

**CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH  
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION  
REQUEST FOR ACTION**

**MEETING DATE:** MARCH 13, 2013

**SUBMITTED TO:** COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

**SUBMITTED BY:** DAVID C. DOMINGUEZ, FACILITIES, DEVELOPMENT & CONCESSIONS MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** URBAN FOREST – PATHWAYS AND TRAILS

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**Statement of Issue:** There is a need to identify certain pathways and trails suitable for pedestrian and/or multi-use access within the Urban Forest in Huntington Central Park.

**Funding Source:** N/A

**Recommended Action:** Motion to:

Approve the proposed path and trail plan for the Urban Forest in Huntington Central Park as presented.

**Alternative Action:**

- 1.) Do not approve the proposed path and trail plan for the Urban Forest in Huntington Central Park as presented; and direct staff on how to proceed or;
- 2.) Refer the issue to the Huntington Central Park Committee for further review and recommendation.

**Analysis:** In 1999, City Council approved the Huntington Central Park Master Plan of Uses (HCPMP) to include an area for an Urban Forest. Through the efforts of the Huntington Beach Tree Society and the assistance of the Public Works Department, the Urban Forest was planted and dedicated in the fall of 2001 at its present location. The Urban Forest is located in the west side of the park - north of Ellis Avenue between Goldenwest and Edwards Streets (Attachment G-1.1).

Development of the Urban Forest was spearheaded by the HB Tree Society. Through their efforts, needed funding to prepare the site for planting and irrigation was obtained. The HB Tree Society also continues to maintain the area using volunteers from the community.

When the Urban Forest was originally approved and constructed, no specific boundaries were established. Therefore, at the October 11, 2011 meeting, Commission acted to approve an established boundary for the Urban Forest (Attachment G-1.2). The Urban Forest currently covers approximately 5-acres and the established boundaries now provide precise limits of the Urban Forest in order to define maintenance responsibilities and ensure compatibility with other park uses per the approved Master Plan of Uses.

The Urban Forest provides the public with an opportunity to experience a forest setting within a developed park and provides sitting areas and various pathways and trails. Access to the Urban Forest and use of the interior paths however has been an issue with some members of the equestrian community. One concern is that the Urban Forest limits the areas available for horseback riding. While the Urban Forest is not located over any of the approved trails identified in the Master Plan, there are several ad-hoc trails surrounding the forest. The south portion of the forest is unrestricted however, the north portion is fenced in. Access to the fenced area is provided by pedestrian gates (Attachment G-1.3).

In an effort to maintain the original intent of the Urban Forest and to accommodate the need for additional trails, staff toured the site and met with members of the Tree Society to come up with a proposed path and trail plan that would accommodate horses and other uses. Due to the various widths and meanderings of the paths and trails, it is staff's conclusion that some paths are suitable for multi-use access including walking, biking and horseback riding, while others are suited for walking only. Based on concerns for public safety and protection of the forest, staff has identified three pathways that could accommodate multi-use access as signified by the yellow lines on the proposed path and trail map (Attachment G-1.4). Two of the paths are located outside of the fenced area and are currently accommodating horses. The other is within the fenced area of the forest. Developing this path to allow for multi-use would require gate modifications to better accommodate access. In addition to the interior paths, the Tree Society volunteers have also proposed to define a multi-use path around the Urban Forest – as indicated by the green line on Attachment G1.4. These paths would still be considered “ad-hoc” and not part of the trail plan within the approved Central Park Master Plan.

Staff gave an overview of the plan to several boarders of the Huntington Central Park Equestrian Center at a January 16, 2013 meeting. Feedback on the proposed path/trail plan was mixed, with some expressing concern over limited access to the area while on horseback and questions on the need for the fencing to remain. The boarders were informed that there would be an opportunity for input at a future Commission meeting. Notice was sent to the Equestrian Center management to inform boarders of the meeting (Attachment G-1.5).

In an effort to address concerns of the equestrian community and maintain the Tree Societies intent for public use of the area, staff is recommending Commission approval of the proposed path/trail plan for the Urban Forest. As an alternative, Commission may consider referring the item to the Huntington Central Park Committee should it be felt that further review is needed. Should the plan be approved by Commission, staff will

work with the groups to prepare appropriate signage to identify the approved access points and use of the various paths and trails.

**Environmental Status:** N/A - The Urban Forest is an existing feature of Huntington Central Park and its development and location were included in the 1999 Huntington Central Park Environmental Impact Report.

