

Dawn Ross

Subject: FW: City council tree meeting 2/10/26

From: john niero.net [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 2, 2026 4:00 PM
To: Jeremy Swan <jswan@ci.claremont.ca.us>
Subject: City council tree meeting 2/10/26

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Hi Jeremy,

Please submit my email to the city council

Best,
John

Dear Council

I would like to address the proposed removal of the Canary Island Pines in Claraboya.

First I will address the safety of these trees.

In 2003 the Grand Prix fire was one of the worst case scenarios, the fire progressing at 100 mph fueled by the Santa Anna winds along with the heat generated by the fire. The fire was very sporadic constantly changing direction which made it very difficult for the firefighters to fight. 16 homes burned to the ground and another 16 had fire damage. Not a single Canary Island Pine burned and the Canary Island Pines are one of the most fire resistant pine trees.

In 2022 there was a freak wind storm in which many trees fell throughout the City of Claremont. Only 4 trees fell in Claraboya. On via Santa Caterina a eucalyptus tree fell, on via Santo Tomas a mediterranean cypress fell and on San Angelo 2 pine trees fell. The 2 pine trees that fell, the owners had built a retaining wall around the trees covering the crown of the trees which compromised them.

Of these worst 2 events, fire and wind, the Canary Island Pines did exceptionally well and proved that they are not a major safety concern. Another concern is if a tree fell and blocked the road when emergency vehicles needed to get through. In the case of an ambulance, the fire department is deployed and usually arrives first followed by the ambulance and police. The firetrucks carry equipment, such as a chainsaw and can clear obstacles in the way. Another safety concern in Claraboya is that there is only one ingress and egress. At the top of Claraboya is the wilderness park and the park rangers drive the dirt roads regularly. The park ranger said that one exit through the wilderness park. Most neighbors drive SUVs so they wouldn't have a problem exiting through the wilderness park.

In the event of an emergency, everyone should have their own safety plan. I was talking with a fire chief and he told me that we should have a two day plan, a one day plan, an hour plan and a 15 minute plan. Safety starts at home and the more prepared you are the better off you will be. There are so many apps that alert our cellphones

in the event of an emergency that in most cases there is time to get out, not wait until the last minute. We have to take responsibility for ourselves, not depend on emergency crews to rescue us.

The most catastrophic result of removing the Canary Island Pines would be the destruction of the ecosystem. The Canary Island Pines are very beneficial for our air, cleaning the air from the particulates generated from the 210 freeway below, help reduce the intensity of the regular Santa Annas by acting as a wind screen, providing shade thus creating a microclimate and reducing our energy bills to keep our homes cool, and providing a habitat for the birds of prey. The birds of prey help keep our rodent population under control. The more rodents there are, the more rattle snakes. The Canary Island Pines also help with erosion control when there is a major rainstorm.

Claremont is the City of Trees. These trees in Claraboya give the neighborhood a distinctive look. There are very few neighborhoods in Southern California that have such beautiful mature trees in a neighborhood. Removing the trees and replacing the with 15 gallon trees would make the neighborhood look like a track development and reduce the value of the homes. It has been shown that mature trees increase the value of a home and the loss of the trees would be a 10% or more loss in value of the homes. The homes in Claraboya average around \$2,000,000 and that would be a loss of at least \$200,000 in the sale. It would take more that 20-30 years for these 15 gallon trees to look like a large tree and many of the current residents won't be around to see them to maturity.

Thank you for your time.

John Niero
