

Council Meeting of
March 24, 2009

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the City Council:

SUBJECT: Community Services – Approval of a revised Tree Dedication brochure and rates.

Expenditure: None

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Community Services Director that City Council approve the new Living Dedication Tree Program brochure and rates.

Funding

Not applicable

BACKGROUND

In 1992 both the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council approved the "Living Dedication Tree Program" in response to the many inquiries that were received by Community Services Department (then Parks and Recreation Department) staff. The Living Dedication program was modeled after the tree program offered by the City of Long Beach in which the public would pay for a tree to be planted in a park of their choice, and the City would plant the tree at its own expense. The donor is then given a Certificate Honoring a designee of their choice.

At the time of implementation, this program charged applicants \$75.00 for a 15 Gallon Tree, and \$175.00 for a 24" Box Tree. While the original Living Dedication program did not call for the reimbursement of labor and supplies, these costs have grown significantly over the years.

ANALYSIS

Staff have provided a Reimbursement Costs sheet to show the estimated costs associated with planting a tree (Attachment A). As the majority of these Plantings are done on weekends, overtime rates are used to calculate labor costs and an average tree cost is used as trees vary in price based on the variety of tree, the season, and quantity of trees purchased. Also included is the standard fleet rate for the truck used by staff for these plantings.

As indicated in the Living Dedication Tree Program Annual Report, a total of 289 trees have been planted through this program since its inception in 1992. In 2008 alone, 20 trees were planted at a cost of roughly \$330.00 per tree, for a total of \$6,600. The total reimbursement the City received for these trees was only \$2,500, a difference of \$4,100.

In 1992 the decision was made not to charge the donors for the labor and supply costs associated with the planting of the trees as the Department was the beneficiary of a 'free' tree. Staff have reviewed the current costs and determined that, due to budgetary constraints, reimbursements must be received in order to continue offering the program. Overtime accounts for approximately 55% and fleet charges roughly 10% of the total program costs, neither of which are budgeted expenses. The new recommended costs to applicants is \$240.00 for a 15 Gallon Tree and \$425.00 for a 24" Box Tree.

Size of tree	Total cost (1992)	Revised cost (2009)
15 Gallon	\$75.00	\$240.00
24" Box	\$175.00	\$425.00

Staff have reviewed other municipal tree dedication programs and found that costs vary from \$100 to \$400 per tree, but that the sizes of the trees varied by municipality. Staff found that the majority of cities do require reimbursement of labor and other costs. It should be noted that some of these fees do include the installation of a plaque commemorating the dedication of the tree. Staff would like to continue the City's current program of providing a Certificate of Recognition for the Dedication Program, and do not recommend incorporating plaques.

In addition to reviewing the reimbursement costs, staff have revised the Living Dedication Tree Program brochure. Included in this full color brochure are pictures of some of the trees that have been planted at our Torrance Parks as a part of this program. The new costs, including those for the reimbursement of labor and supplies, have been added to this brochure.

Staff anticipate that the increase in costs may reduce the total number of trees planted through the Living Dedication Tree Program. However, without the budget to absorb these costs, the reimbursements are necessary for the program to

continue. These changes, along with the revised brochures, were brought before the Parks and Recreation Commission on March 11, 2009. The Commission unanimously approved both (Attachment B), but asked that an additional line be added to the brochure for those applicants that wished to make an additional donation to the Living Dedication Tree Program.

Attached you will find the previous Living Dedication brochure (Attachment C) and a Draft of the revised brochure (Attachment D) that staff bring forward for your approval. It is the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Community Services Director that City Council approve the new rates for the Living Dedication Tree Program, including necessary adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index, as well as the new Living Dedication Tree Program brochure. Once approved, the new brochure will be posted on the City's website, along with other general program information.

