TO: Mayor and Members  
City Council  

WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE

DATE: March 5, 2010

SUBJECT:  
Street Tree Trimming Program - 2010 Budget Council Referred Item  
(City Wide) - (OWM10-006)

SUBMITTED BY:  
Gerry Davis, CMA  
General Manager  
Public Works Department

SIGNATURE: [Signature]

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At Committee of the Whole on February 22, 2010, staff was directed to report back to Council on options for the 2010 Street Tree Trimming budget for this Council Referred Item requested as part of the Public Works Department Operating Budget (FCS09120h, Appendix 2, page 33).

During the 2006 budget deliberations, Council approved a program enhancement to the Street Tree Trimming Program, providing preventative street tree trimming services to the entire urban area based on a service level of a five (5) year cycle to be implemented over a ten (10) year period. The rural areas of the City are not part of the approved enhanced program; however the rural areas of the City continue to receive street trimming, removal and emergency response on a reactive basis. The Program is delivered through the Forestry & Horticulture Section of the Operations & Waste Management Division of Public Works.

The budget for the Program is considered annually as part of the budget process and is currently in year three (3) of the ten (10) year phase-in. The Program implementation is presently one year behind the 2006 Council approved phase-in, which is a result of Council requests to mitigate past budget pressures. Full details were provided in the email to Council on February 12, 2010.

The 2010 Street Tree Trimming Council Referred Item requests 5.0 FTE and $530,000 for Phase 4 of the (now 11 year) phase-in of the Program. Since the Program was implemented in 2006, the street tree trimming cycle has been reduced from 19 years to 14 years in 2009. If the 2010 enhancement is approved, it is estimated that the trimming cycle will be reduced to approximately 12 years.

Street tree trimming is conducted by a combination of City staff and contracted tree trimming services. For implementation of Phase 4 of the Program, 35% of the requested budget is for contracted services ($180,000); the remainder is for costs relating to the additional in-house staff ($350,000).
Potential options to the requested budget for this Council Referred Item and the resultant effects on the tree trimming cycle are detailed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>FTE #</th>
<th>Enhancement</th>
<th>Tree Trimming Cycle (yrs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 budget submission for Phase 4</td>
<td>In-house and contracted services</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>$530,000</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1</td>
<td>In-house services only</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2</td>
<td>Contracted services only</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 3</td>
<td>Partial in-house services and full contracted services</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>$320,000</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 4</td>
<td>Partial in-house services only</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>$140,000</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Development growth has not been accounted for in the above projections, as the trees have not grown enough to require trimming. However it is anticipated that by 2011, the urban grids will increase from 178 to 188 representing a 6% increase in residential development from 2006 to 2010.

There are many benefits in continuing the phase-in of the enhanced Street Tree Trimming Program, namely improved resistance to disease, pests and storm damage, longer tree life expectancy, improved visual / aesthetic character, increased capability to moderate extremes in micro-climate, reduced insurance claims and improved image of the City. Since 2006 and the inception of the enhanced Street Tree Trimming Program, service requests (including storm damage) have gone down by 1,400 calls per year. As a result of the reduced service requests this will allow staff the time to proactively increase inspections and maintenance of hazard trees in rural areas.

For the above noted reasons, staff still supports approval of the 2010 enhanced budget submission.

If you should have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact myself at Extension 2313 or Craig Murdoch, Director, Environmental Services at Extension 4490.

Copy to:

Chris Murray, City Manager
Roberto Rossini, General Manager of Finance & Corporate Services
Kevin Christenson, City Clerk
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