



C I T Y O F
RENO
Memorandum

DATE: March 27, 2026

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

FROM: David Cochran, Fire Chief
Talina Sky, Fire Inspector II
Nathan Ullyot, Director

DEPT: Reno Fire Department
Parks & Recreation

SUBJECT: Actions to Address Fire Risk in Landscape Maintenance District (LMD) Areas

In response to recent articles and inquiries regarding fire risk associated with vegetation conditions in Landscape Maintenance District (LMD) areas, the Reno Fire Department (RFD) coordinated with the Parks and Recreation Department to review current maintenance practices and identify actions to reduce wildfire risk adjacent to residential areas.

Background

Landscape Maintenance Districts (LMDs) are maintained by the Parks Maintenance Division through a contracted landscaping company, with oversight provided by City staff. Routine maintenance includes vegetation management, weed removal, debris cleanup, and clearing along fence lines and other landscaped areas.

Wildfire defensible space guidelines recommend maintaining approximately five feet of clearance from homes, outbuildings, and fences to reduce the potential for fire spread. In areas where larger trees cannot reasonably be removed, pruning is recommended to prevent limbs from overhanging fences or directing fire toward adjacent properties.

Findings and Actions

- **Vegetation Maintenance Oversight** – LMD areas are maintained by a contracted landscaping company operating under the direction and supervision of Parks Maintenance staff. Maintenance activities include weed removal, debris cleanup, and vegetation clearing along fence lines and landscaped areas. Identified issues or deficiencies are addressed as soon as possible.

- **Defensible Space Implementation** –A five-foot vegetation clearance along fence lines will be established within LMD areas in accordance with defensible space guidelines. Implementation will prioritize the removal of combustible vegetation while recognizing that certain existing, maintained vegetation may be retained where removal is not practical or would conflict with established maintenance objectives. In cases where large diameter trees are to remain, pruning will be conducted to reduce overhanging limbs and minimize potential fire pathways. Application of these standards may vary based on site conditions and the relative severity of wildfire risk in specific areas.
- **Contract Review and Updates** – The current LMD maintenance contract expires September 30 and will be rebid this summer. RFD will assist Parks and Recreation in reviewing contract specifications to ensure vegetation maintenance requirements align with defensible space and wildfire risk reduction practices.
- **Training and Coordination** – RFD will provide defensible space training and wildfire risk reduction guidance to the contracted landscaping company to support consistent maintenance practices.
- **Site Verification** – RFD will work with Parks to conduct site visits in LMD areas to verify that defensible space guidelines and vegetation management practices are being implemented appropriately.

These coordinated efforts between RFD and Parks and Recreation are intended to strengthen vegetation management practices, reduce wildfire risk near residential areas, and ensure defensible space principles are consistently applied within City-maintained landscape areas.