

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jennifer Ott, City Manager

Date: February 4, 2025

Supplemental Memo regarding 7-C: Urban Forest Plan

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

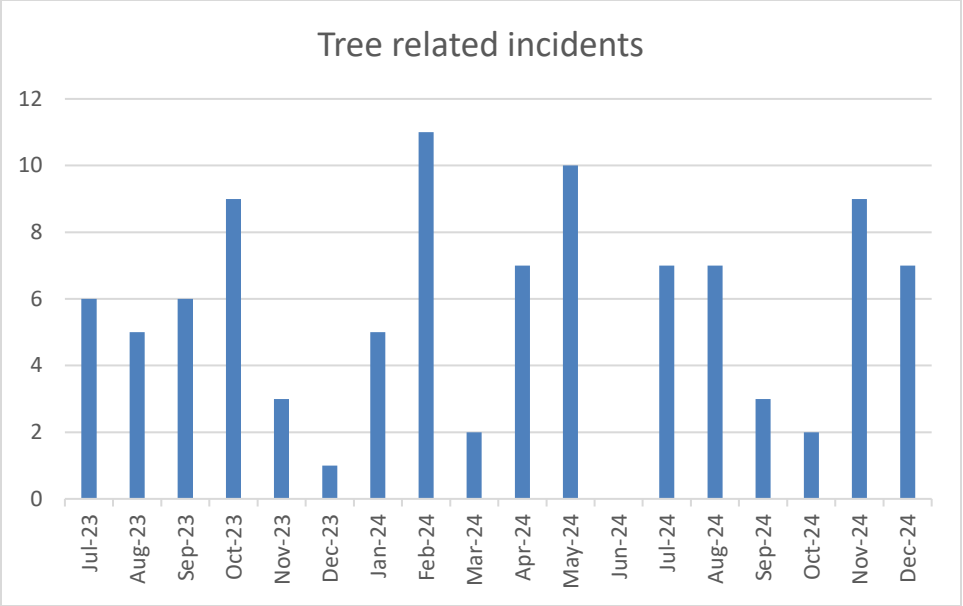
Based on community and City Council requests for additional information, staff is providing this supplemental report for the February 4, 2025 City Council meeting.

Alameda Municipal Power (AMP) staff has been actively involved in developing the Urban Forest Plan (UFP), providing input on utility operations to ensure alignment with the mission to deliver reliable, affordable, clean, and safe power. AMP fully supports the UFP and recognizes its broad benefits for Alameda.

Maintaining a safe and reliable electric grid requires preventing conflicts between trees and power lines. While regulatory minimum clearance standards exist, utilities must exercise judgement to minimize risks. Over the past two years, AMP has experienced increased tree related incidents, prompting the Public Utilities Board to approve increased tree-trimming efforts, a trend seen among other California utilities. The table below outlines tree-related incidents since July 2023, including forced and planned outages or no outage following investigation. Over an 18-month period, it averages 5.5 tree related incidents per month. On January 27, 2025, the Public Utilities Board discussed the UFP and did not recommend any changes.

To reduce these conflicts, AMP recommends limiting tree height under power lines to 25 feet at maturity. This is a best practice within the utility industry. While some pruning will still be necessary, this approach significantly reduces maintenance frequency and costs, benefits ratepayers, and preserves tree health. Taller trees under power lines are more likely to require extensive trimming, increasing costs, reliability risks, and community concerns. As a public utility, AMP is mandated to maintain a safe system and will continue to trim vegetation encroaching on power lines.

AMP remains committed to balancing urban forestry with public safety while ensuring the continued delivery of reliable power to Alameda residents. If directed by City Council, staff will explore the option of including trees above 25' within limited historic corridors in the final UFP to be approved by City Council.



Respectfully submitted,  
Tim Haines, General Manager  
Alameda Municipal Power