

File No. 210836 Committee Item No. 2
Board Item No. 30

COMMITTEE/BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA PACKET CONTENTS LIST

Committee: Land Use and Transportation Committee Date December 6, 2021

Board of Supervisors Meeting Date December 14, 2021

Cmte Board

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Motion |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ordinance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Legislative Digest |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Youth Commission Report |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Introduction Form |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Award Letter |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <u>Referral CEQA 072321</u> |
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Completed by: Erica Major Date December 2, 2021
Completed by: Erica Major Date _____

1 [Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal]

2

3 **Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to eliminate administrative objections to**
4 **removal of Hazard Street Trees, require the Department of Public Works to plant**
5 **replacement Street Trees within 120 days of removal, require that Street Trees removed**
6 **without a permit be replaced by Street Trees of equal size, require that Tree protection**
7 **plans include the applicant’s acknowledgement of potential Tree replacement costs,**
8 **and set maximum administrative penalties for removing or injuring Street Trees; and**
9 **affirming the Planning Department’s determination under the California Environmental**
10 **Quality Act.**

11 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.
12 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.
13 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.
14 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.
15 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.
16 **Asterisks (* * * *)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code
17 subsections or parts of tables.

18 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

19

20 Section 1. CEQA Findings.

21 The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this
22 ordinance comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources
23 Code Sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of
24 Supervisors in File No. 210836 and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms
25 this determination.

1 Section 2. Article 16 of the Public Works Code is hereby amended by revising
2 Sections 806, 808, 809, and 811, to read as follows:

3 **SEC. 806. PLANTING AND REMOVAL OF STREET TREES.**

4 (a) **Planting and Removal by the Department.**

5 * * * *

6 (3) **Appeal of Tree Removal.**

7 (A) If within 30 days after the giving of Notice for Street Tree Removal,
8 as specified in Subsection (a)(2), ~~or if within 15 days after the giving of notice for Removal of a~~
9 ~~hazard Street Tree, as specified in Subsection (a)(4)~~, or if within 15 days after the giving of notice
10 for Removal of a hazard Street Tree, as specified in Subsection (a)(4), any Person files with
11 the Department written objections to the Removal, the Director shall hold a hearing to
12 consider public testimony concerning the proposed Tree Removal. Written Notice of the date,
13 time, and place of the hearing shall be posted on the affected Tree, provided in a newspaper
14 of general circulation, and sent to the objecting party, the owner of the property abutting the
15 affected Tree, and all Interested San Francisco organizations, not less than seven days prior
16 thereto.

17 (B) The Director shall issue ~~his or her~~ a written decision and order on the
18 objections after the public hearing specified above.

19 (C) The Director's decision shall be final and appealable to the Board of
20 Appeals.

21 (4) **Removal of Hazard Street Trees.**

22 (A) No ~~h~~Hazard Street Tree shall be cut down or removed by the
23 Department unless:

24 (i) The Department gives 15 days' prior written Notice to the
25 owner of the property abutting the affected Tree; and

1 (ii) Fifteen days prior to the Removal date, the Department notifies
2 all Interested San Francisco organizations and, to the extent practical, owners and occupants
3 of properties that are on or across the block face where the affected Tree is located. In
4 addition, 15 days prior to the Removal date, the Department shall post a notice on the
5 affected Tree.

6 (B) Hazard Street Tree shall have the same meaning as Hazard Tree in
7 Section 802 except that a ~~H~~Hazard Street Tree is located within the public right-of-way.

8 (5) **Emergency Removal.** In the case of manifest danger and immediate
9 necessity, as determined by the Director, the Department may remove any Street Tree
10 immediately. After such emergency Removal, the Department shall provide Notice of the
11 necessity for such action to the owner of the property abutting the affected Tree, all Interested
12 San Francisco organizations and, to the extent practical, all owners and occupants of
13 properties that are on or across from the block face where the affected Tree was removed.

14 (6) Replacement of Street Trees. If the Department removes a Street Tree under this
15 subsection (a), the Department shall replace the Street Tree at the same location within 120 days of its
16 removal, with the following exceptions and qualifications.

17 (A) If the Department removes a Street Tree and cannot replace it in the same
18 location due to accessibility requirements or interference with underground utilities, the Department
19 shall plant a new Street Tree in a new location as close as reasonably possible to the location of the
20 Street Tree that the Department removed.

21 (B) The Department shall not be required to replace a Street Tree, if a private
22 party has agreed to plant, within the 120 days of removal, and Maintain a new Street Tree at the same
23 location, under Section 805(c).

