



## **HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA**

**6:00 PM - Monday, January 27, 2025**

*Sequoia Room, Los Altos Community Center, 97  
Hillview Avenue, Los Altos, CA*

**PARTICIPATION:** Members of the public may participate by being present at the Los Altos Community Meeting Chambers at Los Altos City Hall located at 1 N. San Antonio Rd, Los Altos, CA during the meeting. Public comment is accepted in person at the physical meeting location, or via email to [HCPublicComment@losaltosca.gov](mailto:HCPublicComment@losaltosca.gov).

**REMOTE MEETING OBSERVATION:** Members of the public may view the meeting via the link below, but will not be permitted to provide public comment via Zoom or telephone. Public comment will be taken in-person, and members of the public may provide written public comment by following the instructions below.

<https://tinyurl.com/43ezrvk5>

**Telephone: 1-253-215-8782 / Webinar ID: 833 0743 9307 / Passcode: 379393**

**SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS:** Verbal comments can be made in-person at the public hearing or submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Written comments can be mailed or delivered in person to the Development Services Department or emailed to [HCPublicComment@losaltosca.gov](mailto:HCPublicComment@losaltosca.gov).

Correspondence must be received by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting to ensure distribution prior to the meeting. Comments provided after 2:00 p.m. will be distributed the following day and included with public comment in the Historical Commission packet.

### **AGENDA**

#### **ESTABLISH QUORUM**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

*Members of the audience may bring to the Commission's attention any item that is not on the agenda. The Commission Chair will announce the time speakers will be granted before comments begin. Please be advised that, by law, the Planning Commission is unable to discuss or take action on issues presented during the Public Comment Period. According to State Law (also known as "The Brown Act") items must first be noted on the agenda before any discussion or action.*

#### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION**

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

These items will be considered by one motion unless any member of the Commission or audience wishes

to remove an item for discussion. Any item removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion will be handled at the discretion of the Chair.

**1. Historical Commission Minutes**

Approve the minutes of the special meeting of November 19, 2024.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**2. H24-0009 – City of Los Altos – 1 North San Antonio Road**

Request for a Historic Alteration Permit to remove and replace 22 apricot trees on a historic landmark property. This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15331 (“Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation”) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**DISCUSSION**

**3. City of Los Altos - Certified Local Government (CLG) Annual Report**

Request to review and approve the annual report to the State Office of Historic Preservation

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**4. City of Los Altos - Margaret Thompson Essay Contest**

Receive a status of the Margaret Thompson Essay Contest.

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

**POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**SPECIAL NOTICES TO PUBLIC**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and California Law, it is the policy of the City of Los Altos to offer its programs, services and meetings in a manner that is readily accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability and require information or materials in an appropriate alternative format; or if you require any other accommodation, please contact department staff. Advance notification within this guideline will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility.

Agendas, Staff Reports and some associated documents for the Planning Commission items may be viewed on the Internet at <http://losaltosca.gov/meetings>.

Decisions of the Historical Commission are final unless appealed by filing an appeal with the City Clerk within 14 calendar days of the decision. No building permits shall be issued during this 14-day period.



**SPECIAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**6:00 PM – Tuesday, November 19, 2024**

*Manzanita Room, Los Altos Community Center, 97 Hillview  
Avenue, Los Altos, CA*

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

At 6:00 p.m. the Chair called the meeting to order.

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Commissioners Adams, Atkinson, Coe and Maguire-Negus

STAFF: Senior Planner Gallegos

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Jane Packard from the Los Altos History Museum, Orchard Commons Committee spoke regarding the Los Altos Historical Orchard and an Eagle scout project, titled upgrading, existing signposts in the Heritage orchard

**CONSENT CALENDAR.**

**1. Zoning Administrator Meeting Minutes**

Approval of the DRAFT minutes of the regular meeting of November 19, 2024.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Adams to approve the Historical Commission minutes of August 26, 2024, seconded by Commissioner Maguire-Negus.

AYES: Adams, Atkinson, Coe and Maguire-Negus; NOES: None; ABSENT: None

The motion was approved (4-0).

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**2. H24-0008 – Todd Parmacek – 236 Eleanor Avenue**

Request for a Historic Advisory Review to allow the removal of the balcony along the front elevation. This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15331 (“Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation”) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). *Planner: Gallegos*

Staff member Sean Gallegos provided a presentation on the project.

Walter Chapman, designer and representative for owner delivered a presentation on the project.

Commissioners Atkinson, Coe, and Maguire-Negus had questions for the applicant.

Applicant responded to comments.

Chair Coe opened the public comment period.

No Public Comments.

The Commission discussed the historic advisory review permit project at 236 Eleanor Avenue

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Atkinson to approve the approve the historic advisory review permit (H24-0008) application based on the recommended findings and conditions of approval, seconded by Commissioner Adams.

AYES: Adams, Atkinson, Coe and Maguire-Negus; NOES: None; ABSENT: None

The motion was approved (4-0).

**3. HPA24-0001 – Todd Parmacek – 236 Eleanor Avenue**

Request to execute a Mills Act agreement for the Historic Resource property located at 236 Eleanor Avenue. This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15331 (“Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation”) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). *Planner: Gallegos*

Staff member Sean Gallegos provided a presentation on the project.

Walter Chapman, designer and representative for owner delivered a presentation on the project.

Chair Coe opened the public comment period.

No Public Comments.

The Commission discussed the Mills Act application at 236 Eleanor Avenue

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Adams to approve the approve the Mills Act application (HPA24-0001) application based on the recommended findings and conditions of approval, seconded by Commissioner Atkinson.

AYES: Adams, Atkinson, Coe and Maguire-Negus; NOES: None; ABSENT: None

The motion was approved (4-0).

**DISCUSSION**

**4. Commission Update and Work Plan Discussion**

Review ideas for the work plan discussion in January and discuss possible topics for the joint meeting with Council. *Planner: Gallegos*

Staff member Sean Gallegos provided a presentation on the item.

Chair Coe opened the public comment period.

No Public Comments.

Action: None. Commission directed staff to make the following revisions to workplan:

- a. For the project titled “Conduct Margaret Thompson Essay Contest,” the work plan shall be revised to show the following:
  - i. Commissioner Atkinson name is correctly spelled.
  - ii. The Notes column should include detail: “The Ice Cream Social is scheduled to take place on the same day as the first Council meeting in May.”
- b. For the project titled “Conduct the Historic Plaque program,” the work plan shall be revised to show the following:
  - i. The details in the Notes column should include detail: “Staff will provide status report at the Historical Commission meeting in April.”
- c. For the project titled “Historic Preservation Award,” the work plan shall be revised to show the following:
  - i. The Notes column should include detail:
    1. “Review nominations and vote on the historic preservation award recipient at the April Historical Commission meeting.”
    2. “The Ice Cream Social is scheduled to take place on the same day as the second Council meeting in May.”

## ADJOURNMENT

Chair Coe adjourned the meeting at 8:04 PM.

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Sean Gallegos  
Staff Liaison



## HISTORICAL COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

**Meeting Date:** January 27, 2025

**Subject:** Historic Alteration Permit at 1 North San Antonio Road

**Prepared by:** Sean Gallegos, Senior Planner

**Initiated by:** City of Los Altos

**Attachment:**  
1. Arborist Report

### Recommendation

Approve a Historic Alteration Permit (H24-0009) for the removal and replacement of twenty-two (22) apricot trees in the Civic Center Orchard per the recommended findings and conditions of approval; and find the project is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15331 (“Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation”) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

### Background

#### Property Description

The project site is located on the Civic Center complex, which is located on a block bound by Angela Drive to the north, Cielito Drive and Eleanor Avenue to the east, Hillview Avenue to the south, and San Antonio Road to the west. The civic center complex consists of City Hall, Los Altos Police Department, Los Altos Community Center, Los Altos Library, J. Gilbert Smith House, Los Altos History Museum, Hillview Baseball Field, Hillview Park, Bus Barn Theater, historic Civic Center Orchard, a playground, and parking and landscaping areas. The surrounding area is a mix of residential and commercial buildings.



Figure 1: Civic Center Site

Historic Landmark Status

In approximately 1901, J. Gilbert Smith purchased 10 acres of farmland in Los Altos to cultivate apricots and establish a homestead. After marrying Margaret Hill Smith, the couple developed a thriving apricot orchard on the land, contributing significantly to the area’s agricultural heritage.

In 1954, two years after Los Altos incorporated as a city, the Smiths sold the property to the City of Los Altos for the development of the Civic Center complex. Upon Margaret Smith’s death in 1973, the property fully reverted to the city, which has since taken responsibility for maintaining the orchard and replacing trees as necessary to preserve its historical significance.

The Civic Center Orchard was designated as a historical landmark in 1981 through Resolution No. 81-23, which included a legal description of the property boundaries. The resolution specified that “all other structures on the land, as well as a presently undefined portion of the orchard necessary to accommodate the future Council Chambers, are specifically excluded.” However, the resolution did not define the exact boundaries of the "undefined portion of the orchard," leaving certain areas outside the historic designation unclear.

