



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA  
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**A G E N D A  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2025, AT 6:30 P.M.**

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1424 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

**South Pasadena Commission Statement of Civility**

*As your appointed governing board, we will treat each other, members of the public, and city employees with patience, civility and courtesy as a model of the same behavior we wish to reflect in South Pasadena for the conduct of all city business and community participation. The decisions made today will be for the benefit of the South Pasadena community and not for personal gain.*

**NOTICE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & ACCESSIBILITY**

The South Pasadena Natural Resources and Environmental Commission Meeting will be conducted in-person from the Council Chambers, Amedee O. "Dick" Richards, Jr., located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena.

The meeting will be available:

- In Person – City Manager Conference Room, 1414 Mission Street
- Via Zoom – **Webinar ID: 880 7206 2700**

To maximize public safety while still maintaining transparency and public access, members of the public can observe the meeting via Zoom in one of the three methods below.

1. Go to the Zoom website, <https://zoom.us/join> and enter the Zoom Meeting information; or
2. Click on the following unique Zoom meeting link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88072062700>; or
3. You may listen to the meeting by calling +1-669-900-6833 and entering the Zoom Meeting ID.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**ROLL CALL:**

Chair	Emily Ng
Vice Chair	Michael Siegel
Commissioner	Liam R. de Villa Bourke
Commissioner	Casey Law
Commissioner	Michael Noe
Commissioner	Alex Rajewski
Commissioner	Margaret Yi

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Emily Ng

**PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES** (*Public Comments are limited to 3 minutes*)

The City welcomes public input. Members of the public can comment on a non-agenda subject under the jurisdiction of the City Council or on an agenda item, you may participate **by one of the following options**:

Option 1:

Participate in-person at the City Council Chambers.

Option 2:

Public Comment speakers have three minutes to address the Commission, however, the Chair and Commission can adjust time allotted as needed. Participants will be able to “raise their hand” using the Zoom icon during the meeting, and they will have their microphone un-muted during comment portions of the agenda to speak.

Option 3:

Email public comment(s) to [NRECPublicComment@SouthPasadenaCA.gov](mailto:NRECPublicComment@SouthPasadenaCA.gov).

Public Comments received in writing will not be read aloud at the meeting, but will be part of the meeting record. Written public comments will be uploaded online for public viewing under Additional Documents. There is no word limit on emailed Public Comment(s). Please make sure to indicate:

- 1) Name (optional), and
- 2) Agenda item you are submitting public comment on.
- 3) Submit by no later than **12:00 p.m., May 27, 2025**

PLEASE NOTE: The Chair may exercise the Chair's discretion, subject to the approval of the majority of the Commission to adjust public comment(s) to less than three minutes.

*NOTE: Pursuant to State law, the Commission may not discuss or take action on issues not on the meeting agenda, except that members of the Commission or staff may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising public testimony rights (Government Code Section 54954.2). Staff may be asked to follow up on such items.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**1. GENERAL (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)**

**PRESENTATION**

**2. SB1383 IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

**DISCUSSION**

**3. PLASTICS REDUCTION AD HOC COMMITTEE UPDATE**

**4. TREE ORDINANCE REVIEW**

## ACTION

### 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2025 NREC MEETING

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Commission review and approve the March 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### 6. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMUNICATIONS

### 7. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

### 8. STAFF LIAISON COMMUNICATIONS

### 9. UPCOMING EVENTS

- Scoping Meeting – Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project  
May 28, 2025, 6pm-8pm, South Pasadena Library Community Room
- LA County Smart Gardening Webinars  
(<https://www.ladpw.org/epd/sq/webinars.cfm>)
- MWD Turf Removal + CA Native Landscape Webinars  
(<https://greengardensgroup.com/turf-transformation/>)

## ADJOURNMENT

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### FUTURE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETINGS

July 22, 2025	Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m.
September 23, 2025	Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m.
November 25, 2025	Regular Meeting	6:30 p.m.

### PUBLIC ACCESS TO AGENDA DOCUMENTS AND BROADCASTING OF MEETINGS

Commission meeting agenda packets, any agenda related documents, and additional documents are available online for public inspection on the City's website:

<https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/government/boards-commissions>

Meeting recordings will be available for public viewing after the meeting. Recordings will be uploaded to the City's YouTube Channel no later than the next business day after the meeting.


The City's YouTube Channel may be accessed at:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnR169ohzi1AlewD\\_6sfwDA/featured](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnR169ohzi1AlewD_6sfwDA/featured)

### AGENDA NOTIFICATION SUBSCRIPTION

If you wish to receive an agenda email notification please contact the Sustainability Division via email at [NRECPublicComment@SouthPasadenaCA.gov](mailto:NRECPublicComment@SouthPasadenaCA.gov) or call (626) 403-7240.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

 The City of South Pasadena wishes to make all of its public meetings accessible to the public. If special assistance is needed to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Division at (626) 403-7230 or [CityClerk@southpasadenaca.gov](mailto:CityClerk@southpasadenaca.gov). Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

### CERTIFICATION OF POSTING

*I declare under penalty of perjury that I posted this notice of agenda for the meeting to be held on **May 27, 2025**, on the bulletin board in the courtyard of City Hall at 1414 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030, and on the City's, website as required by law, on the date listed below.*

5/22/2025

Date

Arpy Kasparian, Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager

## **ITEM 2**

Presentation: SB1383 Implementation Update

# Senate Bill 1383 Implementation Update

**May 27, 2025**

**Natural Resources and Environmental Commission**

# Background

- Senate Bill 1383 requires jurisdictions to:
  - ✓ Provide Organics Collection Services to All Residents and Businesses
  - ✓ Establish Edible Food Recovery Program
  - ✓ Conduct Education and Outreach to Community
  - ✓ Monitor Compliance and Conduct Enforcement
- A new agreement went into effect with a special rate adjustment for all customers on January 1, 2025.
- Athens and a City Athens Negotiations Working Group conducted additional negotiations to address the high diversion requirements of SB 1383.
  - ✓ Transition from 2-stream to 3-stream collection (add recyclables/blue container)
- Focus: provide additional services and comply with SB 1383 with minimal immediate financial impact to ratepayers.
- On May 21, City Council approved the proposed amended and restated Agreement hearing date to July 16, 2025.





# Approved Amended Agreement

## City Council approved an amendment with the following terms:

- ✓ Add recycling/blue collection service (third waste stream) for all customers.
- ✓ Modify the annual rate adjustment formula from using CPI to using Trash CPI plus 1%.
- ✓ Extend the current seven-year rolling term to a ten-year rolling term.
- ✓ The City will agree to not issue a Notice of Intent to Wind Down for five years.
- ✓ Freeze all rates at the January 1, 2025 rate schedule for all customers until July 1, 2027.





# Modifications to Bulky Item Pick-Up

## Challenges with Current Service

- Only free on specific days of the year
- Only Seniors received a curbside program
- Residents need to figure out how to haul their bulky items to event location
- Lack of locations in the City that can accommodate this event

## New Program

- ✓ Provide all residential customers with one free curbside bulky item pick-up (for up to 5 items) per calendar quarter
- ✓ Includes Multi-family
- ✓ Replaces Senior Citizen Weeks and Dumpster Days
- ✓ Addresses issues with event locations, accessibility, and safety

# 3-Stream Implementation - Fleet

## Fleet for 2-Stream System:

- (2) Commercial Front Loaders
- (2) Mother Trucks
- (1) Scout Truck
- (1) Mini Class C Rear Loader\*
- (8) Manual Service Pick-up Trucks



4x

Commercial and  
Mother Trucks



1x

(1) **Green**  
Rear Loader



1x

Scout Truck



8x

Manual Service  
Pick-up Trucks

## Fleet for 3-Stream System:

- (2) Commercial Front Loaders
- (3) Mother Trucks\*
- (1) Scout Truck
- (2) Mini Class C Rear Loaders\*
- (12) Manual Service Pick-up Trucks\*



5x

Commercial and  
Mother Trucks



2x

(1) **Blue**  
(1) **Green**  
Rear Loaders



1x

Scout Truck



12x

Manual Service  
Pick-up Trucks

\*Vehicles to be added to fleet.

# 3-Stream Implementation - Containers

## Residential

- Up to 7 barrels per customer (minimum 1 black, 1 blue, 1 green)
- 29,986 (32-gallon) barrels to be deployed
- Recycle existing containers



## Multi-Family/Commercial

- One 96-gallon recycle cart, serviced once per week



All containers will have standard labeling indicating what is and is not acceptable in the container.

