



Agenda Item No. \_\_\_\_\_

File Code No. 570.05

# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** December 6, 2011

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

**SUBJECT:** Santa Barbara Beautiful Funds For The Urban Forest Program

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council accept a contribution from Santa Barbara Beautiful in the amount of \$30,000 and increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the Parks and Recreation Miscellaneous Grants Fund for the Upper State Street and Oleandar Tree Replacement Projects.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Formed in 1965, Santa Barbara Beautiful has a long history of providing support for the City's Parks and Forestry Programs. In addition to providing funds to purchase new street trees, in 2002 Santa Barbara Beautiful began to contribute funds in support of the Young Tree Care Program. The Parks and Recreation Department (Department) and Santa Barbara Beautiful also collaborate in the celebration of Arbor Day at local elementary schools and other special projects.

In Fiscal Year 2011 the Department identified two special street tree projects that could be funded with the Santa Barbara Beautiful contribution. These include planting of new street trees on Upper State Street and the replacement of diseased oleanders that were removed throughout the City.

#### Upper State Street Trees

The Street Tree Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission recently developed and approved recommendations for eleven new street tree designations for Upper State Street. New street trees are designated to replace existing Ficus trees as they decline as well as to fill existing empty tree wells. There are currently twenty open spaces for new trees that will be planted in winter 2012. It is anticipated that over the next five to ten years, an additional 22 trees will be planted to replace Ficus trees. Santa Barbara Beautiful funds will be used to plant and maintain the trees for a three-year period.

### Oleander Replacement Trees

In 2010, all 310 Oleander street trees were evaluated for presence of Oleander Leaf Scorch (*Xyllela fastidiosa*) disease. The disease can infect and eventually kill many species of plants. The inspection revealed that 53 of the 310 Oleander street trees were infected with the disease. In order to reduce the chances the disease would spread, the 53 infected trees were removed in March 2011.

The Street Tree Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission recently reviewed the streets in the Street Tree Master Plan with Oleanders as the designated tree. Four new street tree designations were established with species that are not susceptible to the disease. The scope of this project is to replant trees in the locations where the Oleanders were removed. Santa Barbara Beautiful funds will be used to plant and maintain these trees for a three-year period. Planting will occur during winter 2012 to take advantage of the winter rains.

### **BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

The funding from Santa Barbara Beautiful will cover the cost of purchasing, installing and maintaining the newly planted trees. It is estimated the trees, materials and installation will cost \$24,500. Remaining funds will support maintenance over the three years. After three years, the trees will be well established and included in the Forestry Program's regular maintenance program.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:**

In addition to quality of life and aesthetic community benefits, the City's urban forest provides energy conservation, water quality, air quality, and wildlife habitat benefits. Scheduled tree removal and replacement are essential tools for the maintenance of a healthy and diverse urban forest.

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**SUBMITTED BY:** Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office