

CITY TREE ORDINANCE REVISIONS Proposed by City Staff
Final Hearing and Adoption by City Council
Thursday, August 4, 2016

MAJOR REMAINING PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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1. PROBLEM: TREE REMOVAL PERMIT CRITERIA BIASED TOWARD REMOVAL

- Proposed ordinance eliminates existing language which encourages preservation of trees.
- Criteria for removal are subjective and not based upon quantifiable factors.

TREES4SACRAMENTO AMENDMENT: ADD CRITERIA TO JUSTIFY A TREE REMOVAL

- When considering the removal of any tree, the City shall consider the benefits of its tree canopy in accordance with the General Plan Environmental Resources Policy 3.1.2 (Enhance the City's Tree canopy).
- If only poor health or potential structural damage is the justification for removal of a tree, a certified arborist or engineer report documenting these factors shall be required by the Director.
- The Director shall find "there are no modifications or revisions to the proposed use that would effectuate its basic project objectives and also preserve the protected tree" before approving removal of private protected tree. (Similar language is would be required for removal of a city tree (see 12.56.050 Tree Permits., C, and 12.56.040 Removal of city trees - Public projects A).)
- Director shall find that the tree proposed for removal is neither a mitigation tree nor a tree previously required as part of project approval before approving removal of a private protected tree.

2. PROBLEM: CREATES POTENTIALLY BIASED, CLOSED, INTERNAL APPROVAL PROCESS FOR TREE REMOVALS.

- Eliminates Parks & Recreation Commission role to hear appeals.
- City tree removals decided by internal meeting with a City Dept. Director; no public or independent process.
- Appeals to Council referred to staff person with no arborist background.

TREES4SACRAMENTO AMENDMENT: ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR REMOVAL OF PROTECTED TREES

- The City shall contract with a independent ISA certified arborist to provide independent review for appeal of non-emergency tree removal decisions made by a Director of the City, staff level approvals, and to hear appeals delegated by the City Council.

- Amend 12.56.050 Tree Permits. Section I as follows: Tree removal permits for private projects are not transferrable and may not be issued until a building permit is pulled and the project proponent presents adequate evidence that financing for the project is assured.

3. PROBLEM: NOTICE OF TREE REMOVAL MINIMIZES PUBLIC'S ABILITY TO EVALUATE TREE REMOVALS AND APPEAL A TREE REMOVAL

- Eliminates 25-year policy for 30-day posted notice for tree removals in parks and City property.
- Eliminates Heritage tree definition and requirements and includes them with other trees. (defined as "private protected tree"). Removes written notification of Heritage tree removals to property owners within 500 feet.
- Establishes a shorter 15-day posted notice for some protected trees. Doesn't require City to be transparent by creating a public list of all requested tree removals (and status) on City website (similar to City's Project List of all development applications).
- No assessment of new ordinance performance or to status of City's tree canopy.

TREES4SACRAMENTO AMENDMENT: TREE REMOVAL NOTIFICATIONS NEED TO BE TRANSPARENT; NEW ORDINANCE AND CITY'S TREE CANOPY REGULARLY EVALUATED

- The City shall make available to the public a listing of all requested proposed public and private tree removals being considered by the City and the status of each. In addition, if a Heritage tree (tree with a circumference of 100 inches or more) is requested for removal, neighborhood associations shall be notified.
- Any notice of proposed tree removal posted on the tree or elsewhere shall state that an appeal or objection process is available regarding the decision to remove a city tree or a private protected tree, and the final date for filing an objection or appeal.
- The City shall present to Council an urban forest report at least once every three years that includes data on tree removals and replacements, enforcement activities, and the status of city trees. The report shall include the status of the City's overall tree canopy and canopy by community plan area.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

EMAIL CONCERNS TO CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS and District Reps

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ATTEND COUNCIL HEARING: Thursday, August 4, 2016, @ 6 pm

Historic City Hall, 915 I Street, 2nd Floor Council Chambers. (Check agenda at www.cityofsacramento.org/council) and click "meetings". Staff report at:

http://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=21&event_id=2834&meta_id=473087

Web updates at <http://www.ecosacramento.net/trees4sacramento/>. Share on social media.

