



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

PARKS AND TREES DIVISION  
221 COMMERCIAL ST.  
SUNNYVALE, CA 94088-3707  
408-730-7506, FAX 408-730-7577  
[parks@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:parks@sunnyvale.ca.gov)

### LIQUIDAMBAR STREET TREE REMOVAL PERMIT APPLICATION FOR CITY PAID REMOVAL PROGRAM

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner(s) Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of street tree to be removed if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_

I (We), \_\_\_\_\_, owners of the real property at the address described above in Sunnyvale, California, do hereby agree to care for a replacement street tree(s) installed in the public right-of-way adjacent to our property for the next three years. We shall water the tree(s) as instructed by the City Arborist or per the street tree work permit. We also agree to inform the City Arborist of any problems or issues relating to the new street tree. I (We) also agree to replace at our expense the tree if dies due to lack of adequate water and care on our part within the three-year establishment period.

I (We) hereby authorize THE CITY OF SUNNYVALE, its employees, agents to have the exclusive right to trim, prune, remove, or otherwise control said tree as official street trees pursuant to Chapter 13.16 of the Sunnyvale Municipal Code; and to enter said property for the purposes of trimming, pruning, removing or otherwise controlling said tree.

**Acceptance of the replacement tree selected by the City is a requirement for participation in this program.**

Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner

**NOTE – The City of Sunnyvale funds the removal of a limited number of Liquidambar streets trees per year. Funding limits for the current fiscal year has been reached. We are currently accepting applications for fiscal year 2024/25, which begins July 1, 2024, can be submitted by mail, electronically and in person using the information above on a first come, first serve basis until funding limits are reached.**

The City's fiscal year cycle begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of the following year. Tree removals, stumping and replanting are done throughout the entire fiscal year cycle and are scheduled accordingly. All three steps may not happen at the same time and can happen several months apart.

All removal requests are subject to the City Council approved guidelines.



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## Liquidambar Street Tree Removal Program Information and Guidelines

In January 2013, the Sunnyvale City Council approved the restoration of the City's block pruning program on an average seven-year cycle, as well as provide other tree services. Annually, \$50,000 of the multi-year contract services will be dedicated to the removal of Liquidambar street trees.

The property owner must apply for a Liquidambar Street Tree Removal Program and pay a non-refundable permit fee. The permit cost is \$34.75. Applications are received on a first come, first serve basis. All removal requests are subject to the City Council approved guidelines below.

- One Liquidambar street tree may be removed per each 10 existing Liquidambar street trees per street block section (from cross street to cross street) per year excluding Liquidambar trees that have to be removed by the City due to disease, damage, decay or other hazard factors as determined by the Parks and Trees representative.
- Council has authorized the removal and replacement of Liquidambar Street trees due to their production of hard, spherical fruit balls that could present a trip and fall hazard to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- No two adjacent Liquidambar trees on the same property or adjoining properties may be removed in the same fiscal year.
- No more than 200 Liquidambar trees will be removed each fiscal year, this includes all reasons of removals.
- When there are more requests for Liquidambar street tree removals than can be allowed for the current fiscal year, a priority listing will be established ranking the removal requests by date and time of the request. Subsequent removals shall be granted for a given block section according to the established removal request listing for that block.
- The removed Liquidambar street tree shall be replaced with a minimum fifteen 15-gallon size standard nursery container tree or equivalent size as directed by the Superintendent of Parks and Trees from the existing Liquidambar tree replacement listing. Where an alternative replacement species has been previously established for a particular block segment, subsequent replacement trees shall be the same species unless, in the determination of the Urban Landscape Manager that the planting site cannot support said tree species.
- Property owner must agree to water and care for the new tree for three years after planting.
- If program funds are depleted in any given year then the property owner may submit a Street Tree Work Permit to remove the tree at their own cost or wait until the next year. The property owner is to provide evidence of homeowners insurance that covers public liability and property damage coverage and sign a release holding the City harmless of any liability due to actions in the course of the street tree removal and its replacement. The property owner shall hire a California State licensed contractor with a minimum license classification of C-61 limited D-49 – 'Tree Service' to perform the tree removal and replacement.

If you have questions or need more information, contact the Street Tree Program in the Parks Division at 408-730-7506, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. or email [parks@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:parks@sunnyvale.ca.gov).

# Liquidambar Removal Program Frequently Asked Questions

## Q. When will my liquidambar street tree be removed?

- A. The City's fiscal year cycle begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of the following year. Tree removals, stumping and replanting are completed throughout the entire fiscal year cycle. Notification will be given to you in the form of a door hanger notice two weeks before any work is to be done. All three steps may not happen at the same time and can happen several months apart.

## Q. Do I have to agree to a replacement tree?

- A. Yes. Applicants are required to replace the removed liquidambar street tree with a 15-gallon size replacement tree. If there is a concern about watering a replacement tree, applications can be moved to the next following year wait list. All the City Council approved requirements for the Liquidambar Removal Program can be found online at [sunnyvale.ca.gov](http://sunnyvale.ca.gov).

## Q. Can I choose my replacement tree?

No, the City Arborist determines the replacement tree species. Selection can depend on several factors including nearby species on your street block segment, vertical clearance (power lines), underground utilities, low water use, resistance to disease and others. Replacement trees for the Liquidambar Removal Program must be a similar species in size and nature to a liquidambar tree such as a Shumardi Oak or the tree species already planted/established on your block. Notification of the selected tree species for your location will be provided when the tree removal permit and tree watering agreement is signed by the property owner. **Acceptance of the replacement tree selected by the City is a requirement for participation in this program.**

## Q. Do I have to water my replacement street tree?

- A. Yes. Applicants are required to water their replacement street tree for the first three years and report any issues with their street tree by calling 408-730-7506 or via email at [parks@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:parks@sunnyvale.ca.gov).

## Q. I'm concerned about the drought, how much water does a new street tree require?

- A. During its first year after planting, a new street tree needs 5 to ten gallons of water weekly to maintain the overall health of the tree. That means a new tree will require 260-520 gallons of water the first year after it is planted at a yearly cost of \$5 or less. In comparison, a single toilet flush uses at least 1.5 gallons of water or more, so a new tree could be watered each week using the water for only 3 to 6 flushes.

## Q. Why do I need to remove rocks, plant material or fences around the base of the tree?

- A. If you have any river rocks, bricks, cobblestone, fencing, artificial grass or plant material such as hedges within 5 feet around the base of the tree, those items will need to be removed prior to the stumping and planting of the replacement tree. The City does not install décor around trees, it is the property owner's responsibility to remove these items as a condition of approval for this program. The stump grinding machine is a large and very heavy piece of equipment and the area will need to be cleared as a

matter of safety and to prevent damages to private property. If this issue does not apply to you, please disregard. Any underground utilities in this area such as water meters do not apply. They are not an issue.

**Q. There are roots that are growing in my front yard, will the City remove them?**

- A. The City does not provide root services. When the stump is removed it will be ground down to 6" below the soil surface in a diameter that is 2-3 times the diameter of the tree trunk depending upon the size of the trunk and site conditions. Any remaining roots are the responsibility of the property owner.