On September 8, 1991, the City Council unanimously passed Resolution No. 91-31 modifying the orchard’s designated boundaries to clarify its historic landmark status. The Civic Center Orchard surrounds City Hall and is divided into two main areas: (1) a strip of land located east of San Antonio Road and west of City Hall, and (2) a larger area extending east of City Hall and west of the Lacey Building, encompassing land south of the surface parking lot and north of the Los Altos Library.

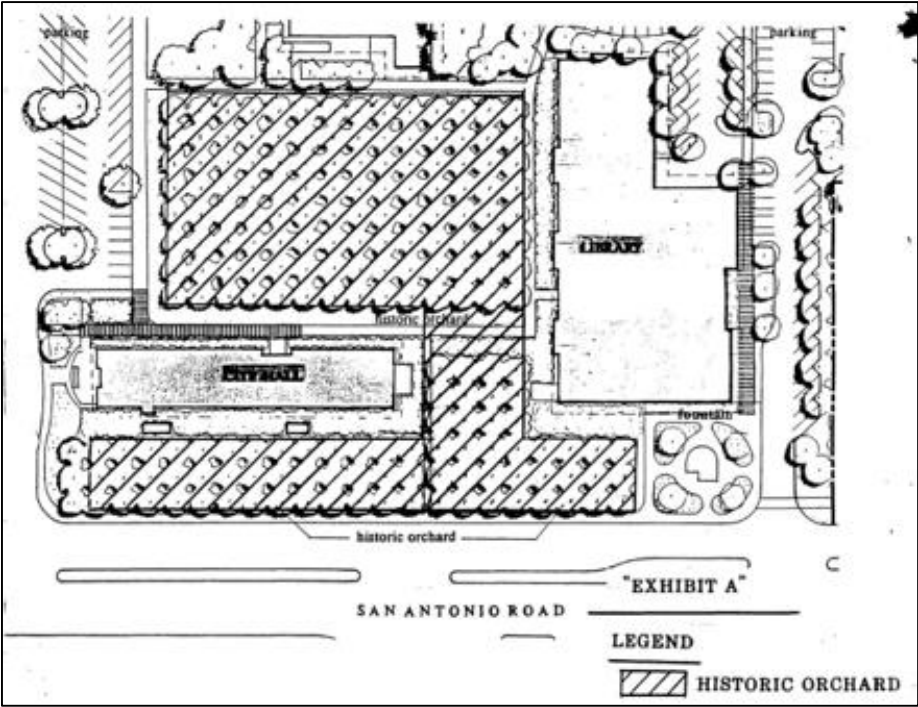


Figure 2: Historic Orchard Boundaries (91-31)

While the orchard's boundaries have remained unchanged since their modification in 1991, many of the trees within it have been replaced over time, as some have died or were removed due to disease. The number of trees within the orchard has varied over the years, and neither the original designation in 1981 nor the modification in 1991 established a fixed number of trees or designated planting sites. The orchard is currently organized into rectangular sections with orthogonal rows of trees.

## Analysis

The project involves the removal of twenty-two (22) dead apricot trees and their replacement with 22 new Blenheim variety apricot trees in the same location. According to an arborist report (Attachment 1) prepared by Backyard Orchards/Orchardscapes, the existing trees succumbed to a combination of pre-existing fungal infections and stress caused by insufficient irrigation during the 2023 growing season. Additionally, the trees were affected by the disease *Pseudomonas syringae*, a virulent pathogen that can kill trees outright during winter. Due to the severity of the disease, there are no viable measures to control or mitigate its spread, leaving the removal of the affected trees as the only effective solution.

The replacement process aims to preserve the orchard's historical and cultural significance while supporting its continued vitality as a living resource. Special care will be taken during the removal and replanting process to minimize disruption to the existing landscape and maintain the orchard's traditional layout of orthogonal rows.

The proposed project was analyzed for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Of the four prescribed treatments for historic properties outlined in the Standards, Rehabilitation provides the most appropriate set of standards for the project. Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are designed to be applied to all historic resource types—buildings, sites, structures, landscapes, districts, and objects. The following is an analysis of the proposed project with the Standards.

*Standard 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

The project complies with **Standard 1**, and the historic apricot orchard will maintain its agricultural use, with the proposed changes supporting its ongoing function as an apricot orchard.

*Standard 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

The project complies with **Standard 2**, which requires that the historic character of a property be retained and preserved, and that the removal of historic materials or



alteration of features and spaces that define the property be avoided. The proposed project does not involve the removal of any character-defining features of the orchard as the dead trees will be replaced with new viable trees in the same locations.

This replacement approach ensures that the orchard's historic layout, species composition, and cultural significance are preserved. The replanting process is designed to maintain the visual and spatial integrity of the orchard. By replacing the dead trees with species true to the orchard's history and design, the project aligns with the intent of Standard 2 to retain and preserve the property's historic character while addressing necessary maintenance and sustainability.

*Standard 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

The proposed project complies with **Standard 3**, ensuring that the Civic Center Orchard is preserved as an authentic representation of its historical period and agricultural use. The project does not propose adding conjectural features, architectural elements, or any modifications that could create a false sense of historical development. Instead, the removal of twenty-two (22) dead apricot trees and their replacement with Blenheim variety apricot trees is consistent with the orchard's historical purpose and character.

*Standard 4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

The proposed project complies with **Standard 4** as it does not involve changes that have acquired independent historic significance. The removal of dead apricot trees and their replacement with Blenheim variety trees preserves the orchard's historic character and agricultural purpose. No modifications with independent historic significance are being altered, and the project ensures the orchard maintains its historical integrity while supporting its continued vitality.

*Standard 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

The project complies with **Standard 5** as the Civic Center Orchard's historic significance is defined by its layout of apricot trees, not construction techniques or craftsmanship. The orchard's distinctive tree arrangement will be retained, and dead trees will be replaced with historically consistent Blenheim variety apricot trees. This approach preserves the orchard's historical integrity while maintaining its agricultural function and distinctive organization.

*Standard 6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where*

*possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

The proposed project complies with **Standard 6** by addressing the removal and replacement of deteriorated historic features in the Civic Center Orchard. While the twenty-two (22) dead apricot trees are being removed, they will be replaced with Blenheim variety apricot trees, which are consistent with the original species planted in the orchard. Although the original trees are being removed due to their deteriorated condition, the new trees will preserve the orchard's historical character by matching the species, layout, and agricultural purpose of the original planting. This approach ensures that the orchard maintains its historical integrity while supporting its continued function as a living agricultural resource.

*Standard 7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

**Standard 7** is not applicable to the project. However, there are no proposed chemical or physical treatments to the historic resource.

*Standard 8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

The project consists of the removal and replacement of twenty-two (22) trees. The proposed project complies with **Standard 8** because the chance to affect significant archeological resources is unlikely; however, if such archeological resources were found during construction, as conditioned in the staff report, a professional and qualified archaeologist shall assess further and provide mitigation measures accordingly.

*Standard 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

There are no additions, exterior alterations or relocated new construction proposed as part of the project. The proposed project complies with **Standard 9** by replacing the deteriorated apricot trees with Blenheim variety apricot trees, consistent with the orchard's original planting. The new trees will preserve the orchard's historic layout, scale, and agricultural function, ensuring the orchard's historical integrity is maintained. This approach protects the orchard's character while supporting its continued use as a living agricultural resource.

Standard 10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

The proposed project complies with **Standard 10** by ensuring that no new construction will alter or diminish the historic significance of the Civic Center Orchard. The project involves the removal of dead apricot trees and their replacement with Blenheim variety apricot trees, which are consistent with the orchard's original planting. No new structures or built features will be introduced to the orchard, and the landscape will remain focused on its agricultural purpose.

Based on this analysis, the project complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

### **Environmental Review**

The project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15331 (Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines because the project consists of the rehabilitation of a historical resource consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

### **Public Notification**

A public meeting notice was posted on the property, mailed to property owners within a 300' radius, and published in the newspaper.

## FINDINGS

With regard to the Historical Alteration Permit, the Historical Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 12.44.140 of the Municipal Code:

1. The project complies with all provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 12.44) due to the project not adversely affecting the physical integrity or the historic significance of the subject property, and the project being in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties; and
2. The project does not adversely affect the physical integrity or historic significance of the Civic Center Apricot Orchard, one of the last active orchards in Los Altos. It preserves the orchard's historical and cultural integrity, reflecting the city's agricultural roots and the legacy of J. Gilbert Smith. The orchard retains its historical significance through its location, design, setting, and association. While the twenty-two (22) dead apricot trees are being removed, they will be replaced with Blenheim variety apricot trees, consistent with the original species. This replacement preserves the orchard's historical character, layout, and agricultural purpose, ensuring its continued function as a living resource.
3. The project complies with Standards 1-4 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. It preserves the historic apricot orchard with minimal alterations, ensuring the orchard's defining characteristics are maintained (Standard 1). The removal and replacement of twenty-two (22) apricot trees with Blenheim variety apricot trees aligns with the original species, preserving the orchard's layout, species composition, and cultural significance (Standard 2). No historically significant features are altered (Standard 3), and the project avoids introducing conjectural elements or modifications that could distort the orchard's historical development (Standard 4). This approach ensures the orchard retains its historical integrity while supporting its continued agricultural use.