Respectfully submitted,

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION



Howard Orpe, Chairperson

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT



John Jones, Director

HONORABLE:



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

- Attachments:
- A) Living Dedication Reimbursement Costs
 - B) Excerpt of minutes from the February 11, 2009, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting
 - C) 1992 Living Dedication Tree Program brochure
 - D) DRAFT Revised Living Dedication Tree Program brochure

Living Dedication Tree Program
Reimbursement Costs*
March 2009

ATTACHMENT A

15 Gallon Tree				
Staff/Hours	Position/Description		Rate	Total
2	Senior Groundskeeper	\$	38.80	\$ 77.60
2	Groundskeeper	\$	32.04	\$ 64.08
Vehicle (per day)				
1	Truck (8320)	\$	22.03	\$ 22.03
Materials/Supplies				
2	Stakes	\$	1.00	\$ 2.00
2	Straps	\$	1.00	\$ 2.00
1	Tree (15 Gallon)	\$	75.00	\$ 75.00
The actual cost for planting a 15 Gallon Tree is:				\$ 242.71
Recommended Cost to Applicant:				\$240.00

24" Box Tree				
Staff/Hours	Position/Description		Overtime Rate	Total
3	Senior Groundskeeper	\$	38.80	\$ 116.40
3	Groundskeeper	\$	32.04	\$ 96.12
Vehicle (per day)				
1	Truck (8320)	\$	22.03	\$ 22.03
Materials/Supplies				
2	Stakes	\$	1.00	\$ 2.00
2	Straps	\$	1.00	\$ 2.00
1	Tree (24" Box)	\$	185.00	\$ 185.00
The actual cost for planting a 24" Tree is:				\$ 423.55
Recommended Cost to Applicant:				\$425.00

*These costs may be adjusted based on the Consumer Price Index.

EXCERPT OF MINUTES

√ Minutes Approved
 Minutes Subject to Approval

February 11, 2009

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
 TORRANCE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Parks and Recreation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11, 2009, in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Cook, Gilbert, Hazell, Ning, Robbins, Taniguchi, and Chairperson Orpe.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Community Services Director Jones, Recreation Services Manager Brunette, Senior Business Manager Minter, Park Services Manager Wilson, Manager/Naturalist Drake, and Park Services Supervisor Simoneau.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Taniguchi seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8C. LIVING DEDICATION TREE PROGRAM 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Park Services Manager Wilson presented the 2008 Annual Report, noting that a total of 289 trees have been planted at various parks and City properties since the inception of the program in 1992. Attachment A shows dates, parks, and donors of an additional 20 trees planted in 2008.

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins moved to accept and file the Living Dedication Tree Program 2008 Annual Report as presented. Commissioner Taniguchi seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

8D. REVISION OF TREE DEDICATION PROGRAM

Senior Business Manager Minter distributed a draft revised brochure for the Tree Dedication Program that reflects an increased cost to applicants of \$240 for a 15 gallon

tree and \$425 for a 24" box tree. He reported that staff has reviewed current costs and determined that, due to budgetary constraints, reimbursements must be received in order to continue to offer the program. A Reimbursement Costs worksheet that shows the estimated costs associated with planting a tree are included in Attachment A. He noted that, as the majority of plantings are done on weekends by request, overtime rates are used to calculate labor costs. He requested that the Commission approve the new brochure and associated reimbursement costs and to forward its recommendation to City Council.

Commissioner Ning brought up the possibility of adding bronze plaques as an option and was informed that it was staff recommendation not to make City parks look like memorials or cemeteries. He also suggested implementing "living giving" to gain discretionary funds for programs such as this.

Commissioner Hazell suggested placing a list of donors, occasions, and locations on a City website as well as adding a donation line on the brochure.

