



This is the first in a series of articles spotlighting Development Services programs that improve the quality of life of Elk Grove residents.

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New Ordinance to Protect and Preserve Elk Grove Tree Canopy

Elk Grove: Working for You

Elk Grove, CA – Trees are a tremendous asset to the City of Elk Grove, offering extensive social, economic, and environmental benefits. They are also a hallmark of the City’s proud heritage.

Beginning this month, the City of Elk Grove is implementing a new plan that will help preserve and protect trees throughout the city.

A new tree preservation ordinance was unanimously adopted by the Elk Grove City Council this February. The new ordinance updates the municipal code to ensure Elk Grove’s urban forest is prudently protected and managed consistently with the community’s vision.

The City’s previous tree preservation and protection ordinance, carried over upon incorporation more than 10 years ago from the County of Sacramento, did not specifically recognize a variety trees that are native to the Elk Grove area that are part of the City’s historic and aesthetic character. It also did not provide a process for the City to recognize unique landmark trees within the community.

Over the past three years, the City of Elk Grove has held multiple public workshops, stakeholder committee meetings, and Planning Commission workshops and hearings to discuss how best to update the regulations. The City collaborated with representatives from business, development, and residential communities, as well as the Sacramento Tree Foundation, to ensure the plan represents the best interest of the city.

“I commend the many citizens and stakeholders who came to the table to provide input on this important ordinance,” said Mayor Steven Detrick. “This city is dedicated to preserving and caring for

our trees which provide clean air, shade, beauty and add immensely to the quality of life of Elk Grove's residents."

Key components of the ordinance include:

- Creation of a landmark tree program where the Council may designate a specific tree as a Landmark Tree because of its size, location, or history in the community;
- A requirement that property owners obtain a tree permit prior to removing certain types of trees or working within the critical root zone of a protected tree;
- Exemptions for home owners and other existing developments depending upon the type of tree;
- A requirement that the removal of a tree be mitigated through activities such as replanting, relocation, or payment of a mitigation fee, unless the mitigation requirement is waived; and
- Waivers for mitigation for the loss of trees when the tree threatens the public safety or has a high degree of probability to cause significant property damage, such as damage to a building foundation;

In addition to the new ordinance, the City is also partnering with the Sacramento Tree Foundation to double the number of trees in the region over the next 40 years. The goal is to maximize the benefits of our urban forest. Air quality, water quality, energy, real estate and businesses all benefit from trees.

The Greenprint is a call to action and a plan of work for each of the 28 local governments in our six-county region to adopt tree canopy optimization goals, policies and ordinances, best management practices, and community involvement strategies. The City of Elk Grove was the first local government to join the regional Greenprint.

Each year, the City partners with the Sacramento Tree Foundation on an Arbor Day tree planting event. This year's event will be on April 9 and will focus on planting 250 new native trees in the City. For more information, visit www.sactree.com/events. Funds for the event come from the City's mitigation fund, paid by developers when they remove existing trees as part of a new development.

To view the City of Elk Grove's new tree preservation ordinance or for more information, visit <http://www.egplanning.org/trees> or contact Christopher Jordan at 916.478.2222 or cjordan@elkgrovecity.org.

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