

DATE ISSUED: July 17, 2002

REPORT NO. 02-166

ATTENTION: Rules Committee
Agenda of July 24, 2002

SUBJECT: Tree: Ordinance, City Organizational Structure, Budget, Canopy Analysis,
Tree Planting Event and FY 2003 Urban Forest Budget Plan

SUMMARY

Issue - Shall Rules Committee accept this status report and direct the City Manager to return to Rules Committee with the information described in this report?

Manager's Recommendations - Accept this status report and direct the City Manager to return to Rules Committee with:

1. Manager's recommendations on the Tree Advisory Board's draft Tree Ordinance, incorporating: a) information obtained from other cities, which have had tree ordinances in place for some time, about their experiences with certain legal, organizational and implementation issues, and b) the Tree Advisory Board's Vision statement for the Future Urban Forest; additionally return with the fiscal impact to implement the Ordinance and the Tree Advisory Board's recommendations on the amended draft Tree Ordinance.
2. Manager's recommendations on the City's organizational structure for the tree program and plans for future budgeting for street tree replacement, watering, pruning and tracking, with the Tree Advisory Board's comments.
3. Status report on the progress of the Urban Ecosystem (Tree Canopy) Analysis.
4. Status report on the Tree Planting Event to be held in eight Council Districts on November 23, 2002.
5. Status report on the FY 2003 Urban Forest Budget Plan and goal to plant 5,000 trees by June 30, 2003.

Other Recommendations - On July 10, 2002, the Tree Advisory Board unanimously: endorsed the Manager's recommendations; applauded the Manager's plans for moving forward with the draft Tree Ordinance; committed to developing a Vision statement for the Future Urban Forest; and requested that the Manager bring the amended draft Tree

Ordinance to the Tree Advisory Board for review and recommendation before returning to the Rules Committee.

Fiscal Impact – None with this action. There could be significant costs associated with implementing the Tree Advisory Board’s draft Tree Ordinance. For the Urban Ecosystem (Tree Canopy) Analysis, the City Manager has committed \$10,000 each from five existing FY 2003 budgets, for a total of \$50,000 in grant matching funds.

BACKGROUND

Tree Ordinance

On May 22, 2002, the Rules Committee requested the Manager to return to the July 24, 2002 meeting with the Tree Advisory Board’s draft Tree Protection Ordinance and with the Manager’s recommendations on the Ordinance. The Tree Advisory Board decided to expand the draft Ordinance from just Tree Protection to a comprehensive Tree Ordinance. The Tree Advisory Board provided the draft to the Manager on June 17, 2002. City departments and agencies commented on the draft and met to discuss their comments on July 8, 2002.

City departments and agencies are very supportive of the goals of the draft Tree Ordinance. They also see: 1) legal issues to research; 2) fiscal impacts to estimate; 3) permit requirements that may need certain waivers; 4) penalties that need to be considered in the context of an overall Vision statement for the Future Urban Forest; and 5) implementation processes to specify.

The Manager recommends that a group of City department and agency staff meet with representatives of other cities, which have had tree ordinances in place for some time, about their experiences with the same concerns. Some City department and agency concerns may prove to be groundless, or easily resolved with alternative ordinance language. Additionally, the Manager recommends that the Tree Advisory Board develop a Vision statement for the Future Urban Forest, and then evaluate the draft Tree Ordinance as a tool for helping to achieve that vision.

All proposed ordinances are subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act. After Rules Committee comments on the draft Tree Ordinance at a public hearing, the proposed Tree Ordinance will be submitted for environmental review.

City Organizational Structure and Tree Program Budget

On June 5, 2002, Rules Committee directed the City Manager to return to the meeting of July 24, 2002 with recommendations about implementation processes for the City’s tree program, including: 1) which City department would be in charge of trees; and 2) a plan to include in future proposed budgets funds to: replace trees; water and prune trees; and track trees.

The issues of the organizational structure and budget are closely linked with the draft Tree Ordinance. Therefore, the Manager recommends returning with this information in conjunction with the draft Tree Ordinance.

Urban Ecosystem (Tree Canopy) Analysis

On June 5, 2002, Rules Committee directed the City Manager to try to identify matching funds of \$40,000 - \$50,000 for an Urban Ecosystem Analysis of the City of San Diego, and to report back to Rules Committee with the status. Following is the status report.

The Manager has identified a matching fund contribution of \$50,000. This represents \$10,000 each from the FY 2003 budgets of five sources: Geographic Information Systems Program, Environmental Services Department, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program, Park and Recreation Department, and Urban Forestry Outreach/Promotion Program. These grant matching funds will provide the City with a product that is valued at \$150,000.

The Urban Ecosystem Analysis for the City of San Diego will be conducted by American Forests which, founded in 1875, is the oldest national nonprofit citizen conservation organization. The Urban Ecosystem Analysis for the City of San Diego will be the third in the nation, and the first on the west coast. The other two communities are Washington D.C., which is completed, and Charlotte, North Carolina, which is in process. American Forests will work in cooperation with the California Department of Forestry and the United States Forest Service. Graduate students from California Polytechnic University will also be involved.

The Analysis will provide the City with: a “green infrastructure” data layer to add to the City’s regional Geographic Information System; digital map showing the percentage of tree canopy cover throughout the City; calculations of the value of the existing tree canopy in terms of reduced air pollution and avoided storm water retention; a copy of American Forests’ CITYgreen software and associated training.

The Analysis will also include initial use of the digitized data and software to answer questions such as: how many pounds of air pollutants (ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and particulate matter less than 10 microns) would be removed by increasing the tree canopy, and what is the associated dollar value based on the Urban Forest Effects Model developed by the U.S. Forest Service; and how would storm water runoff volumes differ based on select tree canopy scenarios, and what is the associated cost avoidance for storm water retention based on the most widely used storm water planning model in the nation, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service Technical Release 55. Graduate students at California Polytechnic University will use the data and software to do additional analyses for the City of San Diego, as will staff in the City’s Geographic Information Systems Program.

Tree Planting Event on November 23, 2002 and FY 2003 Urban Forest Budget Plan

On June 5, 2002, the Rules Committee requested a Tree Planting Event in every Council District in Autumn, 2002. The date for the Tree Planting Event has been selected; it will be Saturday, November 23, 2002.

On June 17, 2002, City Council adopted a FY 2003 Urban Forest Budget Plan. The majority of

the currently funded Urban Forest Budget Plan for planting 5,000 trees, including the Tree Planting Event on November 23, 2002, is from the Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG). However, the nonprofit organization, People for Trees, also has a “Can You Dig It?” grant to plant street trees City-wide. There have been two meetings of recipients of CDBG funds for tree planting to begin to develop a coordinated, non-duplicative effort for tree planting. A calendar of steps backing into the November 23, 2002 tree planting date is currently being developed. Staff will coordinate closely with each Council Office.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Direct the City Manager to provide community planning groups with a 45 day opportunity to comment on the draft Tree Ordinance before returning to Rules Committee.
2. Do not accept the status report; and direct the Manager to finalize the Tree Advisory Board’s draft Tree Ordinance with City department and agency staff comments to-date, and return with it directly to the Rules Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Williams
Assistant to Senior Deputy City Manager

Approved: George I. Loveland
Senior Deputy City Manager

LOVELAND/TW