

## Definitions of Terms

### **Class 1 trees are the following:**

Alder (*Alnus*)  
Ash (*Fraxinus*)  
Beech (*Fagus*)  
Birch (*Betula*)  
Camphor (*Cinnamomum camphora*)  
Carrot wood (*Cupaniopsis anacardiopsis*)  
Cedars (*Cedrus atlantica, and deodora*)  
Chinese Flame tree (*koelreuteria bipinnata*)  
Coral tree (*Erythina*)  
Crape Myrtle (*lagerstroemia indica*)  
Fern Pine (*Podocarpus gracilor*)  
Fig Tree (*Fiscus rubiginosa*)  
Floss Silk Tree (*Chorisia*)  
Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)  
Jacaranda (*Jacaranda mimosifolia*)  
Liquidambar (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)  
Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*)  
Oaks, all (*Quercus*)  
Olive (*Olea europea*)  
Pepper, "California" (*Schinus molle*)  
Pine (*Pinus canariensis*)  
Pine (*Pinus pinea*)  
Redwood (*sequoia giganteum*)  
Strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*)  
Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*)  
Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

**A mature tree** is any class 1 tree in the front yard which exceeds 19" circumference or, if located in a side yard and rear yard, one which exceeds 30" circumference measured 4' above natural grade.

**Landmark or historically significant** trees or stand of trees meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) have taken on an aura of historical value by virtue of age or location.
- (2) A tree which has a trunk with a 40" circumference if located in the front yard or 60" if located in the rear and side yards.

### City of San Gabriel

Community Development Dept.

425 S. Mission Drive

Phone: (626) 308-2800 ext. 4638

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Note: This brochure provides only general guidance. Please consult the San Gabriel Municipal Code or Neighborhood Improvement Services Staff for more information.

## CITY OF SAN GABRIEL



## Protecting Our Urban Forest

*Preserving our city's trees for a better tomorrow.*



# Preserving our city's trees

## **Why is there a tree ordinance?**

In February 1991, the San Gabriel City Council enacted a tree ordinance intended to protect and preserve trees in the single family residential and commercial zones of the City. This ordinance protects mature City trees that make the City look and feel more beautiful, while increasing property values. The information in the brochure will help residents take good care of their trees and contribute to creating a better environment in the City of San Gabriel.

## **What does the City ordinance say?**

- No person shall cut, trim, prune, transplant, destroy or remove more than 1/3 of the live foliage of any mature Class 1 tree located anywhere on private property without first obtaining a permit from the City.
- No person shall cut, trim, prune, transplant, or destroy more than 1/3 of the live foliage or remove any tree of "historical/landmark" significance located in any of the single family residential zones of the City anywhere on private property without first obtaining a permit.
- Finally, no person shall reduce the height of any protected "mature tree" more than 1/4 over two years without first obtaining a permit from the City.

## **Pruning mature trees**

Pruning is the most common tree maintenance procedure. Forest trees grow well in a natural environment. However, landscape trees need a different level of maintenance. Pruning should be done with an understanding of how the tree responds to each cut. Improper trimming can cause damage that will last for the life of the tree, or worse, shorten the life of the tree entirely. This is why the City requests that residents apply for a permit before pruning or trimming their tree.

## **Getting a permit is easy**

To get a permit, just fill out an application for trimming or removal of a tree. This application contains information necessary for the Community Development Director to determine whether the standards for issuance of a permit are satisfied. There is no cost for applying for a tree trimming permit, and the typical wait for approval of a permit is four to seven days. Additional guidelines for how to better trim your tree (s) are available at the Community Development Department.

## **What are the conditions for getting a permit?**

The Community Development Director will grant a permit if one or more of the following findings is made:

- The tree constitutes a nuisance or hazard
- The trimming is found to be necessary by a professional arborist, to maintain or enhance the health or appearance of the tree
- The tree has not been reduced in height more than 1/4 over a two-year period
- The trimming or removal of the tree is deemed necessary to prevent a substantial inconvenience/ financial hardship to the resident/property owner.

## **Remember to replace your tree**

Replacement of a tree is necessary whenever a tree is removed. In addition, if a tree must be trimmed, the work must meet City-approved arborist standards. Finally, any decision of the Community Development Director may be appealed to the City Council.

## **Are there any exemptions?**

Permits are not required for the removal, trimming or pruning of a tree damaged by storm, fire, or other natural disaster or otherwise determined to be dangerous by the City Manager, Community Development Director, Police Officer, firefighter or code enforcement officer.

Also exempted from this ordinance are the following types of trees:

- Immature Class trees—do not exceed 19" circumference when located in the front yard or do not exceed 30" circumference when located in a side/rear yard
- Trees that must be removed or trimmed by order of any public agency or public utility having jurisdiction
- Any palm tree or fruit tree.

## **Additional information**

For supplemental brochures on how to prune trees, plant new trees or care for mature trees, please call the City of San Gabriel at 626-308-2806.

