

The El Cerrito Democratic Club
Date: June 25, 2002 (Revised)

Passed, June 25, 2002

RE: Proposed Resolution: On Balance in Our Urban Environment.

Whereas air, water, land pollution continue to deplete the natural capital of our urban environment, despite the many laws that have been passed in recent times, there seems to be little coordinated effort on an individual level to counteract this trend. Coupled with unprecedented population and traffic congestion in urban areas, the burden on our resources and ability to mitigate these effects grows more difficult with each passing decade; and

Whereas one of the most efficient, cost effective and least intrusive mitigating factors is the presence of trees in both our public and private urban spaces, most recent efforts by cities and municipalities have been directed toward removal and destruction of many of our larger historic trees and urban forests. Trees on both public and private lands have been under attack in recent years by those who would seek personal gain above environmental balance, quality of life and the needs of future generations; and

Whereas trees are perhaps the single most important effective element in providing both the following benefits:

*Trees can lower a home heating bill by 15% and cooling bill by 50%.

*Recent research by the City of Forth Worth indicates that for every dollar spent on maintaining trees , the public receives \$3 worth of benefits.

*A mature tree removes on average over 800 lbs.of air pollutants and other contaminants annually.

*A large tree removes 60-70 times the amount of air contaminants that a small tree can.

*Pollutants partially controlled by trees include nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxides, carbon monoxide, ozone, pollen and mold spores.

*60% reduction in street level particulates.

*Community trees and forests act as filters removing nutrients and sediments while increasing ground water recharge. Trees cleanse ground water as it filters through their root system.

*Development increases hard, non-evaporative surfaces and decreases soil infiltration...increases water quality losses, erosion and flooding. Community tree and urban forest cover intercepts, slows evaporates, and stores water—extending water availability in dry months when it is most needed.

*Increased property values of 20% on average, increased tax revenues as a result.

*Large old street trees were found to be the most important indicator of attractiveness in a community.

Selected Sources: "Quantifiable Urban Forest Benefits and Costs, Current Findings and Future Research" Davey Resource Group, University of Georgia. 1995; reports, documents, brochures from the International Society of Arborists, and . Kim Coder, of the Society of Municipal Arborists, writing in City Trees, (v. 12, no. 4), July/August 1996.

Therefore be it resolved that the El Cerrito Democratic Club, in regular session, call upon our local municipal and city officials to rescind local ordinances that have the effect of

removing healthy, biodiverse and environmentally useful trees from our public and private urban landscapes; and

Be it further resolved that local municipalities, cities, counties, and the State of California protect existing species, promote the planting and maintenance wherever practical and possible of biodiverse and environmentally useful species of trees and shrubs in our urban parks, forests and on our private lands.