

## **Maintenance of Trees and Medians Service Level Reduction**

The original budget reduction proposal included shifting the cost and responsibility for street tree maintenance to adjacent property owners, and shifting the staff focus to city owned properties. As staff worked towards developing this revised program, the difficulty with enforcing maintenance and the resulting risk of unmaintained trees caused staff to relook at options.

Staff's new proposal explores a modification of its in-house services to include maintenance of the trees on City owned properties that have been maintained by contract in the Grounds Division, which would result in \$200,000 in reductions. The additional work associated with the previously contracted services will be reallocated within the department. The resulting service level impacts will be lengthening the tree trimming cycle (from 7-years to approximately 10 years). This cycle is at the edge of the recommended tree trimming cycle of 5-10 years, but still at an acceptable level of service compared to other municipalities. In addition, medians on key corridors, such as De Anza Boulevard and Stevens Creek Boulevard will retain a high level of maintenance. Other locations will be maintained at a less frequent interval, which could, for example, mean fewer shrubs resulting in less service needs.

The focus on tree maintenance over median maintenance prioritizes the safety associated with trees over the high-level aesthetic achieved in medians, resulting in medians that have a more average maintenance level.

## **Maintenance of Sidewalk, Curb and Gutter Service Level Reductions**

The original budget reduction proposal included shifting the cost and responsibility for sidewalk maintenance to the adjacent property owner. In reviewing an implementation plan for this proposal, staff revisited the service delivery model and developed a preferred alternative, presented here.

This new alternative will retain City maintenance of sidewalks within the concrete maintenance program. The program will focus on ADA requirements and curb and gutter modifications to facilitate pavement maintenance. In addition, the program will shift the sidewalk maintenance focus from removal and replacement to grinding of tripping hazards, except in extreme situations. Grinding is a common solution that uses equipment to remove concrete where there are elevation changes (tripping hazards) between two sections of concrete. As a solution this has some advantages, including minimizing the environmental impact of removing and replacing concrete and significant cost savings. The disadvantages can include a less aesthetic solution and the inability to cure the underlying cause.

This option would result in a reduction in expenditures of approximately \$600,000 annually.