

From: [Helen Rahder](#)
To: [Rigo Garcia](#)
Subject: Comments for Tonight's Council Session 2/20
Date: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 11:56:16 AM

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Dear Mayor-pro tem Dutra and Councilmembers Warner, J. Martinez and O. Martinez:

The Conservancy hopes to resolve this matter with a solution that is equitable and makes sense.

We have no intention of picking away at various aspects of the Promenade Project that you discussed over a two-year + period between 2021 and 2023.

However, **the removal of all of the trees at once**---resulting in the loss of the canopy that serves a multitude of purposes---**is not permitted** under the Uptown Specific Plan "phasing" program, nor is it identified or analyzed in any of the environmental documents that have accompanied the project.

The Promenade project was expanded by 51% in the Consent Calendar of Aug. 22,2023---with no discussion whatsoever and, apparently, without the awareness on the part of the council. You all voted for this massive increase in the scope of the project--- including Mayor Vinatieri, who has recused on all other votes. We believe that this escalation from 4.8 acres to almost 7 acres is what has driven Public Works to ramp up the street improvements; this, in turn, has pushed the wholesale tree removal to accommodate this new version---which you have apparently never discussed.

We believe that you need to rescind the Dec. 12th. approval and return to the pre-Aug. 22nd. version of the project and go from there.

After that, we propose the following:

1.) retention of canopy by removing only those trees that meet the criteria for removal per all governing documents; some trees could be removed in between mature ficus and replanted between. Succession then takes place over time as the new tree reach maturity.

2.) "extensive planting" of the periphery of Uptown (Penn, Painter, Pickering, and Hadley) per the pre-requisite requirement in the USP prior to Greenleaf tree removal.

3.) HRC action on the historic street lamps and other historic features in USP.

Helen Rahder
Executive Director
Whittier Conservancy
P.O. Box 9114
Whittier, CA 90608
562-858-3110



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