The project complies with Standards 5-10 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The orchard's layout and species composition are preserved by replacing dead trees with Blenheim variety apricots, consistent with the original plantings (Standard 5). No historic features are irreversibly altered (Standard 6), and there is no chemical or physical treatment that would negatively impact the orchard's historic character (Standard 7). There is no new construction that affects the site's historical significance (Standard 8). The project avoids conjectural features, maintaining the orchard's integrity (Standard 9). Finally, it preserves the orchard's agricultural use and cultural value, with no alterations to its historic landscape (Standard 10).

4. The project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15331 (Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines because the project consists of the rehabilitation of a historical resource consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties.

## CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. **Expiration:** The approval will expire on January 27, 2027, unless prior to the date of expiration the project has been executed, or an extension is granted pursuant to the procedures and timeline for extensions in the Zoning Code.
2. **Approved Plans:** The approval is based on the plans and materials received on December 11, 2024, except as modified by these conditions as specified below.
3. **Revisions to the Approved Project:** Minor revisions to the approved plans which are found to be in substantial compliance with the approval may be approved by the Development Services Director.
4. **Indemnity and Hold Harmless:** The applicant/owner agrees to indemnify, defend, protect, and hold the City harmless from all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by the City or held to be the liability of the City in connection with the City's defense of its actions in any proceedings brought in any State or Federal Court, challenging any of the City's action with respect to the applicant's project. The City may withhold final maps and/or permits, including temporary or final occupancy permits, for failure to pay all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by the City in connection with the City's defense of its actions.
5. **Notice of Right to Protest:** The conditions of project approval set forth herein include certain fees, dedication requirements, reservation requirements, and other exactions. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66020(d)(1), these conditions constitute written notice of a statement of the amount of such fees, and a description of the dedications, reservations, and other exactions. You are hereby further notified that the 90-day period in which you may protest these fees, dedications, reservations, and other exactions pursuant to Government Code Section 66020(a) began on the date of approval of this project. If you fail to file a protest within this 90-day period complying with all of the requirements of Section 66020, you will be legally barred from later challenging such exactions.
6. **Tree Removal Approved:** Trees Nos. Ac03, Be06, Be11, Bi11, Bg13, Bg12, Bh01, Bh10, Bh13, Bi06, Bi13, Cc01, Cc11, Cc12, Cd11, Cd13, Ce10, Cf10, Ch12, Ch14, Da22 and Db15 shown to be removed on the site plan of the arborist report prepared by Backyard Orchards/Orchardscapes are hereby approved for removal.
7. **Replacement Trees:** The applicant shall replace each tree being removed with one Blenheim apricot (*Prunus armeniaca*) tree, resulting in a total of 22 replacement trees in the same location as the tree being removed.

Terence Welch  
Backyard Orchards/Orchardscapes  
I.S.A. Certified Arborist WE-0153A  
831-400-8565  
[twelch6000@icloud.com](mailto:twelch6000@icloud.com)

#### Arborist Report

All of the trees to be removed are Apricots, Prunus armeniaca. The variety is Blenheim, which was the traditional variety planted in the Santa Clara valley for drying and canning.

The next page, entitled "Tree Removal Permit Documentation" shows a thumbnail photo of each tree. All are orchard trees. Six large trees (10-14 inches circumference) died probably due to a combination of pre-existing fungal infections, and stress due to insufficient irrigation during the 2023 growing season. Others were planted 4-5 years ago, but died of a disease called Pseudomonis syringae. This disease is very virulent, and kills trees outright when the right weather conditions occur during winter (generally frost and rain). Common names include Blossom Blast, and Bacterial Canker. There is no effective control, organically or conventionally.

All of the trees to be removed are dead, or have died and the rootstock has grown up.

Submitted by: Terence Welch (see contact info above)

Terence Welch  
Backyard Orchards/Orchardscapes  
I S A Certified Arborist WE-0153A  
831-400-8565  
twelch6000@icloud.com

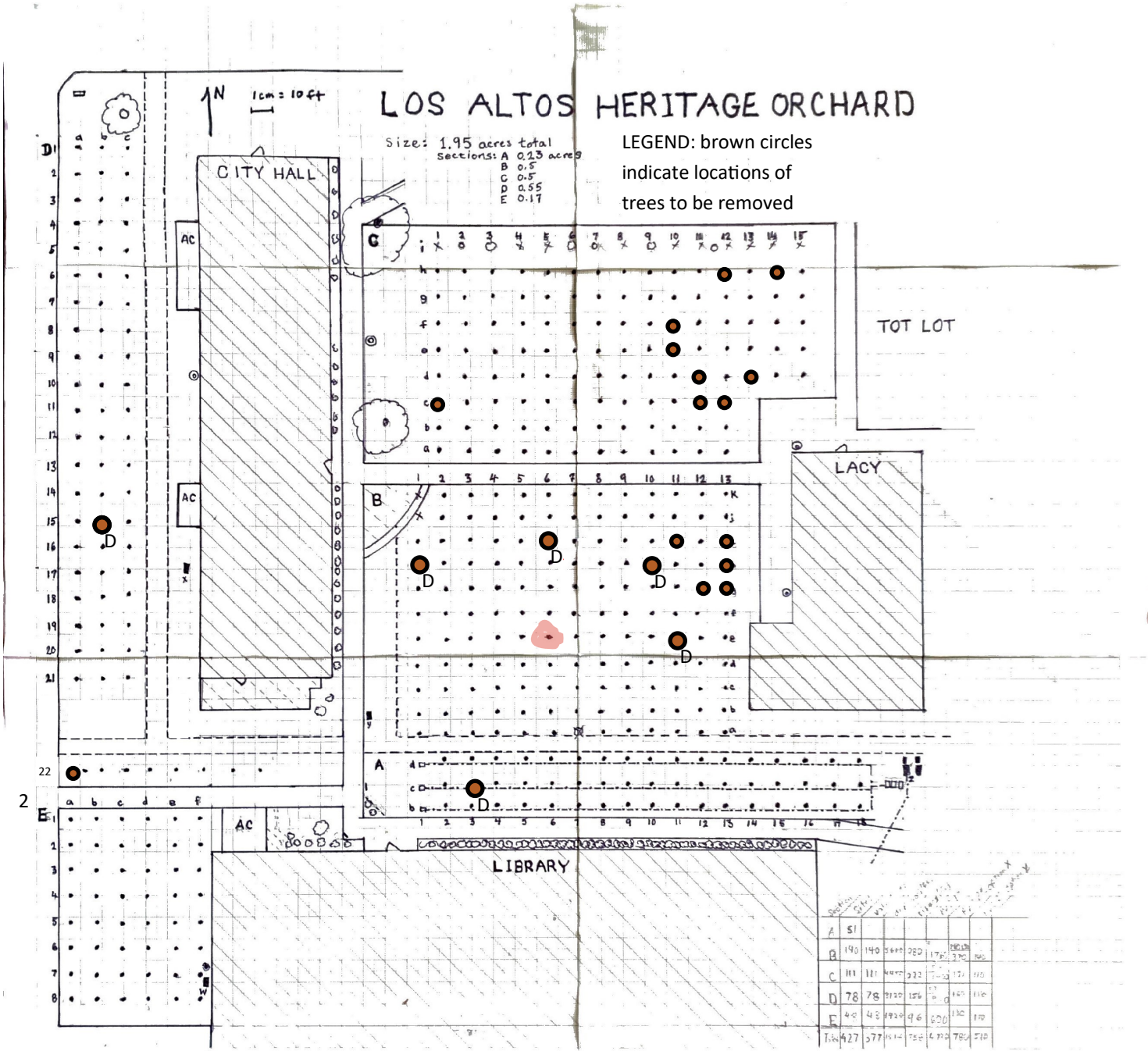
Replacement Plan

All removed trees will be replaced with a bare root apricot tree within the next 1-3 years. These trees will be planted in winter, when dormant

Since the orchard is being managed organically, we cannot use chemicals to sterilize the soil of old apricot tree diseases. The following measures, and perhaps others, will be used to reduce harmful organisms before re-planting:

1. Fallow the soil
2. Leave a hole open to air and sun
3. Cover crop with non woody plants
4. Treat with mustard meal
5. Apply compost

Submitted by: Terence Welch (see contact info above)





















**Tree Removal Permit Documentation November 15, 2024**

Species: Apricot, Blenheim variety (*Prunus armeniaca*)







Location: Los Altos Heritage Orchard, 1 N San Antonio Rd. Los Altos, CA 94022

Tree site location codes: Section, row, numbered site in row (e.g. Be11 is in Section B, row e, site 11)

LOCATION	PHOTO	CIRCUMFERENCE	COMMENTS
Ac03		24 inches	Dead; no irrigation during 2023; indicators of fungal infection (brown and curled yellowish leaves, gummosis, wilted twigs, dead branches); did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024. Data from ePlant tag flat lined
Be06		22 inches	Dying; no irrigation during 2023; indicators of fungal infection (brown and curled yellowish leaves, gummosis, wilted twigs, dead branches); did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024.
Be11		19 inches	Dead; no irrigation during 2023; indicators of fungal infection (brown leaves, gummosis, wilted twigs, dead limbs); did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024.
Bi11		7 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Bg13		5 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Bg12		6 inches	Apricot branches dead; suckers from root stock live; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Bh01		22 inches	Dead; no irrigation during 2023; indicators of fungal infection (brown leaves, gummosis, wilted twigs, dead limbs); did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024.

