

Trees give us a link between the past, present and future. The City of Saratoga has a large variety of majestic trees that provide beauty and stateliness to the City. The City Council, with assistance from the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) and the City Arborist, has created a nomination process for identifying these important trees as Heritage Trees. Property owners are encouraged to seek heritage status for beautiful large trees on their property. Trees that are approved will be placed on the Heritage Tree Inventory.

What trees are eligible for heritage status?

Any tree within the limits of the City of Saratoga can be nominated by the owner of the tree for heritage tree status. The following criteria will be used in evaluating the tree for heritage status:

- 1) Specimen is outstanding, healthy with good structure, and shows potential for long life,
- 2) The tree is distinct because of its age, size, species or location, and
- 3) The tree is historically important and/or relative to: agriculture, social, cultural, aesthetic, educational or economic aspects of the community.

Who can nominate a tree for heritage status?

Heritage Trees may only be nominated by the property owner (owner of the tree). The owner will sign an application stating that they own the tree and are seeking heritage status. Community Development Department staff and/or the HPC can assist the property owner in filling out the application.

Is there a cost to nominate or maintain a tree with heritage status?

No. The status is honorary and does not add

restrictions to the care of the tree nor are there any costs associated with the designation.

Why would someone nominate a tree for heritage status?

Trees provide environmental, social and economic benefits for everyone. While nominations are submitted for different reasons, generally nominations are made because there is a deep appreciation of Saratoga trees, especially those of unusual size, historic or cultural significance, or other unique characteristics.

Who decides whether or not a tree will get heritage status?

The Heritage Preservation Commission will review nominated tree applications. The Commission will then forward the application with a recommendation to the Community Development Department for review. The Community Development Department will forward the application with a recommendation to the City Council for final determination.

How many trees have a heritage status?

As of July 2016, there are 42 trees on the Heritage Tree Inventory.

What happens if a heritage tree is on a development or construction site?

A heritage tree is classified as a protected tree. The Community Development Department requires that people disclose any protected tree on their property during the review process for any development or construction project. As required by City Code, a tree protection and preservation plan, approved by the City, is required during the development. The tree preservation plan states how the protected trees on site to be retained will be protected and preserved during the project.

Can a heritage tree be pruned?

Yes. The work is to be done according to proper pruning guidelines and by a qualified tree contractor under the supervision of an ISA-Certified arborist. No more than 25% of the tree's canopy may be removed without a permit. A permit is required for pruning more than twenty-five percent of the canopy of any protected tree within a two-year period. Pruning includes all work that cuts roots or branches of a tree. The 2001 edition of the International Society of Arboriculture Pruning Standards, known as ANSI A300 (Part 1), has been adopted by the City and establishes the criteria for tree pruning. Consultation with a certified arborist is strongly recommended as they can determine the type of pruning that is necessary to maintain or improve the health, appearance and safety of your tree. For questions regarding city requirements for pruning, please contact the City Arborist at (408) 868-1276.

Are additional regulatory requirements imposed for heritage trees?

Possibly. Any native tree that has a diameter at breast height (DBH) of six inches or greater or any other tree that has a DBH of ten inches or greater is classified as a protected tree. A heritage tree is classified as a protected tree regardless of its size. If a tree meets the size requirement for a protected tree, no additional regulatory requirements would be imposed for the heritage status. Regulatory requirements for protected trees consist of obtaining a permit from the City to remove, prune (as noted above), encroach upon, or perform any other work that could damage any protected tree. For further information, please contact the City Arborist at (408) 868-1276.

What happens if someone harms a Heritage Tree or cuts down a Heritage Tree without a permit?

It is unlawful to harm or remove any protected tree, including a Heritage Tree, without a permit. Violators will be subject to the penalties or remedies as described by City Code. For more detailed information, please read Section 15-50.170 of the City Code.

Will the designation continue if the property is sold?

Yes. The designation stays with the tree.

Can the heritage status be removed?

The HPC may recommend to the City Council that a designated tree be removed from the inventory when the status is no longer warranted.

Further Questions?

Contact Sung Kwon, Senior Planner, at (408) 868-1212 skwon@saratoga.ca.us

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**City of Saratoga
Community
Development
Department**



**HERITAGE TREE
INVENTORY**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS**

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