



MEMORANDUM

January 13, 2012

TO: Board of Mayor and Alderman

FROM: Todd Snackenberg, City Arborist
Larry Mizell, Land Planner
Catherine Powers, Planning & Sustainability Director
Lisa Clayton, Parks Director
Joe York, Street Director
Vernon Gerth, ACA Community and Economic Development
Eric Stuckey, City Administrator *ES*

SUBJECT: McEwen Interchange Tree Planting Project Discussion

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) with information to consider the proposal of adding understory trees to the existing McEwen Interchange.

Background

Since the opening of the McEwen Interchange, trees have been absent from the existing landscape. Through discussions with a Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) representative, canopy trees for this area would not be allowed but understory trees would be for the proposed areas. A main reason why the area was not landscaped is due to the absence of a water source and the hardship of on-going maintenance to accomplish such a project. When McEwen Interchange was constructed, landscaping and trees were taken into consideration in the overall design but limited use of resources made the implementation more difficult than originally anticipated.

A number of factors were considered in the trees selection for this project. The most important was the absence of a water source. Therefore, the City Land Planner, Arborist, and Street Landscaping Supervisor discussed the possibility of adding trees that will withstand heat and the exposure to the elements. The mix of trees recommended by this staff team includes: (8) Amur Maples (7) Chinese Fringe (7) Yellowwoods (7) Sourwoods.

No shrubs are to be planted at this time within the scope of this project. The goal is to establish healthy trees before anything else is planted within interchange. The proposed trees being planted will shed leaves in the fall but the amount of leaf litter will not be enough to cause an issue with traffic. The trees will be planted so they have a minimal effect on traffic and pedestrian visibility. Visibility issues as the trees mature will be remedied by structural pruning. The locations of the trees were selected to not block any traffic views. Their locations will not cause harm to the landscape or streets ROW.

Financial Impact

Upon a favorable response after the initial presentation by city personnel, various departments will move forward with the taking this project through the existing procurement process. The contract will include installation and maintenance of the twenty-nine (29) trees for three (3) years. The funds will be supplied



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from The Tree Bank and has been approved by the Tree Commission tentatively until a final contract is presented prior to submitting for full approval to the Board of Mayor Alderman.

The maintenance of this project would include watering, fertilization, pruning, and any necessary pest or disease control. After the three year maintenance contract is over, city staff would take over the maintenance responsibilities. A landscaping crew consisting of three individuals would spend an estimated twenty (20) hours a year maintaining these trees. Most of this time would be spent on structural pruning. Total estimated cost would be less than \$4,000 yearly in maintenance costs.

Once the procurement process is complete, city personnel will contact the TDOT official assigned to the review of this project to receive a Notice to Proceed. The City Arborist will be the city's representative during the planting stage and multi-year maintenance of the project.

Recommendation

After careful planning and review of the project with the Tree Commission, initial meeting with TDOT for input and various departmental personnel, the city departments recommend moving forward with procurement process at this time. A final contract with written approval from TDOT will be submitted to the Board of Mayor and Alderman for final approval.