



Best Practices – Street Tree Management

Revised 12-12-22

Introduction:

Serrano Park HOA owns about 230 Brazilian peppertrees located in the parkways along Paseo Sombra and Paseo Tranquilo. These are about 40 years old and are at end of useful life. This is the opinion of the Landscape Committee, verbally verified by arborists from Harvest and Great Scott, and summarized in an independent detailed arborist report presented to the HOA by Arborgate. In the coming years, there is no doubt that these trees will continue to decline, and the risk hazards of failure will continue to increase. It is for these reasons that this management plan has been revised and adopted July 3, 2020.

This plan has two separate efforts. The first, is to carefully manage the existing Brazilian peppertrees in an effort to extend their life as best we can. The second effort is to gradually replace the trees over a period of years as to minimize the financial burden. The replacement project must be designed for maximum useful life of the new trees.

Brazilian Peppertree Management:

Currently, the peppertrees have been consistently over-pruned in an effort to reduce the mess during high growth seasons. This causes extreme stress to the trees contributing to their decline. To slow their decline, we intend to change this practice. Going forward, we will be pruning only as needed. To handle the mess from berries and leaves, we will be increasing the sidewalk cleanup maintenance as needed.

1. Broken limbs will be attended to immediately.
2. Trees will be trimmed as necessary to maintain street clearance in accordance with the “SP HOA Best Practices – Landscape Clearances”. This will be performed by the landscape maintenance contractor as needed during parkway maintenance.
3. Watersprouts on the trunk up to 6 feet high will be trimmed by landscape maintenance contractor as needed during parkway maintenance.
4. In April, the landscape committee will inspect the trees for any additional maintenance that may be needed.
5. During seasons when the peppertree berries are dropping, the landscape maintenance contractor will increase the number of times they clean the sidewalks and parkways from a minimum of once per week to a maximum of 3 times per week during peak seasons.
6. Any other issues will be attended to as they come up.

The change from heavy pruning to additional cleanup will reduce the stress on the trees without significant additional costs. We expect this change to minimize the street tree decline until they can be replaced.

Brazilian Peppertree Replacement:

We recognize that the cost of replacement will be high. As such, we expect it to be scheduled in sections over years. **The replacement plan will have a goal to quickly grow new healthy trees, maximize their useful life, minimize maintenance costs, with a target of at least 40 years of useful life.**

Best Practices documents serve as the Serrano Park Community Association reference standards for projects, area management, specifications, and procedural guides. They serve as the interpretation of industry standards as they apply to Serrano Park Community shared property.

1. Removal of the peppertrees will be in large sections at a time. The roots are very aggressive, and we will need to excavate to a depth of at least 30 inches deep to remove them all before new trees can be planted.
2. Root barriers will be installed along the sidewalks.
3. Replacement soil will be properly prepared.
4. An easily adaptable irrigation system will be installed that can be reconfigured as the trees mature.
5. A list of potential tree species will be researched and created that will list only trees appropriate to this area, climate, and other considerations. It will contain pros and cons of each species. Multiple species groups will also be suggested to maximize disease and insect hardiness. Final selection of the replacement species for this plan will attempt to have maximum homeowner involvement.
6. Consultants may be used to review the species pallet and replacement plan to ensure that the plan is a viable, cost effective solution that will meet our goals.
7. The Landscape Committee will research projected costs and suggest schedules and plan phases for the HOA Board to consider.

This project is ongoing, developed and managed by the Landscape Committee at the discretion of the HOA Board, and will be updated as needed with Board approval as the project progresses.

References:

- Street Tree Project: <https://serranopark.org/committees/about-sp-landscape-committee/projects/street-tree-project/>
- Arbogate Report - “Serrano-Park-Community-Assoc-Brazil-pepper-street-trees.pdf”. (Available with the author’s permission on the SerranoPark.org website.) <https://serranopark.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Serrano-Park-Community-Assoc-Brazil-pepper-street-trees.pdf>
- The Life Cycle of Street Trees: <https://serranopark.org/committees/about-sp-landscape-committee/articles/the-life-cycle-of-street-trees/>
- Urban Tree Mortality: <https://serranopark.org/committees/about-sp-landscape-committee/articles/urban-tree-mortality/>
- Each of these above articles and reports lists supporting references.