Supplemental Brief Submitted by the Appellant(s) for the hearing on October 14, 2026

SF Board of Appeals

Hearing Date: October 14, 2026 Appeal #26-039

Property address: 4227 26th street, SF 94131

Appellants: Nina Saltman and James Bullock

As the owners of the property at 4227 26th street, 94131, we have applied to remove a hazardous palm tree in our front, elevated, retaining wall enclosed front yard. After the appeal board hearing of September 2, the SF Board of Appeals chose to continue the hearing to give DPW and BUF a chance to review the tree, old documents, and the retaining wall that is being impacted by the palm tree. BUF came back with a generic response stating that DPW did not want the liability of examining private property to determine the extent or origin of the retaining wall damage immediately in front of the palm tree. The most recent brief from the BUF also regurgitated the Urban Forestry mandate about the need to plant more trees and not remove “significant” trees. They also presented two inspection reports. One was from 2024, stating among other things, that the tree form was fair to poor, and another inspection report from 2025 stating that the tree fronds had 60% die back and the trunk was in only fair

condition. They said that the roots of palms extend only 12-24 inches into the soil and that the upheaved exposed root structure was common in palms. They said not to worry about the swaying and just because the tree is elevated above the sidewalk, not to worry about the impact to the retaining wall. They also said that we, the owners, should get an engineers report to prove the retaining wall/tree impact. This despite them previously stating it would be impossible to prove the tree impact on the wall without digging up the root ball.

The BUF also implied the only person able to determine whether a tree is hazardous is the director.

Apparently the BuF did not deem it necessary or relevant to visit the site again even though it's been over a year since the last inspection. We look at that tree every day. Every day we walk up our front steps. Every day it is frightening. Even if it did not impact the wall, it appears hazardous to us, who live with it every day. On our property. In our yard. Where we live. We have planted 8-9 other trees and countless shrubs and other plantings. The fault of BUF not meeting their Urban Forestry goals are not our fault, or, quite frankly, our problem. We have done more than our part to contribute to a healthy green environment in the city. What IS our problem is a

perceived safety hazard that we would like to mitigate. A hazardous palm is a real threat. When the palm accident happens it will be the responsibility of every member of this board, as well as the BUF and DPW. Is that a risk you are all willing to take? Take it from me, it is not worth the risk. Things happen. Trees fall. I was hit by a seemingly benign palm. And this palm in our front yard is bigger and more threatening and more dangerous than the one that fell on me.

The fact that the BUF states that the roots only extend a short distance underground should strike fear in the entire board of appeals. The palm has a distinct out of vertical plane. Think about that. Not vertical. Big tree. Roots don't extend so deep. Up high above the sidewalk. Big winds. Big storm. Damaged retaining wall. What a disaster this will be.

Not having sufficient grip in the soil is a real and present danger. Not worrying about that liability, when worrying about a liability for an inspection of private property is ridiculous.

We are extremely disappointed with the board's decision to continue this hearing. This board prioritized precedent over public safety, peace of mind, neighbors' concerns, and city liability for a hazardous condition. We had hoped that the board of appeals would use common

sense and allow us to remove the tree, and maintain control over our home environment. This tree, which is in an inappropriate location and is visibly unsafe, should not be such a priority for the BUF and city of SF. Public safety should be a priority. Private stewardship of our domain and private property should be a priority of everyone on the board and in the DPW. We should have the right to make a decision regarding our own property that is a visible and verifiable risk. And a huge risk it is. Are all of the board members willing to take that risk?! Our neighbors hate it, as evidenced by multiple letters. We perceive an unsafe condition and are powerless to do anything. We're told it's fine, the tree is valuable. Yet, it looks bad to us. So because we are not experts, we have no say in this matter? It's ungainly, scary, and it strikes fear in all who walk under and next to this tree. It is obvious that the retaining wall would be better without that tree on top of it. I have trauma every time I walk up our front steps. We find it hard to understand this concern over precedent, especially since there are few if any huge palm trees in elevated front yards in the city.

In addition to all the arguments we have given, it has come to our attention that the city is removing one hundred trees, including many palms, in order to build a new park. That is ok? At least one city agency is

ok with this. One city agency is supporting another city agency, just like the board of appeals appears to be supporting the BUF, no matter how unkind, illogical, traumatic and dangerous the denial is. How is this fair? We are tax paying citizens of this city, yet we cannot control our own front yard?! Are all trees good and valuable trees worth protecting simply because they are big?

Honestly, the BUF is unable to maintain its own trees throughout the city. They've probably spent more time fighting our application than focusing on the real work of tree maintenance throughout SF. On our street, 26th street, in Noe Valley, there are multiple trees that are up in the muni and power lines that are not being trimmed. All over the city this happens. There are trees up and down many blocks in the city that hang down well below head level making it difficult to walk without ducking. Why an agency that cannot care for its own trees finds it acceptable to protect one potentially hazardous, ugly tree because of a city mandate, and keeps us from caring for our own property really baffles us.

Under SF Public Works Code 805 and related tort law provisions, property owners and the City share duties regarding hazardous conditions adjoining public rights of way. Will the city maintain this tree if the removal

denial is upheld? Doubtful as they can't maintain the trees they've got! By denying us this permit, the City is knowingly opening itself to liability. Adhering strictly to administrative precedent in the face of demonstrable safety hazards creates clear municiple liability for the city of SF.

Once again we respectfully request that the BUF decision to deny us a permit to remove the tree be overturned. Our yard is a huge net gain for the city's urban forest plan, even with this removal. If the city can approve 100 trees for removal. What is one more?

Respectfuly submitted

James and Nina

Nina Saltman







Nearly 100 trees being cut down for a new city park

Tahoe driver investigated after seen dozing on video

Sent from my iPhone
Please excuse typos and brevity

Video Link https://app.box.com/s/8p9czlltch6weobr36kzfbt1fhuwj6xl

Supplemental Brief Submitted by the Department for the hearing on October 14, 2026

Charlie Murphy, Assistant Superintendent | Bureau of Urban Forestry
charlie.murphy@sfdpw.org | T. 415.695.2103 | 2323 Cesar Chavez St. San Francisco, CA 94124

Appeal No.: 26-039

Appeal Title: NINA SALTMAN, Appellant vs. SFPW-BUF

Subject Property: 4227 26th Street

Determination Type: Denial of Tree Removal Permit

Order Number: 212462 (Permit No. 795261)

The Department of Public Works – Bureau of Urban Forestry (BUF) requests that the Board of Appeals uphold the denial of the tree removal permit for one – *Washingtonia robusta* or Mexican fan palm (TRE-273117) at 4227 26th Street.

SUPPLEMENTAL PER CONTINUANCE

On September 2, 2026 the Board of Appeals (BOA) requested a continuance of the hearing for Appeal 26-039. The BOA requested (1) the Department of Public Works (DPW) representative go back to the department and determine if the City could send out an engineer to assess the private retaining wall in reference to the appellants claims that the palm tree was causing the wall to fail. The BOA also requested (2) all the material from the initial assessments done as part of the inspection of the palm tree.

1. Departmental discussions around sending out City engineers to assess private property in reference to claims that a significant (protected), private tree was causing damage to said private property concluded in the following sentiment:

The Department cannot take on the liability of assessing possible private property damage caused by private property as it opens the City up to potential liability. The Department also does not believe the burden of proof for these claims lies with the Department.

2. All materials from previous assessments are attached as an appendix to this document.

Additional Information:

Studies show that palm trees are less destructive to urban infrastructure than broadleaf hardwood trees.[1] Unlike hardwoods that feature thick, expanding woody structural roots, palms possess a monocotyledonous, fibrous root system. Their roots grow outward from a root-initiation zone at a uniform, narrow diameter (typically no thicker than a human finger) and do not thicken over time.

Palm roots remain concentrated in the top 12 to 24 inches of soil. Infrastructure classification studies note that "severe uplift" (60% to 100% pavement damage) from palms almost exclusively occurs due to improper construction practices—such as planting a palm in a cutout smaller than the trunk's ultimate mature diameter, poor soil compaction, or a complete lack of base materials under the sidewalk.[2]

The Urban Forest Ecosystem Institute's SelecTree tree selection guidance recommends a planting area of four-to-seven feet for Mexican fan palms.[3]

Based on the Bureau of Urban Forestry's (BUF) assessment and analysis of multiple studies, it is not BUF's belief that the Mexican fan palm is the cause of the issues to the retaining wall in question.

