



AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: MAY 7, 2008

DEPARTMENT: CITY ATTORNEY
DIRECTOR: BRADFORD R. JERBIC

Consent Discussion

SUBJECT:
RESOLUTIONS:

R-26-2008 - discussion and possible action regarding Resolution Adopting the City of Las Vegas Urban Forestry Initiative Awards

Fiscal Impact

- No Impact Augmentation Required
 Budget Funds Available

Amount:

Funding Source:

Dept./Division:

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

This Resolution will adopt the City of Las Vegas Urban Forestry Initiative, implementing both a recommendation contained in the Conservation Element of the Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan and a Council-approved Action Plan regarding sustainability. The Initiative proposes to double the amount of tree canopy coverage in the City by 2035 and provides for the preparation of an Urban Forest Management Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council approve this Resolution and authorize its execution on behalf of the City.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Resolution No. R-26-2008
2. Submitted after final agenda PowerPoint Presentation by staff

Motion made by GARY REESE to Approve

Passed For: 7; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

RICKI Y. BARLOW, LOIS TARKANIAN, LARRY BROWN, OSCAR B. GOODMAN, GARY REESE, STEVE WOLFSON, STEVEN D. ROSS; (Against-None); (Abstain-None); (Did Not Vote-None); (Excused-None)

Minutes:

TOM PERRIGO, Deputy Director of Planning and Development, and DOUG BENNETT, Conservation Manager for the Southern Nevada Water Authority, were present. MR. PERRIGO indicated that this resolution stems from the Council/Planning Commission joint workshop on sustainability, where staff was directed to establish a tree-planting initiative. He then gave a

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PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is included in the minutes, and went over the efforts thus far and the benefits of trees.

MR. BENNETT stated that trees provide habitat, food and shelter for wildlife. They are worth the water investment, if properly selected and maintained. The inventory taken on trees by the City will help manage those assets. In the long-range, information can be yielded for aerial images in order to develop technology to determine what types of tree species are in certain areas of the city and whether landscaping policies are helping the urban forest. The Water Authority is contributing data, staff expertise and money toward this project in the hopes that new technology can be created to obtain valuable information at a lower cost.

MR. PERRIGO outlined the three components of the Urban Forest Initiative in the resolution and recommended approval. He informed MAYOR GOODMAN that the tree canopy is defined by the width of the tree foliage.

COUNCILMAN BROWN questioned the 20 percent figure and whether that is compared to a city similar to the City of Las Vegas, to which MR. PERRIGO replied that the City is currently at 9 or 10 percent, with Ward 6 being the lowest, because it is a young community. The 20 percent goal for the City is based on standards established through studies done for the Southwest. COUNCILMAN BROWN directed MR. PERRIGO to provide him with information on how the 20 percent goal for the City of Las Vegas compares to other cities in the Southwest or nationwide and whether certain types of trees should be encouraged.

MR. PERRIGO pointed out that the City would be the first in the Mojave Desert to have this plan in place, and it would be better to plant tree species that are more beneficial. Once the inventory is completed, information on the current types of species can be derived and used to formulate a comprehensive program.

COUNCILMAN BROWN asked if the resolution calls for looking into development of parks to create tree canopies in areas where land uses might hinder such landscaping, for instance, in higher-density areas. MR. PERRIGO answered that the resolution calls for the preparation of an urban forestry management plan, which will require certain standards and recommendations based on land use. There will be separate components for requirements on private plantings and strategies for the City in order to make up the difference through public spaces.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON encouraged MR. PERRIGO to approach the County about establishing its own program. MR. PERRIGO indicated that, once the program is underway, he would be happy to reach out to any public agency in the Valley.