



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 02/03/2026

ITEM NO: 13

DATE: February 3, 2026
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Chris Constantin, Town Manager
SUBJECT: **Conduct a Public Hearing to Consider Objections to the Proposed Abatement of Hazardous Vegetation (Weeds) for Properties Listed on the 2026 Weed Abatement Program Commencement Report and Order Abatement**

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct a public hearing to consider objections to the proposed abatement of hazardous vegetation (weeds) for properties listed on the 2026 Weed Abatement Program Commencement Report and order abatement.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The County's Weed Abatement Program administers services for 13 local agencies under a cost recovery model, paid for by fees imposed on the parcel owners. The estimated program cost related to each agency is based on the number of parcels per agency.

Should the funding from the assessments fall short of the total program cost, the Town will be billed for a pro-rata share of the program such that the County achieves full cost recovery. If the County needs to request additional funds (which is not currently expected), this would be absorbed in the Parks and Public Works Fiscal Year 2025/26 Operating Budget. The Fiscal Year 2025/26 Operating Budget has sufficient funds to cover the cost of publishing all required legal notices (1115101-62306).

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

The actions in this report support the Strategic Priority to further emergency preparedness and resiliency by reducing wildfire risk.

PREPARED BY: Nicolle Burnham
Parks and Public Works Director

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

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Los Gatos Municipal Code Chapter 11, Article II, requires property owners to prevent potential fire hazards on their property and any nearby structures by clearing hazards. This code section is implemented through the Weed Abatement Program (the Program), which is a different, but complementary program to the Brush Abatement Program. Both programs work to protect the Town by reducing fire hazards created by vegetation growth and the accumulation of combustible debris, with the goal of voluntary compliance.

The Weed Abatement Program is administered by the County of Santa Clara (County) (<https://weedabatement.santaclaracounty.gov/home>) on behalf of the Town and is funded from fees assessed on the properties included on the assessment list. Typically, a property is placed in the Program after a County inspector identifies a potential fire hazard on the premises. Fire Departments, Code Enforcement, Public Works, and other public agencies can also submit complaints to the County regarding specific properties. Once a parcel is placed in the Program, it will remain until it displays compliance for three consecutive years, at which point it will be removed. Every year while, in the Program, property owners are charged a compliance inspection fee, and some incur costs for additional inspections, administrative fees, and abatement fees.

Property owners in the Program are given the opportunity to abate weeds at their own cost prior to receiving an annual compliance inspection by County staff. If the property owner has not complied with the requirements of the Program by the time of the County inspection, then the Town authorizes the County to remove the weeds. The County recovers its costs through a special assessment on each parcel's property tax bill.

DISCUSSION:

On December 2, 2025, the Town Council reviewed the 2026 Weed Abatement Commencement Report (Attachment 1) and passed Resolution 2025-060 (Attachment 2) declaring hazardous vegetation (weeds) a public nuisance, providing for their abatement, and setting February 3, 2026, as a public hearing date.

On January 14, 2026, the County mailed informational weed abatement program packets (Attachment 3), including the schedule, price list, and notice of the hearing date to all affected property owners. In accordance with Town Code Section 11.20.020(c), the Notice was also published in the newspaper twice and posted at three prominent locations in Town.

The Weed Abatement program process is described below. The proposed action represents Step 4 of the annual Weed Abatement Program cycle, during which the Town holds a public hearing, providing an opportunity for residents to object to the abatement.

1. Each November, the County prepares a Commencement Report listing all properties that have been identified and provides it to the Town.
2. Each December, the Town Council adopts a resolution declaring weeds a public nuisance and sets a hearing date to consider objections to the proposed abatement.
3. After the December Town Council, action the County sends notice to property owners on the Commencement Report notifying them of the hearing date. The notification includes guidelines on the Weed Abatement Program explaining that the owner must remove weeds by the abatement deadline, or it will be done for them, with the cost of the abatement and associated administrative costs assessed by the County Tax Collector against the respective property.
4. In January or February, the Town Council holds a public hearing to consider objections to the proposed abatement, set a deadline for compliance, and order the abatement.
5. After the public hearing, the County sends a courtesy letter to property owners on the Commencement Report notifying them again of the abatement deadline.
6. After the abatement deadline, the properties are inspected again by the County Weed Abatement Inspector to verify that weeds were removed. If the property owner has not completed the abatement, then the County performs the abatement. Abatement commences only if the inspection fails. Following completion of the abatement, the County creates an assessment report of properties where the County conducted abatement and all costs associated with the abatement. The Town receives that report in late June of each year.
7. In July, the property owners in the assessment report are notified of the August public hearing date.
8. In August, a public hearing is held to consider any objections, adopt a resolution confirming the assessment report, and authorize the collection of the assessment charges. Following the public hearing, County staff work with the County Assessor to assign the program charges to the property tax bill.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the Council conduct a public hearing to consider objections to the proposed abatement of weeds on properties listed on the 2026 Weed Abatement Program Commencement Report and make a motion to order the abatement. At the time of this report's preparation, staff had not been contacted regarding potential objections.

COORDINATION:

This program has been coordinated with the Santa Clara County Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency (CEPA) - Weed Abatement Program.

PAGE 4 OF 4

SUBJECT: 2026 Weed Abatement Program Commencement Public Hearing

DATE: February 3, 2026

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, the Town's weed abatement program is categorically exempt as a minor alteration to land.

Attachments:

1. 2026 Weed Abatement Program Commencement Report
2. Resolution 2025-060
3. Abatement Program Packet Mailed to Parcel Owners