24 (C) If the Department is unable to replace a Street Tree within 120 days of
25 removal, the Department shall record, in a Delayed Replacement Tree Report, the Tree's location, the

1 reason for delay, and the date the Department projects replacement will take place. The Department
2 shall promptly plant Trees listed in the Delayed Replacement Tree Report as resources are available or
3 constraints are resolved and shall compile and track the average length of time that Trees remain on
4 the Delayed Replacement Tree Report.

5 **(b) Planting and Removal by Persons Other Than the Department.**

6 **(1) Planting and Removal Permits.** It shall be unlawful for any person to plant or
7 to remove any Street Tree without a valid permit for such work issued by the Department. All
8 permits for the Planting or Removal of Street Trees issued by the Director for residential
9 properties shall be recorded on the Report of Residential Building Records in accordance with
10 Section 351 of the Housing Code. All work associated with a Street Tree permit must be
11 completed within six months of issuance, unless an extension has been granted by the
12 Department.

13 * * * *

14 **(3) Removal.**

15 **(A)** An abutting property owner who desires a permit to remove a Street Tree
16 shall apply to the Department on the designated form. The Department may grant or deny the
17 permit in accordance with the following procedures and requirements. If the Department
18 grants a Tree removal permit, it shall require that a Street Tree or Trees of equivalent
19 replacement value to the one removed be planted in the place of the removed Tree or impose
20 an in-lieu fee unless it makes written findings detailing the basis for waiving or modifying this
21 requirement.

22 (i) Where an abutting property owner removed a Street Tree or Trees without
23 obtaining a permit, the Department shall require that the property owner plant a replacement Street
24 Tree or Trees with total diameter six-inches above ground that is equal to or greater than the total
25 diameter of the Street Tree or Trees that were removed without a permit.

1 (ii) The fee for a permit to remove ~~1-3~~one to three Street Trees shall be
2 \$607.~~00~~ when the permit is requested to allow for development or construction; the fee for a
3 permit to remove ~~1-3~~one to three Street Trees shall be \$300.~~00~~ when the permit is requested to
4 remove a hazard or a diseased Tree or to prevent damage to the sidewalk; the fee for a
5 permit to remove ~~4-9~~four to nine Street Trees shall be \$808.~~00~~; and the fee to remove 10 or
6 more Street Trees shall be \$1,214.~~00~~.

7 (iii) **Additional Fees.** The Director, in ~~his or her~~ the Director's discretion,
8 may require an applicant or permittee to pay additional fees as set forth in Section 2.1.3.

9 (iv~~iii~~) **Fee Review and Adjustment.** Beginning with fiscal year 2010-
10 2011, the fees that are established herein shall be reviewed and adjusted each year in
11 accordance with the procedures set forth in ~~Public Works Code~~ Section 2.1.2.

12 (B) Thirty days prior to the Removal date, the Department shall give Notice to all
13 Interested San Francisco organizations and, to the extent practicable, the owners and
14 occupants of properties that are on or across from the block face or adjacent to where the
15 affected Tree is located. In addition, 30 days prior to the Removal date, the Department shall
16 post a notice on the affected Tree. If within 30 days after the giving of such notice any person
17 files with the Department written objections to the Removal, the Director shall hold a hearing
18 prior to removing the Tree. Written notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing shall be
19 posted on the affected Tree and sent to the objecting party and all Interested San Francisco
20 organizations not less than seven days prior thereto.

21 (C) The Director shall issue ~~his or her~~ a written decision and order on the
22 objections after the public hearing specified above.

23 (D) The Director's decision shall be final and appealable to the Board of
24 Appeals.

25 * * * *

1 **SEC. 808. PROTECTION OF TREES AND LANDSCAPE MATERIAL.**

2 * * * *

3 (c) **Construction Work: Protection of Trees Required.**

4 (1) It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in any construction work on
5 private or public property without first taking steps to protect Street Trees, Significant Trees,
6 and Landmark Trees from damage, including damage caused by soil compaction or
7 contamination, excavation, or placement of concrete or other pavement or foundation
8 material. If excavation, construction, or Street work is planned within the dripline of a
9 Significant Tree, a Landmark Tree, or a Tree on any Street or other publicly owned property
10 said Tree(s) shall be adequately protected. If any construction work results in the Injury or
11 damage to such Trees, the responsible party(ies) may be subject to the penalties set forth in
12 Section 811 of this Article.

13 (2) Prior to Department of Building Inspection issuance of a building permit or site
14 permit, the applicant for a project that may damage one or more Street Trees, Significant
15 Trees, and/or Landmark Trees shall submit a Tree protection plan to the Director for review
16 and approval.

17 (3) Prior to issuance of a Public Works permit for excavation, construction, or
18 Street work that will occur within the dripline of a Significant Tree, a Landmark Tree, or a Tree
19 on any Street or other publicly owned property, the applicant shall submit a Tree protection
20 plan to the Director for review and approval.

