



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 06/16/2020

ITEM NO: 12

DATE: June 10, 2020
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Receive the Final Report on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Area
Hazardous Vegetation (Brush) Abatement Annual Program for 2020

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the final report on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Area Hazardous Vegetation (Brush) Abatement annual program for 2020.

BACKGROUND:

The Santa Clara County Fire Department implements and manages a hazardous brush abatement program for the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas within its jurisdictional boundaries, which includes the incorporated areas of Los Gatos, to provide defensible space for structures. Early each year, property owners are reminded that they must remove flammable vegetation from around their home and other structures on their property to create defensible space. The Town annually adopts the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Program and works with the County who serves as the enforcement agent and conducts their own inspections.

If properties are found not to be in compliance with the California Fire Code relative to vegetation clearance, the owners are given notice of the violation. If compliance is still not achieved by approximately the end of June each year, a contractor is authorized to perform the necessary work. The costs associated with the abatement work are then placed on the property tax bill for that parcel.

In February 2020, the Santa Clara County Fire Prevention Division notified property owners located within the designated Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area of the requirement to comply with the enforced safety regulations related to flammable vegetation abatement

PREPARED BY: Stefanie Hockemeyer
Executive Assistant

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, Finance Director, and Director of Parks and Public Works

PAGE 2 OF 3

SUBJECT: Receive the Final Report on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Area Hazardous Vegetation (Brush) Abatement Annual Program for 2020

DATE: June 10, 2020

BACKGROUND (continued):

(Attachment 1). The letter also referenced the Town's recently enacted Municipal Code amendments which further enhance the safety of WUI residents.

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 to perform the work.

In April 2020, the SCCFD began conducting re-inspections of the properties identified in February. As a result of these re-inspections, a letter was sent to those property owners who were not yet in compliance at that time with the WUI enforced safety regulations. The notice (Attachment 2) provided information on a public hearing which was to be scheduled for June 16, 2020 that would identify all properties not in compliance as of June 16th and declare them as having hazardous conditions requiring abatement.

On May 5, 2020, concurrent with the inspections and noticing and as a requirement of this annual program, the Town Council adopted a resolution (Attachment 3) declaring hazardous vegetation (brush) a public nuisance, ordering abatement, and setting June 16, 2020 as a public hearing to consider objections to the proposed removal of brush of non-compliant properties.

DISCUSSION:

On June 1, 2020, the SCCFD began conducting additional re-inspections of the properties that were out of compliance at the time of the April inspections. On June 10, 2020, the SCCFD confirmed with Parks and Public Works staff that all property owners have complied with the enforced safety regulations by abating the hazardous vegetation and there will be no assessments to any of the owners' property tax bills

CONCLUSION:

Since all property owners complied, there will be no County assessments to any of the owners' property tax bills, and there is no need to hold a public hearing for abatement and assessment of costs, thus concluding the annual program. Staff recommends that the Town Council accept the final report on the hazardous vegetation (brush) abatement annual program for 2020.

COORDINATION:

This program is coordinated with the Santa Clara County Fire Prevention Division.

PAGE 3 OF 3

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Vegetation (Brush) Abatement Annual Program for 2020

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FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

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

Attachments:

1. Letter to Property Owners (February).
2. Letter to Property Owners not in Compliance During Inspections (April).
3. Resolution Declaring Hazardous Vegetation a Public Nuisance (May 5, 2020).