1. [Lawrance M. Lesser, Arboriculture & Urban Forestry (AUF) September 2001, 27 (5) 272-276; DOI: https://doi.org/10.48044/jauf.2001.029].
2. [Tahamara Esquivel, SciELO (Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias) Vol. 12 Núm. 68 (2021): https://doi.org/10.29298/rmcf.v12i68.1166].
3."SelecTree. UFEI. "Washingtonia robusta Tree Record." 1995-2026. Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo. Accessed on Oct 1, 2026."

Secondarily, per conversation around hazard tree definition at the previous hearing, Article 16 of City code defines hazard trees as "… any tree that poses an imminent hazard to person or property. *The Director* may determine that a tree is a hazard if it or any part of it: (1) appears dead, dangerous, or likely to fall, even after proper maintenance activities are performed to eliminate dead or dangerous parts; (2) obstructs or damages a street, sidewalk, or other existing structure; (3) harbors a serious disease or infestation threatening the health of other trees; (4) interferes with vehicular or pedestrian traffic; or (5) poses any other significant hazard or potential hazard, as *determined by the Director*; provided, however, that feasible measures have been applied to abate any such hazard, such as applicable Maintenance activities as defined in this Section 802. *The Director's determination shall be in writing*."

The Department's denial of the initial removal permit appeal is signed by the Director, meaning the Director determined the tree does not meet the definition of a hazard tree.

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION:

BACKGROUND

The City of San Francisco has one of the smallest urban tree canopies of any major metropolitan city/county in the country at just under fourteen percent. To note, the national average is around twenty-seven percent. In 2014, the City released an Urban Forestry Plan which laid out the City's long-term vision for a healthy, well-maintained, sustainably funded urban forest that improves the city's ecological function and quality of life.

The 2014 Urban Forestry Plan's (UF Plan) major goals include:

- Grow the urban forest. Expand tree planting and other forms of urban greening, with an emphasis on distributing trees more equitably across San Francisco and maximizing their environmental, social, and economic benefits.
- Protect existing trees. Preserve the trees the city already has and reduce losses from development, neglect, disease, infrastructure conflicts, and other threats.
- Improve long-term management and maintenance. Coordinate planning, planting, design, maintenance, and eventual replacement of trees so the urban forest remains healthy throughout its full life cycle.

- Create stable, long-term funding. Develop a sustainable financing system for planting and maintaining street trees rather than relying on fragmented or inconsistent funding.
- Engage the community and City partners. Increase participation by residents, City agencies, community organizations, and the private sector in caring for trees and strengthening people's connection with nature.

One of the plan's goals calls for increasing the street-tree population by almost an additional 50,000 trees over 20-years – while selecting species strategically to allow the trees to contribute more effectively to the UF Plan's priorities – air quality, stormwater management, public health, carbon storage and wildlife habitat.
The 2026 Climate Action Plan (CAP), which replaced the 2021 CAP, views trees as climate infrastructure, not just a streetscape amenity. Trees fall primarily within the CAP's Healthy Ecosystem section which calls for maximizing trees, managing the urban forest as one system, carbon sequestration, climate adaption, equitability, and broader nature-based solutions.

While both the CAP and UF Plan call for a multi-pronged approach to meet their respective goals, one of the central strategies in both is protecting our existing canopy. The City suffers an estimated four percent loss of its existing tree canopy to mortality; to achieve no net loss of tree canopy, efforts to protect existing canopy are imperative to stabilize the urban forest.

The tree in question is a Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) located in the front yard at 4227 26th Street, which is raised via retaining wall to 5-6 feet above sidewalk grade. Under the Urban Forestry Ordinance (per §810A - Article 16 of Public Works Code) the tree is considered a Significant Tree. Significant trees are defined as any tree within 10-feet of the public right-of-way that is either greater than 12-inch diameter at breast height (DBH), 20-feet in height and/or a canopy spread greater than 15-feet. The tree has a DBH of 14-inches and a height greater than 35-feet.

During the time of inspection, the tree's condition was considered "fair." This is one of the four conditions defined in the International Society of Arboriculture's (ISA) Tree Risk Assessment

Qualification (TRAQ); the four conditions are Good, Fair, Poor, and Dead. TRAQ takes into consideration tree condition, (health) as well as tree risk when making tree assessments. The definition of a "fair" tree is one with at least one health problem/concern (not major) that is either correctable or not considered detrimental to the tree's health or risk.

ADDRESSING APPELLANT CONCERNS

- *Safety concerns of the retaining wall.*

  If the appellant has an engineering report they can produce, the Department believes that the BOA should use it in their deliberation. BUF inspectors are not engineers and cannot speak to this point.

- *The safety of the tree itself.*

  As stated above, a tree in "fair" condition means that the tree is relatively healthy and any concerns are either correctable or are not considered to be detrimental to the tree's health or risk. Proper maintenance of a tree in fair condition can change a tree's condition from fair to good.

- *The root ball is exposed; there is damage to the trunk.*

  Palms are monocots and more closely related to grass than to trees, meaning that their biological systems differ from that of a tree. The "root ball" is just aerial roots that are pushed above ground as new roots are formed. This is completely normal in palms. Palms also do not have a thin cambium layer like trees, meaning that trunk damage, does not impact palms in the way it does trees. Damage was noted as superficial by an inspector and believed to have been caused by climbing spikes. This is a practice used to climb trees using spiked apparatus on shoes to climb trees for maintenance, it is not recognized as a best management practice by the ISA.

- *The tree sways due to windy conditions.*

  Palms consist of thousands of vascular bundles embedded within a matrix of fibrous tissue which provides the stem strength and flexibility. Meaning that palms are expected to sway in the wind, as it lessens the likelihood of failure.

- *Palms provide little, if any urban forestry benefit.*

  Palms provide carbon storage and sequestration, wildlife habitat, aesthetics and can hold emotional value to the community at large.

PROCESS TIMELINE

4.10.2024 – Tree Removal Permit

5.1.2024 – Tree Assessment

5.14.2024 – Tree Permit paid

5.20.2024 – Permit Inspection

10.17.2025 – Inspection for Administrative Decision Appeal Hearing

1.7.2026 – Tree Removal Hearing

7.24.2026 – Denial of Appeal issued

EXHIBITS



Exhibit 1. Photo of the Washingtonia robusta or Mexican fan palm at 4227 26th Street. Taken by ISA-Certified inspector on 5.20.24.



Exhibit 2. Photo of the Washingtonia robusta or Mexican fan palm at 4227 26th Street. Taken by ISA-Certified inspector on 9.17.25.



Exhibit 3. Photo of the retaining wall at 4227 26th Street.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

In an effort to adhere to the Urban Forest Plan and the Climate Action Plan's no net loss of urban tree canopy, it is the Department of Public Works – Bureau of Urban Forestry's recommendation to deny the appeal and retain the *Washingtonia robusta* or Mexican fan palm (TRE-273117) at 4227 26th Street.

