



**Date:** September 8, 2016

**To:** Patrick H. West, City Manager *P.H.W.*

**From:** Marie Knight, Director of Parks, Recreation and Marine *M.K.*  
Craig Beck, Director of Public Works *C.B.*  
Chris Garner, General Manager Long Beach Water Department /s/

**For:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**Subject:** Median Watering Pilot Program

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### **BACKGROUND**

As you know, we are in our fifth year of a drought. As part of the Governor's water conservation mandate in response to the drought, we are prevented from watering street medians that have ornamental turf (grass) with potable water. Unfortunately, the mandate did not provide any allowances for those medians that have both turf and trees, and our antiquated irrigation systems don't provide the ability to only water the trees and not the grass. Subsequently, unless the median is using reclaimed water, which there are only a few, the irrigation has been turned off for the last several years. These two factors have had a significant impact on our urban forest. We are seeing a number of trees that haven't survived the summer, or are in severe distress. In addition, we receive daily calls of complaint and concern regarding the dry/brown look of the medians, and the dying trees.

### **DISCUSSION**

Working in partnership, Public Works (PW), Water, and Parks, Recreation and Marine (PRM) Departments are planning to implement an emergency median watering pilot project. Over the next 90 days, we will be deploying a water tanker truck that will be driven along corridors to water the impacted medians. We will use reclaimed water. The cost of reclaimed water is a lower rate than potable so we will be able to accomplish more with this pilot project. Several operational standards will be employed during this pilot program:

- Tank truck shall be appropriately identified with proper wording of appropriate size to be clearly read to inform the public that reclaimed water is being used.
- Irrigation shall be controlled to minimize ponding, reduce possible odor, and prevent breeding of flies and mosquitoes.

- Precautions shall be taken to insure that reclaimed water is not sprayed on walkways, pedestrians, vehicles, and buildings.

While this is not a long term solution, the goal is to save as many trees as possible over the remaining warm months. Hopefully, we will see some rain this winter to help sustain our street trees. The total cost for this effort covering truck rental, staffing, water and fuel is approximately \$40,000 and will be covered within existing budgets. PW will oversee the staffing, Water will fund the truck rental, and PRM will fund the water. The pilot project is scheduled to begin the week of September 12<sup>th</sup>.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call me at (562) 570-3170.

MK CG:CB/vhd  
9.1.16 MEDIAN PILOT WATERING

cc: Charles Parkin, City Attorney  
Laura L. Doud, City Auditor  
Douglas Haubert, City Prosecutor  
Tom Modica, Assistant City Manager  
Arturo Sanchez, Deputy City Manager  
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