



## City Council Agenda Report

**Meeting Date:** September 10, 2024  
**Prepared By:** Manny A. Hernandez  
**Approved By:** Gabe Engeland

**Subject:** Operating Budget Increase for Fiscal Year 2024/25 for Maintenance Services and Agreement Award: Roadway Median and Shoulder Maintenance Services

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### COUNCIL PRIORITY AREA

- Business Communities
- Circulation Safety and Efficiency
- Environmental Sustainability
- Housing
- Neighborhood Safety Infrastructure
- General Government

### RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Allocate additional funding in the amount of \$131,000 into fiscal year 2024/25 Parks & Recreation operating budget for the median and roadway shoulder maintenance agreement.
- 2) Authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement with Del Conte's Landscaping in the amount not to exceed \$208,116 annually for median and roadway shoulder maintenance.

### FISCAL IMPACT

The following action will increase the general fund operating budget for median maintenance in fiscal year 2024/25 an additional \$131,000. The median maintenance agreement will not exceed \$208,116.

### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA section 15301 – Existing Facilities consisting of the operation, or minor alteration of existing public structures and facilities involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

None

## **BACKGROUND**

City Maintenance staff maintains roadway medians and shoulders on Los Altos roadways and County of Santa Clara owned Foothill Expressway. The Parks Maintenance Division deploys a four-person crew to handle landscape on medians, shoulders, pathways, easements and all downtown landscaping. Maintaining road adjacent landscaping is time consuming and challenging with the limited hours allowed for lane closures, proper lane closure procedure and the precautions that need to be adhered to when working adjacent to vehicular traffic.

Evaluating the workload of the 4-person Boulevard Crew, staff concluded that some of the locations they oversee would be better maintained under contracted maintenance services. This would allow the boulevard crew to focus on areas that have a more intricate planting schedule such as downtown and San Antonio Road. It would also give the crew more opportunity to stay on top of the maintenance of the many resident-adjacent easements that see rapid weed growth and require non-chemical abatement.

## **ANALYSIS**

Using a combination of staff and professional contracts to maintain City landscape is common among public agencies. City of Los Altos Parks & Recreation staff evaluated the roadway median and shoulders that have proved to be challenging to keep at a high level of maintenance and selected five (5) areas to maintain under a maintenance contract. The roadway median and shoulder areas that are being proposed for contracted maintenance are the following.

- Foothill Expressway (Blue Oak Lane to Cristo Rey Drive)
- Medians and City of Los Altos side shoulder on Homestead Rd and Grant Rd
- Medians on South El Monte Ave. (Viola Place and Voorhees Dr.)
- Hetch Hetchy pedestrian path shoulders (Via Del Pozo to Adobe Creek bridge)
- Medians and shoulders on Fremont Ave. (Grant Rd. to Stevens Creek crossing)

Foothill expressway is County of Santa Clara property that is City maintained under an ongoing Landscape Agreement between the City of Los Altos and the County. With the pesticide restrictions set forth by the County on the expressway, it is very time consuming and takes a large number of man-hours to control the weeds, maintain irrigation and prune the oleanders and trees in a regular manner with the current staffing numbers. Being a large and highly visible area, staff feels that having a contractor maintain Foothill will keep the medians and shoulders better maintained year-round due to the attention it would receive.

The Homestead median area is a high traffic location where crews spend a lot of time repairing and re-planting as vehicles regularly damage the landscape. Landscaping repairs are needed in that location due to gopher damage as well. South El Monte medians also see a lot of crew hours for weed control, trash pick-up and plant maintenance.

Hetch Hetchy pedestrian pathway is at the far north end of Los Altos and has ample open space for weeds to grow quickly, many times encroaching on the pathway before crews are scheduled to deploy to that area. Foxtail weeds are prevalent on the Hetch Hetchy pathway and are troublesome to pathway users and their pets. Non-chemical control of these weeds is important in this well-traveled pathway through Los Altos.

Fremont Avenue is a two-lane road between Grant and the 85 highway that sees high traffic at times. There are trees, irrigation and mixed landscaping to maintain in that area.

### **DISCUSSION**

In the budget submitted by Parks & Recreation for contracted maintenance of roadway medians and shoulders for fiscal year 2024/25, staff was planning contracted maintenance only on Foothill Expressway and estimated \$78,000 for that agreement. After further consideration of maintenance efficiencies, expectation of maintenance levels and changes in Park Maintenance staffing levels in 2024/25, staff is proposing including the above areas for contracted maintenance at an additional cost of \$131,000. The use of contracted landscape maintenance in the proposed areas is expected to provide a higher level of maintenance in those areas and allow the Boulevard Crew to continue to maintain downtown and all other medians, shoulders and easements in Los Altos at the highest levels without the need to hire additional maintenance staff or purchase additional vehicles and equipment.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution Authorizing 2024/25 Operating Budget Increase and Award of Maintenance Services Agreement.