REFERENCE LINKS

https://sfpublicworks.org/services/urban-forest-plan

https://www.sfenvironment.org/climateplan

REQUESTED DOCUMENTATION PER CONTINUANCE

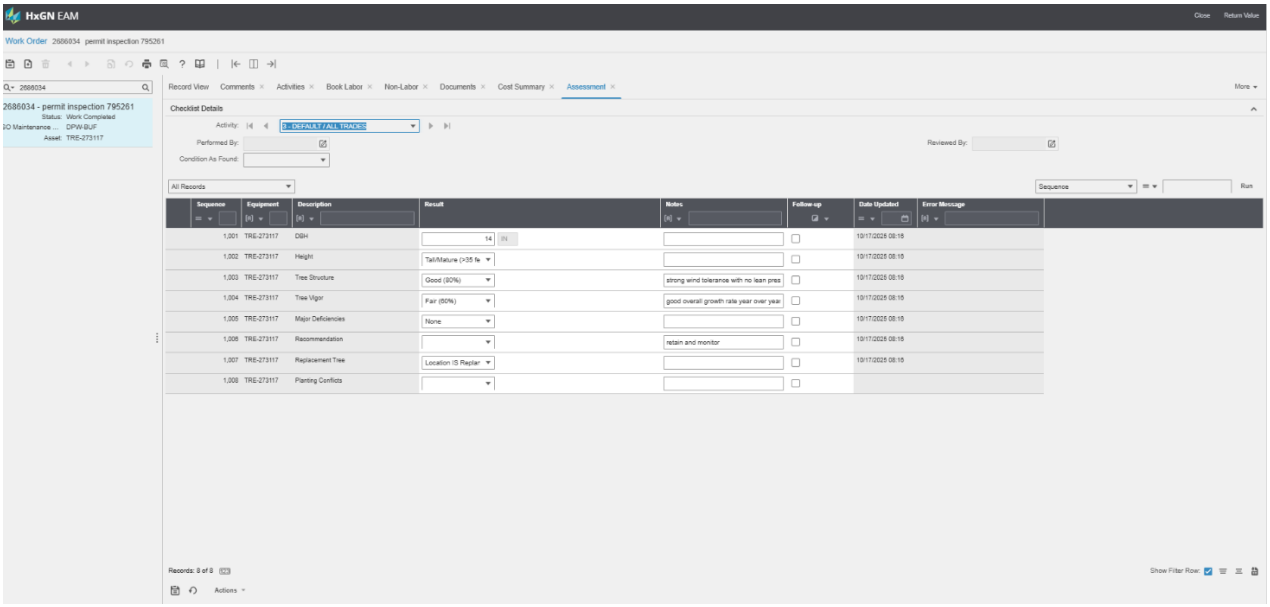


Exhibit A. C. Sullivan Assessment Notes 10.17.2025 [CMMS] More clearly displayed below:

Sequence	Tree	Description	Notes	Result Finding
1001	273117	DBH		
1002	273117	Height		Tall/Mature (>35 feet)
1003	273117	Tree Structure	strong wind tolerance with no lean present	Good (80%)
1004	273117	Tree Vigor	good overall growth rate year over year	Fair (60%)
1005	273117	Major Deficiencies		None
1006	273117	Recommendation	retain and monitor	
1007	273117	Replacement Tree		Location is Replantable
1008	273117	Planting Conflicts		

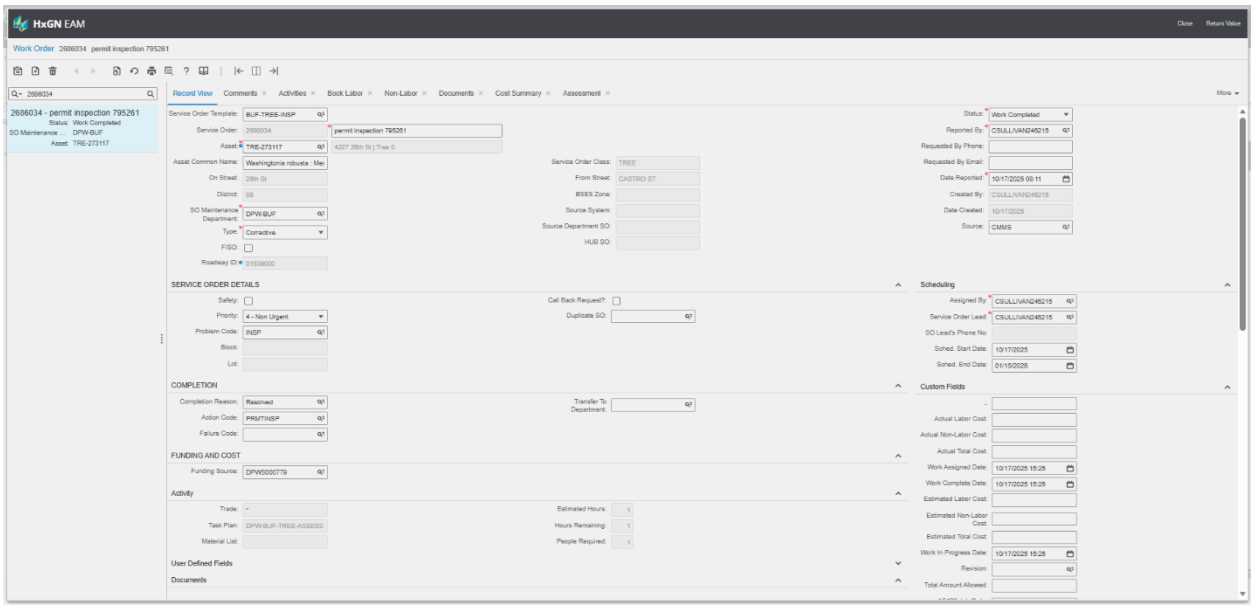


Exhibit B. Work order 2686034 – permit inspection [CMMS]

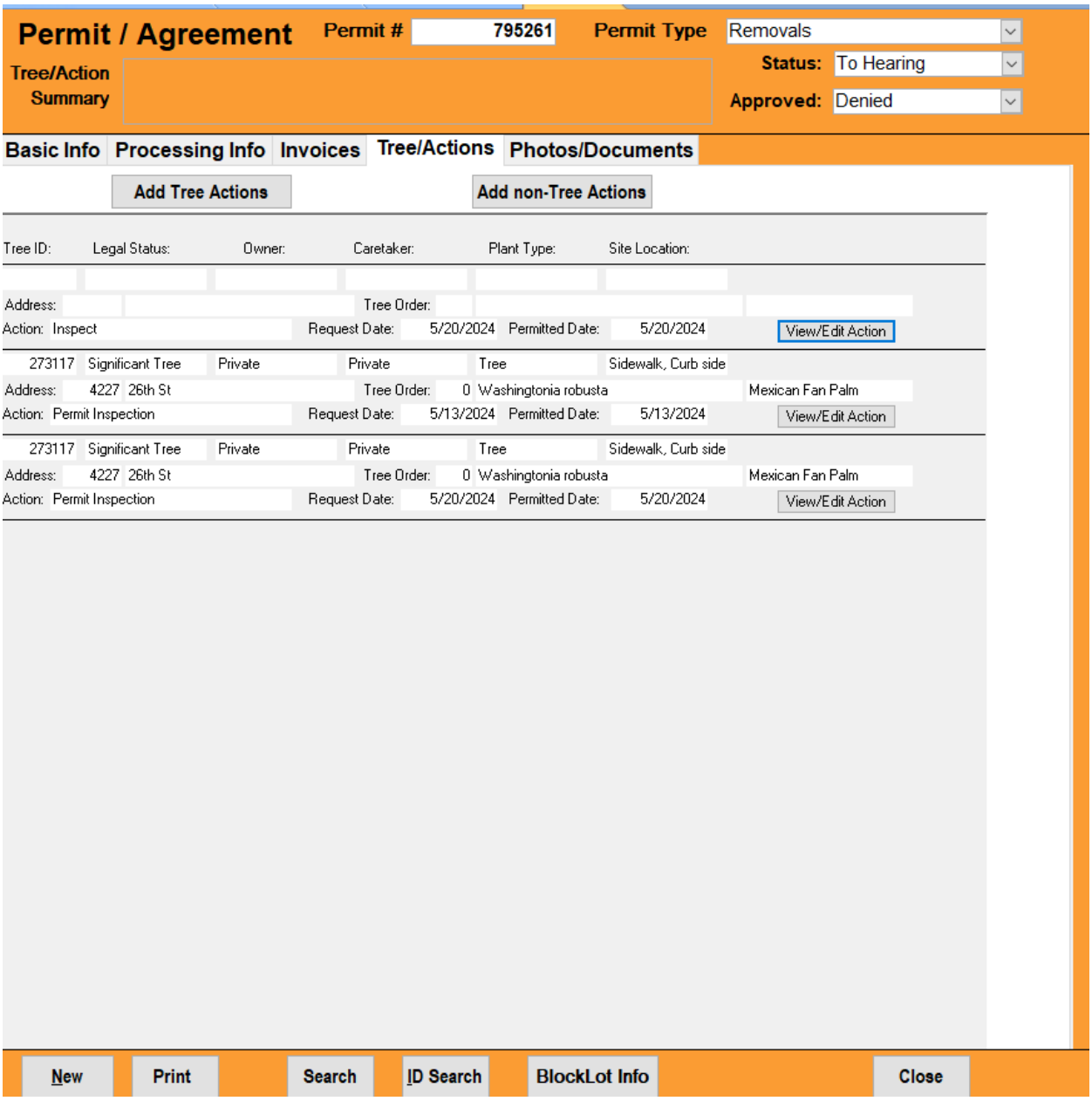


Exhibit C. M. Dottson inspection actions for removal permit at 4227 26th (permit #795261) [former Tree and Permit database]

