



## TREE REMOVAL PERMIT

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### REVIEWING CRITERIA AND PROCESS

The City of Los Altos protects trees by requiring a permit from the City before certain trees can be removed. The purpose of the permit process is to preserve the character of the City by retaining as many significant trees as possible.

Trees that require a permit before being removed include:

- All trees with a circumference of 48-inches or greater measured at 48-inches above the ground.
- Any tree located within the public right-of-way.
- Any Canary Island Palm trees located on Rinconada Court. The Historical Commission has designated these particular trees as landmark trees.
- Any tree which was required to be saved or planted in conjunction with a development review application. Note: Any tree on a lot with a two-story house constructed since 1991 should check with the City to confirm the requirement.

Applications for a tree removal permit are reviewed by staff and evaluated on the basis of the criteria below:

- The condition of the tree with respect to disease, imminent danger of falling, proximity to existing or proposed structures and interference with utility services.
- The necessity to remove the tree for economic or other enjoyment of the property.
- The topography of the land and the effect of the tree removal upon erosion, soil retention and the diversion or increased flow of surface waters.
- The number, species, size and location of existing trees in the area and the effect the removal would have upon shade, privacy impact, scenic beauty, property values and any established standards of the area.
- The number of healthy trees the property is able to support according to good forestry practices.
- The approximate age of the tree compared with average life span for that species.
- Whether there are any reasonable and feasible alternatives that would allow for the preservation of the tree.

City staff will typically perform a site visit when considering tree removal requests. In some cases the applicant may be requested to furnish a written report from a certified arborist providing information about the condition of the tree. As a condition of approval, applicants may be required to plant one or more replacement trees. Trees removed without a permit will subject the property owner and the tree removal service to fines and penalties.

The applicant or any interested party may appeal an approval/denial of a tree permit request to the City Council. Appeals shall be submitted to the City Clerk with ten (10) calendar days of the decision by filing a written statement outlining the reasons for the appeal and appeal fee.

For more information about removing a tree, please contact the Community Development Department at (650) 947-2750.