

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
BUREAU OF STREET SERVICES  
REPORT NO. # 1

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Date : July 10, 2017

CD # 14

Honorable Board of Public Works  
of the City of Los Angeles

Commissioners:

**EASTSIDE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION LINKAGES, PHASE II – REQUEST BOARD APPROVE A NO FEE PERMIT TO REMOVE SEVENTY-SEVEN (VARIOUS SPECIES) STREET TREES FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PUBLIC SIDEWALK AND CURBS DUE TO OFFGRADE CONDITIONS AND IN THE INTEREST OF PUBLIC SAFETY. TREE REPLACEMENTS ARE REQUIRED.**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That your Board:

1. FIND that the tree removal (1) classifies as operation, repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing street, sidewalk, and gutter, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing; and does not involve the removal of a scenic resource; (2) that the action is exempt under Article III, Section 1, Class 1, Category 3 (existing facilities – sidewalk repair or maintenance) of the City of Los Angeles Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (2002); and (3) that none of the exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption as set forth in Section 153.00.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines apply.
2. Review and approve this tree removal permit request for seventy-seven (various species) trees for the reconstruction of offgrade sidewalks and street improvements. Tree replacements are required.

**TRANSMITTALS:**

1. Copy of fax sheet sent to Council office.
2. Service Request #1-438846521.
3. Notice of Exemption, dated April 27, 2017.
4. Project Site Map.
5. Tree removal list.
6. Plot plans for tree removals and replanting.
7. Photographs of the proposed tree removals.

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**CONDITION:**

The Bureau of Street Services shall plant a total of two-hundred, 24-inch box size trees consisting of eighty Australian Willow (*Geijera parviflora*) and eighty Lavender Trumpet Tree (*Handroanthus impetiginosus*) along Boyle Avenue, State Street, and Saint Louis Street; and twenty African Fern Pine (*Afrocarpus falcatus*) trees and twenty Chinese Pistache (*Pistacia chinensis* 'Keith Davey') along Soto Street between Cesar E Chavez Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. All trees shall be watered by the Bureau of Street Services for a three year period.

**ALTERNATIVE METHODS AND OPTIONS EXPLORED:**

The size, species, and locations of the trees negate the possibility of tree preservation or relocation.

**RECITAL:**

The Bureau of Street Services are proposing to repair defective sidewalks and perform other related street improvements as part of the Active Transportation Program (ATP). The purpose of this project is to provide pedestrian improvements to north-south linkage streets to the Metro Gold Line Light Rail on 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and is funded through the ATP and matching funds. The scope of the project includes sidewalk repair and improvements along four streets: Boyle Street, State Street, St. Louis Street, and Soto Street from Cesar E. Chavez Avenue to 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The current condition of the sidewalks is not conducive to existing and increased pedestrian traffic generated by the nearby Metro stations. This project complements the Metro Measure R and Metro Call Project-funded improvements along 1<sup>st</sup> Street from the 101 Freeway to Concord Street in Boyle Heights and will provide sidewalk reconstruction while enhancing new transit opportunities.

A Bureau of Street Services arborist performed a site inspection on April 13 and 19, 2017 and identified seventy - seven street trees of various species and at various locations within the project limits. The trees are growing throughout the 100 through 400 blocks of North Boyle Street, State Street, St. Louis Street; and the 100 through 300 blocks of South Boyle Street, State Street, St. Louis Street, and Soto Street. The affected street trees are eight Silk Oak (*Grevillea robusta*), Eight Flame Trees (*Brachychiton acerifolius*), six Indian Laurel Fig (*Ficus microcarpa*), six Carrotwood (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*), five Brisbane Box (*Lophostemon confertus*), and other various tree species.

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Several of the trees are creating defective conditions to the sidewalks, beginning to encroach onto the curb and gutter, possess poor branch structure, or are in very poor health. The trees to be removed measure on average approximately ten to forty inches in diameter by fifteen to seventy feet in height and are growing in three to four-foot wide parkways or tree wells. Tree removals will also be required at bus stops where landings for transit users, including those on wheelchairs, are impeded by trees. Sidewalk reconstruction and project scope will require removal of the trees.

**CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):**

The Bureau of Street Services finds the tree removal (1) classifies as operation, repair, maintenance or minor alteration of existing street, sidewalk, and gutter, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing; and does not involve the removal of a scenic resource; (2) that the action is exempt under Article III, Section 1, Class 1, Category 3 (existing facilities – sidewalk repair or maintenance) of the City of Los Angeles Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (2002); and (3) that none of the exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption as set forth in Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines apply.

The CEQA Guidelines for Street Tree Removal and Replacement Evaluation for Categorical Exemption were used in making this finding and are on file with the Bureau and available to the public upon request.

**CONCLUSION:**

The tree removals will be done in phases, the sequence of which will be coordinated with the council office, and a significant amount of time is needed to complete tree removals. There will be 200 24-inch box size trees to be planted as replacements, exceeding the City's 2:1 replacement goal.

The subject tree removals were physically posted on March 1, 2017.

- Nate Hayward with Council District Office 14, was informed of the tree removals. The Council office will notify the Bureau of any tree removal objections received prior to the Board hearing this matter.
- Bureau of Street Services, with CD14, has held community meetings.
- Proposed tree removal was also placed on the BSS Tree Removal Notification System.
- The Community Forest Advisory Committee was notified.

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The applicant has been advised of the recommendations contained in this report.  
(TT---GS---NS)

Respectfully submitted,

For

  
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NAZARIO SAUCEDA, DIRECTOR  
BUREAU OF STREET SERVICES

Prepared by:  
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GS:TT/HB:kl

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