21 (4) If the Public Utilities Commission or Municipal Transportation Agency plans to
22 perform any excavation, construction, or Street work within the drip line of a Significant Tree,
23 a Landmark Tree, or a Tree on any Street or other publicly owned property, said department
24 shall submit a Tree protection plan to the Director for informational purposes only.

1 (5) The Tree protection plan referenced above in § subsection (c)(2)-(4) shall be
2 prepared by a certified arborist. and shall contain the certified arborist's estimate of the total
3 replacement cost of all Trees subject to the Tree protection plan. The Tree protection plan shall
4 include a section for the applicant to acknowledge receipt of the total estimated replacement cost and
5 the applicant's understanding that failure to adhere to the plan shall result in liability for the
6 replacement costs as well as any other fines, penalties, or fees for violating the provisions of this
7 Article 16.

8 * * * *

9 **SEC. 809. HAZARD TREES; ABATEMENT.**

10 (a) **Notice.** Upon a finding by the Director that a ~~Tree on private property or a~~ Street
11 Tree for which a private party is responsible is a "hazard tree" as defined herein, the Director
12 shall provide notice to the private party which describes the condition creating the hazard, the
13 actions required to be taken to abate the hazard, and the date by which compliance must be
14 completed. Required action may include replacement or removal of the Street Tree in
15 accordance with applicable requirements and procedures provided in this Article 16 for its
16 removal. In cases of extreme danger, as determined by the Director, the Director may require
17 immediate compliance.

18 * * * *

19 **SEC. 811. PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF ORDINANCE.**

20 * * * *

21 (c) **Administrative Penalties.**

22 (1) In addition to the penalties set forth in § subsections (a) and (b) above, the
23 Director may require any person who removes, ~~injures~~, or destroys a Tree in violation of the
24 provisions of this Article 16 to pay, for each Tree removed or destroyed, a sum of \$10,000 or the
25 Tree's Replacement value, whichever is greater. The Director may require any person who injures a

1 Tree in violation of the provisions of this Article 16 to pay a sum of money equal to the ~~Tree's~~
2 ~~Replacement value or the~~ diminishment of the Tree's value as set forth in the current edition of
3 the Guide for Plant Appraisal (Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers).

4 _____ (2) ~~Further, i~~n addition to the penalties set forth in ~~S~~subsections (a) and (b)
5 above, the Director may require any person who removes, fails to maintain, injures, or
6 destroys sidewalk landscaping or the associated design improvements in violation of the
7 provisions of Sections 808(b) or 810B to pay a sum of money equal to the Replacement value
8 of the affected Landscape Material and associated design improvements or the diminishment
9 of the value of the Landscape Material as set forth in the current edition of the Guide for Plant
10 Appraisal (Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers). In no case shall the administrative
11 penalty be less than \$500 per violation.

12 _____ (3) When one or more additional violations of the provisions of this Article 16 occur
13 within one year of the first violation, the Director may assess a responsible party \$20,000 for
14 each removed or destroyed Tree and double the ~~Tree's Replacement value or the~~ diminishment of
15 the injured Tree's value. Depending on the nature and seriousness of the misconduct,
16 including unpermitted removal of or damage to a Landmark or Significant Tree; the
17 unpermitted removal of or damage to Sidewalk landscaping installed pursuant to a permit
18 issued under Section 810B; the number of violations; the persistence of the misconduct; the
19 length of time over which the misconduct occurred; or the willfulness of the defendant's
20 misconduct, the Director may assess additional penalties in excess of the amounts specified
21 in this subsection (c)(3) above.

22 _____ (4) In addition to the administrative penalty assessed pursuant to this Section
23 811, the Director may assess enforcement costs to cover the reasonable costs incurred in
24 enforcing the administrative penalty, including reasonable attorneys' fees.

1 (5) Any and all amounts paid or collected pursuant to this subsection (c), with
2 the exception of enforcement costs under subsection (c)(4), shall be deposited into the Adopt-A-
3 Tree Fund.

4 (62) Notwithstanding the monetary limitation specified above in this ~~§~~ subsection
5 (c), if a responsible party performs Major Maintenance on a Street Tree subject to the
6 provisions of Section 805.1~~(b)~~ without a permit or injures, destroys, or removes such a Tree,
7 the Department may assess a penalty of up to \$10,000 per violation in addition to the other
8 remedies specified above.