# Next Steps

1. Conduct Prop 218 Public Hearing for changes to annual rate adjustment formula on July 16, 2025. Prop 218 Public Hearing Notices will be mailed out at least 45 days before the hearing.
2. Upon successful Prop 218 hearing, Athens to begin procurement and waste assessments.
  - Manufacturing of barrels may take 16-18 weeks and collection vehicles will take approximately 90 days.
3. New residential barrel and commercial and multi-family bin and cart deployment will begin with extensive outreach and education provided to all account holders.
  - Deployment will take approximately 6-8 weeks.
  - Athens will remove and dispose/recycle customer's old barrels as part of the deployment process.



# Questions

## **ITEM 4**

### Tree Ordinance Review



# **CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA**

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

Tree Ordinance  
Review & Research

**Natural Resources and Environmental Commission**  
**May 27th, 2025**

# OUR GOAL

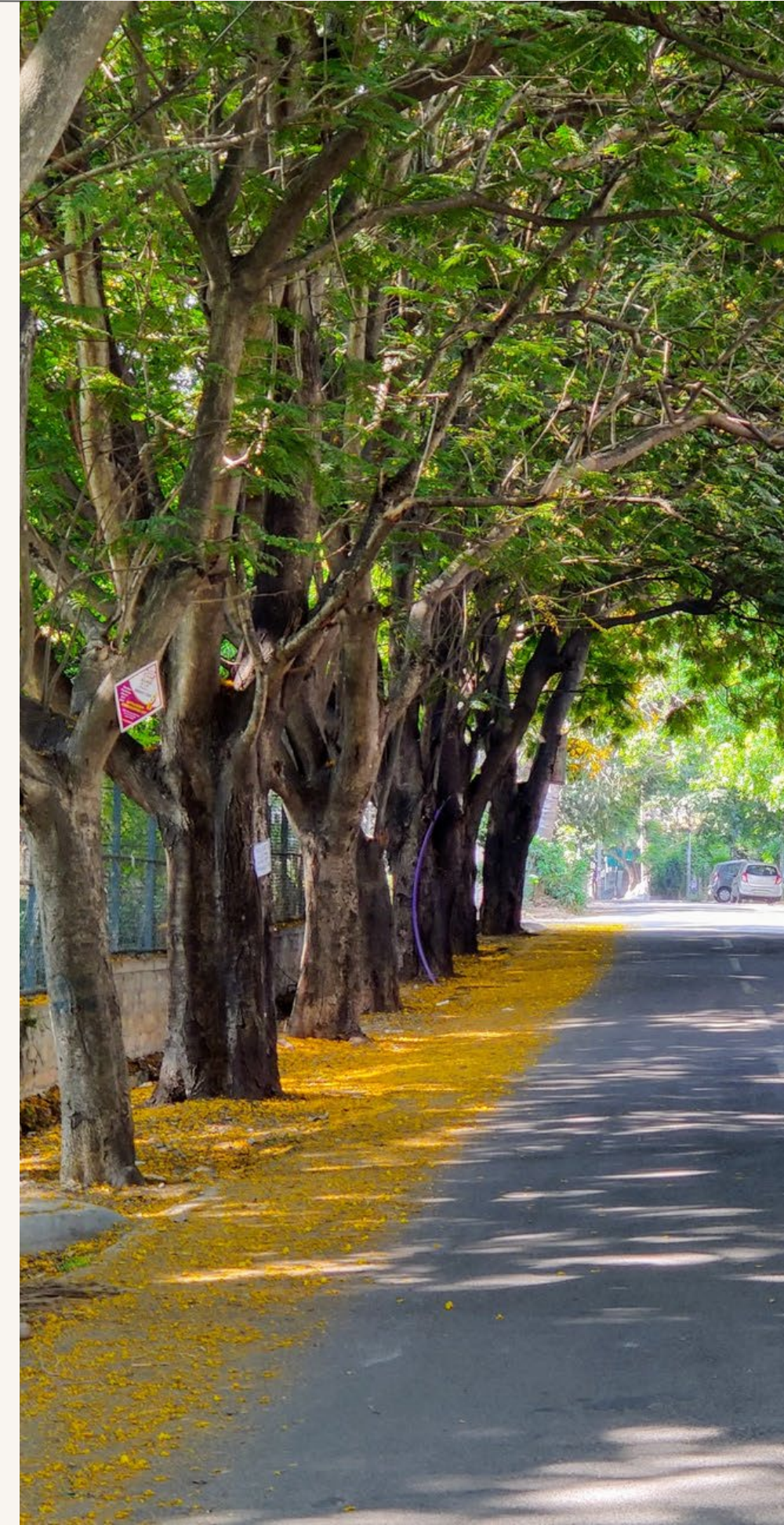
**LEARNING FROM  
SIMILAR  
CHALLENGES**

**IDENTIFY KEY GAP  
AREAS &  
CHALLENGES IN  
CURRENT  
ORDINANCE**

**ADDRESSING THE  
COMMUNITY NEEDS**

# CITIES UNDER CODE REVIEW

- ALHAMBRA [TREE CITY]
- ARCADIA [TREE CITY]
- SIERRA MADRE
- LA CANADA [TREE CITY]
- GLENDALE [TREE CITY]
- SAN MARINO [TREE CITY]
- CLAREMONT [TREE CITY]





# **KEY FOCUS AREAS**

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**MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY**

**DEVELOPMENT & LAND USE**

**TRIMMING/PRUNING CRITERIA**

**REMOVAL CRITERIA**

**PERMITTING**

**ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE**

# MAINTENANCE OWNERSHIP

# MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY

	SOUTH PASADENA	SIERRA MADRE	ARCADIA	ALHAMBRA	GLENDALE	LA CANADA	SAN MARINO	CLAREMONT
ALL CITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR CITY OWNED TREES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PRIVATELY OWNED TREES RESPONSIBLE OF PROPERTY/ TREE OWNER	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RESPONSILITY OF ADVISORY BODIES / COMMISSIONS VARY BY CITY	Established maintenance standards in code and reviews tree permit appeals.	Advisory panel for the city council and staff on urban forest management.	Advises the City Council and reviews the annual City-owned tree inventory and master plan.	Not addressed in the code.	Not addressed in the code.	Develops a five-year Capital Improvement Project Plan targeting future urban forest management needs.	Interprets code application in some cases, advises on preservation policy, and enforces tree regulations.	Recommends care for trees on city-owned and private undeveloped properties and maintains a list of native trees species.



# MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

- Code acts as a guideline for residents on maintenance standards but does not enforce them.
- Community struggles with how to maintain trees and be compliant with code requirements.

## IMPROVEMENTS

### MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

- Provide information to the public on the best practices of maintaining common species of trees.
- Social media posts notifying residents of the upcoming trimming season.

# DEVELOPMENT & LAND USE

# DEVELOPMENT & LAND USE

	SOUTH PASADENA	SIERRA MADRE	ARCADIA	ALHAMBRA	GLENDALE	LA CANADA	SAN MARINO	CLAREMONT
TREE PROTECTION MITIGATION MEASURES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	For work on City property only.
TREE REPLACEMENT PLAN OR ARBORIST REPORT REQUIRED	Note that protected species and tree classifications vary per City							Not addressed in the code.
TREE REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENT	Arborist report and removal/replacement plan required for every species of tree.	Tree survey is required [as part of permit process]. Must enter mitigation agreement with City.	Tree replacement plan [required for every protected tree approved for removal].	Not addressed in the code.	Tree replacement plan and arborist report.	Site plan and replacement plan required.	Tree restoration and protection plan required.	Not addressed in the code.
	Double the normal replacement requirement .	Replaced within 1 year of removal by a minimum of 1 tree of the same species or suitable alternatives.	Replacement based on higher value or cost, plus planting. Type & replacement decided by director.	If violation occurs: Required number of replacement trees shall be double the standard provision.	One or more trees planted as a mitigation measure [replacing protected indigenous].	Tress must be replaced onsite. The size of replacement based on size of protected tree removed.	Heritage and oak trees replaced with equivalent species.	

