure, the removal becomes necessary in spite of the original desires of tree conscious staff and citizens. It may also be necessary to allow tree removal in some cases in order for the property owner to gain access to his property.)
5. Tree removal to alleviate problems of overcrowding. (Note: Thinning is a beneficial forestry technique where competition is detrimental to the health of the total tree population. Thinning also reduces grafting Elm roots which could be devastating in the event Dutch Elm Disease should arrive in Sacramento. The overall tree canopy is improved by proper thinning techniques.)

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
STREET TREE SPECIES PLANTING

The City tree planting policy for the past thirteen years has embraced state of the art thinking which discourages monocultural planting programs and advocates planting of mixed species. The theory behind this reasoning has been that disease or insect problems will not completely decimate plantings of mixed species due to resistance by one or more species in the planting. Aesthetics and public perception favor solid plantings of one species; i.e., monocultures.

City staff concedes that certain specified arterials or sections of arterials could be targeted for uniform plantings of one species. Limiting solid stands should reduce the likelihood of wholesale losses to any one particular pest problem. Staff further notes that achievement of solid stands would be slow if not impossible on currently planted streets where monocultures do not presently exist. Changeover time to achieve solid plantings of one species is probably a minimum of thirty years. A thirty-year changeover time may result in tree selection changes which would make the reality of solid stands unlikely. An additional drawback to single species designation is the loss of choice to the property owner.

Staff policy has been to replace elms and other large species with aesthetically harmonious large species, wherever space allows, and this policy will continue.