

# THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

## *A Report on a Davis Resource*

*Trees are poems that the earth writes upon the sky. – Khalil Gibran*

**June 1, 2023**



Davis trees permission Sharon Browne

### **SUMMARY**

The 2022-23 Yolo County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) received a complaint about Davis (City) street tree maintenance. This report addresses issues of street tree care connected with Chapters 15 and 37 of the Davis Municipal Code (DMC).

The complaint filed with the Grand Jury asserted that some City-owned street trees planted on private property were in poor condition because property owners were not aware of their duty to water these trees. The City's failure to enforce this duty might then result in added costs to the City due to having to remove trees that died prematurely. The Grand Jury has found that the City has not developed an effective education program to inform private property owners of this duty. Further, the City has failed to provide any incentive to the property owners to incur the expense of watering the City-owned trees.

The Grand Jury researched the 2018 Measure H, (1) which renewed a park maintenance parcel tax to support City-owned trees and parks for an additional 20 years. The Grand Jury found that, contrary to voter intent, the Davis City Council deleted "street trees"

from the categories approved to receive the benefits of this parcel tax. Instead, the City inserted “street lighting” when adopting [Ordinance 2521](#), (2) implementing Measure H.

Finally, the Grand Jury found that the organizational structure of the Davis tree program is fragmented, and it is not clear who is responsible for management and oversight of the street trees. The City needs to correct or clarify [DMC Chapter 37](#) (3) to accurately specify which City officers, commissions or committees have responsibility to direct each element of the new Davis [Urban Forest Management Plan](#). (4)

## **DEFINITIONS**

Davis Municipal Code (DMC 37.01.020) provides the following definitions:

**City Tree:** “any tree, other than a street tree, planted or maintained by the city within a city easement, right-of-way, park, greenbelt, public place or property owned or leased by the city.”

**Street Tree:** “any tree, planted and/or maintained by the city, or recorded as a street tree adjacent to a street or with in a city easement or right-of-way on private property, within the street tree easement.”

**Street Tree Easement:** “refers to the ten-foot zone behind the sidewalk or between curb and sidewalk (or if no sidewalk exists, behind the street curb, gutter, edge of street or property line at street) within which a street tree or private tree may exist or be planted.”

## **BACKGROUND**

Since the 1960s, a period of major growth in population, the City has provided Street Trees for residential properties in order to create a uniform amenity along public thoroughfares. This policy has been very successful in creating attractive neighborhoods and a walkable, shaded downtown. In 1963, the City’s Urban Forestry Program was established together with the Street Tree Committee (now the Tree Commission), composed of volunteers. In 1977, the City received recognition for its street tree program from the National Arbor Day Foundation and annually thereafter. In 2002, the City Council adopted the 2002 [Community Forest Management Plan](#) (5) and a Tree Ordinance.

### **2018 Measure H, Park Maintenance Tax**

The 2018 Measure H was adopted by the voters to help fund the maintenance of parks including street trees. However, in implementing Measure H, the City deleted “street

trees” and inserted “street lighting.” The City’s 2022 budget does not make it clear how the [Measure H revenue](#) is spent. (6)

Under these policies, many thousands of street trees have been planted over the years, and the City has acquired a reputation for the beauty of its tree-shaded streets in a hot valley climate where shade is valued and necessary. But many neighborhoods contain aging trees that are increasingly vulnerable to disease and decline in a warming climate. Conditions of heat and drought challenge the health of these trees, and a trend encouraged by the City toward low-water-use landscapes has left many large trees without the water that had sustained them when they were surrounded by lawns. While the City mandates water conservation, it also urges property owners to water City-owned street trees; but it does not provide usable information about proper watering techniques. Importantly, it does not inform owners that they are expected to maintain City-owned trees entrusted to their care. During the summer drought of 2022, some mature street trees exhibited severe stress by dropping their leaves in August. Experts suggest this is evidence that they did not receive enough water. Much more can be done by the City to protect these trees and avoid early removals at the City’s expense.

#### **APPROACH**

The Grand Jury interviewed numerous City employees, volunteers, experts, and property owners, and reviewed City documents available online. When interviewed, some Davis property owners told the Grand Jury that they were unaware of their expected role in maintaining City-owned Street Trees on their private property. Other Davis property owners said they felt that the City was asking them to make unreasonable choices on how to spend their money because they were already paying for Measure H, a park maintenance tax, and they felt that City water rates were high. To make matters worse, private property owners feel that compliance with the city ordinance is difficult because at times the City limits landscaping watering to two or three days a week.