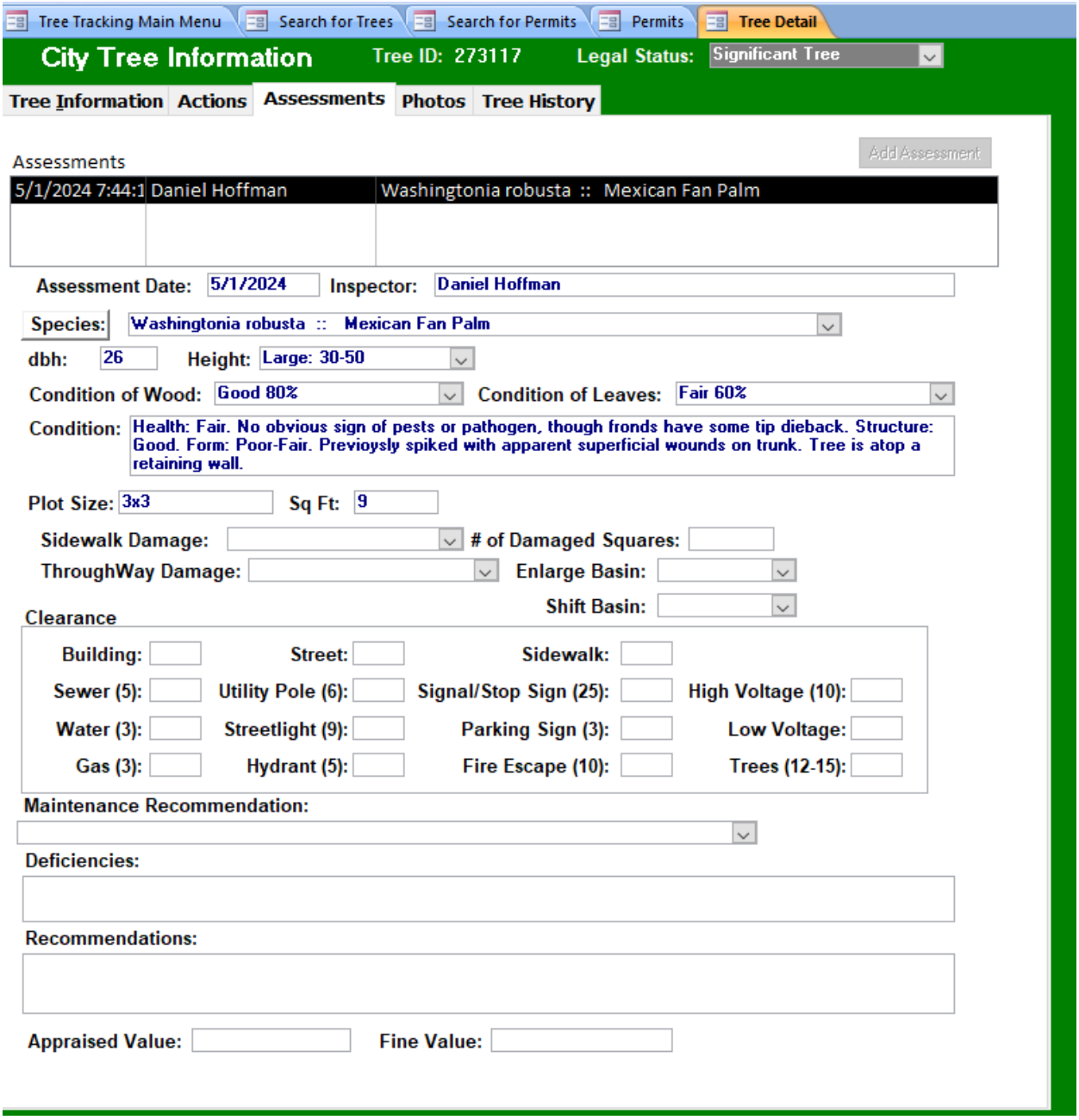


Exhibit D. D. Hoffman assessment in previous tree database 5.1.2024 [former Tree and Permit database]

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE ORIGINAL HEARING DATED SEPTEMBER 2, 2026

BOARD OF APPEALS, CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Appeal of
NINA SALTMAN,)
Appellant(s))
)
vs.)
)
SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC WORKS)
)
Respondent

Appeal No. **26-039**

NOTICE OF APPEAL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT on July 27, 2026, the above named appellant(s) filed an appeal with the Board of Appeals of the City and County of San Francisco from the decision or order of the above named department(s), commission, or officer.

The substance or effect of the decision or order appealed from is the ISSUANCE on July 24, 2026, of a Public Works Order (DENIAL of an application to remove one significant tree, a Mexican Fan Palm, with replacement. The tree is 35 feet in height and went decades of growth to reach its current size and should be maintained) at 4227 26th Street.

ORDER NO. 300186 (Permit No. 795261)

FOR HEARING ON September 2, 2026

Address of Appellant(s):	Address of Other Parties:
Nina Saltman, Appellant(s) 4227 26th Street San Francisco, CA 94131	N/A

Date Filed: July 27, 2026

CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
BOARD OF APPEALS

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT FOR APPEAL NO. 26-039

I / We, **Nina Saltman**, hereby appeal the following departmental action: **Issuance** of **Public Works Order No. 300186 (Permit No. 795261) (DENIAL of application to remove significant tree)** by **San Francisco Public Works** which was issued or became effective on: **July 24, 2026**, to: Nina Saltman**,** for the property located at: **4227 26th Street**.

BRIEFING SCHEDULE:

Appellant's Brief is due on or before: 4:30 p.m. on **August 13, 2026**, **(no later than three Thursdays prior to the hearing date)**. The brief may be up to 12 pages in length with unlimited exhibits. It shall be double-spaced with a minimum 12-point font. An electronic copy shall be emailed to: boardofappeals@sfgov.org, julie.lamarre@sfgov.org, bryan.ong@sfdpw.org, david.moore@sfdpw.org, and susan.nawbary@sfdpw.org

Respondent's and Other Parties' Briefs are due on or before: 4:30 p.m. on **August 27, 2026**, **(no later than one Thursday prior to hearing date)**. The brief may be up to 12 pages in length with unlimited exhibits. It shall be doubled-spaced with a minimum 12-point font. An electronic copy shall be emailed to: boardofappeals@sfgov.org, julie.lamarre@sfgov.org, and bullsalt@sbcglobal.net

Hard copies of the briefs do NOT need to be submitted to the Board Office or to the other parties.

Hearing Date: **Wednesday, September 2, 2026, 5:00 p.m., Room 416 San Francisco City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place.** The parties may also attend remotely via Zoom. Information for access to the hearing will be provided before the hearing date.

All parties to this appeal must adhere to the briefing schedule above, however if the hearing date is changed, the briefing schedule MAY also be changed. Written notice will be provided of any changes to the briefing schedule.

In order to have their documents sent to the Board members prior to hearing, **members of the public** should email all documents of support/opposition no later than one Thursday prior to hearing date by 4:30 p.m. to boardofappeals@sfgov.org. Please note that names and contact information included in submittals from members of the public will become part of the public record. Submittals from members of the public may be made anonymously.

Please note that in addition to the parties' briefs, any materials that the Board receives relevant to this appeal, including letters of support/opposition from members of the public, are distributed to Board members prior to hearing. All such materials are available for inspection on the Board's website at www.sfgov.org/boa. You may also request a hard copy of the hearing materials that are provided to Board members at a cost of 10 cents per page, per S.F. Admin. Code Ch. 67.28.

The reasons for this appeal are as follows:

See attachment to the Preliminary Statement of Appeal.

Appellant filed appeal by email.

Hello,

I would like to appeal the denial of my application to remove a palm tree in my front yard. The address is 4227 26th street. (please see the attached message and attachment)

It took over 6 months to finally get this decision from the Dept of Urban forestry. The tree is in my front yard and does not provide canopy or shade and is, quite frankly, ugly. It has affected the retaining wall in our front yard, and is a safety hazard. additionally, the tree gives me PTSD every time it is windy (daily in SF), due to the fact that I was hit by a city street tree in 2024. The city has responsibility for this trauma and denying me the ability to remove the tree on my OWN PROPERTY, seems cruel, if not criminal.

