



# City of Palo Alto City Manager's Report

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TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND  
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

DATE: OCTOBER 18, 1999

CMR:389:99

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER THREE  
APPLICATIONS TO DESIGNATE HERITAGE TREES: TWO PUBLICLY-  
OWNED TREES AND ONE PRIVATE TREE AT 1032 FOREST AVENUE

*(See page 3)*

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council approve the designation of three trees for heritage status: the El Palo Alto Coast Redwood located in El Palo Alto Park as Heritage Tree No. 1 (See Attachment A); a Coast Live Oak located in Rinconada Park as Heritage Tree No. 2 (See Attachment B); and a Dawn Redwood located at 1032 Forest Avenue as Palo Alto Heritage Tree No. 4, as requested by the owner of the property (See Attachment C). Heritage Tree No. 3 has already been designated as such by a previous Council action on February 22, 1999.

## BACKGROUND

In 1996, the City Council enacted Ordinance No. 4362, effective January 1, 1997 providing for the preservation and maintenance of specified native oak and heritage trees on public and private properties.

Palo Alto Municipal Code, Chapter 8.10.090 entitled "Designation of Heritage Trees" provides for persons to nominate a tree on their property as a Heritage Tree. After City Council approval of such designation, the tree will be included in a listing, including such information as specific location, overall size, canopy spread, etc., and kept by the Department of Planning and Community Environment. Once designated, a heritage tree will benefit from the provisions of the Tree Preservation and Management Regulations, unless removed from the list by subsequent action by the City Council. These regulations include guidelines and restrictions regarding pruning, removal and development as it relates to the tree.

## DISCUSSION

This section provides the basis for approval.

*Heritage Tree No. 1.* The Coast Redwood is located on the bank of San Francisquito Creek and is the symbol of both the City of Palo Alto and Stanford University. The El Palo Alto redwood has not been officially recognized in the heritage tree listing since the Ordinance became effective. In 1971, when El Palo Alto Park was dedicated by Council, the tree was described as the oldest living landmark in California, whose age was estimated to be more than 1,059 years old (see Arborist Report, Attachment A). On November 7, 1926 the Native Sons of the Golden West historic landmark committee placed a plaque on the large boulder at the tree's base declaring it the first official living California Landmark. In 1987, the tree was recognized by the National Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture, for its significance, having lived since General Portola's early expedition in 1769 and during the signing of our nation's constitution. The Coast Redwood meets the standards for heritage tree designation set forth in Chapter 8.10.090 and Heritage Tree checklist (See Attachment D). Staff recommends the historical El Palo Alto Redwood be designated as Heritage Tree No. 1 based upon findings that it is unique and of importance to the community due to one or more of the following factors:

- (1) It satisfies PAMC Section 8.10.090 requirements;
- (2) It is an outstanding specimen of a desirable species;
- (3) It is one of the largest and oldest trees in Palo Alto; and
- (4) It possesses distinctive form, size, age and location

Staff has prepared an overview report of the tree's specific location, size, dimensions and brief history of the tree (see Arborist Report, Attachment A) for Council review.

*Heritage Tree No. 2.* The Coast Live Oak is located in the 20-acre Rinconada Park, in the picnic area near the intersection of Embarcadero Road and Guinda Street. This tree is a fine specimen with many qualities worthy of recognition. In 1994 the tree was publicly honored as a heritage tree by then Mayor Liz Kniss, and was distinguished with a bronze plaque placed near its base identifying it as such. As with the El Palo Alto tree, the Rinconada Oak has not been officially recognized within the heritage tree listing since the Ordinance became effective January 1, 1977. The Coast Live Oak meets the standards for heritage tree designation set forth in Chapter 8.10.090 and Heritage Tree checklist (See Attachment D). Staff recommends the historical Rinconada Oak be designated as Heritage Tree No. 2 based upon findings that it is unique and of importance to the community due to one or more of the following factors:

- (1) It satisfies PAMC Section 8.10.090 requirements;
- (2) It is an outstanding specimen of a desirable species;
- (3) It is one of the largest and oldest trees in Palo Alto; and
- (4) It possesses distinctive form, size, age and location

Staff has prepared an overview report of the trees specific location, size, dimensions and brief history of the tree (see Arborist Report, Attachment B) for Council review.

2 → *Heritage Tree No. 4.* Ms. Karen Kolling, 1032 Forest Avenue, owner of the property, filed an application for heritage tree status for a Dawn Redwood located in the front yard of her property. The tree is a unique species, healthy and sizable, second in size only to the Dawn Redwood at the downtown post office, on the Waverley Street frontage.

