

**DATE:** April 8, 2026

**TO:** Urban Forestry Board

**FROM:** Russell Hansen, Urban Forest Manager

**SUBJECT:** **Heritage Tree Removal Application Appeal—1145 Carver Place**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a Resolution of the Urban Forestry Board of the City of Mountain View to Deny the Appeal, Uphold Staff's Decision, and deny the removal of one (1) Heritage Tree at 1145 Carver Place, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 1 to the memorandum).

**BACKGROUND**

Article II, Protection of the Urban Forest, Sections 32.22 through 32.39 of the Mountain View City Code (MVCC or Code) was established to preserve certain trees designated as Heritage trees within the City of Mountain View. The preservation program contributes to the welfare and aesthetics of the community and retains the great historical and environmental value of these trees. The Code requires a permit be obtained prior to removal of a Heritage tree, and City staff, under the authority granted in the Code to the Community Services Director, has been designated to review and approve, conditionally approve, or deny removal permit applications. Under the Code, there are specific criteria for granting a permit to remove a Heritage tree. The determination on each application is based upon a minimum of one of the conditions set forth in the Code (Attachment 2).

MVCC Section 32.31 allows any person aggrieved or affected by a decision on a requested removal to appeal the decision by written notice within 10 calendar days after the notice of the decision is posted or mailed.

**HERITAGE TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION**

An application to remove one (1) *Sequoia sempervirens*, Coast Redwood (hereinafter referred to as "Redwood") at 1145 Carver Place was submitted by the property owner, Ted Rees ("Applicant"), on March 11, 2025 (Attachment 3). On the application, the property owner marked One (1) of the boxes under reasons for removal for the consideration of the tree:

- "Tree is growing in close proximity to structures and causing damage (or will in the near future)."

The Applicant also provided the following comments for consideration within the removal application:

"The tree is too big and destroying adjacent driveways and sidewalk. One driveway has been replaced twice, with roots cut. The other driveway replaced once and ground down once to reduce tripping hazard. The low branches have been cut. In the recent wind, multiple branches broke and were cut off. The tree was trimmed to reduce wind load. There is unknown danger of falling."

The Redwood tree was denied a permit for removal by staff because it did not meet the criteria under MVCC Section 32.35. Specifically, the denial notice set forth the following:

“Tree is in good health and no evidence of structural issues or pest/disease were identified. Future limb failures can be reduced or eliminated through pruning for end weight reduction. Tree is located 24”-36” from the two adjacent driveways and appears to have caused some lifting of concrete that requires repair. Unable to determine impact of the driveway repair work given limited understanding of roots which were not visible at time of inspection. Once driveway is removed, staff can better evaluate impact of additional root removal that may be required. Property owners should also consider replacing driveway with interlocking/permeable pavers to limit replacement. No structures currently impacted. Does not meet ordinance criteria for removal.”

Notice of the City’s decision was posted on December 2, 2025 (Attachment 5).

An appeal (Attachment 6) was filed on December 5, 2025, by the Applicant disputing staff’s findings and expressing concerns regarding the Redwood’s impact on solar power in the winter.

City staff sent some follow up questions after the appeal was submitted to help with the review process, and the questions were specifically the Applicant’s building permits for solar panels, solar design and potential impacts of the tree to the solar arrays (Attachment 4). The Applicant provided a response, and in summary, has not applied for a building permit to install solar because, according to the Applicant, no feasibility study has been completed, and the Applicant feels the current Redwood tree prohibits adequate sun light for the panels (Attachment 4).

Notice of the appeal was posted on January 8, 2026 (Attachment 6).

## **SPECIE PROFILE**

### **SEQUOIA SEMPERVIRENS**

The *Sequoia sempervirens* Coast Redwood is a tree native to the coastal mountain range of Northern California and Oregon, where they can grow to a height of two hundred (200) feet and provide as much as one hundred (100) feet of canopy spread. In the urban environment, however, they typically only reach heights of one hundred (100) feet and provide up to sixty (60) feet of canopy cover.

While this species has only a limited number of pest and disease issues and is hardy in its native range, it is known to be very drought-sensitive with warmer temperatures and limited coastal fog.

## **STAFF’S EVALUATION**

When evaluating Heritage tree removal applications, staff considers if the reason(s) for removal on the application matches what is observed in the field and whether any of the criteria under Section 32.35 of the MVCC is met, with an emphasis on the intent to preserve heritage trees, as required by the City Code.

***Sequoia sempervirens***

This Redwood is located in the front yard (adjacent to the sidewalk) of the property and provides canopy cover to at least two (2) properties. This Redwood is considered a street tree because it is located within ten (10) feet of the roadway, and the City of Mountain View provides pruning services for this tree. Staff estimates this Redwood to be approximately ninety (90) feet tall with a spread of approximately twenty (20) feet and diameter of forty-seven (47) inches. Overall, the canopy is in good health, and the live crown ratio is appropriate for the species. Staff estimate the tree to be sixty (60) years old. The Redwood is a heritage tree under MVCC Sec. 32.23(c)(3) as its circumference is greater than twelve (12) inches in circumference when measured at fifty-four (54) inches above natural grade.

Staff's initial inspection of the Redwood showed an overall healthy canopy with fair structure and no pest or disease issues. The Redwood has previously had its canopy raised to approximately twenty (20) feet for clearance above the nearby driveways. There were no reports of prior large limb failures, but the overall canopy has been thinned out to increase light or reduce wind impacts to the tree. It should also be noted that prior pruning may have removed more than the recommended foliage from the interior of the tree.

