



CITY OF DELRAY BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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Sent via USPS Certified Mail with Return Receipt

February 25, 2026

To: Stephen Bedner, President
Carrie Parker Hill, Vice President
James M. Alderman, Sr. Vice President
Jeffrey P. Phipps, Sr.
John I. Whitworth, III

Members of the Lake Worth Drainage District
13081 S. Military Trail
Delray Beach, FL 33484

Re: Request for Reconsideration

Dear Members of the Lake Worth Drainage District:

The City of Delray Beach (“City”) formally requests the Lake Worth Drainage District (“LWDD”) reconsider the vote taken at its February 11, 2026 meeting denying the City’s request to permit an existing banyan tree to remain within the west right-of-way of the E-4 Canal adjacent to the Delray Beach Municipal Golf Course. In support of this request, the City states as follows.

On February 20, 2026, the City retained Mark Baker, a Board-Certified Arborist, to conduct an assessment of the subject banyan tree. As part of his credentials, Mr. Baker has also obtained the International Society of Arboriculture Tree Risk Assessment Qualification certificate. Mr. Baker completed an on-site inspection on said date, and prepared a report for the City, attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit “A,” opining on the current condition of the subject banyan tree. In further support of his recommendations, a Basic Tree Risk Assessment Form, attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit “B,” was prepared by Mr. Baker.

While the City understands the concerns voiced by the LWDD regarding the risks associated with allowing the banyan tree to remain, Mr. Baker suggests that, with proper maintenance, said risks can be effectively mitigated. Specifically, the “Basic Tree Risk Assessment Form” concludes that the overall tree risk rating is “low.” Further, the analysis completed by Mr. Baker opines that there are no concerns with regard to the branches, trunk, root collar and roots of the tree.

In support of his conclusion that with proper maintenance and pruning, the tree can be preserved and restored, the report recommends (1) removal of the canopy portion of the tree that overhangs and obstructs access to the canal; (2) removal of the root mass and appendage growth encroaching into the canal; (3) selective removal of the appendages that extend from the main trunk; and (4) establishing proper access to the canal for maintenance. The City concurs with these recommendations.

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In light of this new information, the City respectfully requests that the LWDD reconsider the vote taken on February 11, 2026. This tree has clearly withstood the test of time, and many decades worth of hurricanes and other natural events. The report commissioned by the City supports the City's notion that there is a sufficient basis to suggest that, with proper maintenance, the risks associated with preserving the tree can be mitigated.

The community recognizes the value of this tree and it is the City's sincere hope that the LWDD will as well.

We look forward to your favorable review and response.

Sincerely,



Terrence R. Moore, ICMA-CM
City Manager

cc: Tommy B. Strowd, P.E., Executive Director LWDD
Mayor Thomas F. Carney, Jr.
Deputy Vice Mayor Angela Burns
Commissioner Juli Casale
Commissioner Tom Markert
Lynn Gelin, City Attorney
Missie Barletto, Director of Public Works