**REPLACEMENT PLANS & ARBORIST REPORTS** MAY INCLUDE: TREE SPECIES, AESTHETIC ASSESSMENT, MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS, HEALTH EVALUATION, TREE DIAMETER, REPLACEMENT CRITERIA

**MITIGATION MEASURES** MAY INCLUDE: ESTABLISHING TREE PROTECTION ZONE, (TPZ), ONGOING IRRIGATION, UTILIZATION OF HANDTOOLS ROOT PROTECTION ZONE, AVOID WORK IN DRIPLINE, SUFFICIENT GUARDS OR PROTECTOR

# DEVELOPMENT & LAND USE

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### ENFORCEMENT

- Current code language sets an unclear expectation for the interrelation between development and tree protection

### URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT

- The city lacks long term goals and pathway for the preservation of the urban forest

## IMPROVEMENTS

### ENFORCEMENT














- Aligning the code with the City's and State's current standards and expectations for development

### URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT

- Create measurable benchmarks for the maintenance and enhancement of the city's urban forest through a Comprehensive Management Plan:
  - Addressing the planting of new trees
  - Removing dead/hazardous trees
  - Conducting reforestation in city owned properties
  - Establish tree species guidelines for various corridors throughout the City.
  - Explore planting fire-resistant trees in high severity zones.

# TRIMMING & PRUNING CRITERIA

# TRIMMING & PRUNING CRITERIA

	SOUTH PASADENA	SIERRA MADRE	ARCADIA	ALHAMBRA	GLENDALE	LA CANADA	SAN MARINO	CLAREMONT
PERMIT REQUIRED	 Required for all mature oak trees, mature native trees and heritage trees.	 Required for all street tree and protected tree [both associated and unassociated with development project].	Permit is not required. Trimming of a protected tree guided by ISA/ANSI standards. Property owners additionally require consultation and written confirmation from Certified Arborist.	 Permit not required for routine trimming, trees located on side/rear yards of private property, fruit trees, any palm tree, and removal of dead wood.	 Permit required for protected indigenous trees – including arborist report.	 Any Certified arborists and tree trimmer required to be selected from City’s official list.	 Includes mention of contracting license C-27 or C-61.	Permit is not required for trees on private property.
ISA/ANSI STANDARDS MENTION OR GUIDELINES	 >10% of the live foliage of a mature oak tree or mature native species tree >20% of live foliage of any heritage tree	 Required for “substantial trimming” – defined as >25% of the live grown of a street or protected tree		May require residents to enter an agreement to pay all costs incurred for inspection.			 >10% of live foliage of a mature oak tree >20% of live foliage of any heritage tree or established tree	 Included under definition of pruning.



# TRIMMING & PRUNING CRITERIA

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### PROVIDING CLARITY

- The current language provides unclear guidelines for both applicants and staff on permissions for tree trimming.

### INDUSTRY BMP'S

- Contains a live foliage measurement standard that is difficult to apply and enforce.

## IMPROVEMENTS

### PROVIDING CLARITY








- Provide guidance on appropriate times of the year to trim oak species.

### INDUSTRY BMP'S

- Separate the criteria for tree trimming from that of tree removal, and introduce clear, tangible guidelines early in the process to help applicants understand and comply with the requirements.

# REMOVAL CRITERIA

# REMOVAL CRITERIA

	SOUTH PASADENA	SIERRA MADRE	ARCADIA	ALHAMBRA	GLENDALE	LA CANADA	SAN MARINO	CLAREMONT
PERMIT REQUIRED	 Permit required for all trees.	 Required for all street trees, protected trees [both associated and unassociated with development project].	 Required for all protected trees.	 Permit required for all trees. Permit not required for trees located on side/rear yards of private property, fruit trees, and any palm tree.	 Permit required for protected indigenous trees – including arborist report.	 Required for all protected trees.	 Includes mention of contracting license: C-27 or C-61.	Permit not required for trees on private property.  Permit required for trees located within public ROW.
PROTECTED TREE SPECIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native Tree: Species native to Southern California</li> <li>Oak Tree: Tree of the genus Quercus</li> <li>Significant Tree: Any variety of tree that has caliper of 1 ft or more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>California Scrub Oak</li> <li>Coast Live Oak</li> <li>Coast Scrub Oak</li> <li>Engelman n Oak</li> <li>Southern California Black Walnut</li> <li>Western Sycamore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oak Trees</li> <li>Sycamore Trees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oak Trees: Taller than 15ft or 12inch diameter</li> <li>California Natives: taller than 15 ft or 12-inch diameter</li> <li>Mature Trees: taller than 20ft or 24-inch diameter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coast Live Oak</li> <li>Mesa Oak</li> <li>California Sycamore</li> <li>Valley Oak</li> <li>Scrub Oak</li> <li>California Bay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oak Trees</li> <li>Sycamore Trees</li> <li>Deodar Cedars</li> <li>Any tree over 5 ft in non-residential</li> <li>Any trees on public property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established Tree: Any tree 15ft or 6inch diameter</li> <li>* Heritage Tree: Tree 15ft or 4 in diameter</li> <li>Oak Tree: Any genus Quercus; 15ft or 4-inch diameter</li> </ul>	*Maintains designated street tree list.
* = EXTENSIVE LIST								

# REMOVAL CRITERIA

	SOUTH PASADENA	SIERRA MADRE	ARCADIA	ALHAMBRA	GLENDALE	LA CANADA	SAN MARINO	CLAREMONT
ASSOCIATED FEE	<p>Tree removal permit: <b>\$364</b></p> <p>Private property tree removal [removing 4+ trees]: <b>\$504</b></p> <p>Inspection removal fee: <b>\$141</b></p>	<p>No fee for tree removal permits.</p> <p>Commission review: <b>\$173</b></p> <p>Tree replacement: <b>Actual cost + 15% processing fee</b></p>	<p>Tree permit fee: <b>Range \$138 to \$1,053</b></p> <p><i>Exemptions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No fee for tree permit applications associated w/ diseased or hazardous protected trees</li> </ul>	<p>Tree removal permit: <b>\$600</b></p>	<p>Street tree application fee: <b>\$205</b></p> <p>Indigenous tree application fee: <b>\$880</b></p> <p>Indigenous tree inspection &amp; monitoring fee: <b>\$513</b></p> <p>Indigenous tree; removing a dead tree: <b>\$94</b></p> <p>Public works tree installation: <b>-ranging \$343 - \$6,113</b></p>	<p>Tree Removal App: <b>\$220</b></p> <p>Appeal Removal of City Tree: <b>\$220 + outside costs</b></p> <p>Appeal of Public Works &amp; Traffic Commission City Tree Removal: <b>\$220 +outside costs</b></p>	<p>Tree Removal Permit ROW- <b>\$700</b></p> <p>Tree Removal Permit Private - <b>\$415</b></p> <p>Appeal of Private Tree Removal Permit - <b>\$545 per appeal</b></p> <p>Appeal to City Council - <b>\$905 per appeal</b></p> <p>Appeal to Planning Commission - <b>\$905 per appeal</b></p>	<p>No fee associated with tree removal permit.</p>
TREE REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENT	<p>1 to 2 24” box tree will be required as a replacement for each 6in increment for any tree or native species.</p> <p>1 to 2 24” box tree will be required for each 10in increment for any tree or native species.</p>	<p>Protected Trees: 1:1 replacement; min. 24" box, same species or suitable alternative</p> <p>Heritage Trees (100+ yrs): 1:1 replacement with large specimen trees</p>	<p>Every protected tree approved for removal to be replaced with a minimum of two (2) new 24-in box trees.</p>	<p>Oaks/Natives: 2× 24" box per 10" lost.</p> <p>Mature trees: 1× 24" box per 10", similar/native species.</p>	<p>Mitigation trees must not exceed removed/protected tree diameters; minimum 24-inch box size unless smaller approved.</p>	<p>12”-23”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 replacement tree</li> <li>24” box size</li> <li>24”-35”</li> <li>1 replacement tree</li> <li>36” box size</li> <li>36” or greater</li> <li>1 replacement tree</li> <li>48” box size</li> </ul>	<p>4-8”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One 36” box</li> <li>9-12”</li> <li>Two 36” box</li> <li>13-18”</li> <li>Four 24” box OR two 36” box</li> <li>19-36”</li> <li>Eight 24” box OR four 36” box</li> <li>37” or greater</li> <li>Twelve 24” box OR eight</li> </ul>	<p>City encourages same/larger stature tree for each removed; replant next season unless site deemed non-viable.</p>

# REMOVAL CRITERIA

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### ALLEVIATING THE BURDEN

The current process of removal can be lengthy and a financial burden to residents and developers.

## IMPROVEMENTS

### ALLEVIATING THE BURDEN

Explore language that streamlines the permitting process through:

- Reducing tree species list to only native species that require tree removal permit.
- Adjusting replacement requirements for removals.
- Clearly outline how an application can be approved/denied.
- Require notification letters for NREC appeals only.
- Provide expected permit processing schedule flow chart.