9 (73) The Department shall send Notice of the assessment of administrative
10 penalties to the responsible party. Such Notice shall include a statement that payment is due
11 within 60 days of the mailing date of the Notice. If a responsible property owner fails timely to
12 remit payment, the Department shall send a second Notice of payment due. Such second
13 Notice shall include a statement that failure timely to remit payment in full to the City within 30
14 days of the mailing of the second Notice shall cause the Director to institute lien proceedings
15 pursuant to Sections 706.4-706.7 of this Code. Enforcement and collection of liens for costs
16 associated with Hazard Tree abatement shall be in accordance with Sections 706.4-706.7 ~~of~~
17 ~~this Code~~, except that all monies received in payment of such liens with the exception of
18 enforcement costs, shall be credited to the Adopt-a-Tree Fund.

19 (84) **Hearings.** At the written request of any person who has been assessed an
20 administrative penalty under this subsection~~s~~ ~~(c)(1)-(2)~~, the Director, or the Director's designee,
21 shall hold a public hearing regarding the proposed penalty. The Director, or the Director's
22 designee, must receive the written request for a hearing within 60 days of the Department's
23 notice of the assessed penalty. After the public hearing, the Director's, or the Director's
24 designee's, decision on the assessed penalty shall be final.

1 Section 3. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after
2 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the
3 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board
4 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor’s veto of the ordinance.

5
6 Section 4. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors
7 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,
8 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal
9 Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment
10 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the “Note” that appears under
11 the official title of the ordinance.

12
13
14 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
15 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

16 By: /s/ Robb Kapla
17 ROBB KAPLA
18 Deputy City Attorney

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25
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REVISED LEGISLATIVE DIGEST
(Amended in Committee, 12/6/2021)

[Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal]

Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to require the Department of Public Works to plant replacement Street Trees within 120 days of removal, require that Street Trees removed without a permit be replaced by Street Trees of equal size, require that Tree protection plans include the applicant’s acknowledgement of potential Tree replacement costs, and set maximum administrative penalties for removing or injuring Street Trees; and affirming the Planning Department’s determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Existing Law

Article 16 of the Public Works Code, the San Francisco Urban Forestry Ordinance, outlines the responsibilities, requirements, and processes for protecting and growing the City’s urban forest canopy. Article 16 does not currently mandate that the Department replace Street Trees within a certain amount of time after removal, nor does Article 16 provide guidelines for the minimum size of replacement trees required when property owners remove Street Trees without a permit. Article 16 requires that any person proposing development that may impact a Significant Tree, Landmark Tree, or Street Tree, submit an arborist-prepared Tree protection plan for Public Works’ review and approval. Where a property owner has damaged, destroyed, or removed a Street Tree in violation of the provisions of Article 16, administrative penalties may be imposed up to the calculated replacement value of the removed tree or the diminished value of an injured tree.

Amendments to Current Law

The Proposed Legislation was amended at the Land Use Committee to preserve the 15-day period for filing written objections to Public Works’ proposed removal of a Hazard Street Tree.

The Proposed Legislation would mandate Public Works replace Street Trees removed by the Department in the same location within 120 days of removal. The exceptions to Department replacement within 120 days include: the Department determining that replanting in place would conflict with existing utilities and the replacement tree is planted at the closest feasible location instead; where a private party has agreed to plant and maintain the replacement tree instead of the Department; and where the Department logs the reason why replacement was not possible within 120 days in a Delayed Replacement Tree Report.

Where a Street Tree is removed by a private party without first obtaining a tree removal permit from the Department, the Proposed Legislation would require—in addition to any

administrative penalties—that the responsible party plant a replacement tree that is the same or greater diameter as the removed tree.

The Proposed Legislation would require that Tree protection plans include the arborist's estimate of the total replacement costs for all trees covered by the plan and the applicant's acknowledgement of receipt of the estimate and potential responsibility for replacement costs if the trees are injured or destroyed.

The Proposed Legislation would revise the maximum administrative penalties for destroying or removing a tree without a permit to the Tree's Replacement value or \$10,000, whichever is greater for the first violation, and \$20,000 or double the replacement value for any additional violations by the same party within one year of an initial violation.

Background Information

The Proposed Legislation seeks to resolve issues flagged by the community, Public Works, and the Board of Appeals regarding the current provisions in Article 16. These issues include the lack of clear requirements for replacement trees; difficulty calculating replacement value after trees have been removed; and general lack of public awareness of tree value, which can lead to disregard for tree protection provisions. The Proposed Legislation addresses these issues by: requiring Public Works replace removed Street Trees within 120 days and instituting a reporting mechanism to track and assess the reasons for any delays beyond that deadline; mandating that Tree protection plans provide appraisals of existing tree values to project developers before any development takes place; and providing an objective dollar value metric in addition to difficult *post hoc* replacement value calculations to set the administrative penalties limit for removing, damaging, or destroying a Street Tree without a permit.