The Grand Jury researched the Davis Municipal Code and found that, through inadvertence or by mistake, the City did not follow the voters’ intent when implementing Measure H when they substituted “street lighting” for “street trees” without voter approval.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Street Trees***

Davis is proud of its urban forest program and the City has received recognition and numerous awards for being a walkable and bikeable community. (7) The City maintains over 12,000 street trees, 15,000 trees in parks and greenbelts, and 5,000 trees in public rights-of-way. Davis property owners have generously supported this program with a special tax to help pay for park maintenance and street trees. The first special tax was adopted in 1998 as Measure H, and renewed in 2002, 2006, and 2012. When the 2012 special tax was set to sunset in 2018, Davis voters renewed it through that year's Measure H for another 20 years. (8)

Like many other cities, Davis has established easements in the front of residential lots. These easements, extending from the front property line ten feet onto the property, provide a place for city fixtures such as water meters, signs, hydrants, and Street Trees. Street trees on planned development street frontages are usually provided and planted by the developer and are maintained according to varying developer agreements. A subdivider who creates new residential parcels within a large tract (the typical development scheme in most cities) will note such easements on individual plot plans attached to each parcel. DMC 37.02.010, states:

“Subdividers are hereby required to provide and plant street trees within the city street tree easement according to the city’s street tree planting requirements, for each lot fronting a public street.... During the initial three-year establishment period...the city may provide...street tree pruning and training, paid for by the street tree fees.”

When such new trees are planted, the City gives owners information about tree care. One recent flyer says, “newly planted trees require 5-10 gallons per watering, 2-3 times per week,...more during periods of hot weather” and warns against use of plastic weed barrier fabric near trees. A current “City Tree Planting Notice” says, “Property owners are responsible for watering street trees that are on their property.... This is an important partnership with the City of Davis. The tree is the property of the City.” (See Appendix 1).

City laws make clear the duty of owners to maintain Street Trees: “Private property owners shall be responsible for irrigating street trees that exist on their property....[They] may place and maintain plants on their property within the Tree

Protection Zone....Street trees and city trees shall assume priority over other vegetation.” (DMC 37.01.010(a)(b))

DMC 37.02.040 makes it unlawful for property owners to “prune, spray, brace, plant, move, replace or damage any street tree.” This law establishes the obligation of owners to maintain City-owned Street Trees. By extension, a choice not to water a City Tree could be considered a constructive action to damage it, especially when it contributes to disease or early death during a dry spell. It also states: “Altering the grade of the property including trenching, in a manner that could damage, or ... affect the well-being of a street tree or city tree” is prohibited.

In efforts to reduce water consumption, some homeowners replace plants in their front yards with others that require little or no water. These new landscape designs usually include no irrigation systems or means for supplying water to City-owned Street Trees. No permits are required for work that does not focus on City-owned Street Trees, but a City education program could guide the landscape design work that surrounds the trees.

The City provides periodic newsletters to residents that address water conservation (see Appendix 2). These notices advise limiting routine landscape watering but always encourage people to water their trees. Many residents find this mixed messaging confusing. The idea that property owners have an obligation to care for Street Trees is not discussed. One late-summer notice said that mature trees need deep watering with 30-40 gallons, twice a week, during very hot spells. The City should inform property owners about efficient deep watering techniques because residential sprinklers and ordinary drip systems are not designed for this purpose..

There are many rental properties in Davis, a college town. Approximately 57% of the 25,869 housing units in Davis are on rental properties and many of the Street Trees are on these properties. Large developments have landscape maintenance programs and Street Trees are well cared for. But the many dispersed small rental properties are often under the care of property management companies whose primary purpose is to make money for absentee owners. Care of the landscape and trees is considered unprofitable, and thus is not performed. Although the property owner may have been informed of the matter of Street Tree maintenance duty years ago, the message seems to have been lost over the years with ownership turnover. There is a need to re-establish understanding with current owners who are in the end responsible for fulfillment of the original mandates.

