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Whittier City Council
13230 Penn St.
Whittier, CA. 90602

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

During my public comments at last night's City Council meeting, two pictures were shown on the overhead projector of Santa Monica where the developer of a new 8-story building was required to work around mature ficus trees. Last night, several of you looked intently at those pictures, the first one showing pre-development and a deep ditch alongside the trimmed back ficus trees during construction, and the second picture showing the completed housing project alongside the preserved ficus tree canopy:



I provided details regarding the City of Santa Monica's "Guide to Planning and Protection of Public Trees During Construction Projects" in my letter to you dated August 19, 2024. The developer originally submitted plans to chop down those ficus trees at 500 Broadway to facilitate construction. But the Santa Monica City Council required the developer to work around the existing trees. Tree health was assessed by their City's arborist. Although the ficus trees and their roots had to be cut back significantly, Tree Protection Zones criteria was

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followed. The result was a successful development project with 7 stories of new housing units, and retail shops located on the ground floor. Six years later, those ficus trees continue to thrive today, maintaining the uninterrupted tree canopy along Broadway St. in Santa Monica for residents to enjoy.

Whittier's ongoing sidewalk improvement project replaced sidewalks on Washington and Philadelphia trees in July 2024 alongside much larger ficus trees than those on Greenleaf Av. I observed Whittier's arborist supervising the cutting of huge, 5-inch diameter ficus tree roots to complete that project (pix below). Residents are enjoying the great new sidewalks, and those ficus trees are still healthy, continuing to provide much-needed shade for pedestrians to enjoy (myself included as I frequently walk along Washington and Philadelphia Streets).





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Surely we all agree that the dissension, angst and public outrage surrounding the tree controversy in Whittier must END. Residents and business owners welcome Uptown revitalization and redevelopment alongside retaining our magnificent canopy of trees. This can be accomplished.

As we enter the holiday season, Save Our Trees Whittier Association is rolling out some new branding of our own including this message:



Happy Holidays,

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Conny McCormack".

Conny McCormack
Former L.A. Co. Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (ret.)
28-year resident of Whittier

cc: Brian Saeki, City Manager
Rigo Garcia, City Clerk