



# Park and Recreation Commission

*City of Arts & Innovation*

**TO: HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS**

**DATE: OCTOBER 21, 2019**

**FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT URBAN FORESTRY / LANDSCAPE DIVISION  
QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT**

## **ISSUE:**

Quarterly activity report for the Urban Forestry / Landscape Division of the Public Works Department.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Park and Recreation Commission receive and file the quarterly activity report for the Urban Forestry / Landscape Division of the Public Works Department.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Urban Forestry / Landscape Division of the Public Works Department reports to the Park and Recreation Commission on a quarterly basis due to their connection to City trees as mentioned in the Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 13.25 Tree and Shrub Supervision.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The following report for the Public Works Department Urban Forestry / Landscape Division details accomplishments, claims against the City related to damages caused by City trees such as fallen limbs and root damages to private property, plan checks related to new developments and property upgrades such as new housing tracts, commercial/industrial buildings and expansion of existing properties that are required to plant new street trees within the public right of ways, tree removals, and tree plantings in the third quarter of 2019, and activities planned for the fourth quarter of 2019.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

On Saturday, September 28, 2019, the Public Works Department, working with Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful (KRCB), held the Santa Ana River and City Waterways Cleanup in Ward 1. The meeting location at the Riverside County Flood Control District Office included volunteers from throughout the community and surrounding areas who worked to clean up litter and abate graffiti from along the Santa Ana River and surrounding areas.

On Saturday, October 12, 2019, the Public Works Department, working with Victoria Avenue Forever (VAF), held a volunteer planting project on Victoria Avenue in the medians between Madison and Jane Streets. Volunteers planted 450 Ragged Robin roses along the medians to replace roses that were missing or in decline. Thousands of Ragged Robin roses line both sides of the median along Victoria Avenue. This old-fashioned variety was introduced in 1825 under the name 'Gloire des Rosomanes.' How it came to be called 'Ragged Robin' is unknown, but the roses are one of the distinctive features of Victoria Avenue. All replacement plants must be grown from cuttings, as this variety of roses is no longer grown commercially. The Public Works Department contracts with a local nursery to take cuttings and maintain a supply of roses for ongoing plantings along Victoria Avenue.

On Saturday, November 2, 2019, the Public Works Department, working with KRCB, will hold a beautification project in Ward 4. The meeting location will be at Villegas Park, 3091 Esperanza Street, 92504. Projects will include litter removal, graffiti abatement, and community greening. The community greening site will be located on Overlook Parkway and will include the planting of new shrubs to replace missing plant material.

On Saturday, November 9, 2019, the Public Works Department, working with VAF, will hold a volunteer rose planting project on Victoria Avenue, in the medians between Madison and Grace Streets. The meeting location will be located on the southeast corner of Madison and Grace Streets, at 8:30 a.m.

#### VICTORIA AVENUE MAINTENANCE UPDATE

The Public Works Department maintains the medians and large portions of the parkways along Victoria Avenue from Arroyo Drive to La Sierra Avenue. Victoria Avenue is rich in the history of Riverside. It was deeded to the City of Riverside in June 1902, with the stipulation that the trees were to be maintained and protected. On June 11, 1969, it was declared Cultural Heritage Landmark #8 by the Riverside Cultural Heritage Board. In October 2000, it was added to the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places, and is listed as a Scenic Route.

Over the past 12 to 18 months, the City has experienced thefts of backflow prevention devices. These devices are used between a water meter and an irrigation system as a source of protection against cross-contamination for the City's potable water system. Without backflow prevention devices, commercial irrigation systems are inoperable. During the past year and a half, over 50 backflow prevention devices were stolen throughout the city, and the protective cages enclosing them were damaged. The cost to replace one backflow prevention device ranges from \$2,200 to \$3,500, and replacement time can take up to six weeks as some replacement parts require special order. During this time, the Public Works Landscape Maintenance Inspectors utilize a water truck to manually water as much of the vegetation as possible.

Backflow prevention devices located along Victoria Avenue between La Sierra and Arlington Avenues were stolen during hot summer months, causing extreme stress to plant material from lack of water. As of August 30, 2019, all 10 of the backflow prevention devices stolen from along Victoria Avenue were replaced, and stronger, heavier duty metal enclosures were installed to deter future theft or vandalism. Numerous Ragged Robin roses and several small trees died before irrigation was returned to service. The Public Works Department is currently working with Victoria Avenue Forever to replace these roses and trees.

In addition to these thefts, four of the wooden benches located along Victoria Avenue between Jane and Myrtle Streets were stolen. These benches are being replaced by the Public Works

Department with black powder-coated metal benches that were provided by the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department, at no cost.

As of July 1, 2019, a new contractor, Pacific Coast Landscape and Design, Inc. (PCLD), maintains the landscaping along Victoria Avenue. PCLD is a local company with offices located on Van Buren Boulevard and Indiana Avenue. With the assistance of Victoria Avenue Forever Board members, PCLD was selected as the best qualified to perform landscape maintenance along Victoria Avenue. Within their first three months, PCLD made major improvements with gopher control, weed abatement, and trash control. The contractor will also be assisting with replacing plant material that died as a result of backflow thefts.

### **TREE TRIMMING PROGRESS**

With the help of an additional \$1,000,000 allocated by City Council through Measure Z funding, during the period of June 12 through September 17, 2019, a total of 4,187 trees were trimmed as follows:

- Measure Z Funding: 3,429
- Service Requests: 749
- Resi-Pay: 9

### **TREE MAINTENANCE**

The following grids are currently underway:

Grid 7 – University Avenue

Grid 3 – Hunter Industrial

Grid 4 – Hunter Industrial

The following grids are scheduled:

Grid 8 – Victoria Avenue

Grid 22 – Eastside Neighborhood

Grid 6 – University Neighborhood

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund associated with this report.

Prepared by: Kris Martinez, Public Works Director

Approved by: Adolfo Cruz, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director

Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager

Attachments:

1. Tree Removal and Planting List
2. Plan Checks – 3rd Quarter 2019
3. Claims – 3rd Quarter 2019