



San Francisco Public Works
General – Director’s Office
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San Francisco, CA 94103
(628) 271-3160 www.SFPublicWorks.org

Public Works Order No: 212504

The Director of Public Works held a Public Hearing on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, commencing at 10:00 A.M. via teleconference to consider items related to administrative fines and appeals. The hearing was held through videoconferencing to allow remote public comment.

The hearing was for Order 212078, to consider an appeal for the fine issued for the illegal removal of three (3) street trees adjacent to 43 / 50 United Nations Plaza. The fine issued is \$30,000.00.

Findings:

Three trees located at 43/50 UN Plaza were removed without a permit by Rec and Park. Public Works had identified and initiated these three hazard trees for removal due to severe decline and risk to public safety. That proposed removal was protested and a hearing was held on January 27, 2025, followed by a 15-day Board of Appeals, appeal window. During this time, Rec and Park removed the trees. They acknowledged the violation, citing political pressure. A third party, hired by Rec and Park, confirmed BUF’s assessment that the trees were in poor condition and beyond saving.

Prior to the removal of the three subject trees by Rec and Park, Public Works intended to remove the trees following the required tree removal process and Rec and Park planned to plant the replacement trees. Public Works removed nine trees as emergencies because they were dead. Rec and Park replaced all the replacement trees as committed to, with 36” box size trees within days after they were removed: the nine trees removed as emergencies by Public Works, and the three trees removed without permission by Rec and Park. A total of 13, 36” box size trees were planted, and irrigation installed. Rec and Park has committed to watering the trees until established.

The administrative hearing was to consider the illegal removal of three street trees by Rec & Park. Article 16 of the Public Works code requires that anyone who removes a tree without a permit replace the tree(s) with the same trunk diameter measured six inches above grade. Rec and Park, Public Works and the appellants agreed that the three trees removed had the equivalent trunk diameter of approximately 40” inches. To mitigate the three trees removed without permission, Rec and Park will plant 10, 48” box size trees in nearby locations within UN Plaza and adjacent to the Asian Art Museum. This will include the installation of a new irrigation system, protective screens, and monitoring all trees until established.

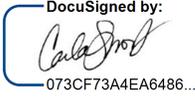
Article 16 of the Public Works code requires a permit to remove any street tree, significant tree, or landmark tree. Although the three trees were in serious decline and considered hazards, Rec and Park knowingly removed the three trees without a permit, in violation of the code. However, the required replacement tree mitigations of planting 10, 48” inch box size trees, installing irrigation, and Rec and Park’s planting of 13, 36” inch box size trees instead of 24” box size trees, will exceed the \$30,000.00 administrative fine.

Recommendation:

After consideration of correspondence and testimony provided, the recommendation is to waive the monetary portion of the fine on the following conditions:

- That Rec and Park plant, water and establish 10, 48" box size trees at UN Plaza and adjacent to the Asian Art Musuem to mitigate the three hazard trees removed without a permit.
- That Rec and Park continue to water, monitor and establish the 13, 36" box size trees already planted adjacent to 50 UN Plaza.
- If any of these twenty-three (23) trees do not become established and need to be replaced, Rec and Park shall replace them with equivalent box sizes as those planted, within 90 days.

This order is final and may not be appealed.

X  DocuSigned by:
Carla Short
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Short, Carla
Director