



PUBLIC COMMENT FOR SEPTEMBER 28,2026 COUNCIL MEETING OUT LOUD

From BELLEVUE MAYOR RECALL <recallbellevuemayor@gmail.com>

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To Bellevue Clerk <Clerk@bellevueidaho.us>; Christina Giordani <cgjordani@bellevueidaho.us>; Diane Shay <dshay@bellevueidaho.us>; Tom Bergin <tbergin@bellevueidaho.us>; Anders Ard <aard@bellevueidaho.us>

I sent this to the entire council as it seems the mayor has been deciding what comment they see and which ones they don't as well as the comment that have been submitted aren't read at the meeting during public comment

Public Comment - Street Trees, ROW Work and Consistent Code Enforcement

Dear City Council,

I am requesting clarification and Council review of how Bellevue is managing, authorizing, inspecting, and documenting the removal of trees and other work within City rights-of-way.

I have raised concerns about tree removals associated with work on a neighboring property. By the time City staff were able to inspect the site, the work had already been completed and the trees had already been removed. That is why I provided before-and-after imagery documenting the changes to the property.

My concern is not simply about one property. It is about whether Bellevue has a clear, consistent, and enforceable system for work occurring within the public right-of-way.

This issue is particularly important to me because I have personally experienced the consequences of the City's permitting and enforcement process. I was significantly fined for fence work because the City determined that I did not have the required permit — even though I had previously been told by the City that a permit was not required.

Whether one agrees with that enforcement decision or not, the lesson I was given was very clear: residents are responsible for knowing when City authorization is required, and failure to obtain that authorization can carry substantial consequences.

If that is the standard Bellevue applies to residents, then residents should be able to expect the same level of attention, documentation, and enforcement when work affects public property and the public right-of-way.

Bellevue City Code § 7-4-4 places public and street trees under City oversight. The Code gives the City authority concerning the planting, maintenance, pruning, and removal of trees on public streets and

other public property, and it makes it unlawful for a person to “prune, remove or destroy any public or street tree” except as authorized.

That raises a very basic question:

If a tree within the public ROW is removed before City staff ever inspect the property, how does the City determine whether the tree was legally removed and whether the requirements of the Code were followed?

That question now extends beyond the neighboring property I originally complained about.

Over this past weekend, I noticed additional tree removals on the corner property at **Muldoon Canyon Road and Ridge View Drive**. Based on where those trees appeared to be located, some or all of them appear to have been within the public right-of-way. I am not stating that those removals were unauthorized. I am asking the City to show residents what authorization existed.

Were the trees at Muldoon Canyon Road and Ridge View Drive located within the City ROW? How was this determined? If so, who authorized their removal, what permit or approval was required, and where can the public review that documentation?

There is also another side to this problem.

A Bellevue resident has been trying to get the City to address a dying tree located within the right-of-way adjacent to her property. She has struggled to get the City to remove or otherwise address that tree.

That creates an important contrast.

On one hand, a resident is trying to get the City to address a dying ROW tree and cannot seem to get action.

On the other hand, trees that appear to be within City rights-of-way are being removed in connection with private-property work, and residents are left asking whether permits were issued, whether the locations were verified, and whether anyone from the City inspected the work before the trees disappeared.

And in my own experience, the City has demonstrated that it is willing to impose substantial penalties on a resident when it determines that required permitting was not obtained — even when that resident had previously been told by City staff that no permit was needed.

Those three situations together raise a legitimate question about consistency.

What exactly is Bellevue's system for managing and enforcing work within its public rights-of-way?

I am asking the City to publicly explain:

- How a resident requests inspection or removal of a dying or hazardous street tree.
- Who determines whether a tree is located within the public ROW.

- What approval is required before a public or street tree may be removed.
- Whether an encroachment permit, tree-removal authorization, or other written approval is required.
- Who verifies that the required approval has been obtained before work begins.
- Whether City staff inspect ROW work before trees or other public improvements are removed.
- Who inspects the work after it is completed.
- What records are maintained showing the approval, inspection, and basis for a ROW tree removal.
- What enforcement process applies if a tree is removed before City inspection or without the required authorization.
- How the City ensures that its permitting and enforcement requirements are applied consistently from one property owner to another.