Thank you,

Nina Saltman

Docusign Envelope ID: 9089A5E3-7DE8-87DA-8242-FDF542E2E50B

San Francisco Public Works
General – Director's Office
49 South Van Ness Ave., Suite 1600
San Francisco, CA 94103
(628) 271-3160 www.SFPublicWorks.org

Public Works Order No: 300186

*Due to staffing changes, the Bureau recently determined a decision was never issued for this case. Apologies for the delay.

The Director of Public Works held a Public Hearing on Wednesday January 7, 2026, commencing at 10:00AM via teleconference to consider items related to tree removals. The hearing was held through videoconferencing to allow remote public comment.

The hearing was to consider Order 212462 (Permit No. 795261) regarding the removal of one (1) significant tree without replacement at 4227 26th St. Staff denied the removal and the applicant has appealed.

Staff: David Steinberg (Hearing officer), Bryan Ong (Bureau of Urban Forestry representative)

General public comment: San Francisco has the smallest urban tree canopy. It is failing its 2014 urban forest plan, climate action, and preservation policies. There has been no net gain in trees since 2017, and it continues to degrade the health of the ecosystem. The country is wildly back-sliding, ramping up coal and oil production while cutting back on promoting resilience. We must preserve our climate and environment and fight for our future.

Findings:

One (1) Mexican Fan Palm tree is being proposed for removal. The owner has applied for removal because they claim the retaining wall has been impacted by the tree. The tree underwent decades of growth to reach its current size and should be retained.

The Bureau of Urban Forestry has observed that:

- The street tree is 35' in height and 14" at DBH. Tree is in fair condition with no major health deficiencies.

The applicant/property owner has observed that:

- The tree poses serious safety issues and increases risk of failure to a retaining wall.

Public Comment Summary: Public comments were in opposition to the removal for the sake of a potentially failing retaining wall when the tree is healthy and thriving, providing ecological/environmental benefits, biodiversity, aesthetic/community value, alignment with

Docusign Envelope ID: 9089A5E3-7DE8-87DA-8242-FDF542E2E50B

Urban Forest plan, negative policy integrity. The tree is an asset and benefit and should not be removed for the benefit of one individual.

Recommendation: After consideration of correspondence and testimony provided, the recommendation is to uphold BUF's decision and deny the tree for removal.

APPEAL:

This Order and permit may be appealed to the Board of Appeals within 15 days of July 29, 2026.

Board of Appeals

49 South Van Ness Ave. suite 1475 (14th Floor)

San Francisco, CA 94103

Phone: 628.652.1150 Email: BoardofAppeals@sfgov.org

NOTE: Office visits by appointment only.

More information about how to file an appeal can be obtained by calling 628-652-1150 or by emailing the Board of Appeals at BoardofAppeals@sfgov.org. For additional information on the San Francisco Board of Appeals and to view the Appeal Process Overview, please visit their website at http://sfgov.org/bdappeal/

Docusign Envelope ID: 9089A5E3-7DE8-87DA-8242-FDF542E2E50B

Signatures:

DocuSigned by:
073CF73A4EA6486...

_____

Short, Carla (DPW)

Dept Head IV

Date Signed: 7/24/2026 | 1:04:56 PM PDT

BRIEF SUBMITTED BY THE APPELLANT(S)

To the San Francisco Board of Appeals

From Nina R Saltman

BRIEF FOR APPEAL NO.26-039

JULY 30, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to present our case to the SF Board of Appeals. We filed a permit to remove a palm tree in our front yard in April of 2024, and after several months denied the permit and then were subsequently denied the appeal to the denial. We are now appealing to this board to review our permit and allow us to remove the Mexican Fan Palm in our front yard in order to ensure the safety of structures and the public at large.

The reasons that we are requesting permission for removal are several, but first and foremost, we want to remove a serious public safety hazard. The tree itself is a hazard, and the effects of its growth to our retaining wall has created a structural hazard to the existing structure as well as for the public.

The palm is located immediately adjacent to our front retaining wall. Since we live on a hilly street and our house is set back from the street, this retaining wall provides lateral support for our front yard and the adjacent

property. We have lived in our house since 1988 and the palm in question was planted before we bought the property. When we moved in the tree was very small. Over the years the tree's root structure has exerted pressure on the walls and there are observable signs of stress and movement. (Please see the photos of the front wall.) For information purposes, please note that the wall has been faux painted brick and has been patched several times since we moved in. The wall is cinderblock and concrete, and not brick.

As the tree continued aging, this stress and movement of the wall increased. The risk of failure increases daily. Retaining walls do not fail gradually, they fail suddenly. Failure in this case would likely result in the tree coming down, along with soil, concrete block, rock movement and total collapse of the wall. This is not speculative. It is a foreseeable hazard to life and limb and poses a seriously dangerous condition. San Francisco Urban Forest Plan and Public Works Urban Forestry guidelines recognize that tree retention must be balanced against public safety, infrastructure protection and risk management. Similarly, the planning code does not require retention of vegetation where it threatens structures or creates hazardous conditions. SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS MUST PREVAIL. And

yet, the Bureau of Urban Forestry deemed it logical and responsible to deny our permit to remove the tree.

I feel the need to add that this part of DPW, the Bureau of Urban Forestry, was responsible for the planting, maintenance and care of the tree that fell on and nearly killed me in February of 2024. The city settled my lawsuit because it was obvious that this tree had been poorly maintained by the BUF, and was an inadvisable tree specimen to begin with (chosen by the BUF). When I first filed for the permit to remove the tree, in our front yard, I spoke with a member of the department who made extremely inappropriate remarks to me, and as a result, the manager of the department called me to apologize. In addition, this department was painfully delinquent in giving me the decision on my appeal, as well as the initial application to remove the tree. As you can see, I first started this process in April, 2024. Despite repeated phone calls and emails to various members of the department, at various times, I received little to no response each time I wrote or called and asked for a decision. It was over 6 months before I finally received notice of the appeal denial. This was only after extreme frustration brought me to the action of when I wrote to my supervisor, the mayors office, the head of DPW, as well as several addresses at the BUF. Then and only then did I get a response within 3

days. Unfortunately, that was the denial from a department that is clearly broken. At the top of the denial notice was a note that “due to staffing changes the bureau **recently** determined that a decision was never issued for (our) this case” !! Really!! ? From the very beginning of this permit process, not to mention before, the department of Urban Forestry has bumbled and stumbled and does not seem to know which way is up. And yet, they are the ones to make a decision that affects the lives of my neighbors as well as myself.

The denial appeared to rely upon public comment that was generic, boiler plate comments about trees being needed in SF to provide environmental benefits in alignment with the Urban Forestry plan. Two people who testify at every tree hearing about keeping every tree without regard to public safety referred to this tree as an asset to the neighborhood. The letter from my neighbors who are scared of the tree was obviously not given equal consideration. As with the tree that fell on me, this echoed the departments lack of knowledge, care and insight. Clearly, the BUF did not take the time or effort, despite having over 6 months to examine the details of the case, to make the right decision and take into consideration

the greater good of the public and the neighborhood. Staffing changes indeed!

In addition to the safety concerns for the retaining wall, there is legitimate concern for the safety of the tree itself. As a person who was seriously injured by an ill maintained city street tree, I know personally, the hazard an unhealthy tree poses. In the Bureau of Forestry's own document they admit that the tree is only in fair condition. I contend that it is worse than that. The root ball is exposed, there is damage to the trunk itself, it is in an inappropriate location and has insufficient drainage. The tree sways in a menacing manner on a daily basis due to the windy conditions of our neighborhood and city. This palm provides little, if any urban forestry benefit. It does not contribute meaningful canopy, cover, shade or habitat, which are the core objectives of the SF's urban forest policies. Its removal would not diminish the environmental or visual quality of the site, In fact, it would enhance the existing landscape design which is already lush and verdant with two other mature trees and established shrubs that will remain and continue to contribute significantly to the urban forest and neighborhood character. Planting the palm in our front yard was a poor decision. It is an inappropriate selection of plant/tree for that location. Our garden was on the Noe Valley garden tour this year, and we have planted

several trees on our property since we moved in here. This is evidence that we are not just willy nilly trying to remove a tree without regard to the greenery and urban forest ideal. Keeping a tree, or any plant, for that matter just because it is green and grows is not necessarily a sound ecological environmental perspective.

