

***Receive Annual Tree
Report and Status
Update Regarding Tree
Assessment, Pruning,
and Removal Program,
including Effectiveness
of Replacement Tree
Incentive and Budget***

**JPB TOPS Committee Meeting
September 24, 2025**



Background

- Intense winter storms in 2023 and 2024 caused trees along the Caltrain Right of Way (ROW) to fall
- At least 30 trees and dozens of branches
- Construction and service delays
- Damage to Caltrain infrastructure
- Caltrain Tree Policy Approved in September 2024

Assessing the Risk

- Caltrain has undertaken a tree risk assessment and maintenance program along the ROW, including pruning or removal of trees that arborist determined to be a high risk to public safety
- At Caltrain's direction, TASI has established an on-call bench of emergency tree removal contractors to remove high risk trees and tree related emergencies.
- Caltrain plans to conduct regular Corridor-wide assessment by an arborist every three years – provided funding is available

Addressing our Right-of-Way & Adjacent Properties

- Caltrain has the authority to assess and mitigate risk from trees on its own property to protect public safety
- Caltrain may not do so on adjacent private and municipal property without the coordination or consent of the property owners
- Staff continues to engage with municipalities to coordinate assessments and removal of trees adjacent to the ROW with city arborists in accordance with city policies
- Government Affairs staff continue to work with the cities to conduct outreach and inform the public regarding the need to assess, prune, and potentially remove trees adjacent to Caltrain ROW

Trees on Property Adjacent to Right-of-Way

- Approach
 - Contract with arborists to continue to assess trees along the corridor and adjacent to the ROW
 - Work proactively with municipalities to remove dangerous trees
 - Written notice to property owners regarding risks their trees pose to the public
- Coordinate with private property owners to safely prune or remove trees that pose a hazard to public safety
 - In-kind support and subsidies to private owners to prune or remove dangerous trees
 - Offer to plant new tree or offer incentive for owner to replace tree

Tree Policy Removal Update

- Over 1000 trees have been removed or pruned within and along ROW
- 142 Removed by Caltrain
- 127 Trees Removed on Caltrain property
- 8 Trees Removed on municipal property
- 7 Trees removed on private property
- Zero Operational delays related to tree risk

Budget Impact of Policy

- Tree removal and maintenance efforts are included in existing operating budget
- Tree Assessment contract expired – not currently in Operating Budget
- Staff estimate that total removal costs could be \$2,500 to \$20,000 per tree
- Total Tree Removal cost in last 12 months - \$306K
- Initial budget of \$250,000 for FY 2025 for incentives and subsidies
 - Zero incentives or subsidies paid to date

Questions?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

WWW.CALTRAIN.COM

