

SIERRA • CURTIS  
Neighborhood Association

**SENT VIA EMAIL TO [Jschenirer@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:Jschenirer@cityofsacramento.org)**

March 10, 2015

Councilmember Jay Schenirer, Chair and Members of the Law & Legislation Committee  
City of Sacramento  
915 I Street City Hall  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Revised City Tree Ordinance and Tree-Related Ordinance Amendments

Dear Councilmember Schenirer,

The following comments are submitted in response to the City of Sacramento's proposed revision to the Tree Ordinances. When this ordinance revision process was started 19 months ago the main goal was to create a clear, concise, and transparent tree ordinance. After review of the proposed changes, SCNA has concluded that the new ordinance does not, in the main, meet those goals.

To the contrary, SCNA believes the proposed changes actually weaken the protection of Sacramento's trees. The biggest change is that residents would no longer have the right to appeal the removal of any city street tree that Urban Forestry has decided to remove. It is imperative that residents be able to speak and write on behalf of our rapidly disappearing tree canopy.

We are also dismayed by the draft ordinance's provision that City would relinquish the care, maintenance, and liability for all City street trees located behind the back of sidewalk. Property owners, who in general have neither the knowledge nor the experience to maintain large trees, would assume these duties.

In addition, the revision eliminates Chapter 12.60 of existing code, which addresses the control Dutch elm disease on private property. Infected elms need to be removed immediately to prevent further spread of this devastating disease. This is a concern for many Curtis Park residents who have elms on or in front of their property, and City code relating to the disease must remain on the book.

Another very significant change is that residents will be required to hire an arborist to determine if the trees on their property, 12 inches in diameter or greater, are private protected trees. The language is vague and subjective: for example what does "good" condition mean? Also, the 12-inch rule puts the City in charge of regulating trees which are small and insignificant; it seems that staff resources would be much better spent on regulating trees behind the sidewalk, which are generally larger and more developed.

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These are just a few of the concerns with the revisions. Attached are the changes SCNA believes will make the ordinance clear, concise, and transparent. Please accept these in place of the flawed draft ordinance, and thank you for your ongoing dedication to protecting and preserving Sacramento's urban forest.

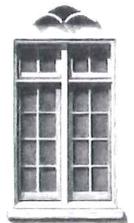
Sincerely,

**SIERRA CURTIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

By:   
Eric A. Johnson, President

Cc: Law & Legislative Committee

Attachment



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