

RECEIVED ON: March 14, 2024

Council Meeting: 03/12/2024
Agenda Item No: 10

From: [Rigo Garcia](#)
To: [William Martinez](#)
Subject: FW: My Public Comment re Trees at March 12, 2024 City Council Meeting
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2024 3:21:40 PM

Below are my remarks given during Public Comment at the March 12th City Council Meeting:

Inviting all the public listening tonight to come to the RALLY to SAVE OUR TREES -- this Saturday, March 16 at 1 pm here at OUR City Hall!!! (The attached Rally Poster was shown on the City's overhead projector). This Rally is a result of your controversial decision to chop down EVERY ONE of the 108 mature, shady trees in the HEART of Uptown on 3 blocks of Greenleaf Ave.

At your Feb. 20th City Council meeting about the Greenleaf Promenade Plan, the issue of the City's liability costs was a major topic of discussion. When Council member Fernando Dutra asked if cutting down ALL of the 108 trees at once would have an impact on the City's liability insurance costs, the City Manager responded "NO".

At the end of that same Feb 20th Council meeting, the City Manager asked the Director of Risk Management "How many outstanding claims against the City are related to trees?" She responded "75." Council member Octavio Martinez asked "Right now, open and pending cases, related to trees?!" She responded: "YES"

I sought verification by following up with a Public Records request. I received the response last week: of the **56** pending cases (not 75), only ONE claimed a trip and fall bodily injury related to tree roots! Many of claims are for property damage to their vehicles due to POTHoles and poorly maintained streets, as well as from falling tree limbs, including dropping pine cones. One claims their vehicle was wrongly towed and impounded. Several claim bodily injury due to traffic collisions, including with police cars! One claims bodily injury due to poor traffic signal visibility. One trip and fall bodily injury claim is due to exposed rebar.

Several claims are related to uneven sidewalks with NO mention of trees. And 7 of the 56 pending claims are OUTSIDE of the City limits.

At that Feb. 20th City Council meeting, after you were told ALL of the City's pending claims are related to trees, Council member Fernando Dutra asked "What happens in other nearby cities?" You heard tonight that other area cities, including LA and Pasadena, are planting more trees, including ficus trees!

In light of the erroneous information you've been given regarding the City's pending liability claims that ALL of the claims are due to trees, I urge you to seek outside, independent sources of information. The public is relying on you to make the right decision regarding the fate of our trees.

Again, calling out to the public to please come to the RALLY TO SAVE OUR TREES, this Sat. March 16 at 1 pm, here at OUR City Hall! **It will be a true ARBOR Day** celebration. The media will be covering it.

Conny McCormack

Former LA Co. Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (Ret.)

27-year Whittier resident

CC: CM; ACM; CA; Council; Original to CC; Public Binder; Department

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**SAVE OUR
TREES!**

RALLY

Sat. March 16 @ 1pm
Whittier City Hall Plaza
13230 Penn St.

www.saveourtreeswhittier.com