



CITY COUNCIL
Staff Report

Meeting Date: Sept. 24, 2019

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Scott Chadwick, City Manager

Staff Contact: Kyle Lancaster, Parks & Recreation Director
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Subject: Update to the Carlsbad Community Forest Management Plan and appropriation of funds for implementation of the plan's goals, strategies and recommendations.

Recommended Action

Adopt a Resolution approving an update to the Carlsbad Community Forest Management Plan and appropriating a total of \$345,000 of ongoing funds to the Parks Maintenance Operating Budget for implementation of the plan's goals, strategies and recommendations.

Executive Summary

Section 4.3.10 of the Carlsbad General Plan Lawsuit Settlement Agreement executed in March 2017, between the city and North County Advocates, states "Within 18 months, the city shall present to the City Council for consideration an update to the Community Forest Management Plan which includes a program to identify and protect heritage trees, where practicable, and will include provisions for protection and enhancement of the urban tree canopy."

On Sept. 18, 2018, the City Council received a staff report on the Carlsbad Community Forest Management Plan (CCFMP), which included discussion of various chapters and sections of the document that were eligible for updates (Exhibit 2). Staff estimated that the consultant services necessary to complete the update would entail \$135,000 in expenditures and take a minimum of one year to complete. The City Council adopted a resolution authorizing staff to update the CCFMP, in response to the General Plan Lawsuit Settlement Agreement (Resolution No. 2018-168). The update to the CCFMP is complete and has been recommended for City Council approval by the Historic Preservation Commission (specific to the Heritage Tree Reports) and the Parks & Recreation Commission.

Discussion

Background

In negotiations to settle the lawsuit challenging the city's certification of the General Plan Environmental Impact Report, North County Advocates expressed their desire that the city update its Community Forest Management Plan. In March 2017, the City Council approved the General Plan Lawsuit Settlement Agreement between the city and North County Advocates (Resolution No. 2017-228), which includes Section 4.3.10 that states: "Within 18 months, the

city shall present to the City Council for consideration an update to the Community Forest Management Plan which includes a program to identify and protect heritage trees, where practicable, and will include provisions for protection and enhancement of the urban tree canopy.” The agreement did not obligate the City Council to approve an update to the plan.

On Sept. 18, 2018, the City Council received a staff report on the Carlsbad Community Forest Management Plan (CCFMP), which included discussion of various chapters and sections of the document that were eligible for updates. The City Council adopted a resolution authorizing staff to update the CCFMP, in response to the General Plan Lawsuit Settlement Agreement. Staff subsequently sought and hired two qualified consultants, Wisniewski & Associates and West Coast Arborists, Inc. (WCA), to assist in the process of updating the CCFMP. The assistance of Wisniewski & Associates was specific to the updating of the Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports – i.e., The Historic Village District, and Phase II. The assistance of WCA was critical to updating the full CCFMP, minus the Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports. WCA has also been the city’s primary contractor for tree maintenance services over the last 15 years.

Tree Inventory

As a foundation of updating the CCFMP, staff ensured that WCA brought current the full inventory of city managed trees. – i.e., street, median, park, facility, trail and urban forest interface trees. The inventory includes tree characteristics such as species, height, width and condition, as well as Global Positioning Systems location and inspection/pruning history. As a result of those recent efforts, the full inventory of city managed trees is at 28,066 trees, of 284 different species. In addition, the city’s urban forest areas – i.e., Hosp Grove, Woodbine Banks, Batiquitos Drive and Village H – consist of an estimated 15,000 trees, predominantly of Eucalyptus species. Combined, the city successfully manages an estimated 43,000 trees, using industry standards and best management practices.

Goals and Strategies of the Updated CCFMP

As with the original CCFMP, the updated CCFMP specifically addresses the portions of the community forest that the city can influence directly. The plan is focused on city-managed landscapes and areas within the street tree assessment districts.

The updated CCFMP includes the following goals and strategies for the protection and enhancement of the urban forest canopy:

- 1 *Promote citywide tree preservation and community education about the community forest and sustainability.*
 - A. *Maintain the Tree City USA designation in perpetuity.*
 - B. *Encourage residents to participate in city tree planting events held on occasions such as Earth Day, Arbor Day and National Public Lands Day. Such events typically include collaboration with staff from the Communications and Environmental Management Divisions to further assist in promoting quality tree care in the community.*
 - C. *Showcase specimen trees or heritage trees on the city’s website and on social media throughout the year to generate interest in the diversity and significance of trees.*

2. *Expand the community forest in areas with lesser tree canopy density and maximize its benefits.*
 - A. *Add an average of 500 trees per year to the city's tree inventory or affect an increase in Carlsbad's Total Tree Canopy by 5% (whichever occurs first) through the end of calendar year 2025, so as to further enhance the community forest.*
 - B. *Plant two inventoried trees for every one inventoried tree removed, to ensure the longevity of the community forest. Only one each of those planted trees shall count toward the addition of an average of 500 trees per year to the city's tree inventory.*
 - C. *A concentrated effort will be made to install new trees in sparsely forested areas in Hosp Grove that lack shade canopy.*