Bh10		14 inches	Dead; no irrigation during 2023; indicators of fungal infection (brown leaves, gummosis, wilted twigs, dead limbs); did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024.
Bh13		7 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Bi06		22 inches	Dead; no irrigation during 2023; indicators of fungal infection (brown leaves, gummosis, wilted twigs, dead limbs); did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024.
Bi13		6 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Cc01		5 inches	Dead; planted February 2024; newly emergent leaves denuded by ground squirrels
Cc11		5 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Cc12		7 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Cd11		7 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Cd13		7 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024



Ce10		6 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Cf10		5 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Ch12		6 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Ch14		6 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Da22		7 inches	Dead; planted March 2020; symptoms consistent with Pseudomonas bacterial infection of buds during unusually stormy winter of 2022/23; not irrigated during 2023; did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024
Db15		11 inches	Dead; no irrigation during 2023; indicators of fungal infection (curled yellowish and brown leaves, gummosis, wilted twigs); did not revive with drip irrigation during 2024.



51 South San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, California 94022  
www.LosAltosHistory.org  
650.948.9427

January 27, 2025

City of Los Altos Historical Commission  
1 N. San Antonio Rd.  
Los Altos, CA 94022

*Los Altos History Museum gathers and presents compelling stories and artifacts that bridge the past and the present by fostering the creative energy of staff and volunteers to challenge established narratives and produce engaging educational programs and exhibits for the community.*

**Board of Directors**

- Vicki Holman**, President
- Kuljeet Kalkat**, 1st Vice President
- Margo Horn**, 2nd Vice President
- Wayne Hooper**, Treasurer
- Jay Thomas**, Secretary
- Gerri Acers**                      **Allison Aldrich**
- Wynn Belton**                    **Christopher Fling**
- Tyler Furuichi**                **Rebecca Lowell**
- Cindy Bogard O’Gorman**
- Jennifer Springer**    **Jeanine Valadez**
- Jung Yoon**
- Sophie Filer**, Youth Director

**Staff**

- Anna Toledano, PhD**, Executive Director
- Amy Ellison, PhD**, Curator and Director of Exhibitions
- Diane Holcomb**, Director of Communications
- Sophia Abarca**, Curator of Collections
- Lisa Porter**, Rental Events Marketing Manager
- Barbara Klein**, Bookkeeper
- Faustino Carrillo**, Gardener

Los Altos History Museum’s legal name is the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum; tax i.d. number 94-2542813. We are a 501(c)(3) organization and your gifts are tax deductible.

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing with regards to Item 2 on the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the Historical Commission on Monday, January 27, “Request for a Historic Alteration Permit to remove and replace 22 apricot trees on a historic landmark property.”

On behalf of the Los Altos History Museum, I find the report to be comprehensive and commend the quality of the work of City staff. I support the actions that City staff recommend.

Sincerely,

Anna Toledano, PhD  
Executive Director



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**Public Comment HC 1/27/25 meeting re: 22 trees alteration request**

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**From** Alice Mansell <alice@mansell.com>

**Date** Mon 1/27/2025 1:21 PM

**To** Public Comment - HC <HCpubliccomment@losaltosca.gov>

Los Altos Historical Commission meeting 1/27/25  
Public Comment for Agenda item #2

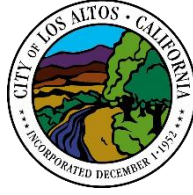
Los Altos City Hall is requesting an Historic Alteration Permit for the City's historic orchard which sounds on its face to be a simple dead tree removal and replace request but it is not simple. Before the City contracted with the Los Altos History Museum (LAHM) in Summer 2023 to maintain and rehabilitate the orchard there was no California State required Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) to define clearly through the Historic Commission's public due process what should be the standards of care for, how to coordinate the orchard with all its historical context lands and the surviving orchardist house, nor define the precise boundaries of the historic orchard. There is to date no publically available LAHM Maintenance Plan (due January 2024) or an Annual Report (due by August 2024) for the public to know precisely why trees are dying under the 1.5+ years of LAHC's care. Until such plans and reports are available for public review at HC, I urge the HC to deny this request to replace and remove any orchard trees. The recent die-off rate of trees is extraordinarily below the death rates of fruit trees in other local orchards indicating a lack of due care. The arborist/orchardist company hired by LAHM specializes in home garden orchards, many merely ornamental gardens, whose landowners can afford to pay for large replacement trees if any die from any lack of care.

Neither a complete HRE by qualified professionals as warranted in support of alterations to this landmark resource nor a Cumulative EIR has been done to date. Both an HRE and EIR are necessary to understand any of the initial replantings and other work on the orchard including since Fall 2023 the already replaced trees, abandonment of tree sites, and the partial irrigation installed in Fall 2023, as well as new gougings into the boundaries of the heritage orchard with unchecked City's developments from the carve-out for the proposed LALE library courtyard and new LAYC/staff offices' HVAC fenced yard and newly fenced patios as well as the staff's Summer 2024 proposed new paved parking spaces on orchard lands for the Dog Park's library parking mitigation.

An HRE was supposed to be done as required by law last year at least for the orchard land the City in November 2023 approved LALE to use for a new library courtyard, as well as the apparent permanent disappearances beginning in 2024 of 40%+ of trees and tree sites removed for new underground utilities and the abandonment in September 2024 of the "North East Grove" of all apricot trees expressly noted on the current State Primary Document for the entire orchard historic resource. Please note, City staffers' have proposed on at least two existing and staff-discretionary permitted construction plans (some work already due for completion by Spring 2025) multiple new paved parking spaces and other new pavement on orchard lands for the LAYC conversion to private staff offices (\$4.5M+) and EOC (\$800k+) projects while the Dog Park (\$1M) final plans with its lost-library parking mitigation designs are not yet public.

Agenda Item 2.

Alice Mansell  
Attorney at law  
Los Altos, California



**HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
AGENDA REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** January 27, 2025

**Subject:** Certified Local Government (CLG) Annual Report

**Prepared by:** Sean Gallegos, Senior Planner

**Initiated by:** City of Los Altos

**Attachment:**

1. CLG Report
2. 2023 to 2024 Historical Commission Minutes

**Recommendation**

Approve the 2023 to 2024 Certified Local Government Report per the recommended conditions of approval

**Background**

The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program is a partnership among local governments, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the National Park Service (NPS) to promote historic preservation at the local level. Established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the program provides technical assistance, resources, and funding opportunities to communities that demonstrate a commitment to preserving their historic and cultural heritage.

In California, the program is administered by the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). Local governments that meet the program's requirements, including having an active historic preservation ordinance and a qualified historic preservation commission, are eligible for CLG certification.

Key benefits of the CLG program include:

1. **Grant Opportunities:** Access to federal Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grants, which are exclusively available to CLGs, to support preservation planning, surveys, education, and rehabilitation projects.
2. **Technical Assistance:** Ongoing guidance and training provided by the OHP to support local preservation efforts.

- 3. Increased Recognition:** CLG status demonstrates a community's commitment to preservation, fostering public trust and engagement.

Participation in the program also reinforces a local government's role in the broader federal and state preservation framework. By becoming a CLG, communities ensure their preservation efforts align with national standards and best practices.

Currently, California has over 90 designated CLG communities, including the City of Los Altos, each contributing to the protection and enhancement of historic resources statewide. Local governments participating in the program play a critical role in preserving California's diverse heritage while benefiting from access to resources and funding to support these efforts.

### **Analysis**

The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program Annual Report is a critical document submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) to detail the local government's preservation activities and compliance with CLG program requirements. This report, covering the period from October 2023 to September 2024, provides a comprehensive summary of commission activities, changes to the Historic Resource Inventory, and training undertaken by commission members.