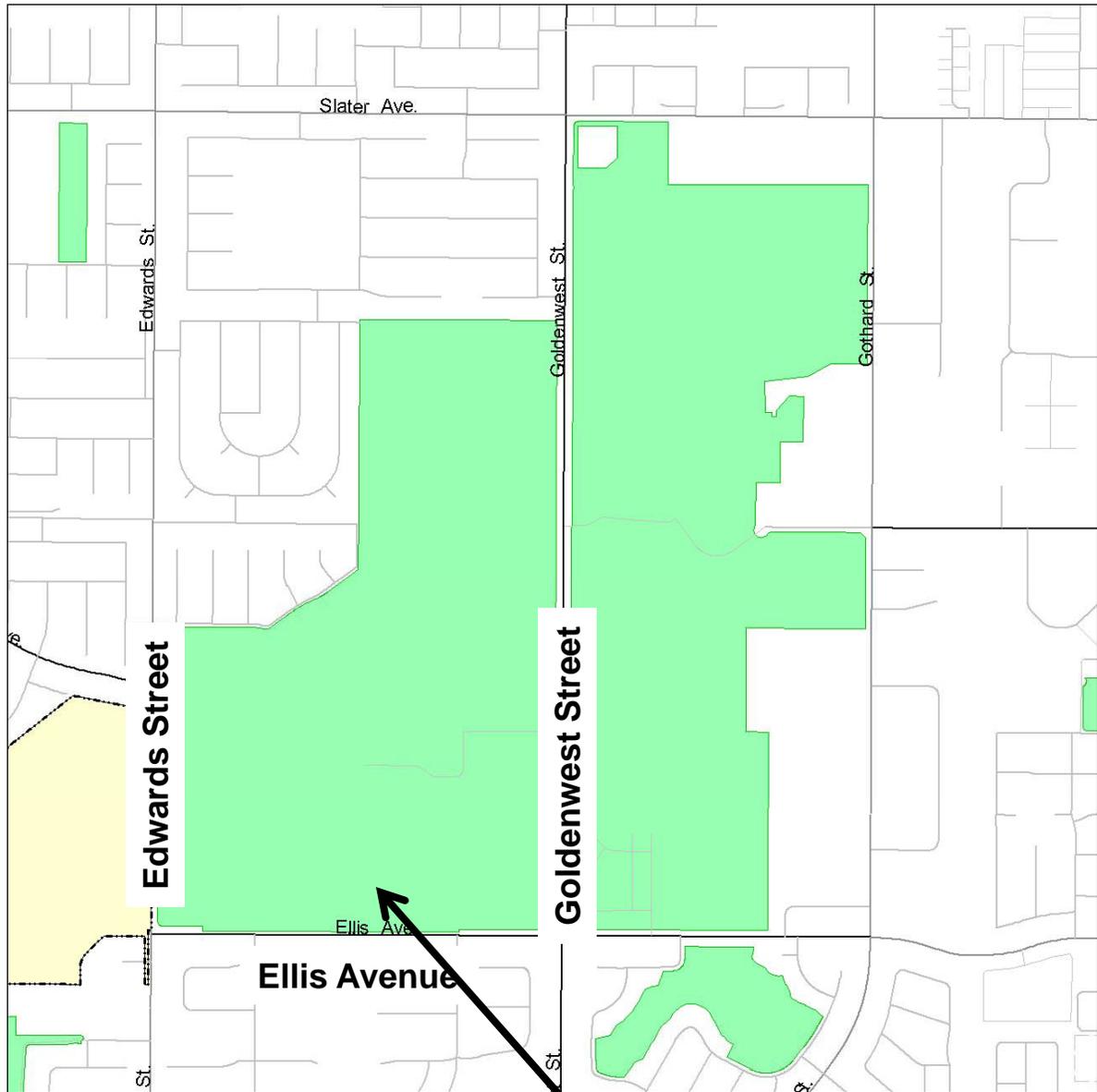
**Attachment(s):**

	No.	Description
	1.	Location Map
	2.	Urban Forest Boundary Map
	3.	Urban Forest Fenced Area
	4.	Proposed Path & Trail Plan
	5.	Notice

RCA Author: D. Dominguez

# HUNTINGTON CENTRAL PARK

## URBAN FOREST LOCATION MAP



**Location of Urban Forest**

# Huntington Central Park Urban Forest Boundary Map



Huntington Central Park  
Urban Forest Fenced Area



# Huntington Central Park Proposed Path and Trail Map



- Urban Forest Boundary
- Proposed established multi-use trails within the Urban Forest
- Proposed new multi-purpose trails outside the Urban Forest
- Proposed Connections to existing Ad-hoc trails

# Notice

The Community Services Commission will review a proposed plan to establish specific access and uses for the various trails within the Urban Forest in Central Park. As part of the review process, there will be an opportunity for input under the public comment portion of the meeting.

The Commission meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 13, 2013 at 6:00 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers – 2000 Main St, HB CA 92648.

Information regarding the item and the meeting agenda will be posted on the City's webpage [www.surfcity-hb.org](http://www.surfcity-hb.org), beginning March 8, 2013 after 5:00 PM.

Thank you