



Item No. 16 Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER

THROUGH: ROBERT OVADIA, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

FROM: SALLY BENTZ-DALTON, PARK MANAGER/TOWN ARBORIST

DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION REGARDING MEDIAN STREET
TREE REPLACEMENT OPTIONS FOR MOUNT VERNON LANE
AND TUSCALOOSA AVENUE

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council review and discuss tree replacement options for Mount Vernon Lane and Tuscaloosa Avenue and provide staff with direction.

BACKGROUND

Due to the poor condition of the median trees on Mount Vernon Lane and Tuscaloosa Avenue and the associated risk to public safety, the City Council, at their April 21, 2021, meeting, approved the removal of the trees. Staff provided public notification to area residents in advance of the tree removals and advised them of the Town's intent to plant replacement trees. After the removals staff met via zoom with interested residents on each immediate street to discuss replacement options and potential constraints. During each meeting, staff provided a PowerPoint presentation with recommended species and residents had the opportunity to provide input.

Mount Vernon Lane

Due to the limited roadway width, the proposal was to plant replacement trees on the side of the roadway along the property frontages. Per the Town's municipal code anything located in the right of way is the adjacent property owner's responsibility. After reviewing the existing plantings and available space, the Mount Vernon residents decided that they only wanted to plant a replacement tree in only one location, in front of 45 Mt Vernon in the right of way planting area. The residents on the street are aware of the maintenance and watering and have agreed to take on the responsibility. Staff will provide the resident with maintenance recommendations prior to planting.

In selecting the proposed location, staff contacted Underground Service Alert (USA) to confirm that there were no major utilities in the area. Some of the existing bushes and plants will need to

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be removed prior to planting. After reviewing the various tree species, the residents preferred replacement with a Cork Oak, *Quercus Suber*. The Cork Oak is suitable for the peninsula's changing climate and its unique characteristics.

Tuscaloosa Avenue

The paved width of Tuscaloosa Avenue is sufficient to allow planting of a replacement tree in the same median area. A small curb should be constructed for the median and delineators and striping are recommended to delineate the median for traffic. Root barriers and watering tubes are proposed to be installed as well as any additional recommendations by the tree company at time of planting. Tuscaloosa Avenue residents are interested in as large a replacement tree as possible. One resident indicated that they may be interested in donating more money for a larger tree if the size of the tree the Town would like to plant isn't sufficient. The resident would like to know the largest tree the Town would plant to see if a donation would be necessary. The residents on Tuscaloosa Avenue would like the replacement tree to be the same species as the one removed, a Valley Oak, *Quercus Lobata*.

Installation

MCE will not be able to plant the large sized box trees desired. The tree purchases will need to include delivery, planting, and potentially a warranty. Due to the expected sizes, a crane may be needed for installation.

Staff reached out to multiple nurseries, and many do not provide large tree planting services. Staff was able to locate two nurseries that have large specimen trees and can provide planting services. Two nurseries were able to include tree planting with the purchase.

Moon Valley Nurseries

Cork Oak in 60" box with delivery, crane, planting and a 15-month warranty with no questions asked would be approximately \$18,500. The specifications on this tree are 22' tall by 11' wide.

Valley Oak in 60" box with delivery, crane, planting and a 15-month warranty with no questions asked would be approximately \$18,500. The specifications on this tree are 24' tall by 15' wide.

Cork Oak -1 \$18,000.00

Valley Oak -1 \$18,000.00

Delivery \$500.00

For both trees it would cost approximately \$36,500 for delivery, crane, planting and a 15-month warranty. The company will include watering tubes and root barriers if needed.

If the Town wanted to go to the next size down, to a 48" box tree then the total cost for both trees would be approximately \$31,000. The approximate specifications on the 48" box trees would have a height of 16-18' and a width of 6-7'.

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Tree Movers

Cork Oak in 60" box with delivery, crane, planting and a 1-year warranty with no questions asked would be approximately \$8,000. The approximate specifications on this tree are 16-20' tall by 7-11' wide.

Valley Oak in 60" box with delivery, crane, planting and a 15-month warranty with no questions asked would be approximately \$8,000. The approximate specifications on this tree are 16-20' tall by 7-11' wide.

For both trees it would cost approximately \$16,000 for trees, delivery, crane, planting and a 1-year warranty. Planting includes amendment, fertilizer, deep watering tubes and if needed a root barrier.

If the Town wanted to go to the next size down, to a 48" box tree then the total for both trees would be approximately \$10,000. The approximate specifications on the 48" box trees would have a height of 11-15' and a width of 5-7'.

The planting hole for a 60" box tree will need to be 5.5-6 feet x 5.5-6 feet by 4 feet deep. The planting hole for the 48" box tree is 4.5-5 feet x 4.5-5 feet x 3-3.5 feet deep. The size of the tree is dependent on the planting space. The Tuscaloosa median at its widest point is 19'x7.5'. Thus, anything larger than a 60' box tree could not be accommodated. The right of way area on Mt Vernon is 18' across so following the utility setback requirements as well as right of way planting requirements a 60" box tree could be accommodated.

Staff is asking for direction on what size/cost of tree to be planted for Mount Vernon and Tuscaloosa Avenue.

The installation of the median curb, delineators and striping on Tuscaloosa Avenue would be procured separately.

POLICY FOCUS

The replanting of these trees will follow Town policy. Per section 8 of the Town's Tree Inspection and Risk Policy the Town must replace City trees that are removed with the same or a similar species in the same general location unless soil, terrain, planned improvements or other conditions make another type or location for planting more appropriate. In locations where new trees are needed the species of new trees shall be approved by the Arborist and shall meet International Society of Arboriculture guidelines. Selection criteria will include, but not be limited to, height and size at maturity with resulting impact on hardscapes, curbs, gutters, walkways, and utilities, predicted longevity, and maintenance requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT

The funding for the tree will come from the Street Tree Maintenance budget. Currently the budget is \$70,000 for the care and maintenance of all of the Town's Street trees. This includes scheduled

pruning, emergency pruning, removals, and plant health care. Because it is the start of the fiscal year at this time limited funds have been expended from this account.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also disseminated via the Town’s electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town’s electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders – to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire District, service provides (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL

This item ___ has or X has not been before a Town Committee or Commission.

- Audit/Finance Committee (meets every other month)
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee (meets as needed)
- Civic Center Advisory Committee (meets as needed)
- Environmental Programs Committee (meets every other month)
- Park and Recreation Committee (meets each month)
- Planning Commission (meets each month)
- Rail Committee (meets every other month)
- Transportation Committee (meets every other month)
- Tree Committee (meets each month)

ATTACHMENT

1. Image of Cork Oak – Boxed and Mature
2. Image of Valley Oak – Boxed and Mature
3. Image of proposed planting area on Mount Vernon Lane
4. Image of proposed planting area on Tuscaloosa Avenue









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