The annual report includes the following key components:

- 1. Commission Meetings:**
  - A detailed summary of all historic preservation commission meetings held between October 2023 and September 2024. This includes the number of meetings conducted, attendance records, and an overview of agenda items and key decisions.
  - Specific focus on significant actions, such as the review of preservation projects, decisions on certificates of appropriateness, or recommendations for resource designations.
- 2. Historic Resource Inventory Updates:**
  - Documentation of any updates to the Historic Resource Inventory, including new resources identified, properties evaluated, or any changes in status (e.g., properties added, removed, or reclassified).
  - A summary of survey efforts or preservation studies completed during the reporting period that contributed to enhancing the inventory and identifying additional historic or cultural assets.
- 3. Commission Training:**
  - A record of training sessions attended by commission members and staff, as required by the CLG program to ensure commissioners are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively.
  - Topics covered during training sessions, such as design review best practices, legal and procedural responsibilities, and updates on federal and state historic preservation regulations.



- An explanation of how these trainings have enhanced the commission's ability to fulfill its mission.
4. **Preservation Activities and Community Engagement:**
- Highlights of key preservation initiatives undertaken during the reporting period, such as National Preservation Month events, public workshops, or collaborations with community organizations.
  - Efforts to educate the public and increase awareness of local historic preservation efforts, including outreach campaigns, tours, or informational materials.

The 2023-2024 CLG Annual Report serves as both an accountability tool and a reflection of the community's dedication to historic preservation. It demonstrates the commission's active role in protecting and enhancing local historic resources while maintaining compliance with state and federal standards. By documenting the accomplishments of the past year, the report underscores the ongoing value of the CLG program in promoting sustainable preservation practices and fostering community pride in its historic and cultural heritage.

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

1. **Approved Report:** The approval is based on the Certified Local Government Report and attachments, except as modified by these conditions as specified below.
2. **Revisions to the Approved Report:** Minor revisions to the approved document and attachments which are found to be in substantial compliance with the approval may be approved by the Development Services Director.

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This a Word form with expanding text fields and check boxes. It will probably open as Read-Only. Save it to your computer before you begin entering data. This form can be saved and reopened.

Because this is a WORD form, it will behave generally like a regular Word document except that the font, size, and color are set by the text field.

- Start typing where indicated to provide the requested information.
- Click on the check box to mark either yes or no.
- To enter more than one item in a particular text box, just insert an extra line (Enter) between the items.

Save completed form and email as an attachment to [info.calshpo@parks.ca.gov](mailto:info.calshpo@parks.ca.gov). You can also convert it to a PDF and send as an email attachment. Use the Acrobat tab in WORD and select Create and Attach to Email. You can then attach the required documents to that email. If the attachments are too large (greater than 10mb total), you will need to send them in a second or third email.

## Name of CLG

City of Los Altos

Report Prepared by: Sean Gallegos, Senior Planner

Date of commission/board review: January 27, 2025

## MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

### I. Enforce Appropriate State or Local Legislation for the Designation and Protection of Historic Properties.

#### A. Preservation Laws

1. Are you considering amending or revising your certified ordinance this year?

**REMINDER:** Pursuant to the *CLG Agreement*, the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) must have the opportunity to review and comment on ordinance changes prior to adoption. Please communicate directly with the OHP Local Government Unit staff to coordinate the review. Changes that do not meet the CLG requirements could affect certification status.

No amendments or revisions to the Historic Preservation Ordinance were adopted during the reporting period.

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

2. Provide an electronic link to your ordinance or appropriate section(s) of the municipal/zoning code.

[https://library.municode.com/ca/los\\_altos/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodetid=TIT12BUCO\\_CH12.44HIPR](https://library.municode.com/ca/los_altos/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodetid=TIT12BUCO_CH12.44HIPR)

## B. New Local Landmark Designations (Comprehensive list of properties/districts designated during the reporting.

1. During the reporting period, October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024, what properties/districts have been locally designated?

Property Name/Address	Date Designated	If a district, number of contributors	Date Recorded by County Recorder
None	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Reminder:** Pursuant to California Government Code § 27288.2, “the county recorder shall record a certified resolution establishing an historical resources designation issued by the State Historical Resources Commission or a local agency, or unit thereof.”

2. What properties/districts have been de-designated this past year? For districts, include the total number of resource contributors.

Property Name/Address	Date Removed	Reason
None	N/A	N/A

## C. Historic Preservation Element/Plan

1. Do you address historic preservation in your general plan?
 

No  
 Yes, in a separate historic preservation element.

Yes, it is included in another element.

Provide an electronic link to the historic preservation section(s) of the General Plan or to the separate historic preservation element.

[https://www.losaltosca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/community\\_development/page/39021/communitydesignhistoricresourceselement.pdf](https://www.losaltosca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/community_development/page/39021/communitydesignhistoricresourceselement.pdf)

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

## D. Review Responsibilities

### 1. Who takes responsibility for design review or Certificates of Appropriateness?

- All projects subject to design review go the commission.
- Some projects are reviewed at the staff level without commission review.  
What is the threshold between staff-only review and full-commission review?

### 2. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

- Explain the historic preservation staff and commission role in *providing input* to CEQA documents prepared for or by the local government.

*The majority of projects that are reviewed by the Historical Commission are exempt from CEQA review. For a project that is subject to CEQA review and listed in the City's Historical Resources Inventory, an initial study of environmental effects would be required. The Historical Commission would review the project prior to the start of the initial study and the Commission's input would be incorporated into the initial study as applicable.*

- Explain the staff and commission role in *reviewing* CEQA documents for projects that are proposed within the jurisdiction of the local government.

*The majority of projects that are reviewed by the Historical Commission are exempt from CEQA review. For a project that is subject to CEQA review and listed in the City's Historical Resources Inventory, the Historical Commission would review the CEQA documents and provide comments, if any, prior to the CEQA documents reviewed by the City Council.*

### 3. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

- Explain the staff and commission role in *providing input* to Section 106 documents prepared for, or by, the local government.

*Staff would take the lead on providing any input on Section 106 documents and, if appropriate and/or required by City Ordinance, seek input from the Historical Commission.*

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

- Explain the staff and commission role in *reviewing* Section 106 documents for projects that are proposed within the jurisdiction of the local government?

*Staff would take the lead on providing any input on Section 106 documents and, if appropriate and/or required by City Ordinance, seek input from the Historical Commission.*

## **II. Establish an Adequate and Qualified Historic Preservation Review Commission by State or Local Legislation.**

### **A. Commission Membership**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Professional Discipline</b>	<b>Date Appointed</b>	<b>Date Term Ends</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Jonathan Adams	Accountant	October 2022	September 2026	<a href="mailto:leadams@sonic.net">leadams@sonic.net</a>
Russell Bartlett	Aerospace (retired)	October 2020	September 2024	<a href="mailto:bartlettjr@gmail.com">bartlettjr@gmail.com</a>
Liza Coe	Aeronautics and Planetary Science	October 2022	September 2026	<a href="mailto:liza.coe55@gmail.com">liza.coe55@gmail.com</a>
Larry Lang	Start-Up CEO	October 2020	September 2024	<a href="mailto:llang@larrylang.net">llang@larrylang.net</a>
Kirk B. Paige	Senior Technologist with the City of Palo Alto	October 2020	September 2024	<a href="mailto:oh_bother@pacbell.net">oh_bother@pacbell.net</a>

Attach resumes and Statement of Professional Qualifications forms for all members.

1. If you do not have two qualified professionals on your commission, explain why the professional qualifications have not been met and how professional expertise is otherwise being provided.

*The Los Altos Historical Commission currently has no qualified professionals as commissioners. Since Los Altos is a smaller community and the Commission is filled by volunteers, it is always a challenge to recruit qualified professionals to sit on the Historical Commission. However, it should be noted that while the other members of the Commission are not technically "professionals", they include real estate professionals, professors, and local residents; all of whom have a professional understanding about various aspects of historical preservation and contribute valuable insight and knowledge into the historic review process. For all projects reviewed by the Historical Commission, the Commission requires the preparation of professional historic reports (i.e. Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Evaluations, Historic Resource Evaluation, etc.) by qualified historic professionals to evaluate historic applications consistent with the Historic Preservation*

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

*Ordinance and the California Environmental Quality Act." Historic professionals must meet the Professional Qualification Standards from the National Parks Service.*

2. If all positions are not currently filled, why is there a vacancy, and when will the position be filled?

*The Historical Commission did not have vacancies during the reporting period.*

## B. Staff to the Commission/CLG staff

1. Is the staff to your commission the same as your CLG coordinator?  Yes     No
2. If not, please provide the Commission staff member's contact information.
3. If the position(s) is not currently filled, why is there a vacancy?

Attach resumes and Statement of Professional Qualifications forms for staff.

Name/Title	Discipline	Dept. Affiliation	Email Address
Sean Gallegos, Senior Planner	Urban Planning and Architecture	Development Services Department, Planning Division	<a href="mailto:sgallegos@losaltosca.gov">sgallegos@losaltosca.gov</a>

## C. Attendance Record

Please complete the commission meeting attendance chart for each commissioner and staff member. Commissions are required to meet a minimum of four times a year. If you haven't met at least four times, explain why not.

Commissioner/Staff	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Jonathan Adams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Russell Bartlett	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liza Coe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Larry Lang	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

Kirk B. Paige	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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## D. Training Received

Please indicate the specific training each commissioner received last year.

