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From: [Sophia Reyna](#)
To: [Rigo Garcia](#)
Subject: Stance on the Uptown Streetscape "Beautification"
Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:38:43 PM

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Dear City Council of Whittier,

My name is Sophia Reyna, I am 19 years old, and I was born and raised in Whittier, CA. I currently study Business Administration and Environmental Science and Policy at the University of California, Irvine. For years I have driven by and walked past the trees along Greenleaf and surrounding streets in Uptown Whittier. The area is very close to home for me, as I attended St. Mary's of the Assumption school from K-8th grade and Whittier High School from 9-12th grade. Friends and family that I have from neighboring cities always point out our beautiful trees in this area of Whittier. The trees are a big part of the landscape of Uptown Whittier, bringing character to our small town and community.

There are detrimental effects that weren't taken into account while deciding on this "Beautification" of Uptown. Not only are the trees a historical and beautiful part of the city, but they provide a natural canopy of shade over the streets of Whittier, which help to keep temperatures lower for residents in the blazing heats in the summer. Our large trees also provide Uptown Whittier with carbon dioxide that purifies the air for residents. Cutting down these trees will take away the natural purification and cause large amasses of air pollution for 3 years while construction takes place. This is a health hazard for residents, especially for children who go to nearby schools, such as my two younger sisters currently attending Whittier High School.

Even if new trees are replanted after the old ones are removed, the new trees will take years to achieve the growth and maturity that the current trees have. Through studying at UCI, I have learned that keeping large trees are important because their roots are strong and keep the dirt underground sturdy, preventing erosion of the soil. New trees need years to grow these same strong roots. I also fear for the small businesses in Uptown Whittier, who I predict will be negatively affected financially and possibly physically by the construction. If construction were to take place, the noise pollution and crowdedness would deter visitors/residents of Whittier to walk and shop around Uptown Whittier. This would be harmful to our local economy.

I understand that there is a want to "beautify" Uptown Whittier, but I think there should at least be a compromise that doesn't include removing all 113 trees from the area. Please let me know what I can do to support keeping the trees of Whittier. I love Whittier and I'm very passionate about the environment and business. I want the best for my hometown and the people in it.

Best regards,
Sophia Reyna