



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Authorize the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement with Our City Forest for Planting Trees on Homeowner's Private Property and Approve Budget Modification No. 17

BACKGROUND

City Council adopted the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) in September 2014 (RTC 14-0396). The overall goal of the plan is to help sustain, protect and enhance the urban forest in the City of Sunnyvale in order to maximize the many benefits that it provides to residents. The urban forest is comprised of three main groups of trees including trees located on City-owned property, trees located in the public right-of-way (ROW) and trees located on private property outside of the ROW.

Major goals of the plan include:

- Increase tree canopy cover to maximize ecosystem benefits provided by the urban forest.
- Choose and locate new trees in all vacant planting spaces to maximize tree-related benefits and minimize maintenance costs.
- Develop an urban forest canopy that is stable over the long term.
- Maintain city trees to maximize benefits and minimize hazard, nuisance, hardscape damage, and maintenance costs.
- Facilitate collaboration among City departments related to issues and projects involving trees.
- Foster community support for maintaining and improving Sunnyvale's urban forest.
- Encourage proper tree management on private property.

Staff has been making consistent progress on the implementation of the UFMP since its inception. Currently the Trees Division is considering ways of working toward the goal of encouraging proper tree management on private property. To this end, an opportunity to partner with Our City Forest (OCF) to offer subsidized trees to Sunnyvale residents to be planted on the resident's private property has come forward. This program would only be available for planting trees on the resident's private property and not on City property or the ROW.

EXISTING POLICY

GOAL CV-1 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT - Achieve a community in which citizens and businesses are informed about local issues and City programs and services are actively involved in shaping the quality of life and participate in local community and government activities.

GOAL LT-2: ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Urban Forestry

- Policy LT-2.3 Accelerate the planting of large canopy trees to increase tree coverage in

Sunnyvale in order to add to the scenic beauty and walkability of the community; provide environmental benefits such as air quality improvements, wildlife habitat, and reduction of heat islands; and enhance the health, safety, and welfare of residents.

- Policy LT-2.4 Maintain and regularly review and update regulations and practices for the planting, protection, removal, replacement, and long-term management of large trees on private property and City-owned golf courses and parks.
- Policy LT-2.5 Recognize the value of protected trees and heritage landmark trees (as defined in City ordinances) to the legacy, character, and livability of the community by expanding the designation and protection of large signature and native trees on private property and in City parks.

Pursuant to Sunnyvale Charter Section 1305, at any meeting after the adoption of the budget, the City Council may amend or supplement the budget by motion adopted by affirmative votes of at least four members so as to authorize the transfer of unused balances appropriated for one purpose to another, or to appropriate available revenue not included in the budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is categorically exempt pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines section 15304 for minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

DISCUSSION

The idea for this program was brought forward by Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates (SUFA), a volunteer Sunnyvale Community Group dedicated to enhancing Sunnyvale's urban forest, to Mayor Klein who suggested it be discussed at City Council. Our City Forest (OCF) is a San Jose based non-profit urban forestry and environmental stewardship organization focused on appreciation, protection, growth and maintenance of our urban ecosystem. Under the proposed program Sunnyvale residents would apply for a cost subsidized tree to be planted by OCF. The total cost is \$350 per tree. Sunnyvale residents will pay \$50 directly to OCF, with the remaining \$300 to be paid by the City of Sunnyvale to an amount not to exceed \$15,000. As part of the program, before a tree is planted the resident must receive training on proper tree care and sign a Tree Stewardship Application (Attachment 2). OCF monitors the Agreement for three years with regular correspondence on how the tree is progressing, Sunnyvale's Trees Division will coordinate with OCF to facilitate the selection, purchase, and planting of the trees as part of the program. At times it can be challenging to find locations on City property to expand the urban forest. This program would allow for an increase in the tree canopy on resident's available property, which will provide an overall benefit to the City.

FISCAL IMPACT

Under this proposal, the portion to be paid by the City is not to exceed \$15,000 for the program and is proposed to be funded by the City Council set aside. Trees staff time to facilitate the program will be absorbed in the current operating budget. City will reimburse OCF twice yearly for costs. The program will terminate once all City funds for the program have been spent or after two years, whichever comes first.

The FY 2020/21 Council Set Aside started at \$100,000 and has a current balance of \$17,500. As part of the budget process, there were three allocations made of the Council Set Aside, \$20,000 for the Bike Rack Installation in Commercial Areas project, \$50,000 for the Cricket Stadium and Baylands

Park Study, and \$12,500 for the Sister City project. Staff recommends approval of Budget Modification No. 17 to fund the project.

**Budget Modification No. 17
FY 2021/22**

| | Current | Increase/ (Decrease) | Revised |
|---|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| General Fund | | | |
| <u>Expenditures</u> | | | |
| Project 829630 - Council Set Aside | \$17,500 | (\$15,000) | \$2,500 |
| New Project - Contribution to Our City Forest | | \$15,000 | \$15,000 |

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, Sunnyvale Public Library and Department of Public Safety. In addition, the agenda and report are available at the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Services Agreement with Our City Forest to plant trees on homeowner private property and Approve Budget Modification No. 17 in the Amount of \$15,000.
2. Do not authorize the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Services Agreement with Our City Forest to plant trees on homeowner private property and do not approve Budget Modification No. 17.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Authorize the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Services Agreement with Our City Forest to plant trees on homeowner private property and Approve Budget Modification No. 17 in the Amount of \$15,000.

Prepared by: Jim Stark, Superintendent of Parks

Reviewed by: Tim Kirby, Director of Finance

Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Public Works

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cooperative Services Agreement with Our City Forest and the City
2. Example contract between Our City Forest and Resident