# REMOVAL CRITERIA

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### ADDRESSING TODAY’S CHALLENGES

As the city’s canopy continues to age, the ordinance requirements and regulations are not able to keep up.

## IMPROVEMENTS

### ADDRESSING TODAY’S CHALLENGES

Update language to navigate today’s challenges with existing/inherited trees. Addressing issues such as retaining/obtaining fire and household insurance, creating a defensible space for fire risks, and encouraging new developments while still prioritizing the longevity and sustainability of the existing urban forest.

Restructure the tree replacement fund deposits to contribute to the city’s overall management of City’s Urban Forest.



# PERMITTING PROCESS

# PERMITTING PROCESS

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### CRITERIA FOR TREE REMOVAL APPROVAL

Current ordinance does not consider contemporary concerns with wildfires and insurances as it does with structural interference and risks to life, safety and property.

### COMPLEX & LENGTHY PERMITTING PROCESS

The permitting process includes many decision points, documents, expenditures, stakeholders and is not easily navigated by community members.

This multi-step process can be time-consuming and may delay necessary actions, especially when urgent safety issues are involved.

## IMPROVEMENTS

### CRITERIA FOR TREE REMOVAL APPROVAL

Opportunity to expand current eligibility removal criteria to address these challenges.

### COMPLEX & LENGTHY PERMITTING PROCESS

Streamline the permitting process to ensure native trees are protected and minimize the overhead time and costs associated with reviewing and processing a tree removal permit.

Streamlining the permitting process will also allow residents to address urgent issues in a timely manner while still adhering the City municipal code.

# PERMITTING PROCESS

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### FINANCIAL BURDEN ON APPLICANTS

The requirement for replacing trees can be financially burdensome, particularly for residents facing significant costs for tree removal or maintenance. Residents often pay for arborist reports, replanting and sometimes even staff time for appeals.

### HIGH POTENTIAL FOR PUBLIC DISPUTES

The permitting process can lead to disputes among neighbors, as seen in cases where tree removal applications have sparked controversy. These disputes can escalate, involving legal action and community tensions, highlighting the need for clearer guidelines and better communication.

## IMPROVEMENTS

### FINANCIAL BURDEN ON APPLICANTS

Implement lower replacement requirement.

Require 100’ radius notification letter if removal application is development related, is denied and applicant appeals Director decision or when the Director refers the decision to the NREC.

Allow 1 year for applicants to fulfill replacement requirement.

### HIGH POTENTIAL FOR PUBLIC DISPUTES

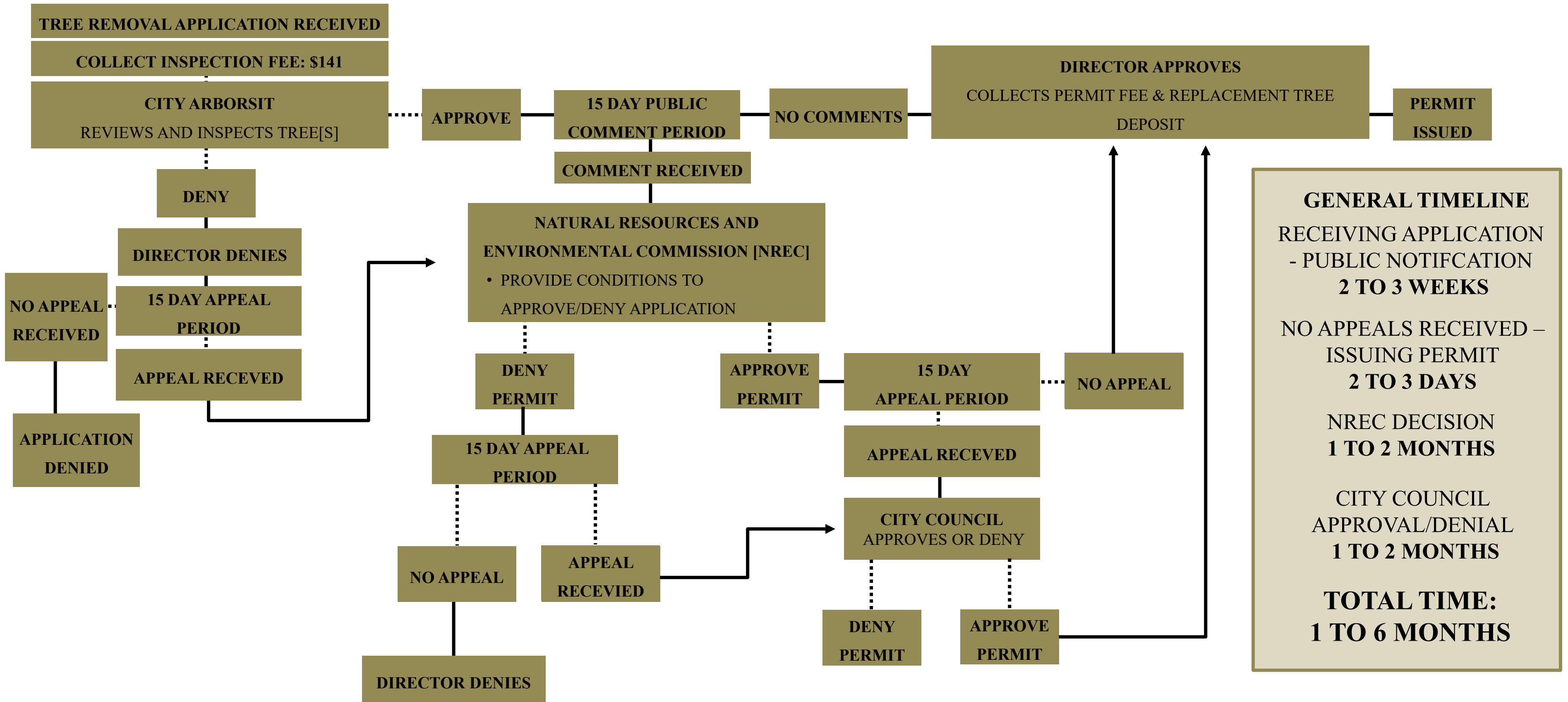
Redefine when a notification letter for a tree removal is required. Additionally, correct that the appeal fee should be paid by the individual filing the appeal, not by the original applicant.