Requiring retention of this palm places us, the home owners in an untenable position. We are aware of a serious, known risk, yet we are prevented from doing anything about it. That outcome is inconsistent with orderly and responsible land use and with basic duty of care principles. It seems important that this board consider proportionality in this case. Alternative measures such as pruning do not address the root related issues of the tree and do not mitigate the risk of imminent failure to the tree or the structural risk of the retaining wall. Engineering solutions to preserve the wall are disproportionate and unreasonable given the tree's limited benefits and poor condition. Removal is the only effective and proportionate response to ensure public safety.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the permit application be reconsidered and approval be granted for the removal of the palm. While

continued retention of this tree creates a foreseeable risk to structural integrity as well as public safety, and where it's removal results in no material loss of urban forest value, the only reasonable and responsible outcome for the board is to approve removal of the palm.

Thank you,

Nina R Saltman

James M Bullock

4227 26th street

San Francisco, Ca. 94131

Appeal No. 26-039


4227


















4227

Whom it

May

concern

at the

WALKUP, MELODIA
KELLY + SCHOENBERGER

Spencer J. Pahlke
spahlke@walkuplawoffice.com

December 5, 2025

Via Electronic Mail Only

Board of Appeals
San Francisco Public Works
City and County of San Francisco
49 S. Van Ness Ave, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94103
urbanforestry@sfdpw.org

Re: ***4227 26th Street Palm Removal***

Dear Board of Appeals:

I write in support of Ms. Nina Saltman's request to remove the palm tree located in her front yard at 4227 26th Street.

On February 4, 2024, while walking in the Castro District, a King Palm tree planted and maintained by the City collapsed and fell directly on Ms. Saltman. The impact knocked and pinned her to the ground, causing multiple fractures to her pelvis, sacrum, thoracic spine, and foot. She spent days in the ICU, weeks in a skilled nursing facility, and continues to live with chronic pain, mobility limitations, and permanent impairment.

The palm tree currently in Ms. Saltman's front yard is not merely a landscape feature—it is a daily, unavoidable reminder of the event that nearly took her life. Each time she sees it, she is confronted with the memory of lying beneath a fallen palm tree, unable to move, fearing she would never walk again. For a San Franciscan who built her identity around physical strength, outdoor activity, and independence, the emotional toll of this constant reminder is profound. Her home should remain a place of comfort and healing; instead, the presence of this tree forces her to relive an event marked by fear, pain, and lasting injury.

(415) 981-7210 650 California Street, 26th Floor | San Francisco, CA 94108 walkuplawoffice.com

Department of Public Works

City and County of San Francisco
November 1, 2025

I am writing to bring your attention to a pressing issue at 4227 26th street. The owners, Nina Saltman and James Bullock, have been clients of mine for several years. I am an experienced general contractor in San Francisco, and I have worked at their properties on several occasions on several different projects.
I noticed that their retaining wall at the front of their property on 26th street has had a serious crack in it for the past few years. I believe that this wall at the front of their property is severely compromised by the tall palm tree. If the crack continues to move as the palm continues to grow, it will eventually require a complete and costly replacement of the wall. I understand from the owners that the city of San Francisco will not allow them to remove this palm that is on their property. They did not plant this tree and want to remove it so that is does not further

impact the integrity of the retaining wall. Another compelling reason to consider allowing the removal of this tree is the real and perceived safety of the neighbors and neighboring buildings.

It is my opinion that if this palm is not removed soon, it will cause the complete and catastrophic failure of their retaining wall. I would ask the DPW to please consider that this tree should be removed promptly to insure the continued safe condition of the retaining wall. If the wall were to fail it would be a safety hazard to both the owners and the public, not to mention huge replacement cost to the owners. There are numerous other trees and plants on the property that will continue to give the public a lush, lovely green space at this location.

Sincerely yours,
Matt Nichols
Deep Elm Construction

To whom it may concern
City and County of San Francisco
Department of Public Works
November 1, 2025

We are writing on behalf of our neighbors, Nina Saltman and James Bullock who live at 4227 26th street.
We live next door at 4229 26th street.
Nina and James told us that they had applied to remove the large palm in their front yard and were refused permission by the city. This is distressful to us, as we have several small children, and our bedroom windows look out over the front of Nina and James house. The palm is scary and threatening. We have been afraid that it would come down in a large windstorm on our yard. The fronds alone are large and menacing. Though your tree inspector may have found it healthy, it appears to be a menace and a safety hazard to us, and we would very much like to support Nina and James in its removal. We ask the DPW to please consider this request.
Thank you,
Caitlin and Sam

Hi Nina, I am sorry about the pain you experienced.
I wish we could remove a tree on the basis of trauma, but we can't.
I was once hit by a car, but I can't remove all the cars from the world. The buzz of cars traumatized me every day for years and I'm afraid to walk on the sidewalk on busy streets.

We can review the tree to see if it would be a removal candidate on its own due to health, but unfortunately not on the basis that you stated.

Urban Forestry Inspection
ISA Certified Arborist
Tree Risk Assessment Qualified
Bureau of Urban Forestry I San Francisco Public Works I City and County of San Francisco
49 S. Van Ness Ave Suite 1000 I San Francisco, CA 94103 I (628) 652-8733 I sfpublicworks.org ·
Sent from mobile device, please excuse any typos.
From: Nina Saltman <bullsalt@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 2:37 PM
To: DPW, Urban Forestry Permits (DPW) <urbanforestrypermits@sfdpw.org>
Subject: 4227 26th street. Owners tree -request permit for removal

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Hi Nina,

I saw this email from this morning and want to reach out personally to let you know that this kind of communication from us is not appropriate. You shared a request that we consider a palm for removal and outlined the reasons. Normally in our responses, we would confirm receipt and refer you to the appropriate inspector to follow-up, get more information, schedule a site visit, and other similar courses of action.

The inspector staffing our permit inbox forgot to sign the email personally, but I think more concerning was the attempt to relate to what you experienced. I don't think there's any way for someone to really understand what you went through in February and to try to personalize it. The comparison to removing all the cars doesn't really apply to what your request was. I tend to give folks the benefit of the doubt and assume positive intentions that they were trying to connect their experience to yours, but it ended up missing the mark in what we strive for with our correspondence.

Going forward, I will be sure that we do follow up with an inspection and provide you with factual points to consider about the process for removing your palm as a Significant Tree under the city's ordinance. It's hard to say without a site visit whether it's a removal candidate or not, but we will know more soon and be able to provide guidance going forward. If it's safe and healthy and not a removal candidate, that would be good to know and hopefully provide some small degree of reassurance. If it's a hazard or otherwise meets our removal criteria, then we would support your permit application.

Sincerely,

Nick

Nicholas Crawford
Acting Superintendent

Bureau of Urban Forestry | Trees and Landscape | San Francisco Public Works | City and County of San Francisco
2323 Cesar Chavez Street | San Francisco, CA 94124 | (415) 695-2103 | sfpublicworks.org · twitter.com/sfpublicworks

From: DPW, Urban Forestry Permits (DPW) <urbanforestrypermits@sfdpw.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 7:10:50 AM
To: Nina Saltman <bullsalt@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: Re: 4227 26th street. Owners tree -request permit for removal

Hi Nina, I am sorry about the pain you experienced.
I wish we could remove a tree on the basis of trauma, but we can't.
I was once hit by a car, but I can't remove all the cars from the world. The buzz of cars traumatized me every day for years and I'm afraid to walk on the sidewalk on busy streets.

We can review the tree to see if it would be a removal candidate on its own due to health, but unfortunately not on the basis that you stated.

Urban Forestry Inspection
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Bureau of Urban Forestry | San Francisco Public Works | City and County of San Francisco
49 S. Van Ness Ave Suite 1000 | San Francisco, CA 94103 | (628) 652-8733 | sfpublicworks.org ·
Sent from mobile device, please excuse any typos.

