

**Meeting Date:** March 11, 2024  
**Subject:** Tree City USA  
**Prepared by:** Raashina Humayun, Vice Chair

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### **Statement of Support for Los Altos' Application to be recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation as a "Tree City USA"**

The Environmental Commission requests the Council to direct staff to submit an application for Los Altos to be designated a "Tree City USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation.

The Tree City USA program was founded in 1976 to celebrate towns and cities committed to growing their urban canopy. Led by the Arbor Day Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service, and the National Association of State Foresters, it provides the framework necessary for communities to manage and expand their tree cover.

More than 3,600 communities home to 163 million Americans have been named Tree Cities. Beyond giving back to the environment, this recognition is a good way to build pride among our residents and position Los Altos as a great place to live. We'll receive flags, signs, and other materials to display our award.

#### **Requirements to apply and why Los Altos Qualifies**

1. Maintaining a tree board or department

Qualification: The Tree maintenance Department housed with the Public Works division.

2. Having a community tree ordinance

Qualification: The updated Tree Protection Ordinance passed by Council in February

3. Spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry

Qualification: According to the 2017 Los Altos Tree Resource guide compiled by Davey the city spends \$405k on managing our city's tree resources. This amounts to more than \$12/capita. We will just need to verify and update the numbers as appropriate.

4. Celebrating Arbor Day

The city council members participate in various tree planting ceremonies, adding one for Arbor Day would be appropriate and not a large investment.

#### **Benefits of joining**

1. Rewards communities for improvements in urban forestry practices and increases public awareness and pride in the city's natural resource
2. Provides educational resources to improve upon canopy cover and for increasing and maintaining local trees.
3. Helps gain financial support as being a Tree City USA will qualify us for several additional grants.

**Status of neighboring cities:**

Most neighboring cities have been on the Tree City USA list for more than 10 years.

Campbell	41 years
Cupertino	11 years
Los Gatos	43 years
Mountain View	22 years
Palo Alto	38 years
Redwood City	41 years
San Carlos	11 years
San Mateo	42 years
Santa Clara	36 years*
Sunnyvale	33 years

\* Santa Clara has also received the Growth Award for 23 years