**Reminder:** It is a CLG requirement that all commissioners and staff to the commission attend at least one training program relevant to your commission each year. It is up to the CLG to determine the relevancy of the training.

Commissioner/Staff Name	Training Title & Description (including method presentation, e.g., webinar, workshop)	Duration of Training	Training Provider	Date
Jonathan Adams	No Training	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.
Russell Bartlett	No Training	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.
Liza Coe	No Training	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.
Larry Lang	No Training	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.
Kirk B. Paige	No Training	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.

## III. Maintain a System for the Survey and Inventory of Properties that Furthers the Purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act

### A. Historical Contexts: initiated, researched, or developed in the reporting year (excluding those funded by the OHP)

**Reminder:** California CLG procedures require CLGs to submit survey results, including historic contexts, to the OHP. If you have not done so, submit an electronic copy or link if available online with this report.



# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

Context Name	Description	How it is Being Used	Date Submitted to the OHP
N/A	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

## B. New Surveys or Survey Updates (excluding those funded by the OHP)

**Note:** The evaluation of a single property is not a survey. Also, material changes to a property that is included in a survey, is not a change to the survey and should not be reported here.

Survey Area	Context Based-yes/no	Level: Reconnaissance or Intensive	Acreage	# of Properties Surveyed	Date Completed	Date Submitted to the OHP
N/A	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.	Type here.

Explain how you are using the survey data: Type here.

## IV. Provide for Adequate Public Participation in the Local Historic Preservation Program

### A. Public Education

Has your CLG undertaken any public outreach, training, or publications programs this year? How were the commissioners and staff involved? Please provide an electronic link to all publications or other products not previously provided to the OHP.

Item or Event	Description	Date
40 <sup>th</sup> Annual Margaret Thompson Essay Contest	The contest was open to students in grades third through sixth and essays were submitted by 300 students from eight Los Altos schools. The essay contest theme for the 2023 Essay Contest is "A Path to Conservation Inspired by Wallace Stegner." Wallace Stegner was at the forefront of the modern conservation movement. He was a visionary who understood how important wilderness is to human beings. Mr. Stegner brought awareness	Type here.

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

Item or Event	Description	Date
	<p>locally, nationally, and globally to the importance of the environment and conservation. In 1962, he co-founded Green Foothills, a local environmental organization, which led to the development of MidPeninsula Regional Open Space and their work in preserving wilderness areas and natural open spaces for all to enjoy.</p> <p>The essay writers were asked to visit the Museum grounds anytime to view this outdoor exhibit by March 5. The exhibit begins in front of the J. Gilbert Smith House. Learn about the impact Wallace Stegner had on the conservation movement as you stroll the Museum grounds and access photos, videos, and audio recordings via QR codes on your electronic device.</p> <p>In this essay, each student was to write about their family's pathway to California. To begin, each student was to have a conversation with family members about their journey to California. This may require information from your mom/dad, a grandparent, another close relative, or you if you moved to California yourself!</p>	

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ANNUAL PRODUCTS REPORTS FOR CLGS

During the reporting period (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) how many historic properties did your local government **add** to the CLG inventory? This is the total number of historic properties and contributors to districts (or your best estimate of the number) added to your inventory **from all programs**, local, state, and Federal, during the reporting year. This includes the National Register, California Register, California Historical Landmarks, locally funded surveys, CLG surveys, and local designations.

Program area	Number of Properties added
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# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

Historic Resource Inventory	None
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**A. Local Register (i.e., Local Landmarks and Historic Districts) Program**

1. During the reporting period (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) did you have a local register program to create local landmarks and/or local districts (or a similar list of designations) created by local law?     Yes         No
  
2. If yes, how many properties have been added to your register or designated from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024?

**C. Local Property Tax Incentive Program**

1. During the reporting period (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) did you have a Mills Act program?     Yes     No
  
2. If yes, how many properties entered into a contract from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024?

Name of Program	Number of Properties Added During 2023-2024	Total Number of Properties Benefiting From Program
Mills Act	1	15

**D. Local “bricks and mortar” grants/loan program**

1. During the reporting period (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) did you have a local government historic preservation grant and/or loan program for rehabilitating/restoring historic properties?     Yes     No
  
2. If yes, how many properties have been assisted under the program(s) from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024?

Name of Program	Number of Properties that have Benefited
Type here.	Type here.

**E. Design Review/Local Regulatory Program**

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

1. During the reporting period (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) did your local government have a historic preservation regulatory law(s) (e.g., an ordinance) authorizing Commission and/or staff review of local government projects or impacts on historic properties?  Yes  No
  
2. If yes, how many historic properties did your local government review for compliance with your local government's historic preservation regulatory law(s) from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024? Seven

## F. Local Property Acquisition Program

1. During the reporting period (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) did you have a local program to acquire (or help to acquire) historic properties in whole or in part through purchase, donation, or other means?  Yes  No
  
2. If the answer is yes, then how many properties have been assisted under the program(s) from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024?

Name of Program	Number of Properties that have Benefited
Type here.	Type here.

### IN ADDITION TO THE MINIMUM CLG REQUIREMENT THE OHP IS INTERESTED IN YOUR TRAINING NEEDS

- Whether or not you were able to participate in any of the free CAMP trainings in 2023-2024, would you like to see the OHP fund CAMPs from the NAPC in the future?

Yes. We would appreciate the OHP funding the NAPC CAMPs (Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program), which are essential training workshops tailored to provide education, resources, and mentorship to local historic preservation commissions, staff, and related stakeholders.

- What are your top three topics for future training provided by the OHP?
  - 1) A Commission specific training for the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - 2) A Commission specific training to guide the Historical Commissioners on evaluating or reviewing Historic Resource Evaluations and/or DPR forms 523A and 523B.

# Certified Local Government Program -- 2023-2024 Annual Report

(Reporting period is from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024)

Agenda Item 3.

- 3) Legal and Ethical Responsibilities of Historic Preservation Commissions with a focus on understanding local, state, and federal preservation laws (e.g., Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act). Additionally, the training should cover procedural requirements, legal compliance in decision-making, and avoiding conflicts of interest.

## **XII Attachments (electronic)**

- Minutes from commission meetings

Email to: [info.calshpo@parks.ca.gov](mailto:info.calshpo@parks.ca.gov)

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF  
THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2023, AT 7:00 P.M  
AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS,  
CALIFORNIA**

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Commissioners Adams, Bartlett, Coe, and Lang

ABSENT: Commissioner Paige

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments.

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION**

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair  
Nominate and elect members to serve as Chair and Vice Chair

Public Comment

No public comment.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Adams, the Commission moved to elect Commissioner Adams as the new Historical Commission Chair for a term ending on the first meeting of September 2024.

AYES: Adams, Bartlett, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Paige; ABSTAIN: None

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Coe, the Commission moved to elect Commissioner Coe as the new Historical Commission Vice-Chair for a term ending on the first meeting of September 2024.

AYES: Adams, Bartlett, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Paige; ABSTAIN: None

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

2. Historical Commission Minutes  
Approve minutes of the regular meeting of April 19, 2023, April 24, 2023 and September 25, 2023

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Lang, seconded by Commissioner Adams, the Commission moved to approve the minutes of April 19, 2023, April 24, 2023 and September 25, 2023 with two corrections to the September 25, 2023 minutes 1) the minutes should be corrected to state that “Chair Lang stated for the record that the Historical Commission urges the City Council to have an open mind and to give consideration to facilitating the need to work with the existing structure and preserve its historic status. for January 23, 2023” and 2) The permit number

referenced in the motion should be HPA23-001.

AYES: Adams, Bartlett, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Paige; ABSTAIN: None

## DISCUSSION

### 3. Consider the Historical Commission Schedule for 2024

Public Comment:

None

The Commission discussed the Schedule for 2024.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Lang, seconded by Commissioner Coe, the Commission moved to approve a meeting schedule with meeting dates occurring on January 22, 2024, April 15, 2024, August 19, 2024, and October 28, 2024.

AYES: Adams, Bartlett, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Paige; ABSTAIN: None

### 4. Preparation for Work Plan and Joint Meeting

Review the work plan and discuss possible topics for the joint meeting with the Council.

Public Comment:

No public comments.

The Commission discussed the nomination.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Coe, seconded by Commissioner Adams, the Commission moved to approve the work plan with the following comments and revisions:

- 1) For Goal 1 (Administer the annual Margaret Thompson Essay Contest), the work plan shall be revised to show Commissioner Lang is assigned to oversee the work plan item.
- 2) For Goal 2 (Implement the Historic Plaque Program), Commissioner Lang will work with the History Museum for a tentative date in May 2024 for an event for the Historic Plaque program at the History Museum.
- 3) For Goal 3 (Administer the preservation and interpretation of the Historic Landmark Apricot Orchard), the goal is modified to “Review Ongoing Efforts to preserve the Historic Landmark Apricot Orchard” with the Commission’s assignment to “coordinate informational reports and presentations from the Los Altos History Museum Orchard Commons Committee on the status of rehabilitation efforts of Historic Apricot Orchard.”
- 4) For Goal 4 (Provide oversight for the ongoing effort to preserve the Halsey House, a City Historic Landmark), the goal is deleted from the work plan.
- 5) For Goal 6 (Review the ongoing staff efforts to ensure the Mills Act is advancing the preservation of historic properties in Los Altos), an assignment shall be added for staff to provide annual report to the Historical Commission on October 28, 2024.
- 6) A new goal was added to “Provide a venue for public engagement regarding the city's heritage by safeguarding historic resources.”
- 7) The overall work plan shall be revised to correct typographical errors in the document.