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Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 2:37 PM
To: DPW, Urban Forestry Permits (DPW) <urbanforestrypermits@sfdpw.org>
Subject: 4227 26th street. Owners tree -request permit for removal

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Hello
I am the owner of a queen palm tree at 4227 26th street. I want to remove the tree and was told I needed a permit because the tree, which is in my front yard, is within 10 feet the public right of way.
I was hit by a palm tree in February and spent over a month in a rehab facility and am still suffering from the accident. Aside from the fact that the palm is leaning, inappropriate for the location, and causing damage to my retaining wall, this palm in my front yard is causing me trauma every day. Please issue a permit allowing me to remove it.
Thank you
Nina Saltman

BRIEF SUBMITTED BY RESPONDENT DEPARTMENT

Charlie Murphy, Assistant Superintendent | Bureau of Urban Forestry
charlie.murphy@sfdpw.org | T. 415.695.2103 | 2323 Cesar Chavez St. San Francisco, CA 94124

Appeal No.: 26-039

Appeal Title: NINA SALTMAN, Appellant vs. SFPW-BUF

Subject Property: 4227 26th Street

Determination Type: Denial of Tree Removal Permit

Order Number: 212462 (Permit No. 795261)

The Department of Public Works – Bureau of Urban Forestry (BUF) requests that the Board of Appeals uphold the denial of the tree removal permit for one – *Washingtonia robusta* or Mexican fan palm at 4227 26th Street.

BACKGROUND

The City of San Francisco has one of the smallest urban tree canopies of any major metropolitan city/county in the country at just under fourteen percent. To note, the national average is around twenty-seven percent. In 2014, the City released an Urban Forestry Plan which laid out the City's long-term vision for a healthy, well-maintained, sustainably funded urban forest that improves the city's ecological function and quality of life.

The 2014 Urban Forestry Plan's (UF Plan) major goals include:

- Grow the urban forest. Expand tree planting and other forms of urban greening, with an emphasis on distributing trees more equitably across San Francisco and maximizing their environmental, social, and economic benefits.
- Protect existing trees. Preserve the trees the city already has and reduce losses from development, neglect, disease, infrastructure conflicts, and other threats.

- Improve long-term management and maintenance. Coordinate planning, planting, design, maintenance, and eventual replacement of trees so the urban forest remains healthy throughout its full life cycle.
- Create stable, long-term funding. Develop a sustainable financing system for planting and maintaining street trees rather than relying on fragmented or inconsistent funding.
- Engage the community and City partners. Increase participation by residents, City agencies, community organizations, and the private sector in caring for trees and strengthening people's connection with nature.

One of the plan's goals calls for increasing the street-tree population by almost an additional 50,000 trees over 20-years – while selecting species strategically to allow the trees to contribute more effectively to the UF Plan's priorities – air quality, stormwater management, public health, carbon storage and wildlife habitat.
The 2026 Climate Action Plan (CAP), which replaced the 2021 CAP, views trees as climate infrastructure, not just a streetscape amenity. Trees fall primarily within the CAP's Healthy Ecosystem section which calls for maximizing trees, managing the urban forest as one system, carbon sequestration, climate adaption, equitability, and broader nature-based solutions.

While both the CAP and UF Plan call for a multi-pronged approach to meet their respective goals, one of the central strategies in both is protecting our existing canopy. The City suffers an estimated four percent loss of its existing tree canopy to mortality; to achieve no net loss of tree canopy, efforts to protect existing canopy are imperative to stabilize the urban forest.

The tree in question is a Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) located in the front yard at 4227 26th Street, which is raised via retaining wall to 5-6 feet above sidewalk grade. Under the Urban Forestry Ordinance (per §810A - Article 16 of Public Works Code) the tree is considered a Significant Tree. Significant trees are defined as any tree within 10-feet of the public right-of-way that is either greater than 12-inch diameter at breast height (DBH), 20-feet in height and/or a canopy spread greater than 15-feet. The tree has a DBH of 14-inches and a height greater than 35-feet.

During the time of inspection, the tree's condition was considered "fair." This is one of the four conditions defined in the International Society of Arboriculture's (ISA) Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ); the four conditions are Good, Fair, Poor, and Dead. TRAQ takes into consideration tree condition, (health) as well as tree risk when making tree assessments. The definition of a "fair" tree is one with at least one health problem/concern (not major) that is either correctable or not considered detrimental to the tree's health or risk.

ADDRESSING APPELLANT CONCERNS

- *Safety concerns of the retaining wall.*

  If the appellant has an engineering report they can produce, the Department believes that the BOA should use it in their deliberation. BUF inspectors are not engineers and cannot speak to this point.

- *The safety of the tree itself.*

  As stated above, a tree in "fair" condition means that the tree is relatively healthy and any concerns are either correctable or are not considered to be detrimental to the tree's health or risk. Proper maintenance of a tree in fair condition can change a tree's condition from fair to good.

- *The root ball is exposed; there is damage to the trunk.*

  Palms are monocots and more closely related to grass than to trees, meaning that their biological systems differ from that of a tree. The "root ball" is just aerial roots that are pushed above ground as new roots are formed. This is completely normal in palms. Palms also do not have a thin cambium layer like trees, meaning that trunk damage, does not impact palms in the way it does trees. Damage was noted as superficial by an inspector and believed to have been caused by climbing spikes. This is a practice used to climb trees using spiked apparatus on shoes to climb trees for maintenance, it is not recognized as a best management practice by the ISA.

- *The tree sways due to windy conditions.*

  Palms consist of thousands of vascular bundles embedded within a matrix of fibrous tissue which provides the stem strength and flexibility. Meaning that palms are expected to sway in the wind, as it lessens the likelihood of failure.

- *Palms provide little, if any urban forestry benefit.*

  Palms provide carbon storage and sequestration, wildlife habitat, aesthetics and can hold emotional value to the community at large.

PROCESS TIMELINE

4.10.2024 – Tree Removal Permit

5.1.2024 – Tree Assessment

5.14.2024 – Tree Permit paid

5.20.2024 – Permit Inspection

10.17.2025 – Inspection for Administrative Decision Appeal Hearing

1.7.2026 – Tree Removal Hearing

7.24.2026 – Denial of Appeal issued

EXHIBITS



Exhibit 1. Photo of the Washingtonia robusta or Mexican fan palm at 4227 26th Street. Taken by ISA-Certified inspector on 5.20.24.



Exhibit 2. Photo of the Washingtonia robusta or Mexican fan palm at 4227 26th Street. Taken by ISA-Certified inspector on 9.17.25.



Exhibit 3. Photo of the retaining wall at 4227 26th Street.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

In an effort to adhere to the Urban Forest Plan and the Climate Action Plan's no net loss of urban tree canopy, it is the Department of Public Works – Bureau of Urban Forestry's recommendation to deny the appeal and retain the *Washingtonia robusta* or Mexican fan palm (TRE-273117) at 4227 26th Street.

REFERENCE LINKS

https://sfpublicworks.org/services/urban-forest-plan

https://www.sfenvironment.org/climateplan

PUBLIC COMMENT

From: Denise Raquel Dunning
To: BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc: James & Nina; Eric Petitt
Subject: Appeal #26-039 – Support for Removal of Dangerous Palm Tree on 26th Street
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 7:57:16 AM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Board of Appeals,

I am writing in support of Appeal #26-039 regarding the removal of the palm tree located on 26th Street.

I live directly across the street from this enormous tree and am the parent of young children. For many years, I have been concerned about the risk it poses to pedestrians, neighbors, and especially children who pass beneath it every day. I worry that someone could be seriously injured by a falling branch or palm frond, or, in a worst-case scenario, by structural failure of the tree itself.

Given its size and location, this tree represents a significant safety hazard to the community. Families, children, and other pedestrians regularly use the sidewalk adjacent to the tree, and the potential consequences of an accident could be severe.

For these reasons, I strongly support Nina Saltman's request to remove the tree and respectfully ask that you give serious consideration to the safety concerns raised in this appeal. Protecting the well-being of residents and children should be a top priority.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Denise Dunning, 4226 26th St.

From: Hope Neighbor
To: BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc: Nina Saltman; Eric Hoffmann
Subject: Appeal no. 26-039
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 6:31:32 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Hello,

I am writing to support the following appeal request:

Appeal no. 26-039
Public Works order no: 300186
4227 26th st. SF 94131
Mexican Fan Palm

The request is for the removal of the Fan Palm, which is circled in the photo below. The palm is not stable and risks falling on the house behind it or forward onto the sidewalk and street.

The tree has been worrisome for us, as we own house across the street at 4224 26th St and are concerned about the palm falling on ourselves, neighbors, or passers-by.

