



# CITY OF COSTA MESA

77 Fair Drive  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

## Agenda Report

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**File #:** 23-1158

**Meeting Date:** 4/13/2023

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**TITLE:**

**TREE REMOVAL REQUEST - 2722 SANDPIPER DRIVE**

**DEPARTMENT:** PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT/MAINTENANCE SERVICES  
**DIVISION**

**PRESENTED BY:** ROBERT RYAN, MAINTENANCE SERVICES MANAGER

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** ROBERT RYAN, MAINTENANCE SERVICES MANAGER (714)  
327-7499

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Parks and Community Services Commission deny the request to remove the City owned tree growing in the public right-of-way in front of 2722 Sandpiper Drive.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Maintenance Services Division received an e-mail from the applicant on March 13, 2023 requesting the removal of the tree growing in the City right-of-way at 2722 Sandpiper Drive (Attachment 1). The applicant states that the winds blow pine needles, flowers and the greenish-yellow pollen onto several areas of this property, which he claims, causes an excessive burden to clean. The applicant also stated that he has allergies and his wife has asthma, which requires both of them to utilize medication. The resident believes that the tree can be removed under Section 4.0.2. Accelerated Removals in the Streetscape and Median Development Standards (Attachment 2).

The City Arborist evaluated the tree and the surrounding area and determined that there was no justification for the removal of the tree at staff level. The Public Works Director reviewed the request from the applicant and agreed with the determination from the City Arborist that it did not meet the criteria for Accelerated Removal. The applicant was informed of the findings and requested that the removal be placed on the agenda for consideration by the Parks and Community Services Commission.

A search of the City's Maintenance Services internal work order system identified four (4) previous work orders (Attachment 3):

- On October 16, 2017, a resident requested that pine trees at 2722, 2725 and 2729 be trimmed. The City Arborist evaluated the three (3) trees and determined that the tree at 2729 Sandpiper was the only tree that needed trimming at that time.

- On April 3, 2018, a resident requested tree trimming. The City Arborist evaluated the tree for trimming. The tree was trimmed on June 7, 2018.
- On September 24, 2018, a resident requested additional tree trimming. The City Arborist evaluated the tree. Additional trimming was performed on December 10, 2018.
- On October 14, 2021, a resident reported that the roots from the city tree have lifted the asphalt in the street on October 6, 2021. City staff responded on October 13, 2021 and performed a dig-out to repair the affected area.

The request for removal has been presented to the Commission on two (2) prior occasions:

- The tree removal request was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission on January 24, 2019. The Commission denied the tree removal request by a vote of 5-0 (Attachment 4).
- The tree removal request was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission on October 28, 2021. The Commission denied the tree removal request by a vote of 5-1 (Attachment 5).

### **ANALYSIS:**

The tree is a Canary Island Pine Tree (*Pinus canariensis*). The tree is approximately forty-five feet (45') to sixty feet (60') in height with a trunk diameter of twenty-six (26") inches. The City Arborist noted areas of epicormics growth on the tree as well as some evidence of past limb failure. However, overall, the tree is healthy and in good condition. The tree was last trimmed by West Coast Arborists on December 10, 2018 (Attachment 6).

The amount of pine needle drop beneath the tree and surrounding area appeared to be normal. There was no obvious signs of sap on the sidewalk or asphalt beneath the tree at time of inspection. The shedding of pine needles and sap drop are both natural occurrences for this type of tree and recent winds and rain have caused a significant amount of tree debris.

There were several lifts in the sidewalk beneath the tree. Sidewalk grinds have been performed in the past on several panels in front of the residence. The repairs are holding; and do not appear to be creating a significant exposure to liability for the City at this time. Additionally, there was some damage to the asphalt beneath the tree. City staff performed a localized dig out on October 13, 2021 in order to repair this issue.

The Pine tree that is requested to be removed is not dead, diseased or dying and does not appear to be causing a significant exposure to liability for the City. The pine cone productions, sap and pine needle drop appear to be normal for this type of tree.

The City Arborist evaluated the tree for possible relocation. Relocation is not recommended due to the size of the tree, low probability of success and the cost of relocation.

The applicant is requesting the removal of the tree as a Category 3 - Discretionary Removals. The applicant has been notified of the Parks and Community Services Commission meeting and has been sent a copy of this staff report.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The Commission could authorize the removal and replacement of the tree, per the Streetscape and Median Development Standards, Section 4.0.2 Category 3 - Discretionary Removals, which would require the replacement of the tree at a 3 to 1 ratio. The applicant would pay all removal and replacement costs. The City Arborist would determine the tree species and location for plantings.

If the tree removal is approved by the Commission, the payment for the removal of the parkway tree and any required mitigation trees must be provided to the City prior to removal and within one year from the date of final approval, after which the approval expires.

**FISCAL REVIEW:**

There would be no fiscal impact to the City if the request to remove the tree was denied, or approved as a Category 3 - Discretionary Removals, as the applicant would pay all costs.

For the Commission's information, removal cost for the tree would be \$795.60 and the replanting costs for the mitigation trees (1 - 24" box size and 2-15-gallon container size) would be \$540.60. Costs are based on current City contract prices. The total cost for removal and replacement would be \$1,336.20

The value of the tree is estimated to be \$14,740.

**LEGAL REVIEW:**

No legal review is required for this item.

**CONCLUSION:**

The City-owned tree that has been requested for removal is located in the public right-of-way in front of 2722 Sandpiper Drive. The tree is in good condition and has been maintained on a regular schedule. The sap and tree litter are not unusual for this type of tree. There are no existing concerns regarding liability or infrastructure. The tree does not meet the criteria required for staff approval. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission deny the request to remove the tree.