

RESOLUTION NO. 8371

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN FERNANDO,
CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A COMPREHENSIVE TREE PRESERVATION
POLICY**

WHEREAS, on April 19, 2024, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 8301, approving and adopting the 2024 Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP); and

WHEREAS, a key recommendation of the UFMP was to establish criteria for tree preservation, as well as a process for notifying community members prior to a tree removal from the public right of way; and

WHEREAS, on August 9, 2024, the Planning and Preservation Commission received and filed a presentation of proposed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for tree removals on the public right of way based on the recommendations of the UFMP; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager seeks to formalize these procedures through City Council approval;

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, DOES HEREBY RESOLVE, FIND, DETERMINE AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The City Council hereby establishes the Comprehensive Tree Preservation Policy, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by this reference.

SECTION 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this resolution and shall cause a certified resolution to be filed in the Office of the City Clerk.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 17th day of March, 2025.



Mary Mendoza, Mayor of the City of
San Fernando, California

ATTEST:



Julia Fritz, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, City Clerk of the City of San Fernando, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of Resolution No. 8371 which was regularly introduced and adopted by the City Council of the City of San Fernando, California, at a regular meeting thereof held on the 17th day of March, 2025, by the following vote of the City Council:

AYES: Lopez, Garcia, Fajardo, Solorio, Mendoza - 5

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINED: None

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City of San Fernando, California, this 18th day of March, 2025.



Julia Fritz, City Clerk

POLICY/PROCEDURE

| SUBJECT | ISSUANCE | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Comprehensive Tree Preservation Policy | ORIGINAL DATE March 17, 2025 | EFFECTIVE March 17, 2025 |
| | CURRENT DATE March 17, 2025 | EFFECTIVE March 17, 2025 |
| CATEGORY | POLICY NO. | SUPERSEDES |
| Public Works | PW-03172025 | |

MANAGEMENT POLICY/PROCEDURES

SECTION I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for the process of removing city owned trees.

SECTION II. SCOPE

This policy applies to any tree that is located in the City’s public right-of-way or any tree planted on City owned property. When a tree is designated as City owned, it is the responsibility of the City to maintain and, when appropriate, remove potentially hazardous or dead trees.

SECTION III. BACKGROUND

- On May 6, 2024, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 8301, approving and adopting the 2024 Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP).
- A key recommendation of the UFMP was to establish criteria for tree preservation, as well as a process for notifying community members prior to a tree removal from the public right of way.
- On August 12, 2024, the Planning and Preservation Commission, in its capacity as Tree Commission, received and filed a presentation of proposed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for tree removals on the public right of way based on the recommendations of the UFMP.
- This policy updates and replaces the existing ‘Comprehensive Tree Management Program’ guidelines on tree removals to create a ‘Comprehensive Tree Preservation Policy’. The new policy also incorporates components of the SOPs established by staff, recommendations of the UFMP, and additional City Council direction.

SECTION IV. TREE REMOVAL CRITERIA

In accordance with the UFMP, a tree may be removed if it exhibits one (1) of the following criteria determined by a tree care professional or International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist or equivalents:

1. The tree is dead.

2. The tree has reached an over-mature condition and is in declining health which will result in its death within the year.
3. The tree is infected with a disease which cannot be treated successfully and/or there is a strong potential that the pathogen could spread to other trees in the immediate vicinity.
4. The tree has been determined through a Risk Assessment Report to be a hazard because of its high potential for failure due to considerable dead or dying foliage, branches, roots or trunk.
5. The tree requires extensive root pruning because of excessive hardscape damage resulting in the severe reduction of its capacity to support itself, thereby creating a potential safety hazard.
6. The tree has been approved for removal as a part of a City Council approved public improvement project that has already gone through the established public process and is not a good candidate for relocation.
7. The tree planted by a private party in the public right-of-way after City Council approval of the Master Plan may be subject to removal of the tree by the City.

Tree removals scheduled due to these criteria must follow the notification and appeal process listed in Sections VII and VIII.

SECTION V. EMERGENCY REMOVAL CRITERIA

According to the UFMP, trees may also be removed due to emergent circumstances, creating the following exceptions:

1. The tree poses an imminent danger to human life or injury.
2. The tree poses an imminent danger to property damage.

A tree is generally considered to be at risk of endangering public or property safety if it exhibits characteristics that indicate a high likelihood of failure or limb drop under normal conditions. While exact criteria may vary by jurisdiction and the guidelines used by arborists or municipal authorities, the following are common risk factors:

Structural Defects

- Significant cracks, splits, or cavities in the trunk or major limbs.
- Evidence of severe decay or internal rot that compromises the tree's integrity.
- Excessive Lean or Instability.
- A pronounced lean, especially if accompanied by root damage or soil instability, increases the risk of the tree falling.
- Dead or Dying Limbs.
- Large, dead, or dying branches that are likely to break off and fall, particularly if they overhang public areas or pathways.

Disease or Infestation

- Signs of disease, pest infestation, or fungal decay that weaken the tree's structure.

Environmental and Site Conditions

- Trees located in areas where their failure would likely impact public safety (such as near sidewalks, roads, or building entrances).
- Poor soil conditions, water saturation, or erosion around the root zone that compromise stability.

When these factors are observed and determined to exist based on an inspection by a tree care professional or International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist or equivalents, when possible, the tree may be designated as hazardous or an “imminent danger” tree by the Director of Public Works, prompting remedial action such as pruning, cabling, or removal to protect people and property.

SECTION VI. NESTING PERIOD CONSIDERATIONS

The Public Works Department will follow all regulatory guidelines and laws. This includes the Federal government’s ‘Migratory Bird Treaty Act’, which prohibits tree removals during nesting period (typically February 1 – August 31), unless the removal is determined to be needed under emergent circumstances listed in Section V.

SECTION VII. NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

A red tag will be placed directly on any tree scheduled for removal at least 21 days in advance of a Planning and Preservation Commission meeting. Appeals can be requested through the Public Works Department or at the Planning and Preservation Commission meeting listed in the posting. A notice will also be distributed to the property owner, adjacent property owners, and any other property within 500 feet of a tree identified for removal. The notice will be disturbed as a door hanger or similar notice. Information regarding the tree(s) identified to be removed will also be available on the City’s website through a tree removal webpage regularly updated by the Public Works Department.

SECTION VIII. APEAL PROCESS

If a community member would like to appeal the proposed removal of a City tree, they may attend the Planning and Preservation Commission Meeting listed on the notice of removal or submit a letter to Public Works expressing their opposition to specific tree(s) to be removed along with a justification for not removing the tree. Staff will ensure that residents are provided with at least a 21 day notice before a tree removal is presented to the Commission for their consideration.

A list of all trees being considered for removal will be outlined as a consent item at the Planning and Preservation Commission meeting. If a resident requests an appeal for a tree on the prospective list, that tree will be removed from consideration and placed on the following Commission meeting agenda for consideration.

Applicants may appeal the Planning and Preservation Commission decision to the City Council in accordance with City Code Section 106-1278.

SECTION IX. AUTHORITY

By order of City Council Motion (Resolution No. 8371), Policy adopted by the City Council on March 17, 2025.