Utility Services / Land Use / Energy Development Committee

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: UTILITY SERVICES / LAND USE/ENERGY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS **DATE: SEPTEMBER 9, 2019**

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT **WARDS: 3, 4, & 5**

SUBJECT: VICTORIA AVENUE POLICY FOR PRESERVATION, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE

Review and revise the 2003 Victoria Avenue Ad-Hoc-Committee Policy related to tree species selection, landscaping, irrigation, trail, roadway maintenance, development standards, right-of-way dedications, and other improvements in conjunction with new development.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Utility Services/Land Use/Energy Development Committee recommend that City Council approve the revised Victoria Avenue Policy (Attachment 1) as an amendment to the 2003 Victoria Avenue Ad-Hoc-Committee Policy (Attachment 2) related to tree planting, right-of-way, parkway improvements, maintenance and other requirements for new development; and

BACKGROUND

In 2003, the City Council adopted the Victoria Avenue Ad-Hoc-Committee Policy (2003 Policy) to preserve Victoria Avenue's historic agricultural character, the City's citrus heritage, and the Greenbelt as recommended by a Victoria Avenue Ad-Hoc Committee. The 2003 Policy reflects the goals of Proposition R, Measure C, and the General Plan 2025 and includes the following design and development standards:

- Plant three rows of citrus along Victoria Avenue when new development occurs;
- Designate Victoria Avenue as a linear park;
- Establish trails along Victoria Avenue and designate within the Trails Master Plan;
- Establish responsibility for tree maintenance;
- Require Cultural Heritage staff review and approval of building design and landscaping;
- Discourage 2-story structures; and
- Require utility infrastructure screening.

The 2003 Policy envisioned that three rows of citrus trees would be established within the right-of way, or in a landscape easement, as development occurred. The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department was identified as the department responsible for long-term

maintenance and irrigation of the trees.

Staff has implemented portions of the 2003 Policy, including citrus trees planted for new development along Victoria Avenue. Other portions of the City Council recommendation have not been implemented including: requiring private properties adjacent to Victoria Avenue to dedicate an easement that the City would maintain, establishing the overlay zone, and designating the linear park.

On October 15, 2018, the Utility Services/Land Use/Energy Development Committee (Land Use Committee) received a staff report (Attachment 3) on the 2003 Policy and proposed changes. The Land Use Committee provided direction related to tree planting, the existing citrus policy along Victoria Avenue, and maintenance and irrigation responsibilities for trees along Victoria Avenue.

DISCUSSION

Based on the Land Use Committee's direction, staff held several meetings with representatives from Victoria Avenue Forever (VAF) and other interested parties (Working Group) to discuss revisions to the Victoria Avenue Policy (Revised Policy). The Revised Policy, which has been reorganized to be easier to use, builds upon the 2003 policy and reflects the input received for changes. The Revised Policy clarifies language, establishes new guidelines/standards, and revises outdated or inconsistent language. The following summarizes the substantive changes.

Tree Rows and Species:

The Revised Policy maintains the requirement for three rows of trees within a landscape parkway on both the north and the south side of Victoria Avenue. Based on feedback from the Working Group, the Revised Policy allows greater flexibility in tree species. This is, in part, because of the ongoing threat of Citrus Greening Disease (Huanglongbing), and will also create diversity along the corridor. Although citrus trees are still preferred and encouraged, the Revised Policy allows "non-deciduous flowering trees…similar in size and character of citrus." The tree species must be climate appropriate, resistant to disease and pests, consistent with Urban Forestry Guidelines, and subject to the approval of the City's Urban Forester. An approved tree list will be developed by a smaller Working Group that includes VAF, the Urban Forester, and Planning staff.

The Revised Policy also protects healthy, existing trees within 100 feet of Victoria Avenue during construction and requires maintenance consistent with the Urban Forestry Policy Manual. This will ensure the preservation and maintenance of all trees along Victoria Avenue. The Working Group's Revised Policy ensures sufficient irrigation for trees and other landscaping, even during times of water shortage or restrictions, and the need to identify funding for the preservation, protection, and replacement of trees and irrigation. The Revised Policy also limits tree removal to diseased, dead, dying, or trees posing safety hazards as confirmed by the City's Urban Forester.

Trails:

The 2003 Policy calls for a decomposed granite (DG) trail on the north side of Victoria Avenue. However, much of the trail along the north side of Victoria Avenue has been paved with asphalt. A DG trail has been installed and maintained along the south side since the approval of the Policy in 2003. The Revised Policy has been updated to reflect this change and encourage the continuation and expansion of trails.

The Revised Policy provides for a DG multipurpose trail between La Sierra Avenue and Arlington

Avenue, with equestrian uses limited to the segment between La Sierra Avenue and Washington Street.

New Development Requirements:

The 2003 Policy includes development requirements for new construction for properties along Victoria Avenue. The Revised Policy builds on this by discouraging two-story structures fronting on, siding on, or reversing onto Victoria Avenue, and adding a requirement that two-story structures meet a minimum 50 foot setback from Victoria Avenue, where 40 feet is typical in the RA-5 Zone.

The Revised Policy maintains a reverse frontage requirement for new development between Washington Street and Myrtle Avenue to be consistent with the existing development pattern. For the area between La Sierra Avenue and Washington Street, the Revised Policy requires that new development front onto Victoria Avenue where possible. Driveways with direct access to Victoria Avenue continue to be allowed on the north side of Victoria Avenue, but are discouraged on the south side.

The Revised Policy includes a revised requirement for Historic Preservation review and a Certificate of Appropriateness for any building constructed within 200 feet of Victoria Avenue. This includes the design and location of all driveways serving homes on Victoria Avenue that must be approved by Historic Preservation staff.

Right-of-Way:

To accommodate the landscaping and tree planting required for new development as included in the Revised Policy, the Working Group identified a preferred, minimum right-of-way (ROW) width of 180 feet. The Revised Policy includes cross sections illustrating the existing typical and undeveloped ROW and a preferred typical ROW when development occurs on either side of Victoria Avenue.

The preferred ROW accommodates landscape areas for the three rows of trees, a paved trail on the north side, a DG trail on the south side, eastbound and westbound vehicle travel lanes with Class 2 bike lanes, and the iconic center median. The Department of Public Works will acquire the dedications necessary to achieve this preferred ROW as future development occurs.

Maintenance Responsibilities:

The Revised Policy reflects current operational responsibilities. Street trees and street landscape maintenance and irrigation responsibilities have been reassigned to the Public Works Department and the Urban Forester, the responsible parties today. Any maintenance responsibilities assigned to the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department have been removed within the Policy.

The Public Works Director and the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director concur with the recommendation in this staff report.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this project.

Prepared by:	David Welch, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds:	Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved by:	Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Draft Revised Victoria Avenue Policy for Preservation, Design and Development
2. City Council Policy on 2003 Victoria Avenue Ad-Hoc Committee Recommendations
3. Staff Report: October 15, 2018 Utility Services/Land Use/Energy Development Committee
4. Presentation