



Memorandum

TO: SAN JOSE CITY COUNCIL**FROM: Councilmember Devora "Dev" Davis****SUBJECT: TREE REMOVAL CONTROLS****DATE: December 19, 2017**

Approved:

Date:

12/19/2017

RECOMMENDATION

Accept staff recommendations to update the City's Tree Permitting and Removal Process and add:

- 1) An automated subscription e-mail noticing system for tree removals by Council District be included in the PBCE Department's current AMANDA Permit System upgrade.
- 2) Discourage illegal tree removals by revisiting illegal tree removal fines for trees on private property (non-street trees) when corresponding permit fees are changed, such that fines for illegal removals be at least five times the cost of a tree removal permit.

BACKGROUND:

As the City moves to streamline its Tree Permitting and Removal processes to become more efficient for our residents, it is important that we take necessary steps to ensure that these processes are effective. Many residents have contacted my office with concerns about the noticing practices that are currently in place for tree removals that require notice. They have seen that posted notices can be damaged by weather, blocked from view, or removed altogether. Currently, residents can sign up for notifications ranging from Wastewater Facility updates and department newsletters to Planning news and Urban Village developments. The development of an e-mail subscription that would send notification of planned non-exempt tree removals by Council District would allow our residents to know what trees are considered for removal regardless of the visibility of posted notices. This kind of system can be incorporated into PBCE Department's current AMANDA Permit System upgrade and would help to ensure that our City's Permitted Tree Removal process is highly visible and convenient for all stakeholders.

It is also of concern that some may remove trees in San José without going through the proper permitting channels. Fines are currently in place for illegal tree removal. To further ensure the fines act as a deterrent to illegal removal, staff should consider raising the fine schedule for the illegal removal of a tree to be at least five times the cost of a tree removal permit. This level of fine would function to deter bad actors from illegally removing trees and damaging our urban canopy in ways that may take many years to replenish.