In 2023, the City completed an Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), funded by a Cal Fire grant. This is a powerful new tool for the City to use in evaluating needs and planning responses to issues such as tree losses. With this in hand, the City plans to update its 2002 tree ordinance in a process which includes citizen input. The new ordinance is an opportunity to address the problem of an aging and, in some areas, a declining urban forest. The public process of adopting the new ordinance can re-establish the City's communication with the public about Street Trees as a shared responsibility. The new ordinance can establish reasonable rules for City support for private actions and reduce the City's costs and liability for tree removals that result from under-watering of Street Trees.

An existing database of City Trees is now a part of the new UFMP. This accounting of trees is out of date and does not properly support the mission of the UFMP. A street-level inventory is needed now to check trees to verify their species, size, health and threats to the trees' health. In combination with an updated list of trees suitable for a changing climate, this action, with the possible help of volunteers, will give the City the information it needs to make wise decisions about the urban forest going forward. Tree Davis, a local non-profit, recommends that the City consider adopting all trees in the City street easement, adding them to the City inventory, regardless of who planted them. This would require the agreement of each private property owner who has a private tree within the street tree easement. Such action would streamline the evaluation of service requests, eliminating the chore of determining "ownership." Adding about 6,000 trees to the city list would require added funding for maintenance.

Various ordinances that deal with City-owned Street Trees agree that such trees on private property require care by homeowners, and the specifics of expected care are spread out in more than one place in City codes. These codes establish a duty to care for the City-owned Street Trees. But the consequences for not following the ordinances are not enforced. Perhaps for this reason, city notices urging tree watering do not refer to any penalties for not doing so. The City should correct this by revising such language in the upcoming tree ordinance update to tie compliance to consequences (notices, fines, assistance, etc.), and then publicize the matter in clear language to the public.

### ***Measure H Voter Intent***

In 1998, Davis voters adopted a new parcel tax to support park maintenance, by a two-thirds vote. It was renewed by the voters several times in subsequent years. In 2018, Measure H was renewed, this time for twenty years. The funds generated by Measure

H, currently about \$1.5 million per year, are dedicated for the specific purposes set out in the language of Measure H. The language of Measure H was clear and precise<sup>1</sup>:

“Shall Ordinance 2521, which renews the existing Park Maintenance Tax of \$49 per year on residential units and on non-residential units in amounts specified in the Ordinance, for 20 years, adds an annual 2% inflator, and is expected to generate \$1.4 million in the first year to fund maintenance of parks, **street trees**, greenbelts, bike paths, medians, public landscaping, urban wildlife and habitat, swimming pools, and public recreational facilities, be adopted?” (emphasis added).

The 2018 voter information packet for Measure H stated: “How does the City use the revenue from the Parks Maintenance Tax? The Parks Maintenance Tax provides \$1.4 million annually, which currently pays for 18% of parks maintenance costs. The funds are dedicated to assisting with the maintenance of parks, **street trees**, greenbelts, bike paths, medians, public landscaping, urban wildlife and habitat, swimming pools, and public recreational facilities in the community, such as building in parks, play structures, and courts and fields. **As a special tax, revenues must be spent only for these purposes**” (emphasis added). However, the impartial analysis of Measure H prepared by the City Attorney, through inadvertence or mistake, inserted “**street lighting**” in place of “**street trees.**”

After Measure H was passed with overwhelming support from Davis voters, Ordinance No. 2521 went into effect. Its title reads:

*“ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DAVIS AMENDING ARTICLE 15.14 OF CHAPTER 15 OF THE DAVIS MUNICIPAL CODE RENEWING AND AMENDING A PARK MAINTENANCE TAX TO FUND MAINTENANCE OF PARKS, **STREET TREES**, GREENBELTS, BIKE PATHS, MEDIANS, PUBLIC LANDSCAPING, URBAN WILDLIFE AND HABITAT, SWIMMING POOLS, AND PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO ADD A TWO PERCENT INFLATOR TO THE MAXIMUM TAX RATE BEGINNING JULY 1, 2019 AND TO EXTEND THE TERM OF THE TAX TO 2038 SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE VOTERS”* (emphasis added).

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<sup>1</sup> The California Supreme Court has long recognized that “the language used in a statute or constitutional provision should be given its ordinary meaning, and —[i]f the language is clear and unambiguous there is no need for construction, nor is it necessary to resort to indicia of the intent of the Legislature (in the case of a statute) or of the voters (in the case of a provision adopted by the voters).” (*Lungren v. Deukmejian* (1988) 45 Cal.3d 727, 735.) The same principle applies to local governments, including the City.

