



May 3, 2021

San Rafael City Council
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: 3rd Street Tree Cutting

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Since the Council last viewed the 3rd Street project in November, *another* mature median tree has been added to the three previously slated to be cut. This magnificent London Plane forms the western gateway to San Rafael. Your choice tonight is to save a living landmark that welcomes thousands of people to our 'tree city' each day, or cling to two parking spaces. Both are shown below:



The tree is approximately 40 feet tall, with an equal spread, a nearly two-foot caliper, good clearance, and the space to continue growing through this century. It is estimated to sequester about a ton of CO₂ climate

pollution every three years, an amount that will continue to grow with the tree. For comparison, an average gasoline car emits about twelve times that amount. We need every sizable tree we have—and many more—to counter that pollution and do their part for healthy streets and a stable climate.

Other than the two spaces shown, there would be no net loss of parking according to the project plans.

Sustainable San Rafael urges you to sacrifice two parking spaces in order to protect a beautiful constituent of our natural community.

Sincerely,

William Carney
President



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San Rafael City Council
14 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: Third Street Rehabilitation

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council Members,

I am writing again about the proposed multi-use path providing safe and pleasant passage for both pedestrians and cyclists.

In a city where tree canopy is vital, and helps to meet the City's Climate and Adaptation goals, the loss of any large median trees eliminates important quality of life measures for residents, riders, walkers, and to meet the City's climate goals. The pandemic has demonstrated that residents desire and need to be out in natural settings for both physical and mental well-being. For some, neighborhood trees are all they have to experience nature.

Truthfully, the challenge should reside firmly with those charged with designing the project. What is it that makes it impossible to allow the mature trees in the median to remain? Is it standard practice, without the eye for a preserving these living beings, which are also contributing members of the community? The City should accept nothing less than requiring a creative solution. This is not a problem, but an opportunity. Replacing these mature trees one for one won't do anything for years to accommodate for the loss of these major City Assets.

It is our understanding that it is these mature trees versus parking spots. Is that true? It seems there's ample opportunity to examine parking policy for a project of this size and that is already changing driving habits overall for the neighborhood? It seems there are thoughtful solutions that the community would embrace in order to save mature trees. Additionally, studies show that trees protect pedestrians and cyclists from passing cars, as well as the other important co-benefits such as rainfall interception, storm-water management, air quality management, property values, and public health, etc.

Please consider honoring the important icons of the community - contributing to the overall well-being to the community, and the important work they will continue to do.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Nancy Hughes
Executive Director
California Urban Forests Council