



**Meeting Date:** 4/28/2025  
**Item Number:** 7a  
**Time Estimate:** 30 minutes

## **TREE COMMITTEE AGENDA REPORT**

**SUBJECT:** 2025 ENGINEERING STANDARDS UPDATE, STREET TREES MAJOR LIST (8020)

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### **1.0 RECOMMENDATION**

Review proposed updates to the Street Trees Major List (Engineering Standard 8020) and provide recommendations to the City Arborist.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

[Municipal Code Section 12.24.040](#) states that the tree committee, with the assistance of the public works and community development departments, has developed and will maintain a Street Tree Master List and a Street Tree Major Streets List which shall be adopted by Resolution of the City Council and shall be on file in the Public Works Department, Engineering Standards. These documents shall specify the species of trees suitable and desirable for planting in certain areas in order to establish a diverse urban forest.

### **3.0 DISCUSSION**

The City is updating its Engineering Standards in 2025, which include the Street Tree Master List and Street Tree Major Streets List. Staff would also like to propose the addition of a Street Tree Specific List and rename the Street Tree Master List to "Master Tree List." Engineering standards matter because they provide a framework to help all participants in the urban forest (City Staff, residents, contractors, and developers) manage and replenish the urban forest in ways that reflect the input from staff, Tree Committee and outside experts.

On February 28, 2025, the Tree Committee reviewed and accepted changes proposed by staff to the Street Trees Major List (Attachment A), derived from the DRAFT Master Tree List (Attachment B). Species deemed to be either problematic, such as Magnolia, or not in the best interests of the urban forest, like Crape Myrtle, were recommended for removal from the list. The Tree Committee also requested further review of species lists and that additional changes be presented.

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Management of the urban forest and species selection is influenced by multiple factors such as impact to public-right-of-way and hardscape, traffic visibility, leaf and fruit litter, light filtration and building architecture visibility. Previous species choices and subsequent performance observations have led to refinement of the species lists. New tree species suggestions have vertical growth habits and let in light while still providing meaningful canopy benefits.

Below is a list of the additional recommended changes to the trees in Downtown District and Downtown Accent categories proposed by staff. Links are provided, which give more detailed information about the tree species discussed below.

The Downtown District and Downtown Accent were prioritized on the Major Streets List because of anticipated future changes to canopy cover. Two (2) species from the Master Tree List are proposed additions to the Downtown list: [Tipuana tipu](#) and [Brachychiton populneous](#) (Bottle Tree). These species provide significant canopy, let in more light, have a reduced maintenance burden and meet expected future requirements of the urban forest like building clearance. They are both drought tolerant once established and are suitable for SLO's climate future.

[Brachychiton populneous](#) (Bottle Tree) can be viewed on the [700 Block of Higuera near the Garden Street intersection](#) and [Tipuana tipu](#) can be viewed on the [700 Block of Lincoln Street](#).

<b>Downtown District (Current):</b>	<b>Downtown District (Revised):</b>
<a href="#">Ficus microcarpa</a> 10% <i>Quercus</i> sp. (evergreen) 50% <a href="#">Ginkgo biloba 'Princeton Sentry'</a> 30% <a href="#">Olea europaea 'Swan Hill'</a> 10%	<a href="#">Ficus microcarpa</a> 10% <a href="#">Tipuana tipu</a> 20% <a href="#">Brachychiton populneous</a> 20% <a href="#">Ginkgo biloba 'Princeton sentry'</a> 20% <i>Quercus</i> sp. (evergreen) 30%

  

<b>Downtown Accent (Current):</b>	<b>Downtown Accent (Revised):</b>
<a href="#">Jacaranda mimosifolia</a> <a href="#">Corymbia ficifolia</a> <a href="#">Cassia leptophylla</a>	<a href="#">Jacaranda mimosifolia</a> <a href="#">Cassia leptophylla</a> <a href="#">Tipuana Tipu</a> <a href="#">Brachychiton populneous</a> <a href="#">Hymenosporum flavum</a>

## 4.0 ACTIONS

- 4.1. Provide recommendations to City staff regarding the proposed updates to the Street Trees Major Streets List (Engineering Standard 8020) and propose adjustments, if necessary.
- 4.2. Continue the review of the updates to the Street Trees Major List (Engineering Standard 8020), with specific direction to staff on pertinent issues, to a hearing date certain or uncertain.

**5.0 ATTACHMENTS**

A - Engineering Standard 8020 updated 4-28-25

B - DRAFT Master Tree List 2025

C - Street Trees Major Streets Engineering Standard 8020