



Councilmember
ROBERTO URANGA
Long Beach, Seventh District

Date: October 8, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Roberto Uranga, Seventh District (R)
Vice Mayor Dee Andrews, Sixth District (D)
Councilwoman Jeannine Pearce, Second District (P)
Councilwoman Suzie Price, Third District (P)

Subject: Magnolia Tulip Tree Scale Comprehensive Update

BACKGROUND:

In late 2017, constituents throughout the Seventh District began reporting magnolia trees on their parkways had been secreting large amounts of sap. After further investigation, the Public Works Department determined that the secretion was due to an infestation by a pest insect called Tulip Tree Scale. As many of the infected trees were originally found in the Wrigley neighborhood, Vice Mayor Dee Andrews and Councilmember Roberto Uranga coordinated with the Public Works Department and the City Arborist to determine a means of treatment while preserving our City's urban forest.

Throughout the month of June 2018, the City contracted with a company to treat a sample of the infected magnolia trees, by applying a specialized insecticide to the tree and root system of 20 infected tree sites. The Public Works Department and City Arborist have continued to treat and monitor the status of tree treatment and reports of new Tulip Tree Scale cases. In October of 2018, our office received a list of the trees infected in the Seventh District, which identified that 142 magnolia trees were infected.

Starting in May 2019, our office received an increase in requests regarding Tulip Tree Scale in magnolia trees, many of which had undergone previous treatment efforts. My office staff has also received reports that the scale has spread into other districts, including Districts 1,2,3 and 8.

It is now clear that this is a problem that is affecting the quality of life for many residents across the City of Long Beach. To best serve our neighborhoods, we must collectively take action to solve this ongoing problem.

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RECOMMENDATION:

Request that the City Manager, or his designee, work with our Public Works (PW) Department and return to Council with a To/From/For memorandum and a receive and file presentation, with the following information within 90 days:

- How many magnolia trees are within the City limits?
- How many magnolia trees with active Tulip Tree Scale infestations are there within the City limits? Within each Council District?
- What efforts has the Public Works Department's made to combat the Tulip Tree Scale (natural solutions, soil injection, watering process, etc.)?
- What is the community education process for requesting treatment?
- What is the community outreach process during treatment?
- What are the costs of the tree treatment process compared to the costs of tree removal?
- How many infested trees were treated in the last round of testing? How many recovered? How many are still undergoing treatment?
- What does recovery look like (lack of sap, removal of scale, etc.)?
- How many infested trees have been removed?

In addition, request the City Manager, or his designee to:

- Provide recommendations to improve the current policies/processes surrounding tree infestations;
- Provide a cost estimate for the removal and replanting of all affected magnolia trees within the City's boundaries;
- Provide a cost estimate for water blasting all affected sidewalks to remove the Tulip Tree Scale secretions.

This matter has been reviewed by Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon on August 30, 2019.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The requested action to provide a report within 90 days is anticipated to have a minimal impact on staff hours beyond normal budgeted scope of duties and a minimal impact on existing City Council priorities. Any potential costs in addressing the affected trees will be provided in the follow-up report.