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From: [D4ward SF](#)
To: [Safai, Ahsha \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmanStaff, \[BOS\]](#)
Cc: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Mar, Gordon \(BOS\)](#); [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: LUTC - Request continuance of Item 4 File 210836 - Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal
Date: Sunday, October 17, 2021 6:23:55 PM
Attachments: [D4ward - Request for Continuance Item 4- 210836.pdf](#)

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Sunset Rises to Action
www.facebook.com/D4wardSF
D4wardSF@gmail.com

October 17, 2021

To: Supervisors Safai and Mandelman

Subject: LUTC - Request continuance of Item 4 File 210836 - Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal

D4ward is a residents' forward-thinking advocacy group dedicated to meeting the challenges of the future while preserving and enhancing the unique character of District 4 and San Francisco.

D4ward asks that the Land Use and Transportation Committee continue Item 4 "210836. Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal" to a future date.

D4ward appreciates the efforts of Supervisors Safai and Mandelman to introduce legislation with the good intention of protecting and increasing San Francisco's street trees. However, we have concerns about this legislation. Our concerns include: the loss of the right of the public to appeal Hazard Tree removal; the lack of a more robust approach to equity in tree replacement planting; the lack of public involvement in creating the legislation, and the addition of language that allows the Department of Public Works to require the removal of trees on private property - an action that is not described in either the title of the legislation or in the legislative digest.

On October 14th the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee (PSNS) held a hearing on the various City programs for street tree planting and preservation in San Francisco as well as trees on Rec and Park and SF PUC lands. There was so much information that the item was continued to a future PSNS meeting. Ordinance 210836 should be considered after that hearing, so that both the BOS and the public have a complete picture of the impact that the proposed Article 16 amendments will have on San Francisco's street tree canopy.

We suggest that the legislation's sponsors might also be able to expand their legislation by asking for input from the various residents and groups throughout San Francisco who have been advocating for preserving street trees and establishing an equitable tree canopy program.

Thank you for your consideration.

cc: Supervisors Peskin, Preston, Melgar, and Mar; Assistant Clerk Erica Major



Sunset Rises to Action

www.facebook.com/D4wardSF

D4wardSF@gmail.com

October 17, 2021

To: Supervisors Safai and Mandelman

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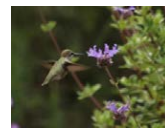
Thank you for your consideration.

cc: Supervisors Peskin, Preston, Melgar, and Mar; Assistant Clerk Erica Major

From: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: LUTC- Request continuance of Item 4. 210836. Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal; Concerns with this legislation
Date: Monday, October 18, 2021 10:35:46 AM
Attachments: [image005.png](#)
[SFUN 10-16-2021 Item 4. Street Trees.pdf](#)

From: SF Parc <sfparc@earthlink.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 16, 2021 6:58 PM
To: MelgarStaff (BOS) <melgarstaff@sfgov.org>; Aaron Peskin <aaron.peskin@earthlink.net>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>
Cc: Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>; MandelmanStaff, [BOS] <mandelmanstaff@sfgov.org>; Safai, Ahsha (BOS) <ahsha.safai@sfgov.org>; Mar, Gordon (BOS) <gordon.mar@sfgov.org>; Stefani, Catherine (BOS) <catherine.stefani@sfgov.org>
Subject: LUTC- Request continuance of Item 4. 210836. Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal; Concerns with this legislation

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San Franciscans for Urban Nature

To: Chair, Supervisor Myrna Melgar
Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Supervisor Dean Preston

CC: Supervisor Rafael Mandelman
Supervisor Asha Safai

Date: October 16, 2021

Subject: Request continuance of Item 4. 210836. Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal;
Concerns with this legislation.

San Franciscans for Urban Nature (SFUN) is a community group of activists for preserving and increasing nature in our cities.



San Franciscans for Urban Nature

To: Chair, Supervisor Myrna Melgar
Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Supervisor Dean Preston

CC: Supervisor Rafael Mandelman
Supervisor Asha Safai

Date: October 16, 2021

Subject: Request continuance of Item 4. 210836. Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal
Concerns with this legislation

San Franciscans for Urban Nature (SFUN) is a community group of activists for preserving and increasing nature in our cities.

SFUN appreciates the hearing on October 14th at the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee on the various City department's approaches to tree planting and preservation in San Francisco. There was a great deal of data that will take some time to absorb; in addition, the item was not completed and the hearing on trees was continued to the next Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee meeting.

However, we have just learned that next Monday, October 18th, the proposed revisions to Article 16 will be heard at the BOS Land Use and Transportation Committee (LUTC).