Three sections of Ordinance No. 2521, now sections 15.14.010, 15.14.040 and 15.14.070 of the DMC, are seemingly inconsistent with both the measure’s title and the text of Measure H itself. These sections provide:

- “15.14.010. Findings. The Park Maintenance Tax currently provides funding to supplement the general fund for the maintenance of community parks, greenbelts, open space, **street lighting**, swimming pools, and related public recreational facilities” (*emphasis added*).
- “15.14.040. Park Maintenance Tax. (a) If approved by the voters, commencing July 1, 2018, for fiscal year 2018-2019, the city shall continue collecting funding for parks, open space, **public lighting** and related public recreational facilities in the form of a special park tax in the manner and at the rates set forth herein” (*emphasis added*).
- “15.14.070. Limitation on Disposition of Revenue. Revenues collected under the provisions of this article shall be deposited in a special fund called the park maintenance special tax fund and shall be used only for the operation and maintenance of landscaping, park, open space, median, greenbelt, swimming pools, public recreational facilities **and public lighting improvements**, within the City and for the incidental expenses incurred in the administration of this tax, including, but not limited to the cost of elections, and the cost of collection” (*emphasis added*).

The ballot language the voters intended to effectuate in approving Measure H in 2018 is clear and precise—a Street Tree is not similar to street lighting or public lighting. The City’s laws implementing Measure H do not conform to the ballot language. This alteration was made without voter approval. It would not be burdensome for the City Council to amend or revise the laws implementing Measure H to restore Street Trees as one of the categories receiving the benefits of this special tax. Amending these laws would promote voter confidence that the City is implementing Measure H according to voters’ intent.

### ***Measure H Revenue and Expenditures Lack Transparency***

Although Measure H revenues are shown as a line item in the City Budget, the City does not account for specific outlays from those revenues by category – maintenance of parks, Street Trees, greenbelts, bike paths, medians, public landscaping, urban wildlife and habitat, swimming pools, and public recreational facilities. This is because the \$1.5 million currently generated by Measure H annually amounts to only a fraction of the City’s expenditures in those areas. The typical City taxpayer may regard this as creating a “black box” effect: the money goes into the City’s coffers, but it is not obvious what becomes of it. This perception has been exacerbated by the City’s decision to begin



depositing Measure H revenues directly into the General Fund instead of utilizing a special fund for that purpose, as was done through the end of the 2020-21 fiscal year.<sup>2</sup>

City spending for each of the categories listed in Measure H is reported over a variety of line items in the annual budget for the Parks and Communities Services Department. There is an exception for expenditures for tree planting and maintenance, which are now aggregated within the Urban Forestry line item in the budget for the Public Works Department. There exists no simple, accessible statement of total City spending for each of the categories identified in Measure H. Such a statement would make it immediately clear to property owners that each category of concern identified in Measure H is receiving funding.<sup>3</sup>

By preparing and posting on the City's website a simplified summary of revenues received from Measure H and annual City expenditures on maintenance of parks, Street Trees, greenbelts, bike paths, medians, public landscaping, urban wildlife and habitat, swimming pools, and public recreational facilities, the City would provide Davis taxpayers with transparency and accountability in the use of Measure H funds. It is entirely possible that such a statement might generate even greater support for Measure H, by highlighting the disparity between the amount of funds received from the tax and the total outlays required for each category.

### ***Chapter 37 Information Is Incorrect***

The Grand Jury has determined that the City's tree management program has recently undergone a good deal of administrative change. This includes shifting the Urban Forestry Division from the Parks and Recreation Department to the Public Works Department, the departure of the City's long-time Urban Forestry manager, and the adoption of a new UFMP.

Responsibility for the tree program's operations is currently centered in four areas: Tree Davis (a private contractor/ volunteer organization operating under a memorandum of understanding with the City); the Tree Commission (a volunteer advisory group to the City Council); the

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<sup>2</sup> City of Davis Municipal Code, section 15.14.070, states that Measure H revenues are to be "deposited in a special fund called the park maintenance special tax fund" which may be used only for the specific purposes listed in Measure H. It is not clear how the City was able to switch to depositing these revenues into the General Fund without violating this provision.

