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**Sent:** Monday, May 8, 2023 10:30 AM  
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**Subject:** Tree Group Comments

Mayor Colin, Council members  
Cc: Clerk Lindsay Lara, DPW Director April Miller, City Manager Jim Schutz, DPW Analyst Stephen Acker  
Bcc: San Rafael Tree Group  
May 8, 2023  
(Based on testimony from 2/6/23 and 10/3/22)

Mayor Colin and Councilmembers:

I'm writing for the San Rafael Tree Group, a coalition of local environmental leaders who have been working with the Department of Public Works for the past two years to improve the City's Street Tree Ordinance and implement other urban forestry programs in General Plan 2040.

Thank you for advancing the General Plan's urban forestry policies with your work on the Street Tree Ordinance. Local conservation and community leaders Bill Carney, Gina Silvestri, Kate Powers, the late Judy Schriebman, Victoria Dewitt and I have lent our expertise to this process, researching national and regional street tree best practices. Arborist Adam Clark has recently joined our group. We've worked productively with DPW and look forward to your action on the street tree ordinance in the near future.

We note that the budget Goals and Objectives for FY22-23 (presented to the City Council at their meeting on June 21, 2022) state that the Street Tree Ordinance was to be brought for City Council consideration in summer 2022. At that point, the draft of the revised Street Tree Ordinance prepared and approved by DPW staff with extensive review and support from our Tree Group was submitted for legal review.

We remain engaged with DPW in helping to address the few issues raised by that review. We believe that the goal of adopting the revised Street Tree Ordinance before the end of this fiscal year (July 1) is achievable. We look forward to completion of this important budget objective as a cornerstone for setting additional urban forestry objectives for the next two years.

Today, we urge the Council to continue moving forward in FY23-24 and FY24-25 with implementation of key remaining portions of the General Plan 2040 Street Tree policies, specifically a Street Tree Inventory (Community Design and Preservation Program 3.5B) Street Tree Master Plan (Program CDP 3.5A), and strengthened Tree Preservation regulations (Conservation and Climate Change Element Program C-11.17A). We also request that you integrate this work with the General Plan's other urban forestry policies (policies C-1.16 and 1.17) to protect, maintain and expand San Rafael's tree canopy.

By implementing these General Plan policies together as a coherent whole, we can achieve a comprehensive tree plan for San Rafael in a coordinated and cost-effective manner. Climate change makes this work urgent, given the significant role that trees play in sequestering the greenhouse gases that cause climate change and in cooling our community during increasingly frequent heat waves.

Our group stands ready to help with the next steps this coming year. Thank you.

Yours truly,

Amy Likover  
Convener,  
San Rafael Tree Group

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