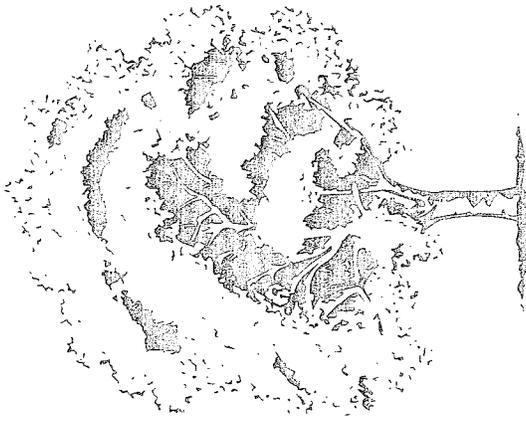
Park Services Manager Wilson stated that the City is considering doing a GPS mapping inventory of all trees in the City and that would help them relocate where donation trees have been planted.

Janet Payne, Engracia Avenue, recommended not marking the trees but stated that a map on the Internet would be a good idea. She brought up the possibility of charging an additional fee for weekend plantings.

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins moved to approve the Tree Dedication brochure as presented but for staff to recalculate and revise pricing in the brochure to reflect both weekday value rates and additional rates for plantings other than normal business hours as well as to add a donation line in the brochure. Commissioner Gilbert seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

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THE CITY OF TORRANCE
INVITES YOU TO



If you wish to participate in the City of Torrance "Living Dedication" Tree Program. Fill in the information below and enclose this form along with your donation check or money order made out to:

The City of Torrance
3031 Torrance Blvd.,
Torrance, CA 90503

- 15 gal. tree.....\$75.00
- 24 inch box tree.....\$175.00

Donated by:

Name and/or Organization

Address

City/Zip

Phone

Date

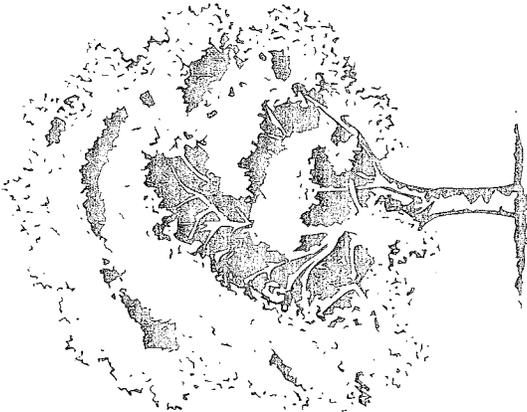
Information for Certificate

Please check where applicable:

