



Agenda Item # \_\_\_\_\_

# Staff Report

## City of Manhattan Beach

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Wilson and Members of the City Council

**THROUGH:** Geoff Dolan, City Manager

**FROM:** Neil Miller, Director of Public Works  
Juan Price, Maintenance Superintendent

**DATE:** March 1, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Presentation of the Proposed Landscape Design for the Downtown Streetscape District and Approve Appropriation of \$40,000

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council receive this presentation of proposed improvements to the downtown Streetscape area, and approve an appropriation of \$40,000 from the Council Contingency Fund.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATION:**

On January 18, 2005 City Council approved using \$50,000 from the Gas Tax Fund to support Downtown Streetscape slurry sealing, re-striping of all traffic markings, curb painting, crosswalk enhancements, and painting traffic signal poles. The remaining landscaping improvements as proposed are estimated at \$60,000. Staff recommends using \$40,000 from the City Council Contingency and \$20,000 from Fiscal Year 2004-05 Public Works operating accounts to complete this project. The current City Council Contingency Fund available balance is \$105,080.

### **BACKGROUND:**

In July of 2004, the City received a letter from the Downtown Manhattan Beach Business and Professional Association (DMBBPA) requesting the City to consider making some improvements to the aesthetics of the downtown. The letter points out that with the upcoming completion of the Community Plaza that the downtown may look a little worn in comparison. Staff also met with the Executive Director of the DMBBPA to clarify and prioritize the requests. One of the requested improvements, replacing string-lighting in the trees with up-lighting, has already taken place. The City Council approved this modification at its October 19, 2005 meeting.

On January 18, 2004 City Council received a presentation from staff regarding the remainder of potential improvements for the downtown area. At that time, City Council approved funding for the Downtown Streetscape slurry sealing, re-striping all traffic markings, and curb painting (\$25,000); crosswalk enhancements (\$10,000); and painting downtown traffic signal poles their

current color (\$15,000). Staff was also directed to return to Council with a “gateway” planter landscape plan and more information on the proposed design of the hanging basket planters.

**DISCUSSION:**

*Hanging Baskets*

While researching various light pole manufacturers for appropriate hardware, staff was unable to find hardware specifically designed for hanging planters on our particular types of traffic signal and street light poles. Available hardware was industrial in appearance, required modification, and did not express an appropriate aesthetic value to match the downtown area. Public Works instead proposes to fabricate custom hardware in-house that will be aesthetically pleasing and capable of being modified to any site specific situations that will be encountered in the field.

Two renderings of the proposed design with a suggested plant pallet are attached for review. The plantings were chosen for color, hardiness, and growth habit and include the following selections:

- Dwarf Morning Glory (*Convolvulus tricolor*)
- Black Eyed Susan Vine (*Thunbergia alata*)
- Ivy Geraniums (*Pelargonium pektatum*)
- Star of Bethlehem (*Campanula isophylla*)
- Needlepoint Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Bouganvillea (*Bouganvillea* spp. “Hawaii”)

Lightweight fiberglass or plastic containers will be used to contain the plantings, which will be left in individual containers to simplify periodic change out. Planting media will consist of vermiculite, moss, and premium planting mix to reduce weight and to ensure the adequate nutrient and water needs of the plantings.

Upon approval of the design by the City Council, Public Works will commence fabrication and installation of the necessary hardware. The plants will be installed after the poles and hanging basket hardware are painted in conjunction with the traffic signal poles, as approved previously by City Council.

*Gateway Planters*

Most of the proposed “gateway” planters have recently been retrofitted with uplighting to replace the aging string lights. The existing plantings consist of gazania, India hawthorne, and well established Carrotwood trees. City Council has expressed a desire to enhance the plantings color impact at specific locations, and City staff proposes the following plant pallet:

- Sea lavender (*limonium prezii*)
- Lily of the Nile (*Agapanthus africanus*)
- Common Thrift (*Armeria* )
- Margurite (*Chrysanthemum frutescens*)
- Daylilies (*Hemorocallis hybrids*)
- Sweet Allysum (*Lobularia maritime*)
- Geranium (*Pelargonium peltatum*)

Staff proposes to clear and grub overgrown standard size India hawthorne shrubs and gazania. Upon completion of the clearing phase, staff will re-grade the planters and amend the soil to improve fertility and moisture retention, finishing with new plantings as described in the attached rendering. Plantings will have to be coordinated with the pole painting and hanging basket installation, and after slurry sealing operations in order to eliminate any damage to the new plantings.

