



Council Agenda Report

From: Lori Wilson, Assistant Planner
Katie Banister, Associate Planner

Subject: Approval of an Update to the City's ISA Certified Arborist List

CEQA Determination: The City finds this action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section § 15378.

Date: October 3, 2023

Facts

1. Sections 10.01.020 and 10.01.040 of the City Municipal code requires that a person who provides services as an arborist in the City must be certified by the Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and must be on a list of certified arborists approved by the City Council.
2. The purpose of the pre-approved arborist consultant list is to ensure that only ISA-certified arborists are used by applicants in addressing oak tree concerns.
3. Four certified arborists have requested their names be added to the City's list to do work within the City boundaries (see Attachments 1-4).
4. Each applicant has returned a signed statement acknowledging he understands the conditions under which the City will accept him for approval on the List of City-Certified Arborists.
5. Staff has confirmed each arborist is listed as an ISA Certified Arborist on the ISA's website, which qualifies them to provide consulting services and to prepare arborist reports for the City pursuant to Chapter 10.01 requirements.
6. The City's list of arborists currently includes a number of arborists who no longer work in San Luis Obispo County or are no longer certified by the ISA, and who may accordingly be removed from the City's current list.

Options

1. Take no action;
2. Add four ISA Certified Arborists to the City's list, and remove currently listed arborists who no longer work in the area or are no longer certified by the ISA; or
3. Provide alternative direction to staff.

Analysis and Conclusions

The Oak Tree Protection Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 10.01) requires an arborist consulting in the City to be certified by the ISA as qualified to determine whether an oak tree is diseased, and able to make recommendations regarding pruning, cutting, and preservation measures. The City has received applications from four certified arborists requesting addition of their names to the City's list of qualified arborists. Each of the following individuals has acknowledged the Oak Tree Protection Ordinance and Oak Tree Evaluation Criteria and has prepared a statement that he agrees to conform to the City's criteria for evaluation reports:

1. David Magney, ISA Certified Arborist No. WE-7674A
2. Sam Oakley, ISA Certified Arborist No. WE-9474B
3. Morgan Scovell, ISA Certified Arborist No. WE-12338A
4. Dan Ponti, ISA Certified Arborist No. WE-14152A

In addition, City staff has identified several arborists on the City's list who no longer work in the County or are no longer listed on the ISA website as a certified arborist. As such, staff is recommending these names be removed from the City's list.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact to the City related to adding an arborist to the list, however, ensuring that qualified professionals are evaluating oak trees within the City helps protect them, and provides financial and aesthetic value to individual properties and to the City as a whole.

Recommendation (Option 2)

Approve Resolution 23-XXX, authorizing the update to the Paso Robles ISA Certified Arborists list as presented in Exhibit A to the attached Resolution.

Attachments

1. Arborist Certification Justification for David Magney
2. Arborist Certification Justification for Sam Oakley
3. Arborist Certification Justification for Morgan Scovell
4. Arborist Certification Justification for Dan Ponti
5. Resolution 23-XXX
 - a. Exhibit A. Revised City of Paso Robles ISA-Certified Arborist List