The Dawn Redwood meets the standards for heritage tree designation set forth in Chapter 8.10.090 and Heritage Tree checklist (see Attachment D). Written request, consent and photographs from Ms. Kolling, have been received along with a written analysis of the tree's specific location, size, dimensions and qualities by arborist Michael Young, of Urban Tree Management Company (see Arborist Report, Attachment C).

Staff recommends this tree be designated as a Heritage Tree No. 4 based upon findings that it is unique and of importance to the property owner and community due to the following factors:

- (1) It satisfies PAMC Section 8.10.090 requirements;
- (2) It is an outstanding specimen of a desirable species;
- (3) It is one of the largest and oldest trees in Palo Alto; and
- (4) It possesses distinctive form, size, age and location

### **RESOURCE IMPACT**

There are no resource impacts expected by these designations.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommended action would continue to promote the pattern for other Heritage Tree designations and is also consistent with existing City policies and overall urban forest goals and objectives.

### **TIMELINE**

After designation as Heritage Trees by Council, the Heritage Trees will be recognized as such immediately.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The Heritage Tree action is exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15061 (b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the designation will have a significant effect on the environment.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: El Palo Alto Arborist Report  
Attachment B: Rinconada Park Coast Live Oak Arborist Report  
Attachment C: Karen Kolling Request, Photographs and Arborist Report

Attachment D: Tree Preservation and Management Regulations, Ordinance 4568  
and Heritage Tree Checklist

PREPARED BY: Dave Dockter, Planning Division Arborist

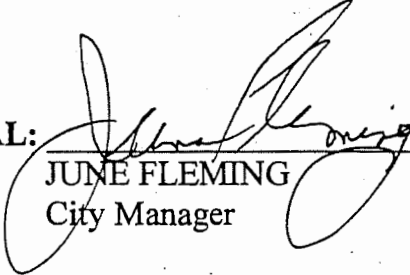
DEPARTMENT HEAD REVIEW:



G. EDWARD GAWF

Director of Planning and Community Environment

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:



JUNE FLEMING

City Manager

cc: Ms. Karen Kolling  
Canopy: Trees for Palo Alto

## ATTACHMENT C

1032 Forest Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
21 February 1998

City Council  
City of Palo Alto  
P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Dear City Council:

I am requesting that the dawn redwood (*metasequoia glyptostroboides*) tree in my front yard at the above address be granted heritage tree status and protection as outlined in CPA Municipal Code 8.10.090.

This letter and the accompanying information are to provide the documentation that the public works department has said is necessary for this application.

I feel that this tree should be protected because it is a large, healthy instance of a lovely and somewhat unusual tree. The only other dawn redwood which I am aware of of such a large size in Palo Alto is the specimen tree at the downtown post office.

Dawn redwoods are believed to date back over 100 million years and to have had a widespread range that included the western United States. They were known only from fossil records and were believed extinct until living trees were discovered in China in 1941. Seeds from China were first imported into this country in the second half of the 1940s. The post office tree was planted on Arbor Day in 1949. More information about them is in the attached article provided by the arborist, Mike Young, who examined the tree.

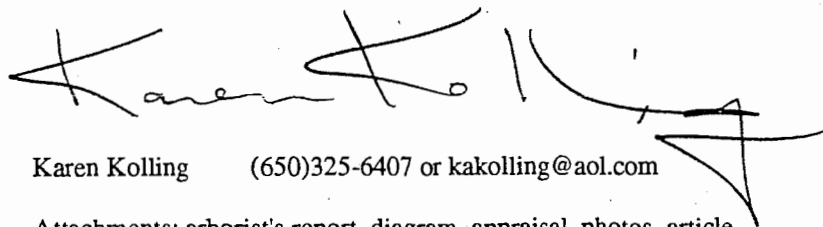
I commit to provide this tree with the appropriate care needed while I own it and to disclose its heritage tree status to any future owners of this property. Also, I grant consent to include this tree location and address on "an inventory list and map that may be utilized by Palo Alto's interested in viewing the tree."

I have included some photographs. Unfortunately, since the tree is not currently in leaf, these photos do not make the full beauty of the tree apparent; it is absolutely stunning when in leaf. However, public works tells me that if I wait until the tree leafs out in another few weeks, I will miss the current deadline for considering heritage trees, and consideration will be postponed for a number of months.

I am not certain of the age of the tree. It was a large tree when I moved here over 20 years ago, and Emily Renzel tells me that it was a "big" tree when she moved nearby 28 years ago. Although the arborist thinks it may be as old as the post office tree, I am not certain of this. The post office tree seems to me to have a larger and more irregular base, but a narrower upper trunk than this tree. Since their growth habits seem to have differed, I am not certain how their ages compare.

I believe I remember being told by a neighbor when I first moved here that the tree had been planted by the late Mrs. Dreier, who was an avid gardener, and whose family owned both my house and the house, now demolished and replaced with a new house, next door at 1044 Forest Avenue.