***NOT ASSOCIATED WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT***



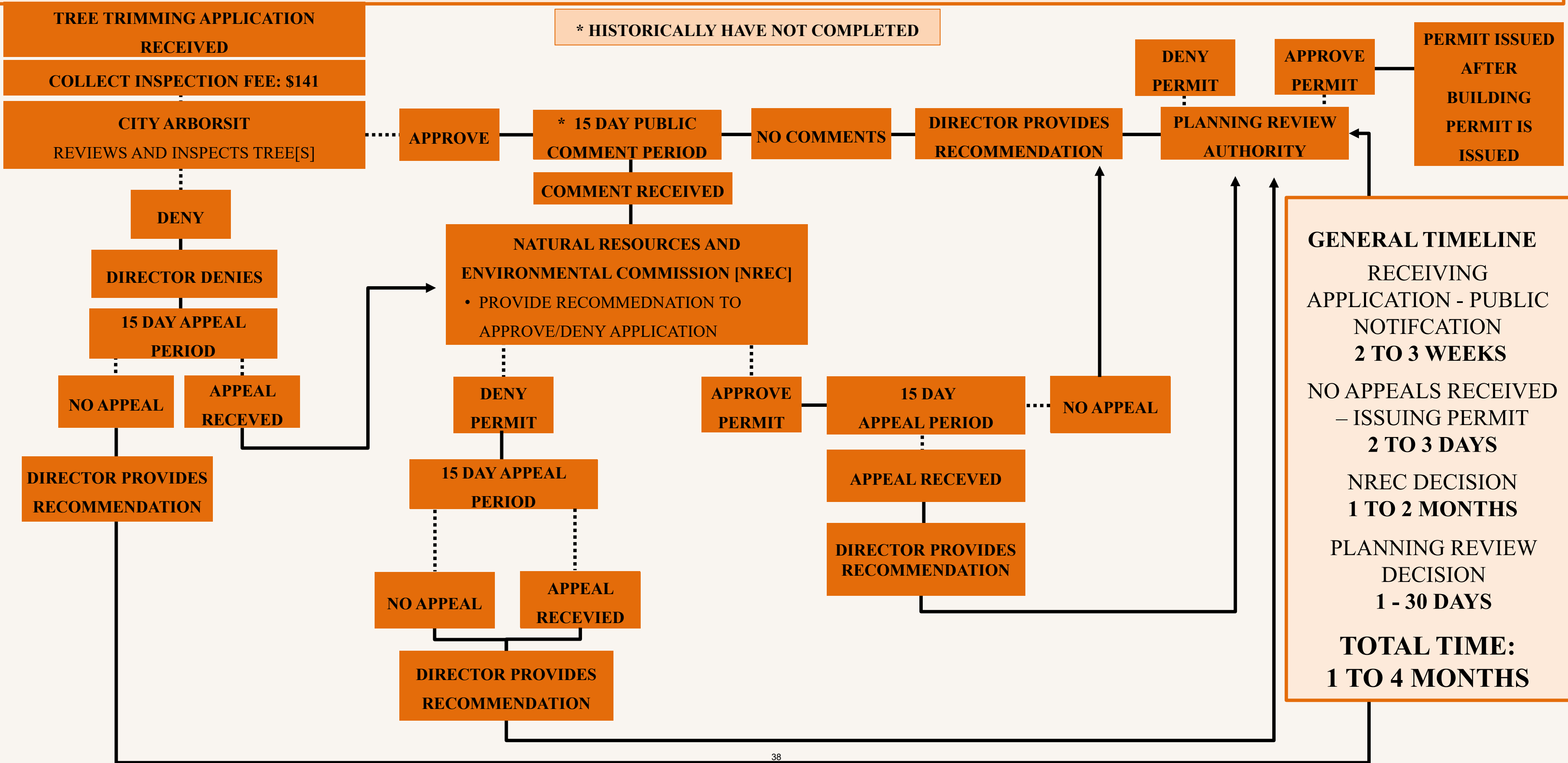
# EXISTING TREE REMOVAL PERMIT PROCESS

*NOT ASSOCIATED WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT*



# EXISTING TREE TRIMMING PERMIT PROCESS

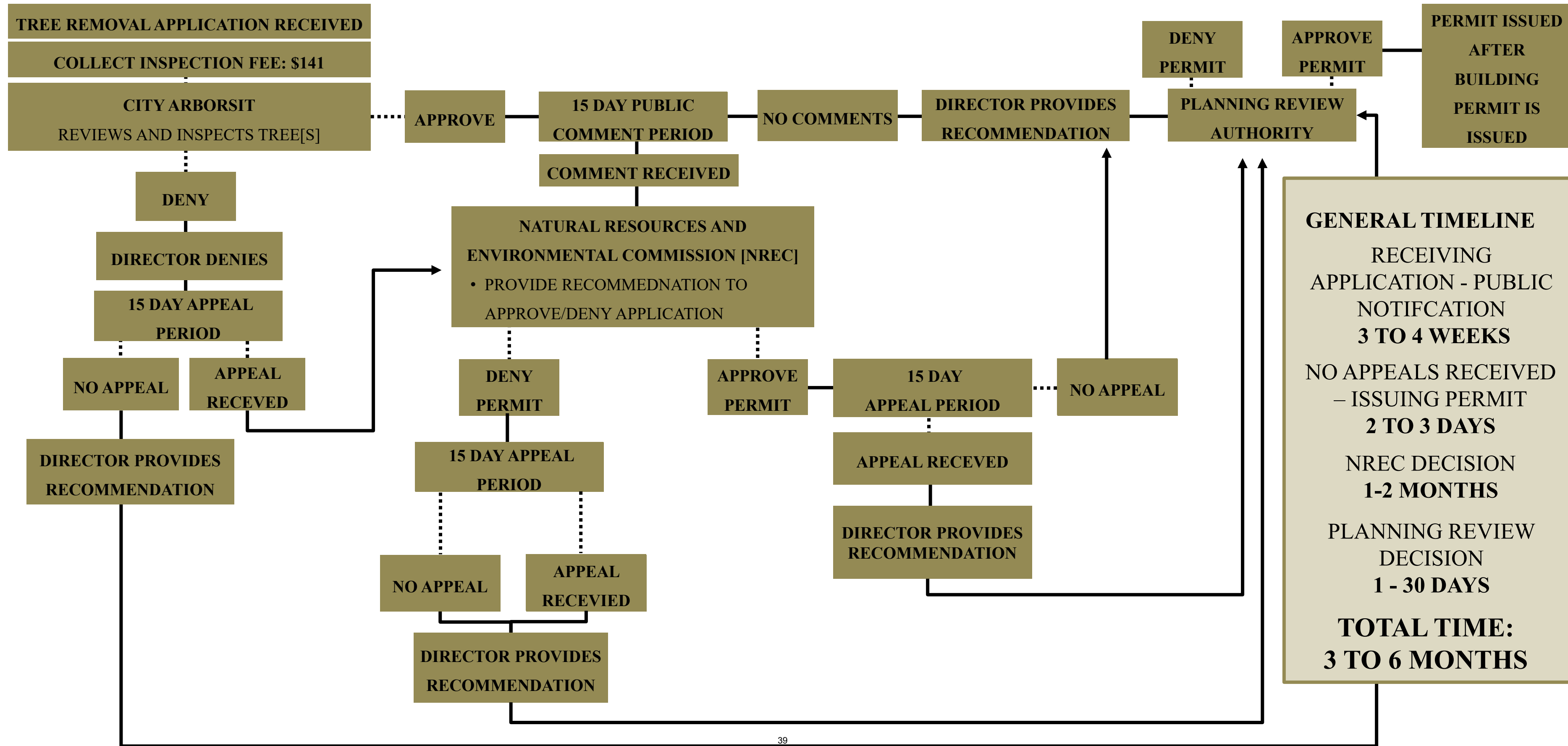
## *ASSOCIATED WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT*





# EXISTING TREE REMOVAL PERMIT PROCESS

## *ASSOCIATED WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT*

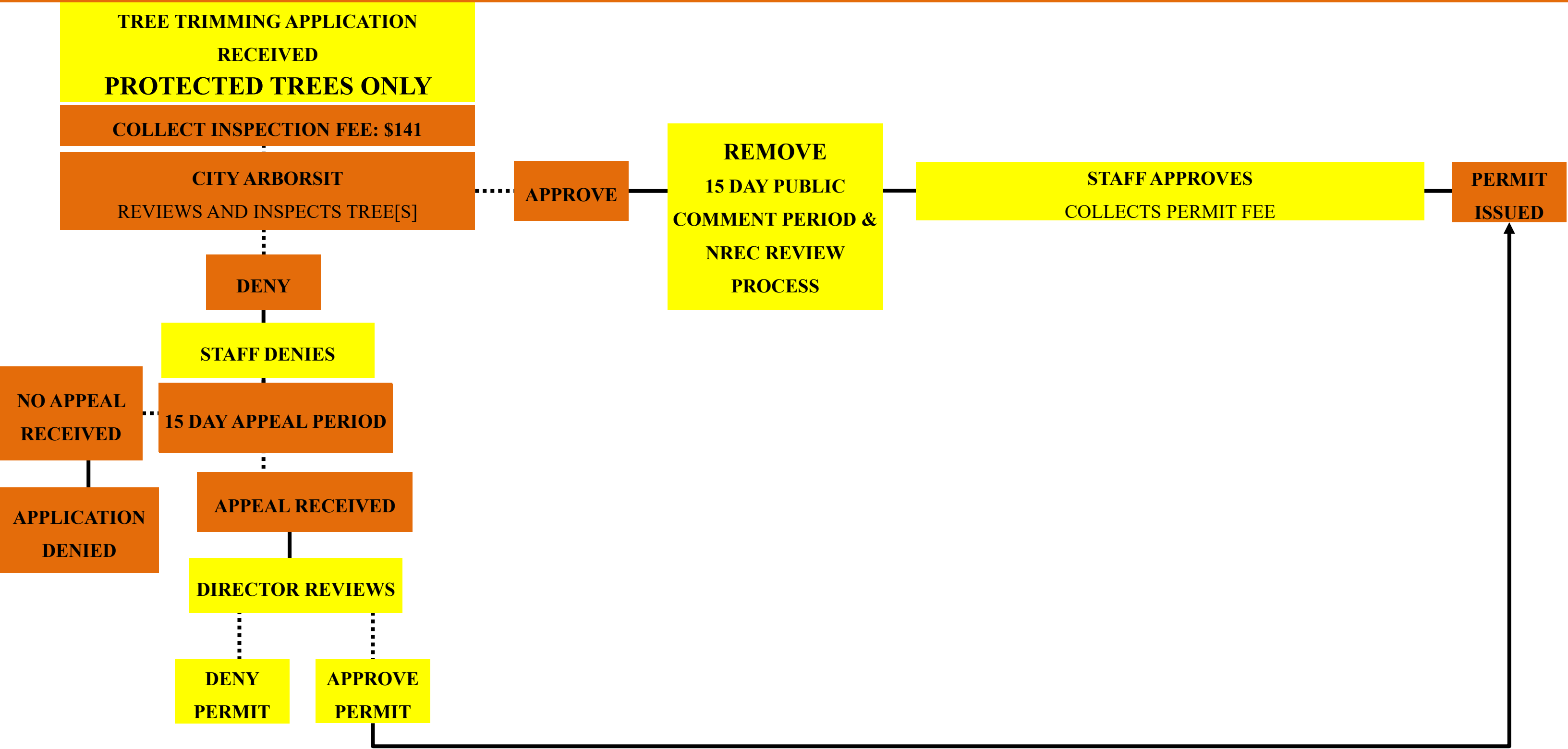


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# IMPROVED PERMITTING PROCESS