- 8) The commission determined their topics of discussion at the Council joint meeting will be the work plan and also a discussion of historic nature of reports and properties, and how the town came about.

AYES: Adams, Bartlett, Coe, Lang, and Paige; NOES: None; ABSENT: None.

### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5. Commission Handbook and Commission Power and Duties

Presentation regarding the final Commission Handbook, and the edited version of the Powers and Duties for the Commission.

Staff provided updates on the final Commission Handbook, and the edited version of the Powers and Duties for the Commission.

6. Monthly Staff Report

Staff provided updates on the next regular meeting, the staff liaison, the Margaret Thompson Essay Contest.

### COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None

### ADJOURNMENT

Chair Adams adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.



Sean Gallegos  
Staff Liaison



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2024, AT 7:00 P.M. HELD VIA VIDEO/TELECONFERENCE PER EXECUTIVE ORDER N-29-20.**

**Please Note:** Per California Executive Order N-29-20, the Commissions will meet via teleconference only. Members of the Public may call (650) 242-4929 to participate in the conference call (Meeting ID: 148 403 6004 or via the web at: [Historical Commission Meeting](#)).

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Commissioners Adams, Coe, and Lang

ABSENT: Commissioners Bartlett and Paige

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following members of the public spoke: Jon Baer

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION**

1. Historical Commission Minutes  
Approve minutes of the regular meeting of December 11, 2023.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Lang, seconded by Commissioner Coe, the Commission moved to approve the minutes for December 11, 2023.

AYES: Adams, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Bartlett and Paige

**DISCUSSION**

2. Preparation for Work Plan and Joint Meeting  
Review the work plan and discuss possible topics for the joint meeting with the Council  
Public

Comment: No public comments.  
No Commission Comments.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Coe, seconded by Commissioner Bartlett, the Commission moved to approve the work plan and topics for the joint meeting with Council.

AYES: Adams, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Bartlett and Paige

3. H23-0002 – Heather Youngquist – 41 Hawthorne Avenue  
Request for Historic Advisory Review for a new 400 square-foot detached accessory structure (garage).

Public Comment: No public comments.

The owner, Sreenivas Tallam made a presentation regarding the project.

The Commission discussed the project.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Lang, seconded by Commissioner Coe, the Commission moved to approve the historic advisory review for a new 400 square-foot detached accessory structure (garage).

AYES: Adams, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Bartlett and Paige

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

4. Certified Local Government Annual Report

Public Comment: No public comments.

Staff provided a report.

5. Margaret Thompson Essay Contest

Public Comment: No public comments.

Staff provided an update on the Margaret Thompson Essay Contest.

#### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Chair Coe requested status of the Haley House.

#### **POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Adams adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

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Sean Gallegos  
Staff Liaison

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2024, AT 7:08 P.M. HELD VIA VIDEO/TELECONFERENCE PER EXECUTIVE ORDER N-29-20.**

**Please Note: Per California Executive Order N-29-20, the Commissions will meet via teleconference only. Members of the Public may call (650) 242-4929 to participate in the conference call (Meeting ID: 148 403 6004 or via the web at: [Historical Commission Meeting](#)).**

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Commissioners Bartlet, Coe, and Lang

ABSENT: Adams and Paige

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following members of the public spoke: No public comments.

1. Historic Preservation Award  
Consider nominations for the 2024 Los Altos Historical Preservation Award.

Public Comment: Gary Hedden provided a presentation on the Historic Preservation Award Nominee, Liz Nyberg.

The Commission discussed the Historic Preservation Award.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Lang, seconded by Commissioner Bartlett, the Commission moved to approve Liz Nyberg as the recipient of the Historic Preservation Award.

AYES: Bartlet, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Adams and Paige

2. Meeting Time Discussion  
Discussion of Altering the Historical Commission Meeting Time

Public Comment: No public comments.

Staff presented a proposal to change the start time of Commission meetings to 6:00 p.m.

The Commission discussed the proposal.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Bartlett, seconded by Commissioner Lang, the Commission moved to approve the work plan and topics.

AYES: Bartlet, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Adams and Paige

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

3. Certified Local Government Annual Report

Public Comment: No public comments.

Staff made a presentation of the Certified Local Government Report.

The commission recommended the report reference that “the Commission stands ready to advise the City Council upon any future action related to the Halsey house.”

4. Margaret Thompson Essay Contest  
Receive an update on the Margaret Thompson Essay Contest

Public Comment: Gary Hedden spoke on the item.

Staff provided an update on the Margaret Thompson Essay Contest.

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Chair Coe requested status of the Haley House.

### **POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chair Coe adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.



Sean Gallegos  
Staff Liaison

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M. HELD VIA VIDEO/TELECONFERENCE PER EXECUTIVE ORDER N-29-20.**

**Please Note:** Per California Executive Order N-29-20, the Commissions will meet via teleconference only. Members of the Public may call (650) 242-4929 to participate in the conference call (Meeting ID: 148 403 6004 or via the web at: [Historical Commission Meeting](#)).

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Commissioners Bartlett, Coe, and Lang

ABSENT: Adams and Paige

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Alice Mansell spoke on orchard and related City topics. A public comment letter was provided to the Commission prior to the meeting.

Catherine Nunes Spoke on orchard and its scope and needs. A public comment letter was provided to the Commission.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Historical Commission Minutes Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 22, 2024.
2. Historical Commission Minutes Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 15, 2024

Public Comment: No public comments.

The Commission discussed the minutes.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Lang to approve the Historical Commission minutes of January 22, 2024 and April 15, 2024, seconded by Commissioner Bartlett.

AYES: Bartlett, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Adams and Paige

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following members of the public spoke: No public comments.

3. H24-0004 – Walter Chapman – 762 Edgewood Lane

Staff member Sean Gallegos provided a presentation on the project.

Walter Chapman, the applicant, delivered a presentation on the project.

Public Comment:

Alice Mansell provided a comment supporting the project.

The Commission discussed the historic alteration permit project at 762 Edgewood Lane.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Lang to approve the historic alteration permit (H24-0004) application based on the recommended findings and conditions of approval, seconded by Commissioner Bartlett.

AYES: Bartlett, Coe, and Lang; NOES: None; ABSENT: Adams and Paige

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

No Informational Items

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

None

### **POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Staff advised a future item related to a historic advisory review application will be coming forward to the Commission, and the quinquennial inspection would also be a potential item at their meeting on October 28, 2024.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chair Coe adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.



Sean Gallegos  
Staff Liaison



**HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
AGENDA REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** January 27, 2025

**Subject:** Margaret Thompson Essay Contest

**Prepared by:** Sean Gallegos, Senior Planner

**Initiated by:** City of Los Altos

**Attachment:**

1. 2025 Cover Sheet
2. 2025 Writing Prompt
3. 2025 General Instructions for Teachers, Principals, and Parents
4. 2025 Rubric for Essay Contest

**Recommendation**

None.

**Background**

Margaret Thompson Essay Contest Overview

The Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest is an annual program established by the City of Los Altos and the Los Altos History Museum to engage students in exploring and reflecting on the city’s rich history. Named in honor of Margaret Thompson, a dedicated Los Altos educator and historian, the contest encourages local youth to learn about the past while fostering a sense of community pride and connection.

The contest is open to students in grades 3 through 6 within Los Altos and the Los Altos Hills area. Each year, the contest features a unique theme designed to inspire students to research and write about significant historical events, figures, or landmarks that have shaped the community.

The contest goals include:

1. **Promoting Historical Awareness:** Encouraging students to discover and appreciate the history of Los Altos through research and storytelling.
2. **Fostering Civic Engagement:** Strengthening the connection between students and their local community by highlighting historical contributions and milestones.

3. **Developing Writing Skills:** Providing an opportunity for students to hone their writing abilities through a structured and meaningful academic exercise.

Winning essays are selected based on creativity, historical accuracy, and clarity of expression. Winners are publicly recognized by the City Council and the Los Altos History Museum, with awards given to honor their achievements.

The Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest remains a cornerstone of local efforts to educate future generations about the importance of history in shaping the identity and values of the Los Altos community.

2025 Essay Contest Theme: “Rooted in Time: Hidden Villa”

The 2025 Essay Contest theme, "Rooted in Time: Hidden Villa," invites students to explore the rich history and natural beauty of Hidden Villa, a historic site nestled in Los Altos Hills. Students will learn about the lasting legacy left behind by Frank and Josephine Duvneck, whose stewardship shaped the land into a place where nature and history intersect.

