

# Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Consideration of an Urgency Ordinance  
Extending a Temporary Prohibition on  
Limited Tree Removal and Oak Woodland  
Conversion

1/23/2024



Staff:  
Robert Aguero

# Summary of 12/12/2023 Meeting

- On December 12, 2023 staff presented proposed updates to tree and woodland protections and a temporary moratorium on certain tree removal for 45 days.
- The Board of Supervisors adopted the urgency ordinance for 45 days, expiring 1/26/2023.
- The urgency ordinance prohibits, with limited exceptions:
  1. The Removal of Protected Trees, as defined in the ordinance, 6" diameter at breast height (DBH) or larger.
  2. Type Conversion of Oak Woodlands, as defined in the ordinance.
  3. Issuance of VESCO permits that involve the Removal of Protected Trees or Type Conversion of Oak Woodlands.

# Exceptions

- Limited exceptions to the moratorium include:
  - Emergency and Evacuation Routes
  - Immediate danger and diseased trees
  - Utility and ROW maintenance
  - Trimming and Pruning
  - Fire Safety
  - Existing or Previously Approved Permits or Entitlements
  - Housing
  - Timber Harvest
  - Residential Maintenance

# Pipeline Provision

- Staff propose including additional language in the exceptions for development permits and entitlements deemed “complete” prior to adoption date (12/12/2023).

# Measures Taken Since Adoption

- Staff have taken the following measures to alleviate the urgency conditions:
  - Conducting additional stakeholder outreach
  - Preparing and evaluating additional policy considerations to bring back before the expiration of the extension period

# Recommendation

- Conduct a public hearing to consider adoption of an urgency ordinance, with added pipeline provision, extending the temporary moratorium on Protected Tree removal and Oak Woodland conversion adopted by the Board on December 12, 2023, with limited exceptions, until May 31, 2024.



End