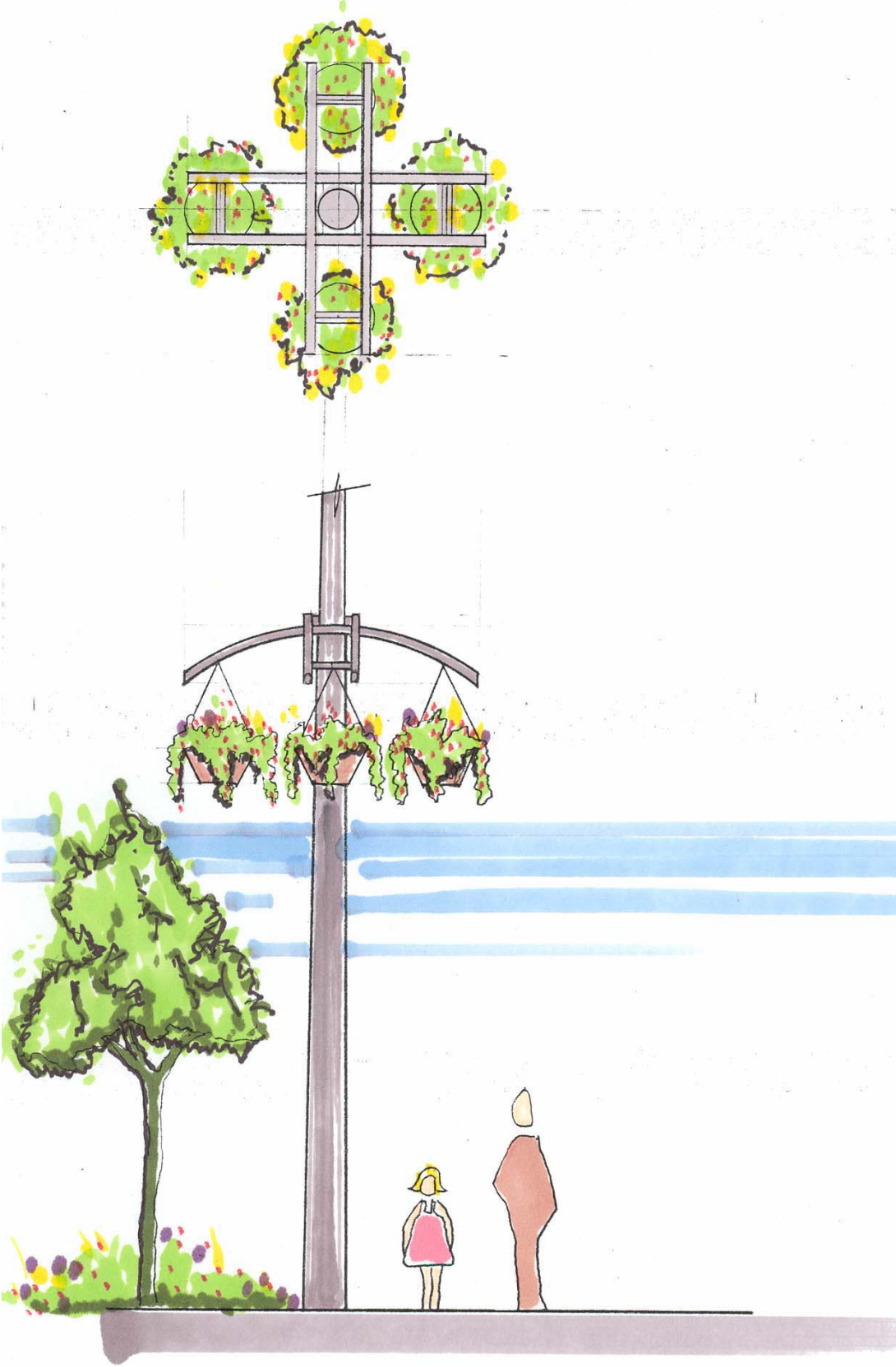
**CONCLUSION:**

The Downtown Manhattan Beach Business and Professional Association requested that the City contribute to a facelift of some of the Downtown Streetscape Improvements. City Council already approved funding for slurry sealing, re-striping of all traffic markings, curb painting, crosswalk enhancements, and painting traffic signal poles. Staff proposes that City Council approve the landscape and hanging plant design plan and appropriate \$40,000 from the City Council Contingency Fund and use of \$20,000 of Fiscal Year 2004-05 Public Works operating accounts to support this project.