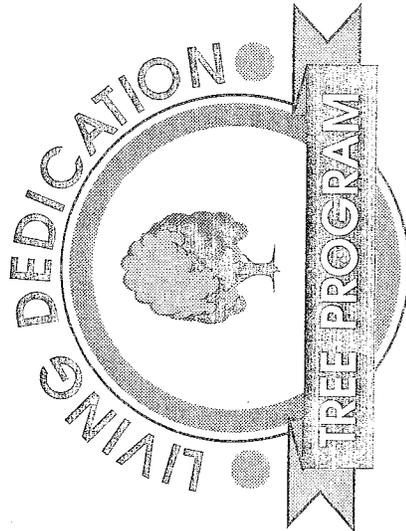
___ Memorial in Honor of

___ Special Occasion in Honor of

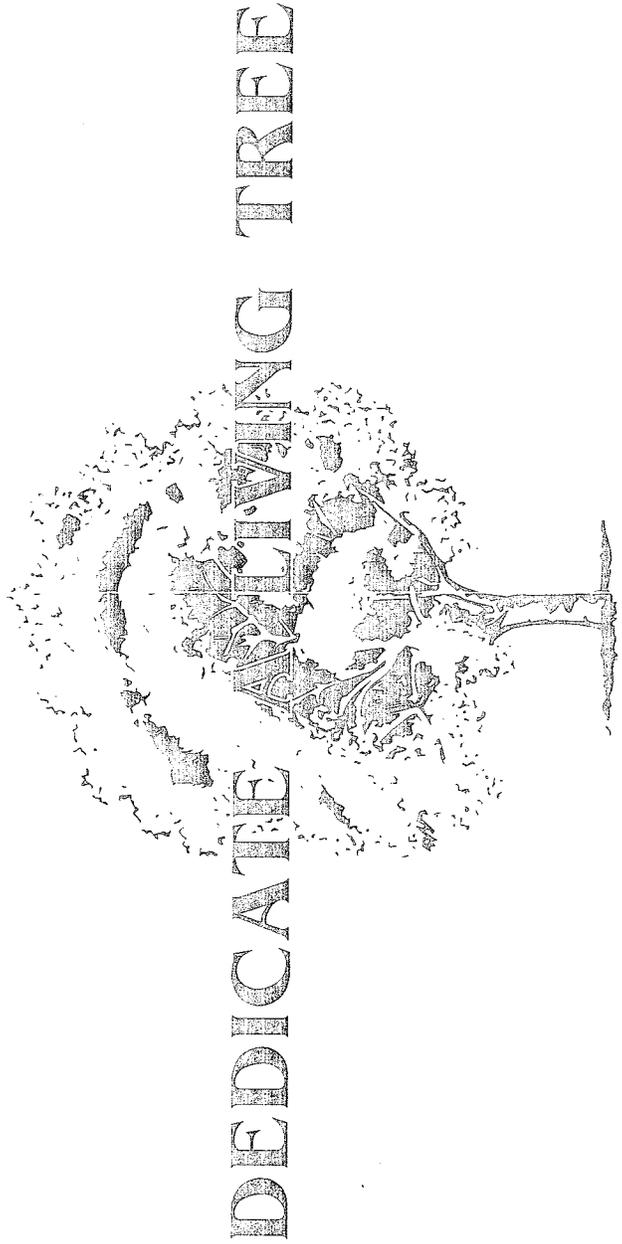
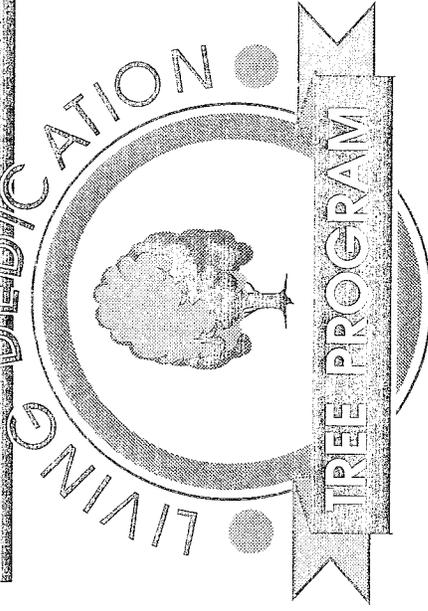
Preferred Park



THROUGH THE TORRANCE
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT



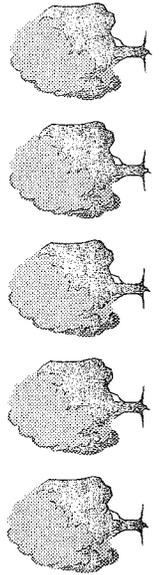
THE CITY
OF TORRANCE
PARKS AND
RECREATION
DEPARTMENT



A GIFT THAT WILL BE ENJOYED FOR YEARS

The City of Torrance, through the Torrance Parks & Recreation Department's "Living Dedication" Tree Program, offers an exciting, meaningful and unique way to contribute to your community...a gift that will give others genuine enjoyment for years to come.

Trees could be planted in City Parks to commemorate weddings, births, anniversaries, graduations, and memorials. Local organizations might show their civic pride by participation in the Living Dedication Program.



You have a choice of two tree gifts...a 15-gallon tree (\$75) or a 24 inch box tree (\$175). Also, you will have the opportunity to recommend your favorite City Park. However, the City staff reserves the right to adjust the Park site to comply with the Park Master Plan and select the tree type to comply with low water use guidelines.