While staff did not have the opportunity to inspect the root system under the two adjacent private driveways, staff believe careful, selective, root pruning is an option to preserve the Redwood while repairing both driveway locations. It should also be noted the driveway uplift at 1149 Carver Place is located on the opposite side of the driveway from the base of the Redwood and may be associated with the roots of a nearby ash tree. The public sidewalk contains an approximate one (1) inch uplift, and it is staff's opinion that it can be repaired without removal by the City of Mountain View Streets Division at no cost to the property owner.

Redwoods are considered to be tolerant of limited root pruning, increasing the likelihood the Redwood can withstand the impacts of the driveway replacement. It is recommended that supplemental deep root watering and tree protection measures be followed to reduce the impact of the driveway replacements. An alternative driveway material such as interlocking concrete pavers may also be considered for the replacement driveway to allow for easier repairs in the future.

While staff understand the Redwood tree reduces the amount of solar sun which reaches the rooftop of 1145 Carver Place home, the current home does not contain solar panels, there are no developed plans for solar and it is uncertain if solar panels can be installed without significant modification of the roof. In the event these obstacles are addressed, the property owner can submit a new application citing a material change in circumstances under MVCC Sec. 32.31(e).

In looking at the criteria for removal under MVCC Sec. 32.35, staff's evaluation did not find any of the criteria met, as follows:

1. The condition of the tree with respect to age of the tree relative to the life span of that particular species, disease, infestation, general health, damage, public nuisance, danger of falling, proximity to existing or proposed structures, and interference with utility services.

Staff's evaluation of the tree did not find that the condition of the tree required its removal, as it's overall health and structure is good, and there is no evidence of any nuisance, damage, or interference issues that cannot be addressed through corrective pruning or other means.

2. The necessity of the removal of the heritage tree in order to construct improvements and/or allow reasonable and conforming use of the property when compared to other similarly situated properties.

Staff's evaluation of the tree did not find that removal of the heritage tree was necessary in Order to construct improvements because there are no improvements proposed. Although the Applicant's appeal referenced the installation of solar panels, the Applicant did not provide any substantiating information that this type of improvement is proposed, as no building permits or plans for solar panel installation exist at this time.

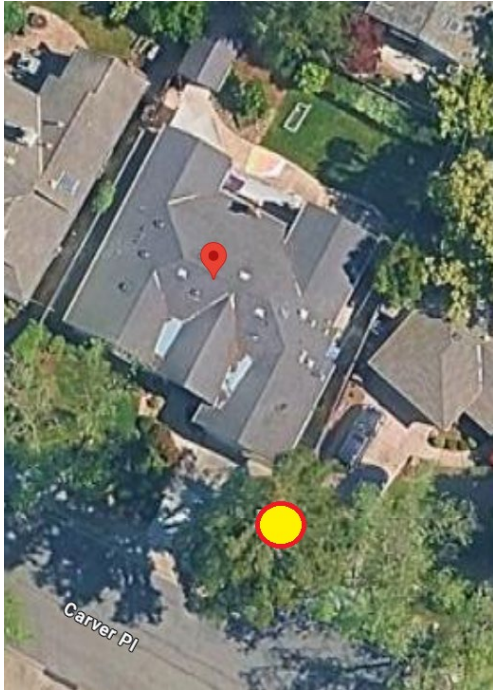
3. The nature and qualities of the tree as a heritage tree, including its maturity, its aesthetic qualities such as its canopy, its shape and structure, its majestic stature and its visual impact on the neighborhood.

Staff's evaluation of the tree found that the tree and structure of the canopy is good and the tree provides significant value and benefit to the neighborhood, therefore this criteria was not met.

4. Good forestry practices such as, but not limited to, the number of healthy trees a given parcel of land will support and the planned removal of any tree nearing the end of its life cycle and the replacement of young trees to enhance the overall health of the urban forest.

Staff's evaluation of the tree did not find that the tree should be removed due to good forestry practices as no facts to support this criteria were provided or observed.

**Representative Photos**



**Photo #1**  
Aerial image showing trees of concern in lower right



**Photo #2**  
Streetview which shows the tree of concern from the street



**Photo #3**  
Photo of the tree looking Northeast.



**Photo #4**  
Photo of the tree facing northwest



**Photo #5**  
Photo of 2" uplift driveway damage



**Photo #6**  
Photo of 3" uplift driveway

#### **URBAN FORESTRY BOARD**

The Parks and Recreation Commission serves as the Urban Forestry Board (Board) for Heritage tree appeals under MVCC Section 32.26. The Board must consider whether to uphold staff's decision and deny the appeal or overturn that decision using the criteria set forth in MVCC Section 32.35. The Board must support its decision with written findings. Staff has provided the Board with a draft resolution with findings upholding staff's decision to deny the removal of the one (1) Heritage Tree. If the Board overrules staff's decision and allows for removal of the one (1) Heritage Tree, staff recommends the Board make their findings orally, and staff will include the findings and decision in this meeting's written minutes.

#### **SUMMARY**

Staff recommends denying the appeal and denying the removal of the one (1) Heritage Tree.

RH/AF/4/CSD  
228-10-09-24M

- Attachments:
1. Resolution
  2. Mountain View City Code, Article II, Protection of Urban Forest
  3. Heritage Tree Application for Removal Permit
  4. Email on Solar Analysis
  5. Heritage Tree Notice of Decision
  6. Heritage Tree Appeal and Notice