We have just started examining this important legislation and have not had time to do a full analysis. We do have concerns about the possibility of misuse of the Hazard Tree language and also the need to review the legislation in terms of equity in tree replacement planting. In addition, there has been language added about DPW removing trees on private property, although the ordinance title refers to street trees and the legislative summary does not mention private trees.

Since there will be more information on tree policies in the next Public Safety and Neighborhood Services hearing, we would appreciate having that information on hand in order to better appreciate the impact that the Article 16 amendments will have on San Francisco's street tree canopy.

Therefore, we request that the hearing on the Article 16 legislation be continued until the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services hearings can be completed and the public has time to review and comment on the Article 16 changes in the light of that information.

Sincerely,
Natalie Downe
Corresponding Secretary

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Sincerely,
Natalie Downe
Corresponding Secretary

From: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: For Land Use and Transportation Committee Mon. Oct 18 2021 Meeting - File No. 210836
Date: Monday, October 18, 2021 10:23:38 AM

From: LINDA SHAFFER <ljshaffer1@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, October 15, 2021 4:01 PM
To: MandelmanStaff, [BOS] <mandelmanstaff@sfgov.org>; MelgarStaff (BOS) <melgarstaff@sfgov.org>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>; Safai, Ahsha (BOS) <ahsha.safai@sfgov.org>; Mar, Gordon (BOS) <gordon.mar@sfgov.org>; Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>; Stefani, Catherine (BOS) <catherine.stefani@sfgov.org>; Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>
Subject: For Land Use and Transportation Committee Mon. Oct 18 2021 Meeting

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Re: agenda item 3, #210836, Public Works Code - Street Tree Planting and Removal

Supervisors Melgar, Preston and Peskin,

A proposed ordinance to amend language in the Public Works Code pertaining to Street Trees is on the upcoming Oct. 18th agenda for discussion at the Land Use and Transportation Committee.

Given that on Thursday Oct. 14th, the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee just started an important and comprehensive hearing on city trees in general, including street trees, and given that that hearing was continued for lack of time, it seems premature for another committee to move forward with this related matter.

Please continue item 3 on Monday's agenda to some future date. This will

- (a) allow the Public Safety Committee to finish its comprehensive hearing; and
- (b) give concerned members of the public more time to digest the proposed amendments to the Public Works Code, and to make better informed constructive comment.

Thank you,

Linda Shaffer

San Francisco District 1 resident and former member of PROSAC

From: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: LUTC: Item 4. 210836. Request for continuance. Also, concerns with this Ordinance.
Date: Monday, October 18, 2021 10:40:50 AM

From: Kathy Howard <kathyhoward@earthlink.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 17, 2021 5:17 PM
To: MandelmanStaff, [BOS] <mandelmanstaff@sfgov.org>; MelgarStaff (BOS) <melgarstaff@sfgov.org>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>; Safai, Ahsha (BOS) <ahsha.safai@sfgov.org>; Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>
Cc: ChanStaff (BOS) <chanstaff@sfgov.org>; Walton, Shamann (BOS) <shamann.walton@sfgov.org>; Haney, Matt (BOS) <matt.haney@sfgov.org>; Mar, Gordon (BOS) <gordon.mar@sfgov.org>; Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>; Ronen, Hillary <hillary.ronen@sfgov.org>; Stefani, Catherine (BOS) <catherine.stefani@sfgov.org>; Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>
Subject: LUTC: Item 4. 210836. Request for continuance. Also, concerns with this Ordinance.

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Supervisors,

I understand that the intent of the Article 16 amendments is to promote a healthy and equitable tree canopy in San Francisco, and this effort on the part of Supervisors Safai and Mandelman is much appreciated. However, I have concerns about some unintended consequences of this legislation that open up the potential for damage to our urban forest, which may not have been considered in creating this ordinance.

Please continue this item to a future date for the following reasons:

- A continuance will help to better inform the legislation with data from the follow-up Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee (PSNS) hearing on trees in San Francisco.
- The loss of the public's ability to appeal the decision to classify a tree as a 'Hazard' may result in the subsequent loss of many trees that might otherwise be preserved. Many trees that have been classified as a Hazard Trees in the past have survived and thrived without being removed and not caused any damage. The "Emergency Removal" classification will still be available for obviously dangerous situations.
- Public officials may employ personal preferences in tree removals; this has already happened in at least one department. This Ordinance opens up the door for abuse of the Hazard Tree removal process.
- The ordinance allows trees on private property to be declared hazardous without the right of appeal for a property owner. There is no information in the Legislative Digest notifying the public that the Department of Public Works will be able to a) send someone to their private yards and b) mandate the removal of a tree without a public hearing or recourse to an appeal.

