



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 05/05/2026

ITEM NO: 2

DATE: May 05, 2026
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Chris Constantin, Town Manager
SUBJECT: **Adopt a Resolution Declaring Hazardous Vegetation (Brush) a Public Nuisance, Ordering Abatement, and Setting June 16, 2026, as a Public Hearing to Consider Objections to the Proposed Removal of Brush**

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a resolution declaring hazardous vegetation (brush) a public nuisance, ordering abatement, and setting June 16, 2026, as a public hearing to consider objections to the proposed removal of the brush.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with abatement work are placed on the property tax bill for that parcel. Funds are provided in the Parks and Public Works Administration Program of the Adopted FY 2025-26 Operating Budget (1115101-61114) to cover the cost of publishing the legal notice for the June public hearing.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

This item addresses the Town's Strategic Priority to further the Town's emergency preparedness, resiliency, and response capabilities, particularly in the area of wildfire risk, and aligns with the Core Goal of Public Safety. Property owners are reminded that they must remove native brush and vegetation from around their homes to create defensible space to reduce the risk of wildfire.

BACKGROUND:

The Santa Clara County Fire Department implements and manages a hazardous brush abatement program for the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas (hillside areas) within its

PREPARED BY: Paul Gonia
Project Analyst

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Administrative Services Director

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jurisdictional boundaries, which includes the incorporated areas of Los Gatos, to ensure appropriate defensible space for structures.

The Town annually adopts the Hazardous Vegetation (Brush) Abatement Program and works with the County, which serves as the enforcement agent and conducts its own inspections.

Between February and March of each year, homeowners are reminded that they must remove native brush and vegetation from around their homes to create defensible space. The brush abatement program entails inspections of hillside properties by fire crews beginning in early April each year. If properties are found to be out of compliance with the regulations found in the California Fire Code relative to vegetation clearance, they are given notice of the violation. A contractor is authorized by the County to perform the necessary work if compliance is still not achieved by approximately the end of June each year. The costs associated with the abatement work are then assessed on the property owner's tax bill for that parcel.

DISCUSSION:

Between February of 2026 and March of 2026, the Santa Clara County Fire Prevention Division notified property owners located within the designated Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) of the requirement to comply with the safety regulations related to flammable vegetation abatement (Attachment 2).

At the time of the notice, property owners were given the option to complete the required work themselves, hire their own contractor, or elect to schedule the Town of Los Gatos' authorized contractor (Santa Clara County) to perform the work.

Below is the scheduled outline for the 2026 hazardous brush abatement program:

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| March 2026 | The 2026 Brush Abatement Program letters were mailed to property owners. |
| April 1, 2026 | Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD) began conducting the first property inspections. A door hanger describing the safety regulations is placed at the property, and a copy is mailed to the property owner's mailing address. |
| May 5, 2026 | Town Council adopts a Resolution declaring hazardous vegetation (brush) a public nuisance and sets June 16, 2026, as a public hearing to consider objections to the proposed removal of brush. |
| May/June 2026 | SCCFD re-inspects the properties that were out of compliance at the time of the first inspection. If properties fail to meet program requirements by |

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June, properties will be submitted to the Town to be considered as part of the nuisance declaration and abatement order hearing in June. Notice will be sent to the property owners providing information about the public hearing. The Town publishes notices of the public hearing at least 10 days prior to the hearing.

June 16, 2026 Town Council conducts a public hearing to consider objections to the proposed removal of hazardous vegetation (brush) of parcels declared non-compliant and orders the abatement of the nuisance by the Town's authorized contractor (Santa Clara County).

June 2026 After the June 16th public hearing, an additional inspection of all identified properties listed on the report will be conducted before the Town's authorized contractor performs any abatement work. If the property is found to be in compliance at the time of the re-inspection or upon the arrival of the abatement contractor, no work will be performed, and no charges will be imposed.

Any Brush abatement violations are referred to the Weed Program and are added to the Weed Abatement Program list in the fall of the same year.

CONCLUSION:

This action will support the ongoing work of Town staff, the County of Santa Clara Fire Department, and the Santa Clara County Weed Abatement Program to reduce wildfire risk within Los Gatos.

COORDINATION:

This program is coordinated with the Santa Clara County Fire Department.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

Attachments:

1. Resolution Declaring Hazardous Vegetation (Brush) a Public Nuisance, Ordering Abatement, and Setting June 16, 2026, as a Public Hearing (includes Exhibit A).
2. Letters Sent to Property Owners within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Area.