

Responses to Council Questions and Comments

6/3/2024

Item #10: Resolution Describing Improvements and Directing Preparation of Engineer's Report for Fiscal Year 24/25 Annual Assessment for the Landscape Assessment Districts; Resolution Providing Preliminary Approval of Engineer's Report for Landscape Assessment Districts, Fiscal Year 24/25; Resolution of Intention to Order the Levy and Collection of Assessments Pursuant to the Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972 for Landscape Assessment Districts, Fiscal Year 24/25, and to Set the Date of the Public Hearing

- Question: When is the City's Landscaping Contract for the LADs and entire City is up to bid?
 - Response: The City's contracts for landscape maintenance for the LADs are performed under a professional services agreement. Staff solicit proposals from service providers but can negotiate with them and need not award contracts based merely on the lowest, responsive bid from a responsible bidder. The status of the current landscape maintenance contract(s) for the City's LADs is that it/they will expire June 30, 2024. We expect to renew the contract for another year while we undergo a significant analytical project to true up LAD budgets with available revenues and ensure service levels are being met. Public Works and Parks/Facilities Maintenance have already started performing high weed mowing and other tasks to augment the landscape contractor's maintenance scope of work in order to address some of the LAD's that do not have adequate coverage under the current LAD landscaper contract or for work that is necessary outside of the current LAD landscaper's scope of work.
- Question: Can you provide financial details of each LAD? Do these need restructuring?
 - Response: The financial details for each LAD are included in Attachment 4 - Exhibits A and B. Each LAD is tracked individually and as shown in Exhibit A, includes a beginning balance, total sources, costs, estimated ending balance and assessments per parcel. As we work our way through the contracting process and updated costs are identified, new fees will be calculated to ensure we are collecting sufficient funding to cover the costs of maintaining each LAD into the future.
- Question: Can we set a date certain for the evaluation of costs and new estimates with a plan of how to put the new (usually higher) fees into play? Can the council members help to initiate local LAD discussions to get the votes needed to make the changes?
 - Response: Providing a work scope and financial overview of all the LADs is a significant undertaking, one that will require consultant effort. Staff support having that work done and believe when it is concluded it will show a substantial need for restructuring of the LADs. A fundamental issue at the heart of the City's LAD program and each of the LADs is: what is the cost of the work needed to maintain each LAD in a safe and acceptable condition, and are the property owners that benefit from the LAD willing to assess themselves that cost. Related questions include: is it desirable to consolidate/eliminate LADs, or to restructure the program under the same or different legal authority, or to otherwise reorganize the program? Obviously, the City Council has an essential role to play in these discussions and in particular the ultimate decisions on how to best proceed regarding the City's LADs. It appears to staff that the Council will best be able to engage with the community and staff in discussion of the LADs once an assessment of the LAD program and options for improving it is complete. Staff estimate an analysis of the LAD program could be completed in the FY 2024/25 timeframe, but will need to confirm this timing once we have selected the consultant who will be performing the analysis. We are considering competitive proposals from two consultants for this assessment and are evaluating the proposed scopes of services,

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schedule, and fees. Also, the cost of the needed LAD review is a consideration; staff is assessing available funding, including whether the cost could be recovered in whole or in part through the assessments that fund the LADs.