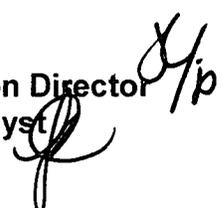


**MOORPARK CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA REPORT**

TO: The Honorable City Council

FROM: Jeremy Laurentowski, Parks and Recreation Director

BY: Jessica Sandifer, Senior Management Analyst 

DATE: August 25, 2015 (CC Meeting of 9/2/2015)

SUBJECT: Consider Variance of Resolution No. 2012-3096, Landscape Design Standards and Guidelines, for Landscape Renovation Project at Villa Del Arroyo Mobile Home Park

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION

Augusta Communities is a non-profit housing organization providing affordable housing at mobile home parks across the State. Villa Del Arroyo (VDA) is one of Augusta Communities' affordable housing mobile home parks located in Moorpark. There are 48 spaces at VDA restricted to very-low income individuals and families. Due to the current drought conditions, and the fact several landscape areas are in need of renovation, VDA management has initiated a project to renovate the landscape area at the front of the park, directly adjacent to Arroyo Drive.

The City's Landscape Design Standards and Guidelines ("Guidelines"), Resolution No. 2012-3096, was created to provide minimum landscape standards for projects within the City. In addition, as required by the State of California, the Guidelines adopt the water use requirements of the State of California's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO). The Guidelines apply to landscape renovation projects that consist of 2,500 square feet (s.f.) or more in size. Due to the fact that VDA's renovation area is within the City's right-of-way, a City standard encroachment permit is required for this work. In addition, the work area exceeds 2,500 s.f. and will need to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.

VDA's owners were not aware that the renovation of the landscape area would require an encroachment permit or would need to meet the requirements of the Guidelines. By the time they became aware of this fact, they had already removed all of the turf and trees along Arroyo Drive. Many of the trees had declined over time and the remaining trees were removed due to the poor health condition of the trees. The turf was removed in an effort to conserve water. VDA's original approved landscape plan for the area adjacent to Arroyo Drive included turf and street trees placed every 50 feet on-center.

VDA is asking for a variance to the Guidelines and is requesting approval to space the trees along Arroyo Drive every 50 feet on-center as originally approved for the project, instead of every 30 feet on-center as required by the Guidelines. The total street frontage is approximately 3,200 linear feet. This would require 106 street trees to be installed at the minimum spacing requirement identified in the Guidelines, or 64 street trees at the requested variance. VDA has stated that placing trees every 30 feet would be a financial hardship for the park. Staff estimates that the cost difference between the spacing requirements of the Guidelines and the requested variance is approximately \$11,500. It should be noted that the street tree spacing is a requirement of the City and is not part of the MWELO. VDA has agreed to comply with all the other requirements of the Guidelines. This includes the installation of drip irrigation and drought tolerant plant material to meet the State's water use requirements. Per the Guidelines, VDA will be required to install one shrub for every 100 s.f. of landscape area. VDA will install bark mulch to deter weeds and assist with water retention, and will work with the City to adjust the irrigation system in anticipation of a future sidewalk project that is planned along Arroyo Drive.

In the interest of supporting landscape renovation projects that reduce water consumption, staff recommends approval of the variance to the Guidelines and allowing VDA to plant the street trees every 50 feet on center.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve variance of the City of Moorpark Landscape Design Standards and Guidelines and authorize staff to approve Villa Del Arroyo's Landscape Plans with street trees placed every 50 feet on center.