<sup>3</sup> Through 2021, there was no evidence that Measure H revenue was spent on street lighting or withheld from street trees. However, by placing Measure H revenue into the general fund, there is no way to confirm how Measure H revenue is spent.

Planning Commission; and the City's urban forestry staff. The Grand Jury could find no centralized, readily available statement, in the DMC or elsewhere, of exactly which agencies or officials are responsible for which elements of the City's tree program. The website for the Urban Forestry Division states: "Until further notice, please anticipate delays in response times for maintenance and planning activities of the Urban Forestry Division due to staff shortages."

This statement has been posted since February 24, 2023. Clearly, staffing levels are too low to accomplish and maintain the City's tree program. Moreover, existing information in DMC Chapter 37 is apparently incorrect. DMC 37.01.040 states that the City's community service director "shall be charged with the enforcement of this chapter." When the Grand Jury attempted to contact the director, it was found that she had no connection to the tree program.

### **COMMENDATION**

The Davis City Council should be commended for its Urban Forestry Program, and in particular, its innovative new Urban Forest Management Plan. Under its memorandum of understanding with the City, Tree Davis has sponsored educational events, in coordination with City staff, for multiple audiences. These outreach efforts have resulted in the development of an active volunteer program and a valuable volunteer list.

### **FINDINGS**

F-1: The City does not adequately inform homeowners about their responsibilities for maintaining City-owned trees on private property. This can result in inadequate or no watering of established Street Trees, especially those on rental properties managed by agents.

F-2: The City does not enforce compliance with Chapter 37 obligations to maintain City Street Trees.

F-3: The voter-approved ballot language in adopting the 2018 Measure H is clear and precise. However, the laws implementing Measure H substitutes "street lighting" for "street trees," contrary to the voters' intent.

F-4: Chapter 37 fails to provide current and accurate information as to which officials or agencies are responsible for overseeing the various elements of the City's tree program. This information is not available on the City's website.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

R-1: The Grand Jury recommends that the City clarify its expectations that private property owners maintain City-owned Street Trees on their property so that Street Trees do not suffer early decline that forces early removal at City expense. Publication of specific expectations for watering and coordination with other landscaping is needed. This outreach effort should include extra measures to communicate with absentee owners and property managers. This should be done by January 1, 2024.

R-2: The City should enforce compliance with Chapter 37 obligations to maintain City Street Trees.

R-3: The Grand Jury recommends that the City develop a means to incentivize the proper care of City-owned Street Trees on private property by providing a water allowance for this purpose, or similar measures such as making available appropriate irrigation materials and consultations with property owners. This should be completed by January 1, 2024.

R-4: The Grand Jury recommends that the City amend the language of Ordinance 2521, now DMC sections 15.14.010, 15.14.040, and 15.14.070, to effectuate voter's intent in adopting Measure H. This should be completed by January 1, 2024.

R-5: The Grand Jury recommends that the City post on its website a simplified summary of annual revenues received from Measure H and related appropriate annual City allocations and expenditures. This should be completed by January 1, 2024.

R-6: The Grand Jury recommends that Davis Municipal Code, Chapter 37, be amended to clearly identify responsible departments and officials charged with overseeing each element of the City's tree program. This information should be clearly posted on the City's website. This should be completed by January 1, 2024.

## REQUIRED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses to its Findings and Recommendations from the **Davis City Council** within 90 days.

## END NOTES

- (1) [https://ballotpedia.org/Davis, California, Measure H, Park Maintenance Parcel Tax \(June 2018\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Davis,_California,_Measure_H,_Park_Maintenance_Parcel_Tax_(June_2018)) Measure H Parcel Tax
- (2) [https://content.qcode.us/lib/davis\\_ca/pub/municipal\\_code/files/ordlist.pdf](https://content.qcode.us/lib/davis_ca/pub/municipal_code/files/ordlist.pdf)
- (3) [https://library.qcode.us/lib/davis\\_ca/pub/municipal\\_code/item/chapter\\_37](https://library.qcode.us/lib/davis_ca/pub/municipal_code/item/chapter_37)
- (4) <https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-hall/urban-forestry/city-of-davis-urban-forest-management-plan>
- (5) <https://www.cityofdavis.org/home/showdocument?id=5638> 2002 UFMP
- (6) <https://www.cityofdavis.org/home/showpublisheddocument/17344/637813053672630000>
- (7) <sup>1</sup> In 1977, the City received recognition by the National Arbor Day Foundation and continues to receive this award annually. <https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-hall/urban-forestry>.
- (8) <sup>1</sup> 02/06/2018 City Council Minutes.  
<https://documents.cityofdavis.org/Media/CityCouncil/Documents/PDF/CityCouncil/Council/Meeting/Minutes/2018/Minutes-2028-02-06-City-Council-Meeting.pdf>

## APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: City Tree Planting Notice
- Appendix 2: Caring for Young Trees
- Appendix 3: City Tree Planting Notice
- Appendix 4: There's No Doubt—We're in a Drought You Can Help!

**APPENDIX 1**

Davis, CALIFORNIA  
CITY TREE PLANTING NOTICE  
October 26, 2022



Occupant  
Davis, CA 95616

Dear Occupant,

The City of Davis Urban Forestry Division will be planting a tree soon at \_\_\_\_\_. Please read the following information carefully as the replacement tree will not be removed once it has been planted. This planting is happening because a City tree was removed. As part of the City's street tree planting program a replacement tree(s) will be planted at \_\_\_\_\_. City Trees are planted in the easement on your property, within 10 feet from the back of the sidewalk (back of the sidewalk is the edge of the sidewalk closest to your home). Generally, replacement trees are planted in or near the same location as the City tree that was removed.

The tree recommended (or specified per your request) for your property with consideration of soil, size, and location is: Bubba Desert Willow. To review information about this tree species, go to [www.nfei.org](http://www.nfei.org) and click on the SelecTree at the top of the page. You can enter the species name to see pictures and learn more about these trees. If you would like a different tree selection for your property, please contact our office as soon as possible via email at [CityTrees@cityofdavis.org](mailto:CityTrees@cityofdavis.org), so we can work with you to determine an appropriate alternative. Requested alternatives for trees must be received in writing and be an available species from City of Davis Master Street Tree list. Availability of species could be limited, and for that reason the City of Davis will be working with regional nurseries this planting season. To learn about the species available for this planting season please contact the Urban Forestry division at [CityTrees@cityofdavis.org](mailto:CityTrees@cityofdavis.org) or 530-757-5633. The City of Davis Master Street Tree list can be found on the City of Davis website at [https://www.cityofdavis.org/cit\\_half/urban-](https://www.cityofdavis.org/cit_half/urban-)

Prior to tree planting, a door hanger will be posted at your residence confirming the tree species, listing an approximate planting date, and explaining the tree planting location. Also, a flag will be placed in the general tree planting area and will be marked in paint. The paint marks the area that will need to be assessed for underground service lines

530-756-5686 | @CityofDavis @    
Public Works Utilities and Operations Department  
23 Russell Boulevard, Davis, CA 95616

and confirm that there are no utilities in the area before planting. If you would like to change the planting location, please keep in mind that the following specifications must be met:

- The tree must be kept within the City's 10' tree planting and maintenance easement. The 10' is measured from the back of the sidewalk (back of the sidewalk is the edge of the sidewalk closest to your home).
- The tree must be planted a minimum of 5' from City utilities such as the sewer and water lines.
- The tree must be planted a minimum of 4' from existing sidewalks and driveways.

To help with tree establishment, it is the property owner's responsibility to water the newly planted tree. This is an important partnership with the City of Davis; therefore, at the time of planting, tree care instructions will be left at the residence. Property owners are responsible for watering street trees that are on their property. With proper care, your newly planted street tree can become an integral part of our Community Forest.

The tree is the property of the City of Davis and will be maintained on a block pruning schedule. You can find information about caring for new trees and the block pruning schedule on the City of Davis website at <https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-halt/urban->

If at any time you feel the tree requires inspection, please contact the Urban Forestry Division staff. Staff can be reached at (530) 757-5633 to resolve any questions or concerns you have.

Sincerely,

Davis Urban Forestry Program  
Public Works Utilities & Operations Department

**APPENDIX 2**

# CARING FOR YOUR TREES

## Watering

Trees of all ages require watering to remain healthy.

