



Payne-Phalen

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

567 Payne Avenue, St. Paul MN 55130 www.paynephallen.org 651-774-5234 district5@paynephallen.org

December 9, 2025

Council President Rebecca Noecker
310-B City Hall
15 Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

VIA EMAIL

Re: Support for City of St., Paul Tree Preservation Ordinance

Dear Council President Noecker,

At the October 28, 2025, Community Meeting, the Payne-Phalen Community Council heard a presentation from Megan Jekot on the Tree Preservation Ordinance Public Input Group and their Final Work Product, followed by a discussion period. The Board adopted a vote of support for creating and updating the City's Tree Ordinance. In particular, the Board supports key themes of equity, transparency, and trust as values and ideals that should be referenced for projects across the city, including the creation of a Tree Preservation Ordinance.

We understand and agree that the ordinance should primarily protect trees on city-owned land, including boulevards, rights-of-way, parks, and trails, and that it should include efforts to extend protections to private properties. We strongly agree that clear definitions are needed to delineate responsibilities among city departments. In addition, cross-departmental collaboration is greatly needed to ensure that the best interests of our communities are understood and served across the long term. More specifically, tree preservation plans must be developed early in the project process, identifying at-risk trees and site constraints, and should be publicly shared before final decisions are made. Enforcement during construction is critical. Foresters, contractors and community members need to work closely together to preserve trees on job sites and ensure the long-term viability of outcomes. Tree removal should trigger automatic replacement. If on-site replanting isn't possible, replacements should be planted in under-canopied neighborhoods based on publicly available data.

All tree protection activities should remain City-led, not outsourced. There should be a central point of contact within the city for the public to reach to address issues. There should be clear communication with the public on tree removal, replacement, and maintenance schedules. Public notices should use plain, multilingual language through a variety of channels.

Council President Rebecca Noecker
December 9, 2025
Page Two

The ordinance should balance clear public values with technical implementation from staff-driven rulemaking. The Saint Paul Public Works Department and Forestry Division should be working together when projects, especially street or sidewalk projects, involve or will affect trees.

Our Community Council strongly supports the creation of a Tree Preservation Ordinance based on the Final Work of the Public Input Group.

Thank you so much for taking up this very necessary project! We appreciate you including this letter in the packet of materials for the upcoming City Council meeting. Thank you in advance for taking the position of the Payne-Phalen Community Council into full consideration as you make your decision. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or require further clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Byers".

Jack Byers
Executive Director

cc. Council Vice-President, Hwa Jeong Kim, Ward 5
Councilmember Nelsie Yang, Ward 6
Councilmember Cheniqua Johnson, Ward 7
Megan Jokot, Ward 2 Legislative Aide
Bill Dermody, Supervisor, St. Paul Planning and Economic Development Dept.
Rebecca Nelson, PPCC Board Chair
PPCC Board of Directors