



Dear Neighbors,

Our Hamilton trees are an important design element of the architecture in our communities. They create a visually appealing picture along the side of our streets, provide shade for our lawns, increase oxygen, and give us privacy.

Trees add value to your home. Several recent nationwide surveys show that mature trees in a well-landscaped yard can increase the value of a house by 7 to 19 percent. On the other hand, trees that are causing root damage or have outlived their space and/or attractiveness could be a deterrent.

Enclosed are some Guidelines for managing the trees in your yard:

1. If a tree, or large shrub, needs removing, prior to the removal an *Application for Architectural Design and Review* must be submitted to your neighborhood's Architectural Committee. This application can be found at [hamiltonfield.org](http://hamiltonfield.org). Please include in the application the following: tree size and placement of the new tree in the yard and type of tree you are planning to plant. Remember to engage a licensed professional who is insured.
2. All stumps and surface roots must be removed from the surface and the area cleaned prior to planting.
3. Replace, repair all irrigation pipes prior to replanting, and ensure that the new plantings will receive water.
4. As a general guide, when a mature tree is replaced in the front yard the minimum replacement size is a 15-20 gallon tree. This larger size ensures that a new shade tree will grow in scale with the neighborhood within 3-5 years after planting. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Board Approved 10-30-19

### **TIP #1**

*Install a root guard.* This guard is inserted alongside and parallel to the pavement at a distance from the tree being planted. This guard will force the roots down and discourage them from lifting up the pavement in the future. Check out [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) for installation instructions.

### **TIP #2**

*Deep water.* Deep watering a newly planted tree in the early years of tree growth can encourage root growth below the existing sprinkler system and create a healthier and stronger tree.

### **TIP #3**

#### *Stake Your New Tree*

1. Remove the nursery stakes, and find two or three stakes (wooden or metal) 2. Place the two stakes opposite each other and about 1.5' away from the trunk 3. Use a soft material, like canvas strapping or tree staking straps, to attach the stakes. As the tree matures, the tree staking straps will need to be adjusted and eventually removed after 12-18 months.

Hamilton has many varieties of trees. Diversity is a good thing so all trees will not be affected if there is a disease that attacks one type of tree. Trees that **will or may need to be replaced** are outlined below.

#### **Redwood Trees**

Redwoods should not have been planted due to the type of soil we have and the lack of space. It is recommended that homeowners with Redwoods consider removing the trees before or when they see damage occurring. Just remember, the bigger the tree, the bigger the expense.

#### **Ornamental Pear Trees**

Pear trees have a lifespan of about 20-30 years at which time they will start losing branches and die. In addition, many pear trees in this area are afflicted with fire blight disease which will only hasten their demise.

### **Crabapple Trees**

Crabapple trees are a good choice but they can also get fire blight disease.

### **Birch Trees**

Birches are subject to a number of insect pests and diseases, and they aren't adapted to the Bay Area climate. They like to grow where winters are colder, and they require extensive summer watering to survive our dry summers.

### **Pine Trees**

Pine trees will grow very large and are not fire resistant.

### **Cypress Trees**

All Cypress Trees are prone to disease and bagworms and are not fire resistant.

### **Sycamore, Camphor, Pepper, Ash, Liquid Amber, Dutch Elm, and some Maples**

These are beautiful trees but owners need to watch for sidewalk damage if trees are planted in too small of a space.

### **Which trees are the best trees to plant in a small area?**

Recommended trees include the Eastern Redbud, Mayten, Saucer Magnolia, Pacific or Flowering Dogwood, and Crape Myrtle (Indian varieties) trees. The Novato website also has a tree recommendation list at <https://novato.org/home/showdocument?id=418>.

### **Just a reminder--**

1. Homeowners are responsible for any sidewalk, wall, or street damage caused by trees.
2. Be proactive and evaluate your trees!
3. Don't forget!! Before removing a tree and replanting, remember to complete the *Application for Architectural Design Review* which is available on [www.hamiltonfield.org](http://www.hamiltonfield.org).
4. One last thought...here is a link to fire prone trees/plants in Marin County: <https://www.firesafemarin.org/plants/fire-prone>.