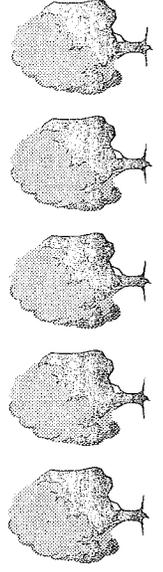
To dedicate a tree, fill in the form on the back of this brochure. Mail the form along with your check or money order (payable to the City of Torrance) to:

Parks and Recreation Dept.
City of Torrance
3051 Torrance Boulevard
Torrance, California 90503

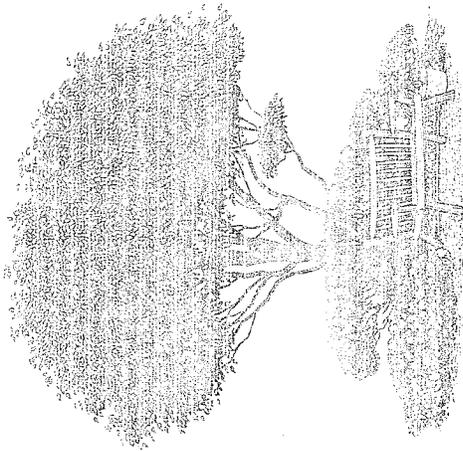
A Parks and Recreation Department staff member will contact you to make arrangements for your tree planting.

To record your gift, you will receive a beautiful certificate acknowledging your lasting contribution...something that you will be proud to display on your wall at home or office.

For information, please call:
(310) 781-6901



Living Dedication Tree Program



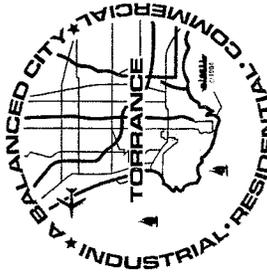
You have a choice of two tree gifts...a 15-gallon tree (\$240) or a 24-inch box tree (\$425). You may also select the park site and the type of tree with the approval of City staff.

To dedicate a tree, fill in the form on the inside of this brochure. Mail the completed form along with payment to:

City of Torrance
Community Services Department
3031 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503

For more information contact the **Park Services Division** at **(310) 781-6901** or visit our website at: **www.torchnet.com**

*(Make checks payable to the
City of Torrance)*



City of Torrance

Community Services
Department

3031 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503

Park Services Division
(310) 781-6901
www.torchnet.com

*Creating and Enriching Community Through
People, Programs and Partnerships*



Front cover: Liquid Amber Tree; Above: Bradford Pear Tree

The City of Torrance
invites you to



Dedicate a
Living Tree

Dedicate a Living Tree

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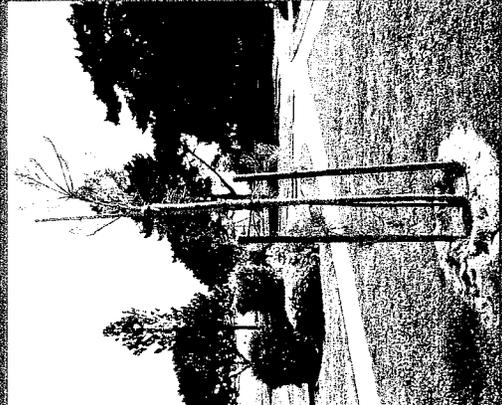
Flowering Cherry Tree



Alder Tree



Tipuana Tree



Canary Island Pine Tree

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Torrance, CA 90503

- 15 gal. tree.....\$240.00
- 24 inch box tree.....\$425.00
- Additional donation to the "Living Dedication" Tree Program \$ _____

Donated by

Name and/or Organization _____

Address _____

City/Zip _____

Phone _____

Date _____

Information for Certificate

Please check where appropriate:

- Memorial in Honor of _____
- Special Occasion in Honor of _____

Preferred Park: _____