Newly planted trees require regular watering to become established. At the time of planting, a basin can be constructed around the tree, slightly larger than the root ball to help direct water to the tree's roots. Fill the basin once or twice a week, as needed, to keep the root ball moist. More frequent watering may be required during periods of hot weather. Since soils and environmental conditions vary, periodically check the soil to see that it is not too wet or too dry and that you are watering deeply enough. Be sure to water the entire root area and slightly beyond.



Young, established trees require infrequent deep watering for root development and good tree growth. Drip irrigation is best to apply water slowly onto the soil, allowing the water to infiltrate into the root zone. A system that allows approximately 40 gallons of water to infiltrate per watering is a good starting point to keep the tree's roots moist. A good system is calibrated to adapt to the soil, weather conditions, and tree type prior to installing and irrigating.

Mature trees may only require watering in the hotter summer months. Water should be applied under the drip line when possible. Trees should be watered so the soil is at field capacity.

**APPENDIX 3**

**City Tree Planting Notice**

As part of the City's Urban Forestry Program a replacement tree will be planted in the City easement front of your home.

It is the goal of the City to have at least one tree on each lot (one on each side for corner lots). The tree is the property of the City of Davis and will be maintained on a block trimming schedule.

The tree recommended your lot with consideration of size, and location is a \_\_\_\_\_. Which is estimated to grow to \_\_\_\_\_ feet tall.

This is a deciduous evergreen tree.

Should you have any questions, please call the City's Urban Forestry Program at 530-757-5633 with your name and address. To view information about this tree species, go to [www.ufe.org](http://www.ufe.org) and click on "SelecTree." Please note that the City will not remove or relocate trees once they are planted.

The small flag placed in your yard indicates the area that was selected for the tree to be planted. If you would like the tree planted in an alternate location, move the flag to the spot you prefer. Please note that tree planting locations must be:

- Within 4-10 feet of the sidewalk.
- At least 5 feet from water, sewer or gas lines.

Depending on the weather we will plant your tree in the coming weeks.





APPENDIX 3

# There's No Doubt – We're in a Drought You Can Help!

With three dry years in a row, Davis is in a drought. Alongside the City's permanent mandatory water-use restrictions, the City has implemented Shortage Level 2 of the City's Water Shortage Contingency Plan (as required by the Governor). Shortage Level 2 restricts irrigation to three days per week and prohibits vehicle washing except at a commercial carwash. The state water-waste restrictions also remain in place. See below for more information on the sprinkler irrigation restrictions.

## Sprinkler Irrigation Restrictions

The City Council implemented watering restrictions for sprinkler/spray irrigation use that began November 1, 2021. The watering restrictions apply to all customers (residential and commercial) and will aid the City in reducing water usage. The watering restrictions only apply to sprinkler/spray irrigation and do not apply to other methods of irrigation such as drip systems and hand-watering.



**Sprinkler irrigation systems can water a maximum of three days a week on an odd/even watering schedule :**

**Odd numbered addresses: Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday**

**Even numbered addresses: Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday**

Whether you own your property or are renting, we can all help to reduce water usage during these dry conditions. Learn more at: [SaveDavisWater.org](https://www.savedaviswater.org)

### Look Out for Leaks

- Look and listen for leaks. Make repairs or report leaks to the property manager.
- Register for AquaHawk (if you rent, check with your property owner/manager)
- Watch for water or gas (hot water) bill increases



### Save Water Indoors

- Only wash full loads of dishes and clothes
- Turn off the water while brushing teeth
- Take shorter showers or fill the bathtub less
- Save and reuse water for watering



### Save Water Outdoors

- Use a broom instead of a hose
- Repair leaks and broken sprinkler heads or report them to the property manager
- Water no more than three days per week (or less!) and keep deep watering your trees



## Prioritize watering trees

During the hot, dry summer months it is essential to water your trees. Deep watering of trees encourages root growth, helps reduce surface rooting, and helps keep trees healthy even during dry and/or drought conditions. Young and mature trees have different watering needs. Young, established trees require infrequent deep watering. Mature trees may only require watering in the hotter summer months. Drip or flood irrigation over the critical root zone (under the tree canopy) is usually the best way to water trees. Avoid spray irrigation if possible. If this is the only option, make sure the sprinklers do not spray the trunk of the tree. Visit [CityofDavis.org/City-Hall/Urban-Forestry](https://www.cityofdavis.org/City-Hall/Urban-Forestry) for details on tree watering.




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