- CEQA review has been eliminated. The Planning Department has stated that this legislation is not subject to CEQA, because there is no basis to conclude that it “may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.” It is unclear how the possible removal of hundreds of trees with no ability of the public to appeal this removal, even if replaced at a later date, could not cause a direct physical change in the environment for our City streets.
- The ordinance should take a closer look at equity in tree replacement planting and involve residents from under-represented neighborhoods in formulating the language.

Various groups and individuals all over San Francisco have participated in not only tree planting but also tree preservation efforts. These groups would be an asset in giving input into enhanced legislation that can further the goals of a healthy, dense, and equitable tree canopy.

A continuance and a more inclusive public process could result in an ordinance that can better fulfill the good intentions of the sponsors to protect and enhance our urban forest.

Thank you for your consideration.

Katherine Howard

District 4

From: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#)
To: [BOS-Supervisors](#)
Cc: [Calvillo, Angela \(BOS\)](#); [Somera, Alisa \(BOS\)](#); [Ng, Wilson \(BOS\)](#); [Laxamana, Junko \(BOS\)](#); [Mchugh, Eileen \(BOS\)](#); [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: SFMTA: Tree removal hearing 12-2-2021
Date: Wednesday, December 8, 2021 12:56:50 PM

From: San Francisco Tree Campaign <sftreecampaign@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 1:46 PM
To: Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>
Subject: SFMTA: Tree removal hearing 12-2-2021

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Attention Supervisors and tree-watchers:

Here we go again with SFMTA! This proposal is to remove 18 trees along 16th St., from Bryant to Guerrero streets that manage to be in the way of SFMTA's plans to fix up the street for the Muni buses. (Let me guess: to make them a minute faster -- well, at least sometimes, depending.) Our experience with SFMTA is that objections to their proposals are heard by their own hearing "officers" and any appeal of this decision is also heard by one of their Department heads. Slam-dunk! End of subject.

Something needs to be done about the excessive concentration of control in this one agency, this one authority: SFMTA.

John Nulty
District 8
<https://sanfranciscotreecampaign.blogspot.com>

From: [Kathleen Courtney](#)
To: [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [PrestonStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Short, Carla \(DPW\)](#); [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#); [Jamie Cherry](#); [Paul Burke](#); [Michele Sudduth](#); [Chris Bigelow](#); [John Borruso](#); [Dawn Mucha](#); [Robyn Tucker](#)
Subject: BOS Land Use Committee: 12-6-21 Item #2 - 210836 Public Works Code - Tree Removal on Private Property
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 1:09:04 PM
Importance: High

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Greetings Supervisors.

The Russian Hill Community Association (RHCA) has had the great good fortune to work with DPW Interim Director Carla Short when she was the City's Urban Forester. She worked with us on the trimming, planting and replacing trees on the Hyde Street Corridor.

Therefore it was with dismay that we discovered the proposed expansion of the DPW's jurisdiction to remove trees on private property. We agree that hazardous street trees should be removed, after the public's right to object. But the language dealing with "tree on private property" needs to either be removed or modified.

Thank you for your consideration. Kathleen

Kathleen Courtney
Chair, Housing & Zoning Committee
Russian Hill Community Association
kcourtney@rhcasf.com and kcourtney@xdm.com
(c) 510-928-8243

From: [Paul Burke](#)
To: [Kathleen Courtney](#)
Cc: [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [PrestonStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Short, Carla \(DPW\)](#); [Major, Erica \(BOS\)](#); [Jamie Cherry](#); [Michele Sudduth](#); [Chris Bigelow](#); [John Borruso](#); [Dawn Mucha](#); [Robyn Tucker](#)
Subject: Re: BOS Land Use Committee: 12-6-21 Item #2 - 210836 Public Works Code - Tree Removal on Private Property
Date: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 5:16:46 AM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Hi Kathleen -

Thank you for the news about DPW.

This city's government is hopelessly broken.

The DPW can't even maintain the jurisdiction they have; yet they want to expand their control and further inflict their corruption and incompetence on private property owners. Absolutely incredible.

As I was walking down Van Ness the other day; I was thinking that the people in city government are not stupid, but rather like hyenas and vultures. Stripping the last bits of meat from the putrified corpse of a once vibrant city.

Hope you have a happy and healthy holiday.

Paul Burke

On Monday, December 6, 2021, Kathleen Courtney <kcourtney@xdm.com> wrote:

Greetings Supervisors.

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Thank you for your consideration. Kathleen

Kathleen Courtney

Chair, Housing & Zoning Committee

Russian Hill Community Association

kcourtney@rhcasf.com and kcourtney@xdm.com

(c) 510-928-8243

LUTC Hearing — Trees

Dec 6, 2021 1:30pm



Lance Carnes
SaveSFtrees.org

Trees posted “24-hour” Emergency Removal in District 2 Still in place 15--17 months later

1621 Vallejo - posted
9/23/20



dead fuf tree. too small to post.

