



## For the Love of Trees – Part 3

By Maria Kootsikis, Pharm.D.

There are 60 trees on the city list of approved trees that may be planted in your parkway. Having so many choices might be a paradox until you consider that all trees are not created equal; however, there is a perfect tree for every spot.<sup>1</sup> The Bluff Heights Neighborhood Association (BHNA) canvassed a small section of Bluff Heights to find that there are almost 50 trees missing from different parkways. This small survey provides a snapshot within the perimeter of Bluff Heights showing a need for replacement parkway trees. Over a year ago, several beautiful magnolias were removed on Vista Street due to disease. BHNA contacted the city of Long Beach to learn that this area can receive up to 50 trees to be planted at one time with support from the community.

The City Arborist will survey the area and determine the best trees to be planted, and then contact homeowners to determine their interest in receiving a parkway tree along with the owner's commitment to watering the tree(s). There are fantastic replacement choices; for example, the lovely Crepe Myrtle, which doesn't drop acorns (which can cause tripping and falling) and doesn't have a deep, invasive root system that can dig up the sidewalks or invade water pipes.<sup>2</sup> The Crepe Myrtle is also considered drought tolerant and doesn't require a lot of watering.

Another point to keep in mind when planting a tree is the damage a lawn mower can do when a young tree has not yet developed a thick coat of bark to protect themselves from physical trauma. Damage to a newly planted tree can be mitigated by using shears around the tree, instead of a lawnmower, or by placing a protective tree guard around the tree (either made

from plastic containers or purchased from a hardware store). Another tip would be to put mulch (not fertilizer) around the tree.<sup>3</sup>

The city of Long Beach received funding from the Port of Long Beach and CAL FIRE to plant 10,000 trees in Long Beach neighborhoods through 2022. Margaret Madden, Long Beach Development Services' Neighborhood Improvement Officer, will be planting ten trees in North Long Beach on Thursday, September 23, 2021. If you're interested in helping to plant trees, please contact Margaret at [Margaret.Madden@longbeach.gov](mailto:Margaret.Madden@longbeach.gov) or 562-570-6830.

Volunteers of all ages are welcome at this event to help plant and water these young trees. There are volunteer waivers you need to bring with you on planting day. Volunteers are needed to help make sure each tree is deeply watered with 15 gallons on planting day to help them get off to a good start. Housing and Neighborhood Services Bureau staff will deliver all the trees and tools on planting day. This would be a wonderful volunteer effort on your part to help beautify greater Long Beach as part of the **I Dig Long Beach** tree planting effort as we prepare for and support the continued efforts of re-establishing parkways trees in Bluff Heights area in the very near future.

1. <https://www.desertsun.com/story/life/home-garden/maureen-gilmer/2018/06/10/palo-verde-near-perfect-tree/675267002/>
2. <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/trees/crepe-myrtle/crepe-myrtle-root-system.htm>
3. <https://easterngroupusa.com/2018/02/07/how-to-protect-your-trees-while-mowing-the-lawn/>

Maria Kootsikis and her husband, Paul Montalbano, both retired pharmacists, moved to beautiful Bluff Heights for their retirement.