



Staff Report

Agenda Item #: {{section.number}}E

Yountville Town Council Staff Report

DATE: November 19, 2024
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: John Ferons, Public Works Director
PREPARED BY: John Ferons, Public Works Director

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution Number 24-4320 approving the removal of a heritage oak tree located in the Town right of way in front of 1901 Finnell Road per the Town Arborist's inspection and recommendation for health, life safety reasons, and a requirement for equivalent replacement trees to be planted on Town-owned right of way or property.

DISCUSSION/BACKGROUND

The property owner at 1901 Finnell Road, and a local tree company working on the private trees at that address, expressed concerns about failing branches on one of the two valley oaks located within the property frontage of that address. These two valley oaks are Heritage Oak Tree numbers 130 and 132 from the Town's 2011 Heritage Tree Survey and Report. While both trees are located well within the Finnell Road right of way and are considered Town-owned street trees, the health concern is specific to tree number 132, the westerly tree.

As a result of the inquiry Town staff enlisted the Town Arborist Tony Wolcott, under the On-Call Arborist Responsibilities, to perform a site visit, inspection of the tree and supporting documentation for the results of the inspection.

The Town Arborist's inspection included the two trees described above and also a heritage oak located across the street, which is Heritage Oak Tree number 129 from the same 2011 Heritage Tree Survey and Report. The Town Arborist concludes that a balanced approach for the three Heritage Oak Trees would be to remove tree number 132 entirely and remove deadwood on tree numbers 129 and 130. Tree number 132 should be removed for life, health, and safety reasons due to failure targets being pedestrians, vehicles, and public/private property.

Pursuant to Town of Yountville Municipal Code (YMC) 17.128.060 A.2; The Town Council shall grant or deny a permit for tree removal for heritage trees and native oak protected trees. The removal is based on the following finding in YMC 17.128.060 B.1; The condition of the tree with respect to its health presents an imminent danger of falling or failure and constitutes a likely hazard to safety due to the proximity of existing structures or interference with public infrastructure or utilities.

The Town values its urban forest, therefore pursuant to YMC 17.128.070 A.1; Since it is not possible to replace a large, older tree with a single equivalent tree, the following tree canopy replacement ratio shall apply: the replacement shall be calculated on an inch-by-inch replacement of the removed tree. For this tree, the removal diameter is 47.5 inches which shall necessitate the planting of eight six-inch diameter trees with the minimum size for a replacement of a heritage tree or a native oak shall be 24-inch box.

Town public works staff will work with the Town Arborist to determine the optimal locations on Town-owned right of way and property for the planting of the replacement trees.

Staff respectfully requests the Town Council adopt Resolution Number 24-4320 approving the removal of a heritage oak tree located in the Town right of way in front of 1901 Finnell Road per the Town Arborist's inspection and recommendation for health, life safety reasons and a requirement for equivalent replacement trees to be planted on Town-owned right of way or property.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Exempt per California Environmental Act (CEQA) Guideline, Section 15061(b)(3)

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

Is it Currently Budgeted? Yes

Where is it Budgeted? Street Maintenance 01-4305-4210 Contract Services Tree Removals in the Right of Way

Is it Mandatory or Discretionary? Mandatory

Is there a Staff Resource Impact? Nominal

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

Is item Identified in Strategic Plan? Yes

If yes, Identify Strategic Goal and Objective. **Exceptional Town Services and Staff:** The Town supports its talented staff who deliver high quality municipal programs and services while maintaining public infrastructure for the benefit of the community. **Quality of Life:** The Town enhances the livability of Yountville by providing well-maintained public facilities, parks, and trails, and quality programs and events.

Briefly Explain Relationship to Strategic Plan Goal and Objective. Mitigating the hazard by removing the tree is a Town service maintaining public infrastructure for the benefit of the community and planting replacement trees enhances the livability of the Town by maintaining its urban forest.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution Number 24-4320
2. Town Arborist Report Assessing Three Valley Oaks at 1901 Finnell Road dated November 1, 2024.