To prepare for the contest, students are encouraged to visit the Hidden Villa Exhibit at the Los Altos History Museum. The exhibit delves into the Duvneck’s lasting impact on Hidden Villa and the area’s historical significance. The exhibit is open Thursday through Sunday, 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. until March 1. For more details, visit the [Rooted in Time: Hidden Villa Exhibit](#).

Hidden Villa is also celebrating its Centennial this year, marking 100 years of its founding. Students may want to visit Hidden Villa in person, where they can explore a farm with animals, hiking trails, and other attractions. For more information, visit the [Hidden Villa Website](#).

Writing Prompt: Reflecting on Your Outdoor Adventures

Students are invited to reflect on a past visit to Hidden Villa or a similar outdoor location that they and their family have enjoyed together. This could include a local park, national park, forest, or other natural habitat. Have a conversation with your family to recall your shared memories. To help you get started, consider these questions:

- Where did you go on your adventure?
- What activities did you participate in?
- What sounds, sights, and textures stood out to you?
- Who joined you on this experience?
- What made this place unforgettable?

After reflecting on their adventure, students will write a personal narrative to share their story. Creativity, interesting vocabulary, and vivid descriptions are encouraged.



Students are also invited to include a visual component, such as a drawing, painting, or photograph to complement their written narrative. Although visuals are optional, they are welcome and will not be considered in the evaluation process.

#### Outreach Efforts for the 2025 Contest

Staff has actively worked to promote the 2025 Margaret Thompson Essay Contest to ensure broad community participation. The following outreach efforts have been undertaken:

- **Los Altos Town Crier Article:** Staff worked to secure an article in the Los Altos Town Crier to advertise the essay contest and encourage participation.
- **Essay Contest Webpage:** A dedicated webpage has been created for the contest, where all relevant documents—including the 2025 cover sheet, writing prompt, general instructions, and rubric—are available. Visit the webpage at: [Margaret Thompson Essay Contest Webpage](#).
- **School Outreach:** Staff has directly contacted local schools to invite students in grades 3 through 6 to participate in the contest. This outreach ensures that a wide range of students within the Los Altos and Los Altos Hills communities have the opportunity to engage with the contest theme.



Los Altos Historical Commission and Los Altos History Museum  
 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest  
 For 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders

## 2025 Theme – Rooted in Time: Hidden Villa

### Essay Contest Cover Sheet

**Please PRINT the following information.**  
**STAPLE this COVER SHEET ON TOP of YOUR ESSAY.**  
**PUT ONLY YOUR NAME AND DATE ON THE ESSAY.**  
 Have your parent read and SIGN the statement below.  
 Essays should be approximately 300 words or less.  
 Essays are due to your teacher by **Friday, March 7, 2025.**  
 Include a COPY of your painting, drawing, or photos with your essay.

**PLEASE NOTE: Essays NOT containing this Cover Sheet (filled out completely) will NOT be judged. Please print legibly and neatly. Thanks!**

**Student’s Name: (first & last):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name (first & last):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address (include city and zip code):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher’s Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Release:**

By signing the following release, I give consent for my child’s essay to become part of the collection of the Los Altos History Museum and to be used for community enrichment such as exhibits, programs and research.

I understand that by submitting this essay, I declare that I have full legal right to transfer custody and title of this essay. I hereby transfer such custody, title and interest, and copyright, willingly, unconditionally and without reservation, to the City of Los Altos. I hereby consent to the unrestricted use of the information in furtherance of the mission of the Los Altos History Museum.

If my child is a contest winner, I grant permission for Los Altos History Museum to photograph and use my child's image and likeness for publicity and marketing purposes, understanding that Los Altos History Museum may use these images in the local press, on social media, and in marketing materials without any claims or compensation. I also understand that only children’s first name and last initial, school name, and grade level may be used to label the photos.

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



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## 2025 Theme – Rooted in Time: Hidden Villa

### Essay Prompt

#### **Background:**

Walk through the green gate and come to explore the rich history and natural beauty of Hidden Villa. Begin your journey through the eyes of Frank and Josephine Duveneck. Follow in their footsteps as you experience the lasting legacy that they left behind on this land. Discover the stories that are brought to life through the photos, narratives, and artifacts. Appreciate the roots and heritage of this special place.

Come to the Museum any time before March 1, Thursday-Sunday, 12-4 p.m., to view this exhibit. For more information on this exhibit, please visit this website:

<https://www.losaltoshistory.org/exhibit/rooted-in-time/>

Also, you could visit Hidden Villa during their Centennial Celebration this year. Their many events honor 100 years since Hidden Villa was founded. Hidden Villa is located in Los Altos Hills and has a farm with animals, many hiking trails and more. Their website is <https://www.hiddenvilla.org>

Hidden Villa is one of many outdoor locations where families enjoy the natural environment. Perhaps you have visited Hidden Villa, or you have gone to a similar site that allowed you to actively investigate the natural habitats on your travels.

#### **Writing Prompt:**

To begin, think back to an experience you had at Hidden Villa or at a similar place your family visited together. This could be a local park, a National Park, a forest, a rock canyon, or another natural habitat. Have a conversation with your family to reflect on your adventures. Here are some questions to bring your memories to life:

*Where did you go on your adventure? What did you do when you were there? What sounds did you hear, what sights did you see, what items did you touch? Who joined you on this experience? What will you never forget about this special place?*

Either before or after writing, illustrate your memory with a drawing, painting or photograph. Your visual contribution will enhance your personal narrative, but its inclusion is not part of the rubric. (It is not required to send in a visual.)

Now, take your memories and use them to tell us your personal story. As you write, use interesting vocabulary and communicate your ideas in a creative manner. Originality and descriptive language are greatly encouraged. You are encouraged to include your drawing, painting or photos with your personal narrative when you submit it. We can't wait to read about your adventures in the great outdoors!

#### **Win Prizes**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$50    2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$30    3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$20**  
**3 Winners Per Grade Level!**



Los Altos Historical Commission and Los Altos History Museum  
41<sup>st</sup> Annual Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest  
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## 2025 Theme – Rooted in Time: Hidden Villa

### General Instructions for Teachers, Principals, and Parents

- 1) READ the attached prompt and rubric before you discuss this contest with your students. You may wish to photocopy both the prompt and the rubric for your students to refer to as they write their essay. You have also been sent a video which is a good way to introduce your students to the Essay Contest. The video may be sent home for students and parents to view together.
- 2) **IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION: A COVER SHEET WITH PARENT RELEASE and SIGNATURE is required.** Remind your students that the **COVER SHEET must be stapled to the top of the essay.** Also, remind students to only put their name and date on the essay.
- 3) READ the grading rubric to the students. This rubric is used to judge the essays.
- 4) When you receive the completed essays from your students, please put them in a large envelope. Please label the envelope the “MARGARET THOMPSON HISTORICAL ESSAY CONTEST.”
- 5) **Student essays and accompanying photographs, maps or drawings/paintings** are due to the classroom teacher by **Friday, March 7.** LASD essays must be returned to the LASD Asst. Superintendent’s office by **Tuesday, March 11.**
- 6) Private school/home-schooled essays must be returned to the Los Altos History Museum by **Tuesday, March 11.**
- 7) **Cover sheet, prompt, instructions, and rubric are also available at the following websites: Los Altos History Museum, Los Altos School District, and the City of Los Altos.**
- 8) **Essays, paintings, drawings or photos will NOT be returned.** Please ask students to make a copy before they turn in their essays and their visual contribution.
- 9) **Prizes will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. The Margaret Thompson Essay Contest Trophy will be awarded to the school/schools with the most winners. The contest winners will be honored in May at an Ice Cream Social on the Los Altos History Museum patio.**

A note of appreciation from the Los Altos Historical Commission and the Education Committee of the Los Altos History Museum to participating teachers:

*Thank you for agreeing to participate in this essay contest. We hope that you and your students find it enjoyable and rewarding, and that it encourages interest in the history of our community.*



Los Altos Historical Commission and Los Altos History Museum  
41<sup>st</sup> Annual Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest  
For 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders

## **2025 Margaret Thompson Essay Contest**

### **Rubric for Scoring**

There will be a total of 30 points possible for an essay. These points will be allotted according to the following criteria:

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Beginning paragraph clearly identifies and supports essay prompt | 5 points  |
| 2. Ideas  | 10 points |
| • Establish a clear focus   |           |
| • Provide relevant information                                      |           |
| • Communicate ideas in a creative manner                            |           |
| 3. Expression   | 10 points |
| • Use interesting vocabulary and descriptive language               |           |
| • Use a variety of sentences  |           |
| • Use grammar conventions (mechanics) effectively                   |           |
| 4. Organization   | 5 points  |
| • Demonstrate a sequential flow of ideas                            |           |
| • Be sure your closing paragraph completes your essay               |           |