Best,
Hope Neighbor
(In addition to being a neighbor, my last name is also Neighbor)

From: Susan Rutberg
To: BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc: Nina Saltman
Subject: Appeal no 26-039, Public Works Order no. 300186 (Permit to remove unsafe and unsightly tree at 4227 26th Street, SF CA 94131)
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 7:58:08 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Appeal no. 26-039

Dear Board of Appeals:

The tree at issue in this proceeding is in the front yard of 4227 26th Street, in the upper Noe Valley neighborhood. The longtime property owners, Nina Saltman and James Bullock, want to take the tree down. They find it unsightly, contributing neither beauty nor shade to their lawn. But more importantly, they find it traumatizing.

Just 3 years ago they suffered a terribly traumatic event involving a similar tree. That city owned palm tree, planted on Castro Street near18th Street, toppled over in a windstorm in February of 2024, landing full force on Nina Saltman, nearly crushing her as she and a friend walked on Castro Street. Ms. Saltman suffered nearly life threatening injuries. Her back was broken in several places and her right foot and her pelvis were also broken. Hospitalization and lengthy rehabilitation followed. Now, more than two years later, she still suffers from residual pain from her injuries, and her trauma is lingering and real.

An example of her ongoing trauma, is that Ms. Saltman remains in fear that the tree—which is objectively ugly and serves no benefit to the public—will fall and cause injury to someone passing by. The trees' roots impact the safety of the retaining wall between the yard and the sidewalk and it appears ripe for falling. The Saltman-Bullock front yard is beautiful—except for this tree that looks like it belongs somewhere else. Let these property owners, whose lives have already been negatively impacted from one tree planted in the wrong place—the wrong ecosystem— remove this tree and get on with their lives and their recovery.

Sincerely,

Susan Rutberg, friend and former neighbor, of Nina Saltman and James Bullock
smrutberg@gmail.com
415.205.6429

Susan Rutberg
smrutberg@gmail.com
415.205.6429

From:	judith mcrae
To:	BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc:	Nina and James
Subject:	Subject: Letter of Support – Appeal No. 26-039 / Public Works Order No. 300186 – 4227 26th St, SF 94131
Date:	Monday, August 10, 2026 7:58:32 AM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Members of the Board of Appeals,

I'm writing to express my support for the appeal to remove the Mexican fan palm at 4227 26th St. (Appeal No. 26-039, Public Works Order No. 300186), and I hope the Board will grant it.

I'm a friend of Nina's and have visited the property many times. This palm is tall, top-heavy, and poses a real safety risk to pedestrians and neighbors, especially during storms, a concern that only grows as the tree ages. It is also already causing visible damage to the retaining wall along the sidewalk, which is a further safety issue.

Unlike the many other trees on Nina's lush, well-planted property, this palm provides no shade or canopy benefit to the public. Given the genuine risk it poses and the minimal benefit it offers in return, I don't believe there's a good reason to keep in place.

I hope the Board will weigh these safety concerns seriously and approve the removal.

Sincerely,
Judith McRae

From:	Tandy Iles
To:	BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc:	Nina Saltman
Subject:	Appeal no. 26-039 public work order 300186
Date:	Wednesday, August 12, 2026 5:21:21 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Nina Saltman's appeal to have a Mexican Fan Palm removed at 4227 26th Street. San Francisco, Ca. 94131. I am extremely concerned about the perilous danger the tree is causing, Not only is this tree impacting the retaining wall, but it is also in danger of falling and causing serious injury to someone. As someone who witnessed a tree in San Francisco fall and injure my friend, I am super sensitive to this possibility occurring again. I ask that you please grant this appeal to have this tree removed.

Thank you for your attention to this.
Tandy Iles
526 Judson Ave
Sf, Ca. 94112

A Luta Continua.....

From: David Fine
To: BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc: Nina
Subject: Appeal no. 26-039
Date: Friday, August 14, 2026 12:23:01 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Board of Appeals,

I am writing in regards to:

Appeal no. 26-039
Public Works order no: 300186
4227 26th st. SF 94131
Mexican Fan Palm

I strongly urge you to rule in favor of the homeowner in this matter. The palm tree in question is old and unhealthy and now poses a risk to the public as well as an immediate risk to the homeowners and residents of said property. The tree is affecting the integrity of the retaining wall and is likely to topple, threatening public safety. This property has other healthy trees that benefit the public, but this palm tree in question must go to avoid tragic consequences.

Sincerely,

David Fine
San Francisco

From: Denise Raquel Dunning
To: BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc: James & Nina; Eric Petitt
Subject: Appeal #26-039 – Support for Removal of Dangerous Palm Tree on 26th Street
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 7:57:16 AM

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Dear Board of Appeals,

I am writing in support of Appeal #26-039 regarding the removal of the palm tree located on 26th Street.

I live directly across the street from this enormous tree and am the parent of young children. For many years, I have been concerned about the risk it poses to pedestrians, neighbors, and especially children who pass beneath it every day. I worry that someone could be seriously injured by a falling branch or palm frond, or, in a worst-case scenario, by structural failure of the tree itself.

Given its size and location, this tree represents a significant safety hazard to the community. Families, children, and other pedestrians regularly use the sidewalk adjacent to the tree, and the potential consequences of an accident could be severe.

For these reasons, I strongly support Nina Saltman's request to remove the tree and respectfully ask that you give serious consideration to the safety concerns raised in this appeal. Protecting the well-being of residents and children should be a top priority.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Denise Dunning, 4226 26th St.

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To: BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc: Nina Saltman; Eric Hoffmann
Subject: Appeal no. 26-039
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 6:31:32 PM

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Public Works order no: 300186
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(In addition to being a neighbor, my last name is also Neighbor)

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Sincerely,

Susan Rutberg, friend and former neighbor, of Nina Saltman and James Bullock
smrutberg@gmail.com
415.205.6429

Susan Rutberg
smrutberg@gmail.com
415.205.6429

From:	judith mcrae
To:	BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc:	Nina and James
Subject:	Subject: Letter of Support – Appeal No. 26-039 / Public Works Order No. 300186 – 4227 26th St, SF 94131
Date:	Monday, August 10, 2026 7:58:32 AM

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Dear Members of the Board of Appeals,

I'm writing to express my support for the appeal to remove the Mexican fan palm at 4227 26th St. (Appeal No. 26-039, Public Works Order No. 300186), and I hope the Board will grant it.

I'm a friend of Nina's and have visited the property many times. This palm is tall, top-heavy, and poses a real safety risk to pedestrians and neighbors, especially during storms, a concern that only grows as the tree ages. It is also already causing visible damage to the retaining wall along the sidewalk, which is a further safety issue.

Unlike the many other trees on Nina's lush, well-planted property, this palm provides no shade or canopy benefit to the public. Given the genuine risk it poses and the minimal benefit it offers in return, I don't believe there's a good reason to keep in place.

I hope the Board will weigh these safety concerns seriously and approve the removal.

Sincerely,
Judith McRae

From:	Tandy Iles
To:	BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc:	Nina Saltman
Subject:	Appeal no. 26-039 public work order 300186
Date:	Wednesday, August 12, 2026 5:21:21 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Nina Saltman's appeal to have a Mexican Fan Palm removed at 4227 26th Street. San Francisco, Ca. 94131. I am extremely concerned about the perilous danger the tree is causing, Not only is this tree impacting the retaining wall, but it is also in danger of falling and causing serious injury to someone. As someone who witnessed a tree in San Francisco fall and injure my friend, I am super sensitive to this possibility occurring again. I ask that you please grant this appeal to have this tree removed.

Thank you for your attention to this.
Tandy Iles
526 Judson Ave
Sf, Ca. 94112

A Luta Continua.....

From: David Fine
To: BoardofAppeals (PAB)
Cc: Nina
Subject: Appeal no. 26-039
Date: Friday, August 14, 2026 12:23:01 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Board of Appeals,

I am writing in regards to:

Appeal no. 26-039
Public Works order no: 300186
4227 26th st. SF 94131
Mexican Fan Palm

I strongly urge you to rule in favor of the homeowner in this matter. The palm tree in question is old and unhealthy and now poses a risk to the public as well as an immediate risk to the homeowners and residents of said property. The tree is affecting the integrity of the retaining wall and is likely to topple, threatening public safety. This property has other healthy trees that benefit the public, but this palm tree in question must go to avoid tragic consequences.

Sincerely,

David Fine
San Francisco