

Mr. Kevin James, President
City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works
200 North Spring Street, Room 361
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Application for Tree Removal Permit

Dear Mr. James:

On behalf of the Neighborhood Council of Westchester / Playa, I am writing to express our wholehearted support for Westchester Streetscape Improvement Association's final phase of Sepulveda Boulevard landscaping improvements, including the removal of all ficus and bottle brush trees on the east side between 78th and 79th Streets.

For many years, the Neighborhood Council has supported the WSIA's efforts to develop a beautification plan for Sepulveda Boulevard, secure funds to make that plan a reality, and implement its vision.

Today, WSIA's efforts have resulted in a gorgeous streetscape, including new meandering sidewalks and spectacular landscaping on both the sidewalks and medians along Sepulveda Boulevard. The final, important step in this process is to assure that the remaining portions of this area fit seamlessly into the improvements that have already been made.

The existing ficus and bottle brush trees have caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage, buckling sidewalks, infiltrating water pipes, and creating a safety hazard for both pedestrians and drivers. According to certified arborist Greg Monfette, who has examined the trees, these trees cannot be "root pruned and preserved because the root severance will destabilize the trees leading to their failure."

Furthermore, if these trees are allowed to remain, sidewalk buckling will only increase, forcing more pedestrians to walk in the street, creating a dangerous situation for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. In short, this area is simply not safe unless the trees are removed.

By allowing WSIA to complete its beautification efforts along Sepulveda Boulevard, including the removal of the damaging trees, our community will benefit from a more beautiful streetscape and those who walk and/or drive along Sepulveda Boulevard will be able to do so more safely. We encourage you to support this effort. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Paula Gerez,
President, Neighborhood Council of Westchester Playa

C: Councilman Mike Bonin