



AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

Meeting Date: February 13, 2024

Subject Tree Removal Permit Fee Resolution

Prepared by: Nick Zornes, Development Services Director

Approved by: Gabriel Engeland, City Manager

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution

Initiated by:

City Council

Previous Council Consideration:

May 24, 2022, November 28, 2023

Fiscal Impact:

No cost to the City of Los Altos was incurred by amending the Tree Removal Permit Fee Structure.

Environmental Review:

This Resolution is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15073 (Fee Exemption) of the State Guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt a resolution of the City Council of the City of Los Altos amending Tree Removal Permit Fee Structure.

Purpose

To update the City's Tree Removal Fee Structure consistent with City Council direction received during consideration of amendments to the Tree Protection ordinance.

Discussion/Analysis

Tree replacement: A section in the updated ordinance has been added to include tree replacement guidelines as follows: trees approved for removal shall be replaced in-kind, with some exceptions. In cases or at sites where smaller trees at maturity are proposed, more trees will be required. For example, if a 45-inch diameter tree is removed, and the applicant is proposing to replace it with a species that would reach 20 inches at maturity, two additional trees would be required. Applicants

Reviewed By:

City Manager

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will be required to work with an arborist to determine appropriate tree replacement and develop a tree replacement plan. In cases where no tree can be replaced on-site, the applicant will be required to pay an in-lieu fee in an amount set by council. The City will utilize these funds to purchase, plant, maintain and monitor trees on public lands, or support the City’s urban forestry management goals. In-lieu fees vary amongst jurisdictions, below is a table summarizing various in-lieu options mainly in Santa Clara County.

Jurisdiction	In Lieu Fee
Los Altos	No
Campbell	Yes: In-lieu fee is equal to the fair market value of a standard City street tree (delivered and installed).
Cupertino	Yes
Gilroy	Yes: In lieu fee is equal to the value of the replacement trees required as specified. The in-lieu payment shall include funds sufficient for the care of the replacement tree during their establishment period.
Los Altos Hills	Not specified
Los Gatos	Yes: in-lieu fee \$250 for each 15 gallon and each 24" Box Replacement Tree In-Lieu Fee* \$500 for each 36" Box Replacement Tree In-Lieu Fee*
Menlo Park	\$100-\$7,000 based on trunk diameter.
Milpitas	Not specified
Monte Sereno	Not specified
Jurisdiction	In Lieu Fee
Morgan Hill	Not specified
Mountain View	\$750.00
Palo Alto	\$650.00
San Jose	\$775.00
Santa Clara	Not specified
Saratoga	Not specified
Sunnyvale	Yes: In -lieu fee shall be paid in accordance with the City’s adopted Fee Schedule.

Tree Removal Application Fees: Staff conducted research on cities in Santa Clara County to compare tree removal application fees. Research showed that the City of Los Altos’ fee is



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significantly lower than the surrounding cities. Staff recommend increasing the application fee, including a fee per tree. Below is a table showing tree permit removal fees in the county:

Jurisdiction	Permit Fee	Additional Tree Fee
Los Altos	\$75.00	No
Campbell	\$249.00	\$78.00
Cupertino	\$328.00	\$165.00
Gilroy	\$313.00	No
Los Altos Hills	\$250.00	No
Los Gatos	\$250.00	\$125.00
Milpitas	\$247.00	no
Monte Sereno	\$100.00	no
Morgan Hill	\$120.00	no
Mountain View	\$116.00	\$58.00
Palo Alto	\$472.00	no
San Jose	\$268.00	\$33.00
Santa Clara	\$295.00	no
Saratoga	\$130.00	no
Sunnyvale	\$373.00	no

Proposed Tree Removal Fee Structure:

	FEE
Tree Removal Permit (1 tree)	\$300.00
Tree Removal Permit (each additional tree)	\$150.00
Tree Removal Permit (Invasive Species)	\$0.00
In-Lieu Tree Replacement	\$1,200.00