

## Street Tree Pilot Reforestation Project In Your Neighborhood – Fall 2006

The Street Tree Reforestation Program is a proposed multi-year effort to remove selected problematic or declining street trees and replace them with healthy, young appropriate species, as prescribed by the City's "Street Tree Management Plan". Street trees are defined as trees located in the area between the property line and the curb, valley gutter or edge of street pavement. Most of these trees were planted by the City or during the original development of the neighborhood.

Currently, the three most numerous species of problematic, aging street trees in Menlo Park are liquidambar (sweetgum) trees, camphor trees and Modesto ash trees. These species tend to damage sidewalks, curbs, utility infrastructure and streets. As they age, many have structural problems and pose minor safety problems.

In your neighborhood, these species were planted in large numbers at the same time, so they are more susceptible to disease and are likely to decline at the same time. Many of the trees are now nearing the end of their natural life expectancy. In order to maintain a variety of healthy trees of differing ages and sizes throughout the city over the long term, declining or problematic street trees need to be gradually and selectively removed and replaced with appropriate species.

Under guidance of the Environmental Quality Commission, the City is conducting a pilot reforestation effort in your neighborhood to evaluate the condition of each street tree, educate and involve residents, and select trees in the worst condition for removal. After tree removals and replacements have been completed, a survey will be taken of the residents about the effectiveness of the pilot project. Information from the survey will be reported back to the City Council before additional reforestation efforts are considered.

The Pilot Reforestation Area is bordered by Santa Cruz Avenue, Cotton Street, Valparaiso Avenue and Elder Street. A consulting arborist was hired to rate the trees in this area on their condition and whether they are damaging structures. A portion of the trees with the worst rating (#1) have been prioritized for removal and replacement this fall (see list attached). These trees are in decline, have serious structural problems, and/or are damaging sidewalks. Removal of the trees with better ratings (not on the enclosed list) will be considered in later years or as necessary. The consulting arborist's report and survey of the street trees in the pilot area will be posted on the City's website at [www.menlopark.org](http://www.menlopark.org) (see "Items of Interest"). This information can also be mailed to you upon request.

You are invited to join a **"Tree Walk" on Saturday, November 4th from 9 to 10 a.m.** with the consulting arborist and staff, to learn about the reasons for the proposed removals, ask questions, and make comments. Participants will gather at the corner of Cotton Street and Hillview Drive for a short walk to look at examples of tree conditions with the arborist.

If any tree on the enclosed list is adjacent to your property, you are encouraged to read the report and look on the survey to see the arborist's ratings on the condition of the tree. Trees were tagged on the trunk with a number that corresponds to the survey data. The data is organized by tree number. **Please contact City staff (noted below) by November 6th if you do not want to have the tree removed and replaced.**

If a tree on your property is removed, a fifteen-gallon size replacement tree will be planted by the end of December. You may request a larger specimen before November 6th, if you are willing to pay the City for the incremental cost. The recommended replacement tree species are on the attached list. If you wish, you may state your preference for one of the two listed replacement species. Photos of replacement trees are on the City website at [www.menlopark.org](http://www.menlopark.org). During the week of October 23<sup>rd</sup>, small flags will be put in the ground at the proposed locations for the replacement trees. In many cases, the replacement tree will be planted in the same location as the old tree. If you have a preference for a different location, please contact City staff. The City will prune the replacement trees as needed for the life of the trees, and residents are asked to water the trees. Instructions will be provided.

**Please contact City staff if you have any particular request or question about the Pilot Reforestation Project by November 6<sup>th</sup>. Otherwise, the trees on the enclosed list will be removed starting in late November and replaced with a 15 gallon-size species as noted on the attached list.**

Thank you for your interest in this reforestation program, which will ensure that Menlo Park's streets are lined for decades to come with healthy, beautiful trees of various species, sizes, and ages. Please feel free to call or email City staff with any questions or comments you have.

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