


ITEM NO.	<u>9c</u>
MEETING DATE	<u>3-13-07</u>
APPROVED BY	
STAFF AUTHOR	
PLANNING MANAGER	

CITY OF REDDING

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: March 9, 2007

CODE: B-080-300

FROM: Development Services Department

SUBJECT: Report on Parking Lot Shade Trees

BACKGROUND

At the previous two meetings, the Commission has expressed a concern that some trees being planted in new parking lots are not of a species that will achieve the intended shading effect of the tree-planting requirements of the Parking Ordinance. It has been suggested that possibly the ordinance should be revised to require a "target shade area" expressed in a percentage of the parking lot area. For example, the City of Folsom requires that, "Trees shall be interspersed throughout the parking area so that in 15 years, 40 percent of the parking lot will be in shade at high noon . . ."

In considering this approach, I researched the history of Redding's parking lot tree-planting requirements. In 1990, Redding amended the Parking Ordinance to increase the tree-planting requirement from a ratio of 1 tree per 10 spaces to 1 tree per 4 spaces. Interestingly, the same "shade ratio" was considered at that time. Example parking lots were developed assuming a 25-foot-diameter tree canopy, and it was determined that the 1-tree-per-4-space ratio would achieve a 40 percent shade coverage. It was also determined that a tree-planting ratio would be easier to enforce and administer than a shade-area ratio. For example, monitoring would not occur for 15 years, growth rates are somewhat unreliable, and enforcement could cause hardship (e.g., parking-space removal).

I believe the Commission has a valid point that staff could be more diligent toward ensuring that trees planted within parking lots are, where possible, of a species that will achieve the desired shading. There will be some constraints due to utility infrastructure and planter configurations; however, I do believe that certain trees are not appropriate in parking lots and that staff should closely monitor this. Toward that end, I am working with the City's Landscape Specialist on a policy, identifying the purpose and criteria for parking lot trees and a list of preapproved trees. Other trees could be utilized that meet the criteria and are approved by the Planning Division. My intent is bringing this policy before the Commission for adoption. For a good example of how well the 1-tree-per-4-space ratio can work with appropriate tree types, the Commission is referred to the shopping center at the corner of Placer Street and Buenaventura Boulevard. These trees consist of medium to large varieties (Zelkover, Chinese Hackberry, Raywood Ash, and Flowering Pear) and were planted at 15-gallon size eight years ago.

This is to request your concurrence with this approach or receive other direction.

DD:jh
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 c: City Manager
 City Attorney
 Redevelopment Manager