Thank you for considering offering this tree the protection of heritage tree status,



Karen Kolling (650)325-6407 or kakolling@aol.com

Attachments: arborist's report, diagram, appraisal, photos, article

URBAN  
TREE  
MANAGEMENT



741 Enright Ave.

Santa Clara

CA 95050

quercus@ricochet.net

650•321•0202

Contractor's  
License #755989

Cert. Arborist  
WC ISA #623

2/18/1999

Karen Kolling  
1032 Forest Ave.  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
650-325-6407

RE: Historic Tree Registration

To Whom It May Concern:

My client would like to submit an application to register her Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) as a Historic Tree with the city of Palo Alto. This is a beautiful specimen.

DBH: 27"  
Spread: 40'  
Height: 48'

Dawn Redwoods are meant to be a single leader tree with even branching originating laterally from the trunk. This specimen adheres directly to these specifications. Annual growth has been approximately 5"-6" for the last several years. While the tree is still mostly dormant this time of year, the abundance of flowers on the tree and the previous years' growth indicate strong vigor. Previous pruning has been kept to a minimum. There are no obvious signs of over or under irrigation around this tree and the root collar is nicely exposed.

There are a few minor problems with this tree that are easily corrected. In a few places limbs could be removed to eradicate duplication. A concrete path near the base of the tree has been cracked due to expansion of the root plate. The homeowner is going to break out this concrete and replace it with stepping-stones. Lastly, there is a Douglas Fir approximately 18' away from the Dawn Redwood. The presence of this tree has forced the Dawn Redwood to grow slightly at an angle, and some of the Doug Fir limbs should be pulled back to allow more room for the Dawn Redwood.

Overall this is a beautiful specimen. As is well documented Dawn Redwoods were discovered in fossil form in 1941. They were thought to be extinct until later that year when in China a few trees were discovered in a remote location. The original specimen was 450 years old. Little is known about the life expectancy of this tree in our area. It wasn't until 1949 (only 50 years ago) that seedlings were distributed throughout the world. It would not surprise me if this specimen were part of the original batch of Dawn Redwoods distributed in 1949.

It is an honor for me to recommend this tree as a Historic Tree to the City of Palo Alto.

Should you have any further questions feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Michael P. Young

**TRUNK FORMULA METHOD FORM FOR NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, 1992**  
**Established by the International Society of Arboriculture, 1992**  
**Trees LESS Than 30" Diameter**

Appraised Value = Basic Value X Condition X Location

Basic Value = Replacement Cost + (Basic Price X [T<sub>AA</sub> - T<sub>AR</sub>] X Species)

SPECIES: Meta Sequoia glyptostroboidea TREE#: 1

1. Replacement Cost = \$1805

Cost of largest commonly available transplantable tree, as installed in an average location, (as established for Northern California, by the Western Chapter). If the appraised tree is in a location which will make installation of a replacement especially difficult or expensive, you should increase this line to account for costs above the average.

2. Replacement tree Basic (per square inch) Price Group # 4 \$ 27.50 per inch<sup>2</sup>  
 (from Table 11-1992)

3. Determine difference in trunk areas

If d<sub>A</sub> = 30" or less, determine TAA

A.	TAA = (0.785d <sup>2</sup> )	DBH <u>27"</u>	=	<u>572.56</u>	ln <sup>2</sup>
B.	Replacement tree TAR		=	<u>19.60</u>	ln <sup>2</sup>
(refer to table 11-1992)					
C.	Subtract TAR from TAA (3A-3B)		=	<u>552.96</u>	ln <sup>2</sup>

4. Multiply Basic Price by area differences \$ 27.50 per ln<sup>2</sup> X 552.96 ln<sup>2</sup> = \$ 15,206.40  
 (2) (3C)

5. Adjust step 4 by Species rating 90 % = \$ 13,685.76

6. Basic Value = \$1,805 (line 1) + \$ 13,685.76 (line 5) = \$ 15,490.76

7. Adjust Line 6 by Condition 90 % = \$ 13,941.68

8. Adjust for Location:

Location = (Site + Contribution + Placement) + 3 =  
90 % + 95 % + 90 % = 275 + 3 = 91.67 %

Adjust Line 7 by Location = \$ 12,780.34

9. Appraised Value (before damage, if applicable) = Round Line 8 to nearest \$100 = \$ 13,000.00

Appraised Value (after damage, if applicable) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

10. For Partial Loss: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ value of loss = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

11. Removal/Reconstruction Cost, if appropriate = \$ 13,000.00

TOTAL = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared for: Karen Kolling

Address: 1032 Forest Ave. Palo Alto, CA.

Date: 2/18/99 Job #: \_\_\_\_\_

Failure Date: \_\_\_\_\_