



TREES - EXISTING CODES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CLIMATE ACTION SUBCOMMITTEE FEBRUARY 5, 2025

PRESENTATION BY:

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MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 17-24: TREES

- Adopted in 1990
- Purpose:
 - ✓ Trees contribute greatly to the health, safety and general welfare of all of the City's citizens and preservation and proper maintenance is a matter of Citywide concern.
 - ✓ It is necessary to enact regulations prohibiting unnecessary damage, removal, or destruction of trees.
 - ✓ The regulations are intended to protect certain trees that are an essential part of the City's natural heritage (heritage trees) while recognizing property owner's right to utilize their land.

PERMIT REQUIRED

- Category I – No Proposed Development
 - A Tree Removal Permit is required for any proposed alteration, removal, or relocation of any tree or a heritage tree.
 - The number, location, condition and reason for removal must be provided, arborist report may be required.

- Category II – Part of a Proposed Development
 - All development proposals must indicate trees proposed for alteration, removal or relocation, and those to be protected – proposed removal is included as part of the project permits.
 - Must include the genus, drip line and trunk circumference of all trees, and reasons for any removal.

PERMIT REQUIRED

■ Exemptions

- Trees in single-family residential areas, except protected or heritage trees, or those tree species listed as exempt.
- Trimming or clearing of branches/roots from interfering with public utilities and right-of-way when necessary for maintenance or lines of sight, or as necessitated by a hazardous or dangerous condition.
- Removal or alteration of any tree necessitated by a hazardous or dangerous condition which requires immediate action to protect life or property. Street, protected or heritage trees meeting this criteria may be removed without a permit when written permission is provided by the City Manager or the head of the following City departments:
 - Police
 - Fire
 - Public Works
 - Planning and Economic Development
 - Water
 - Recreation and Parks
- Code identifies certain species that may be removed without a permit.

MITIGATION AND PROTECTION

■ Mitigation Requirements:

- For each 6 inches or diameter – approved for removal – 2 trees (minimum 15-gallon), shall be planted on site.
- For each 6 inches or diameter – not approved for removal – 4 trees (minimum 15-gallon), shall be planted on site.
- If the site is inadequate in size to accommodate the replacement trees, an in-lieu payment of \$100.00 per 15-gallon replacement tree may be provided (to be used for City tree-related educational projects and/or planting programs).

■ Tree protection requirements:

- Before the start of any clearing, excavation, construction or other work, protected trees shall be fenced off at the perimeter.
- If the proposed development or any site work will encroach upon the perimeter special measures shall be utilized to allow the roots to obtain oxygen, water, and nutrients as needed.
- No substances that may be harmful to trees shall be stored or dumped within the perimeter.
- Underground trenching for utilities shall avoid major support and absorbing tree roots, and no concrete, asphalt paving or compaction of soil shall be placed over the root zones.

