



October 29, 2025

City of Mountain View Parks and Recreation Commission
City Hall, 500 Castro Street
PO Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: 5.1 Heritage Tree Removal Application Appeal-151 Calderon Avenue

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission members:

GreenSpacesMV appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Heritage Tree Removal Application Appeal for 151 Calderon Avenue, which you will review at your meeting on October 29th.

As you know, we feel very strongly that all trees (including heritage trees) in Mountain View should be protected as much as possible. In fact, we need an *increase* in our overall tree canopy, not a decrease. At the same time, we acknowledge the pressure the City is subject to to provide more housing here. However, we must be aware of our priorities, especially if they conflict. With the work being done now on the Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan, more and more attention is falling on what Mountain View needs to do to protect our urban forest, something that we haven't always done very well. We feel strongly that this would be a case of outrageous application of City priorities if the removal of the trees is approved.

Bear in mind that the Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan will fail if we do not keep its principles in practice, even now ahead of its adoption. Similarly, we face challenges with protecting forest ecosystems and highway vegetation barriers where they provide health benefits (e.g., protection from CO₂, heat island mitigation, particulate matter, and ground level ozone) to both people and wildlife given we're lacking an updated Heritage Tree Ordinance, which we do anticipate through the Plan work. As you are aware, native trees are not only important for beauty, adaptability, sustainability and climate resilience, they also provide food sources, habitat, and perches for native bird species. We already know enough to be able to accurately gauge the directions the Plan is pointing us in. More housing is important, but not to the exclusion of all else, so let's please avoid being short sighted here or overly focused on housing needs alone.

In this case, the location for the proposed ADUs is simply inappropriate, no less given that they would presumably sit under or near existing transmission lines. Besides the stated need to cut down existing trees, the location is very close to both Stevens Creek and the Stevens Creek Trail both of which require special attention for any potential environmental impacts on them. Also, as it is now, that area has been used by tenants in the area as a small park. Residents can walk or bike

around and through it, play in it with their kids, have picnics. walk their pets, etc. and to simply enjoy its beauty.

Finally, we see that the ADU plans aren't included in the PRC packet. One reason the plans are relevant is that folks should be able to see the footprint they have in mind. How can anyone make design change suggestions otherwise, including PRC commissioners? We are told the plans will be provided during the meeting however.

We have one related question you might want to explore during your deliberations regarding the tree valuation calculus by the arborist: Do you know if the developer is obligated to remit the entire estimated amount as the in-lieu fee (>\$183K)? Or does the City still only require the replacement cost of 2X8 24"pot saplings?

Note that you are very likely to hear from individual GreenSpacesMV members on this as well. They might or might not mention affiliation with the organization, but we have been discussing this internally in advance of your meeting.

Also note that we agree with and support points made in the letter to you from the Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,
Bruce England for GreenSpacesMV

Cc:
Russell Hansen, Urban Forest Manager
Brenda Sylvia, Assistant Community Services Director
Kimbra McCarthy, City Manager
Heather Glaser, City Clerk

About GreenSpacesMV

GreenSpacesMV is made up of volunteer members who are primarily residents of Mountain View and are, therefore, direct stakeholders affected by what happens in our city. Our focus is on biodiversity, native, drought-tolerant, and pollinator-friendly landscaping, green complete streets, parks and other open spaces, including privately owned, publicly accessible (or POPA) park spaces, and so on.

For more information, see <https://www.facebook.com/GreenSpacesMV>.

To contact us, send email to GreenSpacesMV.info@gmail.com.