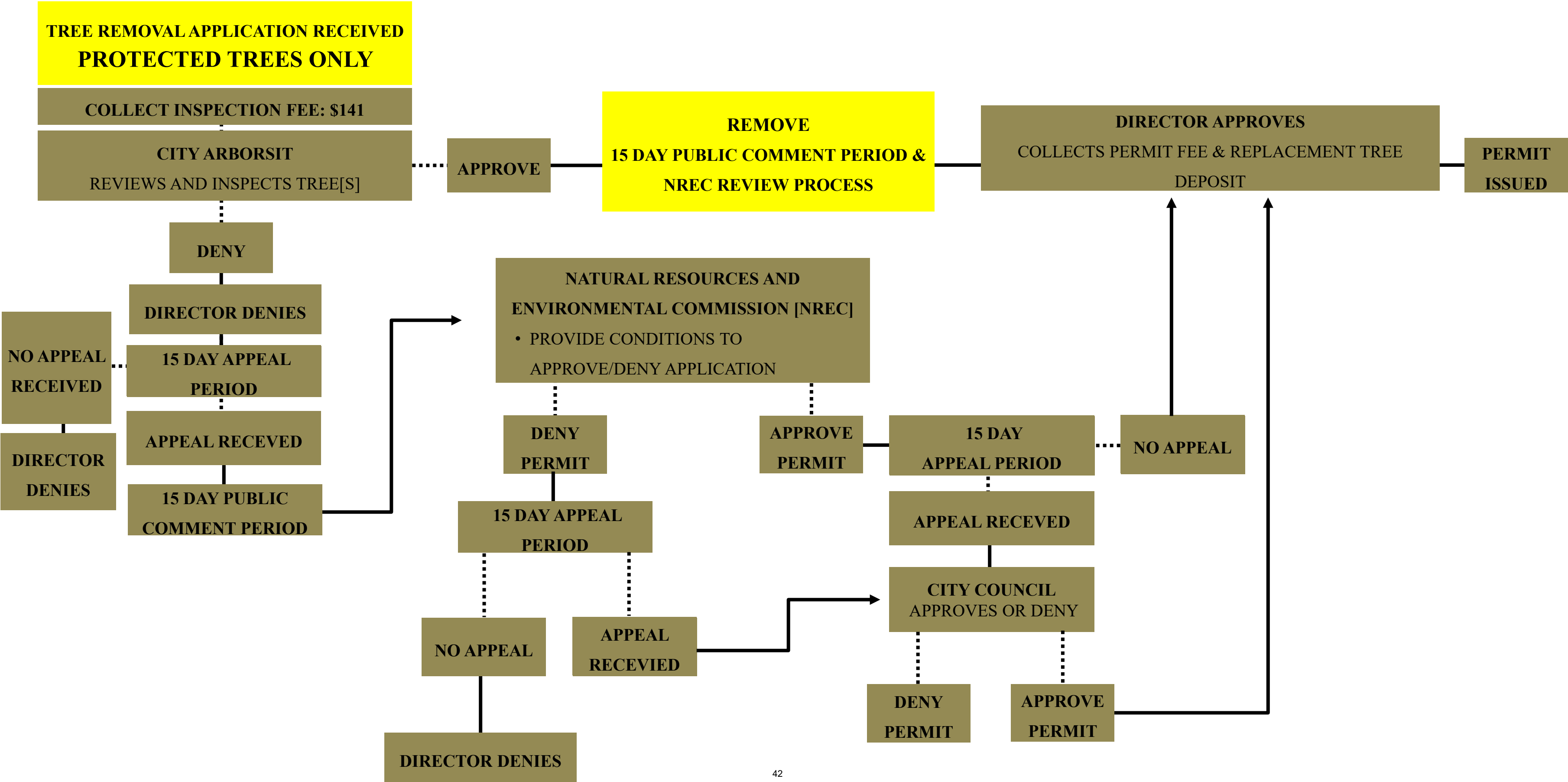
# PROPOSED TREE TRIMMING PERMIT PROCESS

***NOT ASSOCIATED WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT***



# PROPOSED TREE REMOVAL PERMIT PROCESS

*NOT ASSOCIATED WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT*



# PROPOSED TREE REMOVAL PERMIT PROCESS

## *ASSOCIATED WITH LAND DEVELOPMENT*

**TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION RECEIVED  
PROTECTED TREES ONLY**

**COLLECT INSPECTION FEE: \$141**

**CITY ARBORSIT**  
REVIEWS AND INSPECTS TREE[S]

**DENY**

**STAFF DENIES**

**15 DAY APPEAL  
PERIOD**

**NO APPEAL**

**APPEAL  
RECEIVED**

**DIRECTOR PROVIDES  
RECOMMENDATION**

**APPROVE**

**15 DAY PUBLIC  
COMMENT PERIOD**

**COMMENT RECEIVED**

**NO COMMENTS**

**DIRECTOR PROVIDES  
RECOMMENDATION**

**DENY  
PERMIT**

**APPROVE  
PERMIT**

**PLANNING REVIEW  
AUTHORITY**

**PLANNING REVIEW AUTHORITY**

- PROVIDE DECISION TO APPROVE/DENY APPLICATION

# ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE



# ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE

## PRESENT CHALLENGES

### LACK OF CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY

The current enforcement criteria and violation conditions are not always clear which hinders staff in being able to consistently enforce the municipal code.

### STAFF RESOURCES

The enforcement demands outweigh staff resources due to current municipal codes application to all trees.

## IMPROVEMENTS

### LACK OF CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Remove subjective criteria allowing staff to apply violations consistently.

### STAFF RESOURCES

Focusing ordinance on protected trees allowing staff to enforce municipal code without subjective interpretation.

# STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

FOCUS AREA	RECOMMENDATION
<b>MAINTENANCE &amp; OWNERSHIP</b>	Staff recommends instituting more resources on best practices for common tree care. Including but not limited to notifying residents of trimming season through social media campaigns, website links, local newspapers and other standard city communication methods.
<b>DEVELOPMENT &amp; LAND USE</b>	<p>Staff recommends aligning the code with the City’s and State’s current standards and expectations for development.</p> <p>Staff additionally recommends developing a comprehensive Urban Forest Management Plan to set a more holistic approach to planting, maintenance, species selection and risk reduction.</p>
<b>TRIMMING/ PRUNING CRITERIA</b>	<p>Staff recommends integrating guidance on the optimal times of year to trim oak tree species to promote healthy growth and minimize environmental impact.</p> <p>Staff recommends streamlining the permit process including creating separate criteria for tree trimming from that of tree removal, and introducing clear, tangible guidelines early in the process to help applicants understand and comply with the requirements.</p> <p>Staff similarly recommends reviewing and revising the language related to heritage trees to distinguish them from other protected trees.</p>

# STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

FOCUS AREA	RECOMMENDATION
<b>REMOVAL CRITERIA</b>	<p>Staff recommends revising code language to streamline the tree removal process by limiting the species list to protected tree species only.</p> <p>Additionally consider adjusting replacement requirements, amending approval criteria, only require notification letters when Director denies applications and applicant has appealed Director decision or Director has referred decision to NREC, and provide expected permit processing schedule flow chart.</p> <p>Staff recommends refining language to more effectively address contemporary challenges related to existing trees. Including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire risk mitigation</li> <li>• Insurance implications</li> <li>• Facilitation of new developments</li> <li>• Prioritizing resilience of urban forest</li> </ul>
<b>PERMITTING</b>	<p>Staff recommends streamlining the permitting process to ensure native trees are protected and minimize the overhead time and costs associated with reviewing and processing a tree removal permit.</p> <p>Implement lower replacement requirement (consider models established by other cities).</p> <p>Require 100' radius notification letter if removal application is development related, is denied and applicant appeals Director decision or when the Director refers the decision to the NREC.</p> <p>Additionally, correct that the appeal fee should be paid by the individual filing the appeal, not by the original applicant.</p>

# STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

FOCUS AREA	RECOMMENDATION
<b>ENFORCEMENT &amp; COMPLIANCE</b>	Staff recommends removing subjective criteria allowing staff to apply violations consistently.  Focusing ordinance on protected trees allowing staff to enforce municipal code without subjective interpretation.

# PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

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- **MAY 27:** NREC [Review of Research and Policy Issues]
- **JUNE 9:** Public Safety Commission [Summary of Policy Issues]
- **JUNE 11:** Public Works Commission [Summary of Policy Issues]
- **JULY 16:** Council Update [Commission Advisement]
- **AUGUST 20:** First Reading of Draft Ordinance
- **SEPTEMBER 3:** Second Reading of Ordinance
- **OCTOBER:** Ordinance in Effect

**ITEM 5**

Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of March 25, 2025





**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA  
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025, AT 6:30 P.M.**

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1424 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

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**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT**

Chair	Emily Ng
Vice Chair	Michael Siegel
Commissioner	Liam R. de Villa Bourke
Commissioner	Casey Law
Commissioner	Michael Noe
Commissioner	Alex Rajewski
Commissioner	Margaret Yi

**ABSENT**

NONE

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Emily Ng

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**1. GENERAL (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)**

In Person Public Comments:

*Angelo Gladding* provided remarks to a previous South Pasadena Beautiful board member who assisted South Pasadena in establishing it's Tree City USA recognition and referenced a recent article reflecting on the current status of the city's tree municipal code.

Zoom Public Comments:  
None.

**PRESENTATION**

**2. LIBRARY/COMMUNITY CENTER SITE PLAN – PROJECT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW**

Cathy Billings, Director of South Pasadena Library, presented on the City of South Pasadena's South Pas Forward initiative – a comprehensive site plan aimed at reimagining

the Library Park Campus [including Library, Senior Center and Community Room]. Billings expressed that the project seeks to optimize these facilities to better serve the community's evolving needs through enhanced infrastructure, accessibility and sustainability.

## **TREE HEARING**

### **3. TREE HEARING: 1459 INDIANA AVE.**

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission (NREC) review and provide a decision of the removal of two trees at 1459 Indiana Avenue.

Michael Vartanians, Principal Engineer, presented the details of the application and staff's recommendation to approve the removal of two trees [one classified as a "significant tree"] based on the current lean and soil instability. The applicant additionally contributed to the case, specifically highlighting their efforts to manage the current landscape their trees are within and components of their replacement plan, guaranteeing planting following the decision of commissioners.

#### **In Person Public Comments:**

Angelo Gladding raised concerns over the removal of a significant tree at applicants' property without a replacement plan or arborist report. Requests greater transparency and proper mitigation measures.

Deborah Char, longtime neighbor, objected to the tree removal, citing past unmitigated removals, the trees' health and stability, and the community's strong value for mature trees.

#### **Zoom Public Comments:**

None.

#### **COMMISSION ACTIONS AND MOTION**

A motion was made by Commissioner Law, seconded by Vice Chair Siegel and approved by roll call vote for the approval of the tree removal application at 1459 Indiana Ave. The motion carried 6-0-0, by the following vote:

AYES: Ng, Siegel, De Villa Bourke, Law, Rajewski, Yi

NOES: None.

ABSENT: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

## **ACTION**

### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 25, 2025 NREC MEETING**

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Commission review and approve the February 25, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes.

## **COMMISSION ACTION AND MOTION**

A motion was made by Commissioner Rajewski, seconded by Vice Chair Siegel and approved by roll call vote for the approval of the tree removal application at 1459 Indiana Ave. The motion carried 6-0-0, by the following vote:

AYES: Ng, Siegel, De Villa Bourke, Law, Rajewski, Yi

NOES: None.

ABSENT: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **5. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMUNICATIONS**

Council member Cacciotti shared updates on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks decision – urging future input from commissions. Additionally reported on regional efforts in open space preservation, Gold Line expansion, and air quality monitoring.

### **6. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Law highlighted new research showing microplastics found in human brains and the lack of enforcement of the state’s Styrofoam ban, urging renewed local action to reduce plastic use and pollution.

Commissioner Rajewski shared that USC is offering free soil lead testing for those affected by wildfires.

Vice Chair Siegel expressed support for Council member Cacciotti’s remarks regarding 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks. Additionally promoted the upcoming Sustainability Fair event, highlighting the free bike valet services.

Commissioner De Villa Bourke suggested revisiting membership of the plastics ad hoc committee.

### **7. STAFF LIAISON COMMUNICATIONS**

Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager Arpy Kasparian addressed the questions from Commissioner De Villa Bourke regarding re-establishing the plastics ad hoc committee. Lastly, announced the upcoming Sustainability Fair on March 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **8. UPCOMING EVENTS**

- *Sustainability Fair + Plant Swap + Garden Tour*  
March 29, 2025, 1pm – 4pm, South Pasadena Nature Park
- *Landscape Academy: Beautiful Gardens on Minimal Water*  
April 23, 2025 6pm – 7pm, Library Community Room  
([www.SouthPasadenaCA.gov/EnvironmentalPrograms](http://www.SouthPasadenaCA.gov/EnvironmentalPrograms) )
- LA County Smart Gardening Webinars  
(<https://www.ladpw.org/epd/sq/webinars.cfm>)
- MWD Turf Removal + CA Native Landscape Webinars  
(<https://greengardensgroup.com/turf-transformation/>)

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further matters, Vice Chair Ng adjourned the meeting of the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission at 8:05P.M. PT to the next Regular Commission meeting scheduled for May 27<sup>th</sup> 2025.

Respectfully submitted:

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Arpy Kasparian  
Staff Liaison, Environmental Services  
& Sustainability Manager

APPROVED:

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Emily Ng  
Chair

Approved at Commission Meeting:

## **ITEM 9**

### Upcoming Events

# Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project

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**TO:** Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting

The City of Pasadena (Pasadena) is the designated Lead Agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project (Project) pursuant to an agreement between Pasadena and the City of South Pasadena (South Pasadena) in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15051(d). The Project would be implemented by the City of Pasadena Department of Public Works in cooperation with the City of South Pasadena Department of Public Works.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, Pasadena has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide responsible and trustee agencies, organizations, interested persons, the Los Angeles County Clerk, and the State Clearinghouse with sufficient information describing the Project and its potential environmental effects to enable these parties to make a meaningful response. For public agencies, Pasadena requests your agency's views on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed Project, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b). For organizations and interested parties, Pasadena requests your comments and concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with construction and operation of the proposed Project, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15083. Additionally, this NOP serves as a notice for the public Scoping Meeting, which is held to facilitate the consultation process.

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD:** Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b), the NOP will be available for public review and comment for a 30-day period, from **Thursday, May 15, 2025 through Friday, June 13, 2025**.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The Project site encompasses a total of approximately 3.7 acres on two sites in the Lower Arroyo Seco that are situated adjacent to the Arroyo Seco Channel – the northern, San Rafael site (1.5 acres) in the City of Pasadena; and the southern, San Pascual site (2.2 acres), in the cities of South Pasadena and Los Angeles (see Exhibit 1, Regional Location and Local Vicinity). Both sites are within the County of Los Angeles; and both sites are comprised of vacant, open space-zoned lands primarily within the cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena, respectively, with a portion of the San Pascual site (approximately 0.53-acre) within the City of Los Angeles. Both sites are immediately adjacent to the concrete Arroyo Seco Channel (Channel) that is under the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD). The two sites are approximately 850 feet (0.16 mile) apart at the closest points.

The San Rafael site is situated southwest of the San Rafael Avenue overpass of the Channel, on the west side of the Channel, and adjacent to Pasadena's southern boundary. The San Rafael site includes a linear feature that is within the limits of the San Rafael Creek easement under LACFCD jurisdiction. The San Pascual site is situated southeast of the San Pascual Avenue overpass of the Channel and on the east side of the Channel. The San Pascual site is bound by San Pascual Avenue on the north and Stoney Drive on the east. The sites are regionally accessible via State Route 134 (SR 134), which is located approximately 1.25 miles north of the San Rafael site; and SR 110, which is located approximately 0.10 mile south of the San Pascual site.

