

Consent Agenda Item 14

Oak Park MAC CSA 4 Landscape Committee Report: November 2024

Submitted by: Brian Trushinski

- **Landscape contractor for Oak Park CSA 4 services for 2025.** Ventura County Public Works is extending the current contract with Enhanced Landscape Management until June 2025. Staff are reassessing the 2024 RFP contractor bid submissions to find ways to reduce the +80% cost increase for 2025 services. Staff will attend the November MAC meeting to receive Council and public suggestions for cost and landscaping service reductions to remain within the approved County budget.
- **Ventura County Public Works (Watershed Protection District) draft 2025-2030 California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) Routine Maintenance Agreement for Medea and Lindero Canyon Creeks and their tributary streams.** WPD's draft 2025-2030 Agreement will be discussed at the November 21, 2024, MAC meeting. Council and the public will have an opportunity to provide input on what should be included in the District's final 2025-2030 Agreement submission to CDFW.
- **Juniper hedge trimming at the southeast corner of Kanan Road & Tamarind Street.** The entire hedge line has been removed and replaced with a gravel base material to provide safe conditions for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians at this busy intersection.
- **Revitalized planting areas along Hawthorn Drive (both sides) between Cremona Way and Kanan Road.** These specific planting areas were in the Steiner report (2023) as Areas J, K, L, M, and N. The MAC supported this project in April/ May 2024. There are approved budget funds. County Public Works has not yet authorized Enhanced Landscape to prepare a planting plan and cost estimate.
- **Updates from Rancho Simi Recreation & Parks District**
 - The District held an advertised community meeting on November 14, 2024, at the Oak Canyon Community Park Center (Kanan Road) to introduce Mr. Eric Lundstrom (Oak Park-Wood Ranch District 5 RSRPD Board Member) to Oak Park residents. Ten residents attended and presented ideas and suggestions regarding the District's services. Topics included wildfire abatement, removal of invasive plant species, general landscaping, maintenance of trails, parks, and open spaces, long-term environmental management of Medea Creek upstream of Hollytree Dr. to the Oak Park/Agoura Hills municipal boundary, CDFW permitting process for creek maintenance activities, requiring mountain bike bells for hiker safety, and the new Deerhill Park pickleball facility.

- The District has received approximately \$2.3 million grant money for improvements on RSRPD lands along Medea and Lindero Canyon creeks (removal of invasive plant species, wildfire hazard palm trees, and dead materials that are channel blockages). Envicon Engineering is working with CDFW to secure the mandatory regulatory permits.
- The Deerhill Park pickleball facility is in its third plan check for a building permit from the Ventura County Building Safety Division.
- The District is working to resolve a major hillside sediment debris flow that encroached into the backyards of residential properties in the Smoke Tree Ave. community.
- The District is working with the Ventura County Resource Management Agency to obtain the mandatory permit for trimming an oak tree on RSRPD property that is encroaching into the backyard of 42 Medea Creek Lane. This item was raised by the homeowner at the MAC's October 24, 2024, meeting and Brian Trushinski notified RSRPD.
- Friends of Oak Park Open Space is working with the District on various Medea Creek projects including invasive plant species removal, oak tree planting, and public awareness for environmental health and sustainability.
- Friends of Oak Park Open Space expressed notable concern that the District has not been following mandatory CDFW regulations for the significant riparian vegetation removal work in the ephemeral headwaters of Medea Creek immediately upstream of Hollytree Dr. Friends want a management plan created that prevents future environmental damage in this environmentally important reach of Medea Creek.
- Oak Park residential property owners each pay about \$41.00/year for RSRPD services. Costs associated with labor, materials, insurance, utilities, etc. increase annually thus resulting in a deepening budget-deficit situation. It is financially difficult to maintain what already exists in Oak Park. Community engagement should occur on service expectations and possibly a future assessment increase.

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