2200 Franklin - posted 7/27/20



dead



Emergency Tree Removal Notice

Aviso de Corte de Árbol de Emergencia
緊急樹木移除通知

The Director of Public Works has determined that this tree is an immediate public safety hazard and has approved it for EMERGENCY REMOVAL.

Location: 150 SANTA PAULA AVE (HEC 8) # of trees: one (1)

Reason(s) for removal:

- Dead, dangerous, or likely to fall (immediate structural hazard)
- Obstructing or damaging a street, sidewalk, or other existing infrastructure
- Tree has serious disease that threatens the health of other trees
- Interfering with vehicular or pedestrian traffic

Poses other significant hazard: **STRUCTURALLY WEAKENED, repeated branch failures. Structure remaining unbalanced. Failure at main UNION.**

Will tree be replaced?

- Yes, meets all planting guidelines
- Yes, unless conflicting underground utilities found
- No because:
 - Inadequate spacing between adjacent trees
 - Conflict with underground utilities identified
 - Other: **too close to intersection**

This is a 24-Hour Emergency Removal Notification. This notice cannot be protested.

For more information / Para más información / 想要查詢更多信息

Bureau of Urban Forestry

49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1000, San Francisco, CA 94103

(628) 652-TREE (8733), urbanforestry@sfdpw.org, sfpublishworks.org/tree-removal-notification




In accordance with Public Works Code, Article 16, Section 806, providing for the care and maintenance of San Francisco's street trees, the Department shall post a notice on the affected tree(s) for Emergency Removal. Each tree that is removed will be replaced barring conflicts with any existing infrastructure (street lights, traffic lights, stop signs, bus stops, etc.), conflicts with any underground utilities or lack of compliance with Public Works Director's Planting Order 187,246, as well as with the Minimum Guidelines for Planting Street Trees.

Emergency Tree Removal Notice

- No date on the notice
- 2 / 3 of all removal notices are “24-hour Emergency” notices
- “This is a 24-Hour Emergency Removal Notification”
“This notice cannot be protested.”

In other words **BUF doesn't want to have a removal hearing for the tree.**

The public is disenfranchised from protesting 24hr tree removals.

A vertical line runs down the left side of the slide, with a small white circle positioned at approximately the middle height.

Supervisors, please halt the posting of these 24-hour Emergency Removal Notices, which serve as a backdoor way of removing 15- and 30-day protest periods and avoid removal hearings.

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco 94102-4689
Tel. No. (415) 554-5184
Fax No. (415) 554-5163
TDD/TTY No. (415) 554-5227

July 23, 2021

File No. 210836

Lisa Gibson
Environmental Review Officer
Planning Department
49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Ms. Gibson:

On July 13, 2021, Supervisor Safai submitted the following legislation:

File No. 210836

Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to eliminate administrative objections to removal of Hazard Street Trees, require Public Works to plant replacement Street Trees within 120 days of removal, require that Street Trees removed without a permit be replaced by Street Trees of equal size, require that Tree protection plans include the applicant's acknowledgement of potential Tree replacement costs, and set maximum administrative penalties for removing or injuring Street Trees; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

This legislation is being transmitted to you for environmental review.

Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Erica Major".

By: Erica Major, Assistant Clerk
Land Use and Transportation Committee

Attachment

c: Joy Navarrete, Environmental Planning
Don Lewis, Environmental Planning

Not defined as a project under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15378 and 15060(c)(2) because it would not result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joy Navarrete".

September 16, 2021

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
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San Francisco 94102-4689
Tel. No. (415) 554-5184
Fax No. (415) 554-5163
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Alaric Degrafinried, Interim Director, Public Works

FROM: Erica Major, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee

DATE: July 23, 2021

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

The Board of Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committee has received the following proposed legislation, introduced by Supervisor Safai on July 20, 2021:

File No. 210805

Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to eliminate administrative objections to removal of Hazard Street Trees, require Public Works to plant replacement Street Trees within 120 days of removal, require that Street Trees removed without a permit be replaced by Street Trees of equal size, require that Tree protection plans include the applicant's acknowledgement of potential Tree replacement costs, and set maximum administrative penalties for removing or injuring Street Trees; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

If you have comments or reports to be included with the file, please forward them to me at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: erica.major@sfgov.org.

cc: David Steinberg, Public Works
Jeremy Spitz, Public Works
John Thomas, Public Works
Lena Liu, Public Works

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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Planning Department
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By: Erica Major, Assistant Clerk
Land Use and Transportation Committee

Attachment

c: Joy Navarrete, Environmental Planning
Don Lewis, Environmental Planning