**PROJECT SUMMARY:** The proposed Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project would develop two regional stormwater capture and treatment facilities (man-made treatment wetlands and infiltration basins) located within existing open space-zoned areas near the Arroyo Seco Channel. Additionally, as part of the Project, an off-site water harvester and related infrastructure would be installed within the existing, gated maintenance yard at the public Arroyo Seco Golf Course in South Pasadena. The Project would provide water quality benefits for multiple jurisdictions within the 5,005-acre drainage area in which the two sites are located. For both sites, the Project would include native landscaping; hardscape elements including reclaimed wood log benches, post-and-rail fencing, and concrete seat walls faced with natural stone; informational signs as a watershed education opportunity; and expand the existing trail network to enhance regional trail connectivity through the Lower Arroyo Seco.

The Project sites are located within the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) Watershed. Runoff from this watershed drains to and runs through over 50 linear miles of the Los Angeles River and then to the Pacific Ocean. The Arroyo Seco Channel is a major tributary to the Los Angeles River. On July 9, 2010, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) adopted resolution No. R10-007 incorporating a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for indicator bacteria in the Los Angeles River watershed. A TMDL is the calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a waterbody and not affect that waterbody's ability to meet and



maintain water quality standards. Outfalls along the Arroyo Seco Channel were modeled for indicator bacteria and the San Rafael Creek outfall was identified as a priority outfall; these outfalls have routine problematic discharges that drive the total bacteria load. Runoff in San Rafael Creek would be diverted into the San Rafael site, pre-treated, and a portion of this runoff infiltrated for groundwater recharge. The portion not infiltrated would be treated, discharged into the Channel, and then diverted downstream into the San Pascual site for infiltration and additional treatment prior to discharge back to the Channel. The operation of these two regional stormwater management sites would result in an annual average water supply benefit of 320 acre-feet (af). Of this, there would be approximately 258 af of groundwater recharge and approximately 30 af (or less than 10 percent of captured water) would be captured off-site for irrigation reuse at the golf course to reduce potable water demand.

In addition to fulfilling regulatory obligations placed on Pasadena to provide cleaner water in the Arroyo Seco and Los Angeles River channels, other Project benefits include increased habitat and reestablishment of natural plant communities, improved trails, increased public access to open space areas, and educational opportunities utilizing interpretive materials focused on hydrology and native habitat.

**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d), Pasadena conducted a preliminary review of the Project to focus the EIR on the potentially significant effects of the project. Pasadena anticipates the following topical areas have the potential to result in significant impacts: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources (including Paleontological Resources), Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Public Services (parks), Recreation, Tribal Cultural Resources and Wildfire. The following topical area are expected to result in no impacts or less than significant impacts: Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils (except Paleontological Resources), Hazards and Hazardous Resources, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services (law enforcement, fire protection, schools, and other public services), Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems.

**SCOPING MEETING:** A public Scoping Meeting will be held to share information regarding the Project, the environmental review process, and to receive comments about the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be addressed in the Draft EIR. The Scoping Meeting is an information-gathering meeting, not a public hearing, and no public testimony or recordation of the meeting will occur. Attendees may submit comments in writing at the Scoping Meeting or submit anytime during the public review period.

No decisions about the Project will be made at the Scoping Meeting. A separate public hearing for entitlement requests and consideration of certification of the EIR will be scheduled after the completion of the Final EIR. The date, time, and location of the public Scoping Meeting are as follows:

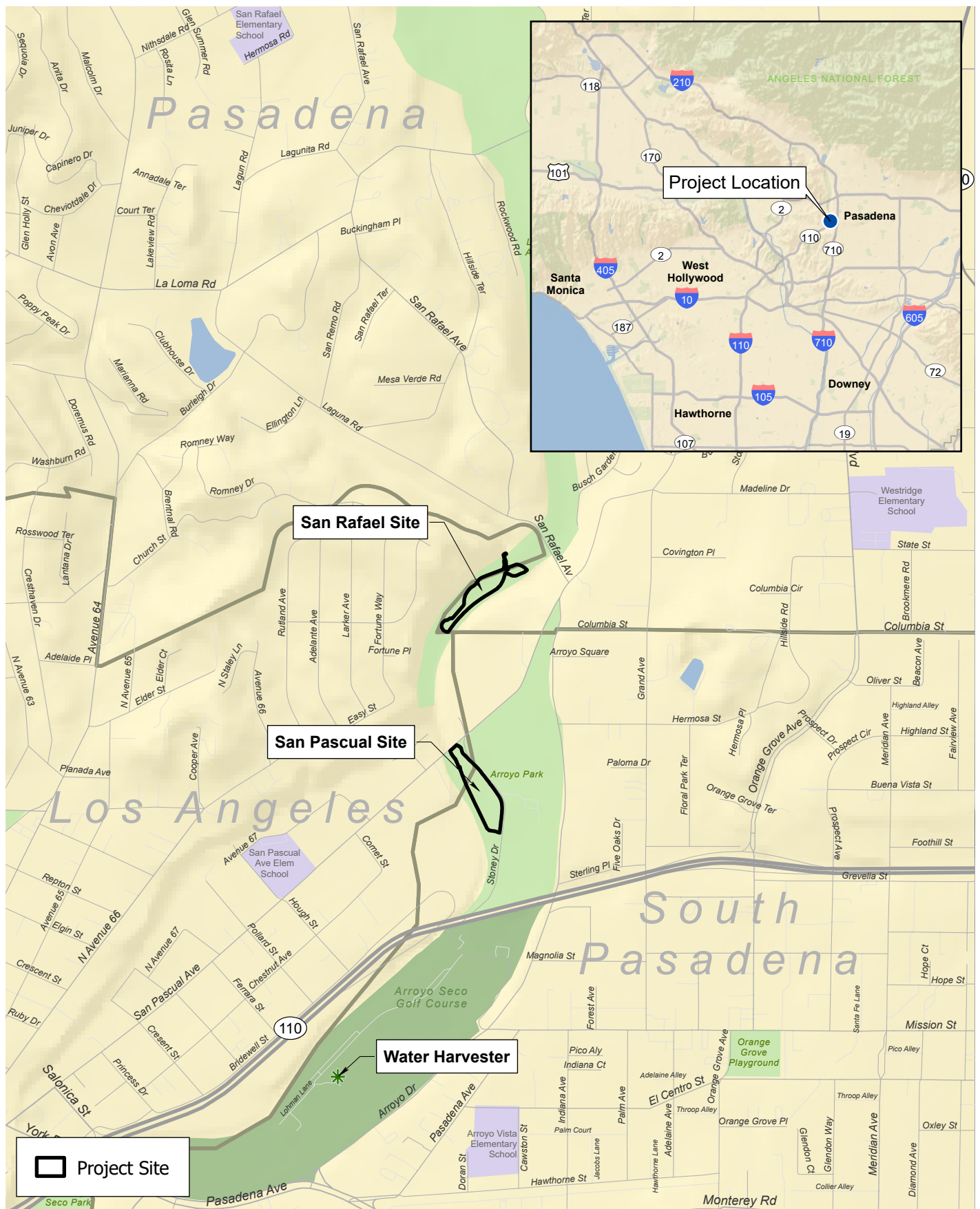
**DATE:** Wednesday, May 28, 2025  
**TIME:** 6:00 PM–8:00 PM  
**LOCATION:** South Pasadena Community Room  
1115 El Centro Street  
South Pasadena, CA 91030

**SUBMITTING COMMENTS:** A copy of this NOP may be viewed online at <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/planning/arroyo-seco-water-reuse-project/> and will be available for viewing during regular business hours at the City of Pasadena Permit Center (175 North Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101); the San Rafael Library (1240 Nithsdale Road, Pasadena, CA 91105); the South Pasadena Public Library (1100 Oxley Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030); and the Arroyo Seco Regional Branch Library (6145 North Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90042).

The City will consider all written comments regarding the potential environmental effects of the Project received during the scoping period. Written comments, including e-mails, must be submitted in writing by 5:00 PM on June 13, 2025. Written comments will also be accepted at the Scoping Meeting described above. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your comments must be received by Pasadena no later than 30 days after receipt of this NOP. Please direct your written comments via e-mail and/or U.S. mail to:

Christina Monde, P.E.  
City of Pasadena Department of Public Works  
100 North Garfield Avenue, Suite N306  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
E-mail: [CMonde@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:CMonde@cityofpasadena.net)

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## Regional Location and Local Vicinity

Exhibit 1

### Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project



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Feet