

View Preservation Ordinance FAQs

- **City Trees**
 - Will they be included in this ordinance?
 - The City Council will give direction to Staff on whether to include City trees in the ordinance or not.
 - When are City trees trimmed?
 - The Public Works Department has scheduled tree maintenance. Please contact the Streetscape Division to find out when street trees in your area will be trimmed. You may also contact Streetscape with regards to a Tree Trim permit through a City-approved contractor. Please be aware that there are certain areas in which the trees are exempt from this permit process.
 - How does the City deal with trees that are unsafe or have caused damage?
 - The Public Works Department should be contacted to assess the damage and determine the next steps with regards to City trees. Trees on private property can be assessed by a Code Enforcement Officer.
 - Can City trees be permanently removed?
 - Applications for tree removal permits can be obtained through Public Works, the Permit Center or by calling the Streetscape Division at (310)781-6900. The Removal Permit, requires a deposit which is refunded to the property owner when the replacement tree has been inspected and approved.
- **View**
 - How do you define a view?
 - The definition for a view has not been established. However, Staff has considered what a view is based on the conditions in which it is gained.
 - What is the difference between an existing or “original” view and an acquired view?
 - An existing view is one which exists at the time a residence is occupied, without modifying the structure or property. An acquired view is one which is gained after the house has been remodeled. Common examples of a gained view are from a newly constructed second story or balcony.
 - When is a view established?

The timeframe for the establishment of a view has not yet been set. However, some ordinances state that a view is established either 10 years prior to the establishment of the view ordinance or at the time the property was purchased, whichever is most recent.
- Are there or will there be a height limit on trees?
 - If the view ordinance is adopted, it will likely have some guidelines regarding tree/vegetation height. However, at this time, the heights have not been established.
- Can this issue be put on a ballot for a vote?
 - The hillside vegetation ordinance can be put to a vote, although it is unlikely, given the cost of that process.

- Who will this ordinance apply to? The entire city? Just the Hillside Overlay district? What about the pockets in the hillside which aren't in the Overlay?
 - The area that the vegetation ordinance will apply to has not yet been set. City Council will decide where it shall be applied. Being that those in the Hillside Overlay district are most affected, staff has invited those residents and property owners to voice their opinion on the possibility of the ordinance.
- How do you weigh view versus privacy?
 - View and privacy are both issues which involve various stakeholders, neither of which are held in higher regard over the other. Staff will consider all elements which affect both view and privacy.
- Will the City hire an arborist?
 - Staff has researched various view ordinances from nearby cities. Some do have an arborist who provides professional guidance and advice on how best to approach a tree which impacts a view. The City is still in the process of exploring how its own ordinance will be framed and what role an arborist may assume in that framework.
- How long before the View Preservation Ordinance is adopted?
 - At the direction of the City Council, Staff conducted several outreach meetings to gauge the public's response to the possibility of a hillside vegetation ordinance. Staff will present its findings to the City Council, who will then determine the next step in the process. Given the complexity and number of stakeholders, it may be at least one year before an ordinance is established.