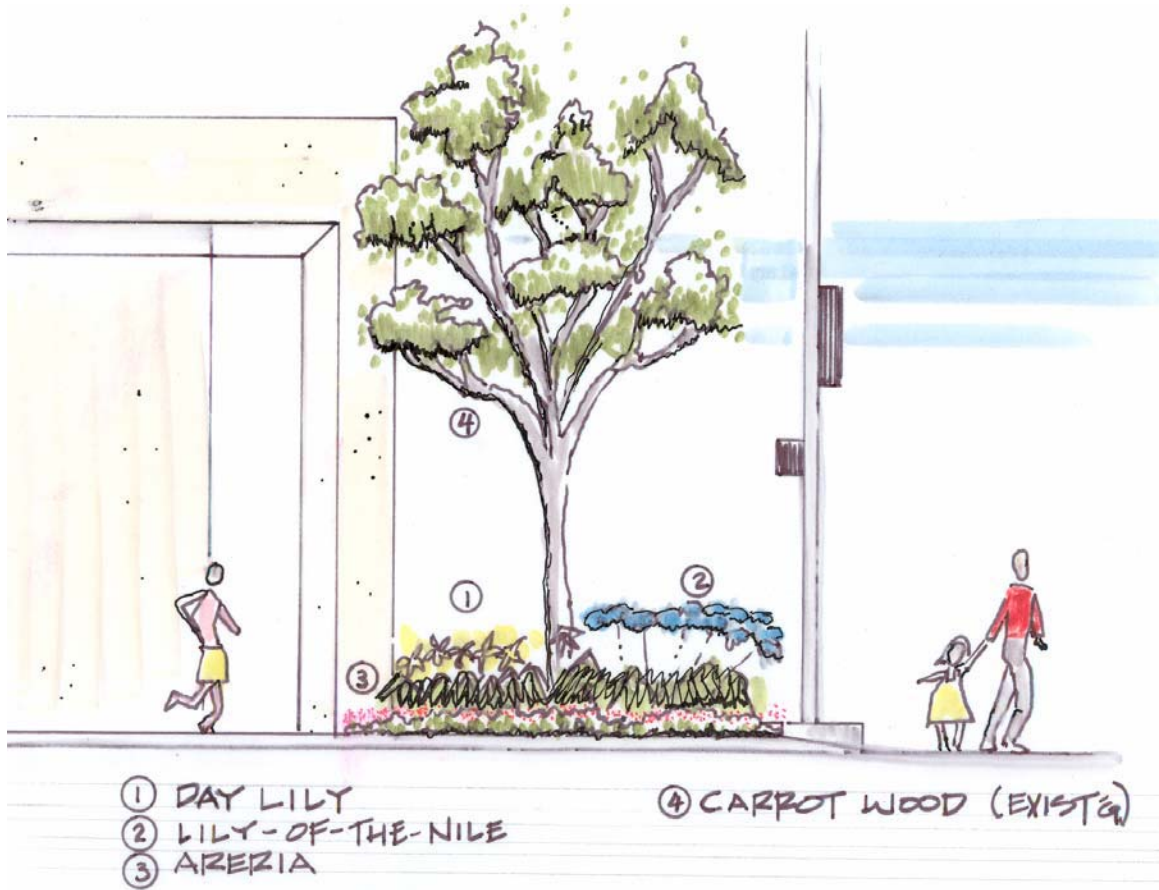
- Attachments:
- A. Renderings of Hanging Flower Baskets
  - B. Rendering of Typical "Gateway" Planter
  - C. GIS Map of Proposed Work

xc: Carol Rowe, Executive Director, Downtown Manhattan Beach Business and Professional Association

**Attachment A**  
**Renderings of Hanging Flower Baskets**



Attachment B  
Renderings of Typical "Gateway" Planter



# Downtown Streetscape Proposed Landscape Design