DRAFT GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION STRATEGIES

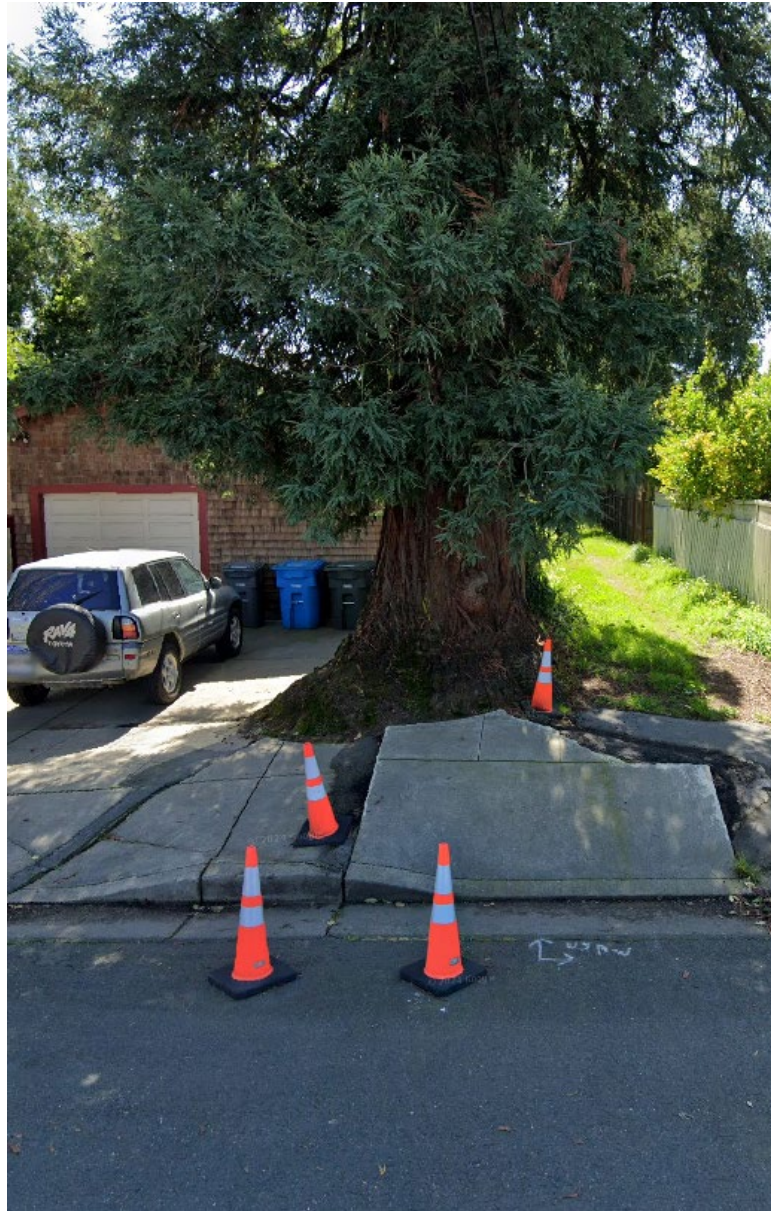
- Expand tree planting, maintain heritage trees, and replant street trees, when they are removed for safety or health reasons, and continue to maintain Santa Rosa's Tree City USA designation.
- Seek resources to conduct a community-wide tree canopy assessment and increase the city's urban tree canopy (Action 5-6.16)
- Work with the Water Team and Master Gardeners to refine guidelines on specific tree species and management procedures that integrate carbon sequestration, ecosystems services, and biodiversity. (Action 5-6.18)
- Where woody vegetation is appropriate, maximize planting of coast live oak and other native trees and shrubs in the public realm. (Action 5-6.19)
- Work to complement the street tree network by increasing the number of street trees in the sidewalk and tree wells. (Action 5-6.20)
- Preserve mature trees during infrastructure modifications using solutions to retain them such as bulb-outs, basin expansion, and sidewalk re-routing. (Action 5-6.21)
- Require tree planting and other landscaping in all new development and redevelopment that supports other community benefits, such as shade for walking and biking, and include greening elements as a primary project scoring criteria for bicycle improvements. (Action 5-6.22)

STREET TREE - RESPONSIBILITIES

- City Code 17-24.020 - any tree having a single trunk circumference greater than six and one-quarter inches or a diameter greater than two inches, a height of more than six feet, and **one half or more of its trunk is within a public right-of-way or within five feet of the paved portion of a City street or a public sidewalk**
- Responsibility of the property owner or developer
 - Maintain in such a condition that will not endanger - [CA Law SHC Div 7 Ch 22](#)
 - Trimming trees and hedges abutting sidewalks - [City Code 17-24.085](#)
 - Not interfere w/ use of streets and sidewalk. Liability on property owner - [City Code 13-32.010](#)
- Developments are conditioned:
 - To plant or replace street trees – direction comes from Parks Dept.
 - To constructs planter strips or tree wells per the City's Street Design and Construction Standards

STREET TREES - IMPACTS

- DRAINAGE
- ADA COMPLIANCE
- PAVEMENT FAILURE



STREET TREES – SOLUTIONS

- GRIND ROOTS
- WIDEN TREE WELL
- BOW CURB OUT
- MEANDER SIDEWALK



RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TREES

Four main areas of responsibilities:

- Plan Review including pre-application
- Street Trees
- Emergent trees in the Right-of-Way
- Maintenance and Tree planting



RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TREES

Plan Review including pre-application

- Residential, non-residential and City projects per City's Design and Construction Standards, and City Code Chapter 17-24 and 13-32.010
- Ensure street tree requirement is included – access to street tree list
- Assist with the review of existing trees for Heritage status
- Information regarding future maintenance responsibility of trees

RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TREES

Street Trees

- City Code 13-32.010
- Street Tree definition
- Street Tree Removal permits
 - Per site evaluation of each tree
 - Approval/Denial process
- Referral to Code Enforcement as needed



RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TREES

Emergent trees in the Right-of-Way

- Any tree debris blocking public Right of Way
- Parks Maintenance staff respond 24/7, 365 days per year
- Arborist contract service available



RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TREES

Maintenance and Tree Planting

- City tree definitions
- Annual maintenance for tree types
- Park A Month program – tree planting
- Irrigation for Trees
- Tree replacement
- Tree City USA designation