3. *Manage an estimated 43,000 City of Carlsbad-owned/ controlled trees using industry standards and best management practices.*
 - A. *Continuously review the condition and recommended maintenance of the city's community forest and look for opportunities to improve health.*
 - B. *Utilize best management practices and industry standards when all work is performed on city trees.*
 - C. *Continuously train staff on new technology and scientific discoveries to ensure the most up-to-date information is in the hands of tree care professionals.*

Consistency and Alignment

The updated CCFMP is consistent with, and/or aligned with, each of the following:

- Carlsbad Community Vision and Values
- Carlsbad City Council Policy No. 4 – Street Trees
- Carlsbad Municipal Code Chapter 11.12 – Trees and Shrubs
- Carlsbad Municipal Ordinances Nos. 43, 44 and 46 – Water Conservation/Irrigation
- Carlsbad Landscape Manual
- Carlsbad Climate Action Plan
- Carlsbad Sustainability Environmental Guiding Principles
- Carlsbad General Plan
- Carlsbad Local Coastal Program
- Carlsbad Village and Barrio Master Plan

Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports

Chapter 6 of the updated CCFMP is dedicated to a program to identify and protect heritage trees, where practicable. As another foundational element of the updated CCFMP, staff ensured that Wisniewski & Associates brought current the Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports – i.e., The Historic Village District (also known as Phase I), and Phase II. Phase I identified heritage tree candidates that were predominantly within the Historic Village District (depicted via maps in Appendix A to the report). Phase II identified heritage tree candidates in a wider geographical area, some near the original zone, and some within further outlying areas (depicted via maps in Appendix A of the report).

The Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports contain both city-owned and privately-owned heritage tree candidates. The original Phase I report of 2002 contained 110 total heritage tree candidates.

The updated Phase I report reflects 74 of those tree candidates remain, and one tree candidate has been added, for a net of 75 heritage tree candidates. Of those 75 heritage tree candidates, 41 are city-owned and 34 are privately owned. The original Phase II report of 2009 contained 51 total tree candidates. The updated Phase II report reflects 41 of those tree candidates remain. Of those 41 heritage tree candidates, 11 are city-owned and 30 are privately owned. Both Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports contain the same Management Recommendations Summary (Phase 1 – Page 91; Phase II – Page 257). The summary contains 15 recommendations, some of which are solely administrative and others of which have operational and/or financial impacts. As stated in both reports, the recommendations are to:

...provide for the health, safety and longevity of Carlsbad's Heritage Trees. These recommendations should be adopted by the City Council as mandatory for all city owned Heritage Trees, and are advisory only recommendations for any privately-owned and non-city owned public Heritage Trees.

The Carlsbad Heritage Tree Report – Phase II also contains six Supplemental Recommendations (Page 260). Like the initial recommendations, some of the supplemental recommendations are solely administrative and others have operational and/or financial impacts. As stated in the report:

The trees in the Phase II Study have some additional requirements, especially those located in historic parks or in natural open space areas. Some of these recommendations are of a general nature, and others are specific to individual trees.

As in the Phase I Study the recommendations should be adopted as mandatory for all city owned Heritage Trees and are advisory only for privately owned and any non-city owned public Heritage Trees.

Both Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports additionally contain the same Heritage Tree Nomination Process (Phase 1 – Page 93; Phase II – Page 261). A ten-step nomination process is suggested. As stated in the report:

A process should be developed for the city to allow for the nomination of additional Heritage Trees by its citizens.

Review, Input and Action

The process of updating the CCFMP involved review and input from staff of the Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Library & Cultural Arts, Community & Economic Development, Communications, Finance and Fire Departments. Additionally, the process included review and input from North County Advocates. In late June 2019, staff sent a preliminary draft of the updated CCFMP to North County Advocates. In early July 2019, North County Advocates provided comments to the preliminary draft of the updated CCFMP and in late August 2019, staff responded to those comments (Exhibit 3).

In late August 2019, staff also posted a revised draft of the updated CCFMP on the city website for public review, sent social media alerts, and notified the Historic Preservation Commission

and the Parks & Recreation Commission. On Sept. 9, 2019, the Historic Preservation Commission received a presentation on the updated CCFMP (specific to the Heritage Tree Reports) and voted to recommend its approval by the City Council. On Sept. 11, North County Advocates provided further comments to the revised draft of the updated CCFMP and on Sept. 12, 2019, staff responded to those comments (Exhibit 4). No other comments from the public were provided. On Sept. 16, 2019, the Parks & Recreation Commission received a presentation on the updated CCFPM and voted to recommend its approval by the City Council.

Fiscal Analysis

Staff is requesting a total appropriation of \$345,000 of ongoing funds to the Parks Maintenance Operating Budget for implementation of the CCFMP’s goals, strategies and recommendations. The below table provides the distribution of the requested appropriation.

