



DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND RECREATION
Urban Forest Services

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

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August 27, 2007

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Parks and Recreation Commission
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT: URBAN FOREST SERVICES REORGANIZATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION**

LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION: That the Parks and Recreation Commission support the reorganization of Urban Forest Services from the Department of Parks and Recreation into the Department of Transportation.

CONTACT PERSON: Joe Benassini, Urban Forest Services Manager (916) 808-6258

FOR COMMISSION MEETING: SEPTEMBER 6, 2007

SUMMARY:

This report provides a summary of the rationale by which urban forest services will be reorganized into the Department of Transportation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In fiscal years 2005, 2006 and 2007, Urban Forest Services responded to an average of over 7000 individual service requests annually. An estimated three quarters of these service calls were for tree-related issues within the public street right-of-way. The majority of publicly owned trees are in parkways and along streets throughout the City. Based on a recent survey by the Department of Transportation, 70 percent of 23 cities surveyed place the urban forest maintenance function within transportation of public works departments.

The work of both the Urban Forest Services division and the Department of Transportation are closely aligned. Street services, Parking Services, Engineering Services and Urban Forest Services share responsibility for both the safety and the sustainability of the City's transportation corridors. Urban Forest Services supports the reassignment of responsibility



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for the division based on the following:

- Improved communication and efficiencies by coordination of activities that affect tree and street maintenance
- Utilization of a common asset management system and efficiencies in data gathering efforts
- Additional training resources for new technology, safety, and traffic control
- Consistent standards and policies in regards to impacts to City infrastructure by development projects and encroachments
- Possible centralization of staff and administrative support
- Increased potential for resource development
- Streets, sidewalks and trees are all regulated under the same title within the city code (SCC Title 12, Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places)

The Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the Department of Parks and Recreation, has developed a transition plan to address such issues as signature authority and human resource and administrative support. Actual transfer of the budget will be delayed until fiscal year 2009.

Until such time as the City's tree-related ordinances and other internal policies are reviewed, the role of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Urban Forestry Committee will remain unchanged. The Commission will continue to hear appeals to decisions of the director in regards to tree permits, and the committee will continue to meet regularly and provide input into policy direction for the division. Urban Forest Services will continue to implement best management practices through the Urban Forest Enhancement Program.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no financial impacts to Urban Forest Services due to reorganization. Funding and revenue sources will remain the same. Staff anticipates cost savings due to the implementation of work management inventory management programs utilized by the Department of Transportation.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

This report concerns administrative activities that will not have a significant effect on the environment, and does not constitute a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) [CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b) (3); 15378(b) (2)].

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

The reorganization is consistent with the City of Sacramento Strategic Plan's goals of improving and expanding public safety and achieving sustainability and livability.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

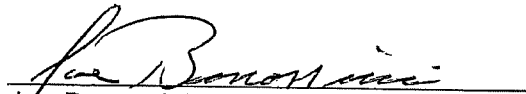
The Urban Forestry Advisory Committee supported the reorganization at its meeting of July 25, 2007.

ESBD CONSIDERATIONS:

No goods or services are being purchased in association with this report.

Recommendation: That the Parks and Recreation Commission support the reorganization of Urban Forest Services from the Department of Parks and Recreation into the Department of Transportation.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Benassini
Urban Forest Services Manager