

September 12, 2023

City Council
City of Whittier
13230 Penn St.
Whittier, CA 90602

Via Email

Re: Public Comment Opposing Proposed Removal of Street Tree at the Northeast Corner of Comstock and Broadway

Dear Mayor Vinatieri, Mayor Pro-Tem Fernando Dutra, and Council Members Cesar Martinez, Martinez, and Wagner:

I have lived in Whittier since 1993; one of the reasons I relocated here was its beautiful trees. I am proud of my city's many Tree City, USA awards, and I am sure there are many others who feel as I do.

I am familiar with the above-noted tree and its immediate surroundings, which I frequently pass on my morning walks.

I am writing to oppose removing the tree.

REMOVAL OF THE TREE, EVEN IF IT IS REPLACED, IS IN NEITHER THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S NOR THE CITY'S BEST INTERESTS FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- The tree canopy on this block of Comstock is particularly beautiful because of its visual unity; in other words, the trees are of similar size, and many are of the same species. Replacing the tree with a much smaller one, even of the same type, will destroy this. (See page A2 of the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan for a reference to visual unity as a positive attribute.)
- A smaller tree will provide less shade and less cooling just as our summers are getting hotter.
- A smaller tree will sequester less carbon dioxide than a large one at a time when our climate needs all the help it can get.
- Removal of the tree will be an unnecessary expense for the city.

WHILE THE ROADWAY AND SIDEWALK IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE TREE SHOW SOME UPLIFTING AND DAMAGE (SEE ATTACHED PHOTOS) WHICH, PRESUMABLY, ARE WHY THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WANTS TO REMOVE THE TREE, THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES.

- The sidewalk next to the tree is uplifted. The surface could be made smoother and thus easier to use by people with limited mobility (wheelchairs, etc.) by overlaying it with asphalt.
- The curb could be “bulged” two feet into the street while leaving the sidewalk in place. This would provide space between the tree and the curb and also cover the damaged part of the street surface.
- The curb could be “bulged” four feet into the street, and the sidewalk rerouted to the street side of the tree. The sidewalk could be made completely flat by doing this, and the damaged part of the street could be covered over.
- Regarding the above two points, it should be noted that no parking would be lost since the side of Comstock Avenue between Broadway, the tree, and the driveway immediately to the north of the tree already contains a fire hydrant, so much of it is a no-parking zone, while the remaining area is too close to the corner, too small, and too close to the driveway to be useful (or safe) as a parking area.
- It should be noted that the tree is of the species *Podocarpus henkelii*, known as the Long Leaved Yellowwood. It is not a *Ficus*, so concerns about invasive roots should be nonexistent or much less.

There may be other ways to address the Public Works Department’s concerns without removing the tree, which, with adequate input from the tree’s immediate neighbors, could be pursued.

Thank you for considering my comments and, in advance, for saving this tree.

Sincerely,

Ken Bodger

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Whittier, CA 90601

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NEIGHBORHOOD
SAVE THIS TREE
Organized by Old City Winery & Vineyard
City of Newport County
9-12-23-611
310 617 7768





WE LOVE TREE

SAVE THE TREE
CONSERVATION
916-435-0811

SAVE OUR TREE

6056



605

Comstock Ave
Reading

WMC 10.16.120

NO PARKING
THIS BLOCK
TUESDAY
8AM TO 11AM

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

EMERGENCY CALL 911
Non-Emergency (562) 567-9200
PROGRAM IN FORCE
We report all Suspicious
Persons & Activities to the
Whittier Police Department

NO PARKING THIS BLOCK
TUESDAY 8-11 AM