Community Forest Management Plan–Goals, Strategies & Recommendations	Amount
Landscape materials for adding an average of 500 trees/yr. to city’s inventory	\$75,000
Contractual services for adding an average of 500 trees/yr. to city’s inventory	\$98,000
Part-time Program Coordinator for administration of adding 500 trees /yr.	\$25,000
Part-time Maintenance Technician for field oversight of adding 500 trees/yr.	\$20,000
Contractual services for public outreach of tree plantings and Heritage Trees	\$35,000
Landscape materials for de-compacting drip lines of city-owned Heritage Trees	\$31,000
Contractual services for drafting annual reports on city-owned Heritage Trees	\$35,000
Contractual services for arborist’s direct pruning of city-owned Heritage Trees	\$26,000
Appropriation of Ongoing Funds to the Parks Maintenance Operating Budget	\$345,000

Next Steps

Staff will take steps to implement the above listed goals, strategies and recommendations of the update to the CCFMP. In particular, staff will commence recruitments and subsequently fill the noted part-time positions. Staff will also seek proposals for the noted contractual services and pursue the execution of formal agreements.

Environmental Evaluation (CEQA)

An environmental review concluded the potential environmental impacts associated with the update to the CCFMP were exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land).

Public Notification and Outreach

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

Exhibits

1. City Council Resolution
2. City Council Staff Report, dated Sept. 18, 2018, authorizing staff to update the CCFMP
3. North County Advocates comments/staff responses on prelim. draft of update to the CCFMP
4. North County Advocates comments/staff responses on revised draft of update to the CCFMP
5. Update to the CCFMP, on file at the City Clerk’s Office

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING AN UPDATE TO THE CARLSBAD COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN AND APPROPRIATING A TOTAL OF \$345,000 OF ONGOING FUNDS TO THE PARKS MAINTENANCE OPERATING BUDGET FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN'S GOALS, STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

WHEREAS, Section 4.3.10 of the Carlsbad General Plan Lawsuit Settlement Agreement executed in March 2017, between the city and North County Advocates, states "Within 18 months, the City shall present to the City Council for consideration an update to the Community Forest Management Plan (CCFMP) which includes a program to identify and protect heritage trees, where practicable, and will include provisions for protection and enhancement of the urban tree canopy"; and

WHEREAS, on September 18, 2018, the City Council received a staff report on the Carlsbad Community Forest Management Plan (CCFMP), which included discussion of various chapters and sections of the document that were eligible for updates; and

WHEREAS, staff estimated the update would entail \$135,000 in consultant services expenditures and take a minimum of one year to complete; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted a resolution authorizing staff to update the CCFMP, in response to the General Plan Lawsuit Settlement Agreement (Resolution No. 2018-168); and

WHEREAS, staff subsequently sought and hired two qualified consultants, Wisniewski & Associates and West Coast Arborists, Inc. (WCA), to assist in the process of updating the CCFMP; and

WHEREAS, the assistance of Wisniewski & Associates was specific to the updating of the Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports – i.e., The Historic Village District, and Phase II; and

WHEREAS, the assistance of WCA was critical to updating the full CCFMP, minus the Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports; and

WHEREAS, as a foundation of updating the CCFMP, staff ensured that WCA brought current the full inventory of city managed trees; and

WHEREAS, the city successfully manages an estimated 43,000 trees, of 284 different species, using industry standards and best management practices; and

WHEREAS, the updated CCFMP includes goals and strategies for the protection and enhancement of the urban forest canopy; and

WHEREAS, the updated CCFMP is consistent with, and/or aligned with, several other Carlsbad planning and management documents; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 6 of the updated CCFMP is dedicated to a program to identify and protect heritage trees, where practicable; and

WHEREAS, as another foundational element of the updated CCFMP, staff ensured that Wisniewski & Associates brought current the Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports; and

WHEREAS, the Carlsbad Heritage Tree Reports contain a Management Recommendations Summary and Supplemental Recommendations; and

WHEREAS, these recommendations are to be mandatory for all city-owned Heritage Trees; and

WHEREAS, the process of updating the CCFMP involved review and input from staff of the Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Library & Cultural Arts, Community & Economic Development, Communications, Finance, and Fire Departments, and from North County Advocates; and

WHEREAS, in late August 2019, staff posted a revised draft of the updated CCFMP on the city website for public review, sent social media alerts, and informed the Historic Preservation Commission and the Parks & Recreation Commission; and

WHEREAS, on Sept. 9, 2019, the Historic Preservation Commission received a presentation on the updated CCFMP (specific to the Heritage Tree Reports) and voted to recommend its approval by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, on Sept. 16, 2019, the Parks & Recreation Commission received a presentation on the updated CCFPM and voted to recommend its approval by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, staff requests appropriation of \$345,000 of ongoing funds to the Parks Maintenance Operating Budget for implementation of the updated CCFMP's goals, strategies and recommendations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Carlsbad, California, as follows:

1. That the above recitations are true and correct.
2. That the City Council hereby approves the update to the Carlsbad Community Forest Management Plan.
3. That the Deputy City Manager, Administrative Services is authorized and directed to appropriate \$345,000 of ongoing funds to the Parks Maintenance Operating Budget for implementation of the updated CCFMP's goals, strategies and recommendations.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED at a Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Carlsbad on the ___ day of _____, 2019, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

MATT HALL, Mayor

BARBARA ENGLESON, City Clerk

(SEAL)