



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
CITY CLERK

2016 APR -7 PM 2:36

TO: Mayor & City Council

FROM: Councilman Joe Krier, District 9

COPIES TO: Sheryl Sculley, City Manager; Leticia Vacek, City Clerk; Martha G. Sepeda, Acting City Attorney; John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Christopher Callanen, Assistant to City Council

SUBJECT: A stronger oak-wilt suppression program

DATE: March 31, 2016

Issue Proposed for Consideration

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

Colleagues, I am seeking to direct City staff to take the following steps to combat oak wilt, a fungal infection that destroys oak trees, threatening our City's tree canopy and the property values of affected home- and business owners:

- Change the City's brush-collection schedule to avoid pickups between Feb. 1 and July 1. Springtime is when fungal mats are most likely to form on oaks and sap beetles, which spread oak wilt, are most active, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service. Experts agree: Avoid tree trimming in that time period.
- Study other cities' responses to oak-wilt infestation. In Texas, these include Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Waco, Odessa, and Midland.
- Initiate a much stronger public-awareness campaign on the dangers of oak wilt and treatment methods. This information, for example, could be included in monthly CPS Energy and SAWS bills.
- Work closely with the Texas A&M Forest Service, and partner with Bexar County to fund an additional arborist to focus on this problem. The arborist's tasks should include carefully mapping oak-wilt "hot spots" in the area, information that would be posted on the City's website.

Brief Background

The oak-wilt fungus can kill an oak tree in just a few weeks. And once the fungus enters an area, it's difficult to stop its advance. Oak wilt spreads through interconnected root systems at a rate of between 75 feet to 150 feet per year. The damage to neighborhoods is extensive: streets lined with gray, gnarled oaks (instead of leafy, healthy ones) and diminished quality of life for homeowners — not to mention lower property values. One estimate holds that a single, mature oak tree accounts for \$25,000 of a property's value.

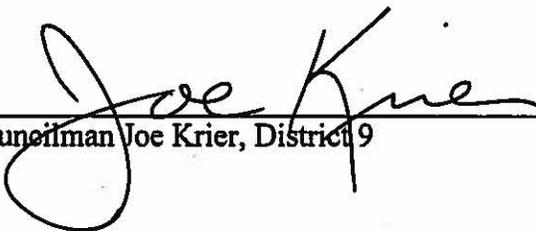
Oak wilt, which chokes off the water supply of live oaks and red oaks, had been spreading south toward San Antonio for years. It has significantly damaged the tree canopies of Wimberley, Bandera, Fredericksburg, Boerne, and Helotes. The City of Austin has lost more than 10,000 trees to oak wilt over the last 20 years, according to the City's Development Services Department, which oversees Austin's oak-wilt suppression program.

The fungus now has a foothold in San Antonio — in Whispering Oaks in District 9 and other sites on the North Side — and will continue pushing south. At last count, oak wilt had infested 80 locations around northern Bexar County. Unfortunately, the City of San Antonio is not fully prepared to meet this threat to our tree canopy.

I believe we have to act with a sense of urgency.

Thank you for your consideration.

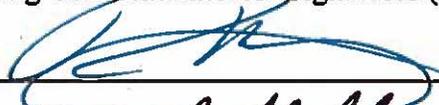
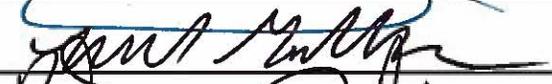
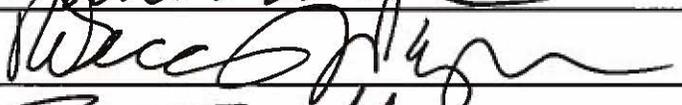
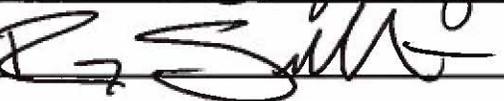
Submitted for Council consideration
by:



Councilman Joe Krier, District 9

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (4 only)

District No.

1.		8
2.		10
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