



## City Council Agenda Report

**Meeting Date:** June 25, 2024

**Prepared By:** Nick Zornes

**Approved By:** Gabe Engeland

**Subject:** Weed Abatement – Participation in County Program

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### **COUNCIL PRIORITY AREA**

- Business Communities
- Circulation Safety and Efficiency
- Environmental Sustainability
- Housing
- Neighborhood Safety Infrastructure
- General Government

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Consideration of participation in County of Santa Clara Weed Abatement Program and provide authorization to City Manager to enter into an agreement for program participation.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No direct fiscal impact to the City of Los Altos is associated with participation in the Weed Abatement Program as the cost to perform the work is covered by a Property Tax Assessment to the Parcel of land where the violation occurs.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Ordinance is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATION**

Informational Item Provided to City Council on May 28, 2024.

### **BACKGROUND**

This item was previously provided to the City Council on May 28, 2024, as an Informational Item (Item #8) after request was made by Councilmember Lee Eng. At the close of the City Council meeting during future agenda items general interest was expressed to return with an item for consideration of participation in the County Program.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Santa Clara County Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency works with several cities throughout Santa Clara County on the Weed Abatement Program. The purpose of the Weed

Abatement Program is to prevent fire hazards posed by vegetative growth and the accumulation of combustible materials.

The Weed Abatement program is entirely funded from fees charged to residents. Fees will be assessed for any property in the program. This is to cover the cost of the compliance inspection for the property. Properties that fail the compliance inspection will be charged a failed inspection fee, even if the resident completes the weed abatement. If the property requires abatement by the County contractor, the property owner will be responsible for the actual cost of abatement plus an administrative fee. Properties that meet and maintain the minimum fire safety standards will not be charged other than the annual fee.

Santa Clara County program staff annually inspect parcels at the beginning of the fire season, which is typically in March or April depending on the jurisdiction. If the parcel is not in compliance at the time of inspection, the property owner will be charged a failed inspection fee, and the owner will be sent a courtesy notice as a reminder to abate the weeds. If the weeds are not abated by the property owner, the work will be completed by the County contractor. The property owner will pay the contractor's fees plus a County administrative fee. All fees will be included in your property tax bill.

When a property is placed in the Weed Abatement Program, it will remain in the program for up to three years for ongoing monitoring, and if after three years no abatement has been required on the site the property will be removed from the program. The intention of the Weed Abatement Program is to achieve Voluntary Compliance. Vegetation must not exceed 6 inches in height any time after the compliance deadline. Maintain grasses and weeds below 6 inches for 10 feet horizontally on both sides of all roadways, including driveways and access routes.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- 1. County of Santa Clara – Weed Abatement Program Brochure**
- 2. County of Santa Clara – Weed Abatement 2023 Parcel Notification Letter**