

City of Los Altos

Street Tree Planting List

Category I Trees that grow over 40 feet and need minimum 6 foot wide planting areas.
Category I trees should not be planted under overhead utility lines.

Category II Trees that grow to 40 feet and require less than 6 feet of growing space.

Category III Trees that grow no higher than 30 feet.

Category I Deciduous Species:

Celtis australis-

European Hackberry

Reaches 45' to 75' tall with a 35' to 50' spread. Gray-green, elm-like leaves and growth habit. Tolerates heat, wind, drought. Needs deep watering to establish. Resistant to Dutch Elm Disease. Not destructive of pavement.

Celtis sinensis-

Chinese Hackberry

Reaches 30' to 50' tall and broad with upright branching habit. Glossy, dark green, elm-like leaves. Tolerates wind. Very fast in deep soil with deep watering. Resistant to Dutch Elm Disease. Not tolerant of alkaline, wet soils.

Ginkgo biloba 'Fairmount' -

Maidenhair tree

Pyramidal form grows to 35' to 50' tall. Ashen grey bark with fan-shaped leaves with fall colors that range from pale green to brilliant gold. Only certified male trees should be planted.

Liquidambar styraciflua 'Palo Alto' -

Sweet Gum

Grows to 70' tall. Fall colors range from orange/red to bright red. Leaf resembles maple. Surface roots can be invasive in lawns or parking strips.

Platanus acerifolia -

London Plane Tree

A dependable performer if Anthracnose, Mildew and Scale are controlled. The 8" wide maple-like leaves have white wooly under-sides causing allergies for some people. Left unpruned, they will be 50' tall, pyramids. 'Bloodgood' not resistant to mildew. 'Yarwood' resistant to mildew and Anthracnose. 'Centennial' reported to be mildew resistant.

Quercus lobata -

Valley Oak

Appearing in areas with year round water availability. Magnificent structure, reaches 70' high and broad with picturesque twisted branches. Gray, checkered bark. Medium gray, 2" lobed leaves with pale undersides. Fast growing when young. Good in riparian areas. Treat for Oak Pit Scale in winter. Do not use in lawns.

Category I Evergreen Species:

Cinnamomum camphora-

Camphor tree

Broad-leaved evergreen that is a spreading, dense tree that provides deep heavy shade. Its light green leaves take on a bronze appearance in the winter. Roots tend to surface if only if surface moisture is available. Highly susceptible to oak root fungus.

Cedrus deodora

Deodar Cedar

Fast growing to 80' tall. Graceful, sweeping branches covered with blue-green needles in clusters. Cones are 4" tall, 3" round, standing on top of branches. Recognized by its drooping terminal leader. Too big for many yards.

Pinus canariensis

Canary Island Pine

Fast growing to 60' to 80' tall with pyramidal habit. Hanging, blue-green, 6" needles fully cover the majestic shape. Aphids can be a pest. Tolerates most soils. Oak root fungus resistant. Roots not destructive of pavement.

Pinus eldarica

Eldarica Pine

Tall, pyramidal and fast-growing, to 40' tall in 15 years. Dark green when young, slightly gray-green with age. Excellent Monterey Pine substitute. Tolerant of most soils.

Sequoia sempervirens

Coast Redwood

Tall, fast and pyramidal to 50', up to 100' tall at maturity. Cutting grown forms are: 'Soquel' - dense, gray-green, slower growing; 'Aptos Blue' - semi-open habit, green with gray undersides, fast; 'Los Altos' - dark glossy green, semi-open, fast; 'Santa Cruz' - paler green full, moderate. Must receive regular irrigation to remain disease free.

Quercus agrifolia

Coast Live Oak

The dark green domes which dominate California coastal hillsides. To 40' tall, 70' spread (or 70' tall, 40' spread in groves). 2" dark shining green, rounded leaves with spined edges. Limbs and branches are twisting, gray. Fast growth when young. Do not use in lawn, or with other water loving understory.

Category II

Deciduous Species:

Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywood'

Raywood Ash

A rapid growing, oval upright tree to 40' tall. Dark green, leathery leaves turn claret red in fall. A lush, full crown all summer. Seedless and resistant to all common ash problems.

Koelreuteria bipinnata

Chinese Flame Tree

A 20' to 40' tall tree with a spreading crown; 2' long leaves, divided into many leaflets, turn yellow before dropping in December. 18" terminal clusters of yellow flowers in September-October. Fruit clusters are rust-colored lanterns.

Koelreuteria paniculata

Goldenrain Tree

To 20' to 35' tall with 10' to 20' rounded crown. Compound leaves are reddish in spring, dull green in summer. Spring flowers in upright, yellow clusters. Lantern-like, 2" seed pods in fall. Roots deep, not invasive.

Melaleuca styphelloides

Prickly Melaleuca

To 20' to 40' tall. Pendulous branchlets are thickly covered with 1/2" medium green leaves. The thick bark is papery, light tan. White flowers is small "bottlebrushes" appear summer through fall. Excellent lawn tree, even in heavy soil. Oak root fungus resistant.

Pistacia chinensis

Chinese Pistache

Highly regarded street tree and adopted as official city tree. To 30' to 40' tall with a round crown. Dark green, 8" compound leaves. Brilliant orange and red fall colors. Grows best in hot climates with deep soil but tolerates most soils. Pest free. Non-destructive root systems. Resistant to oak root fungus.

Pyrus calleryana cultivara

Flowering Pear

'Aristocrat' is pyramidal when young becoming oval upright to 40' x 30'. 'Redspire' more pyramidal. 'Bradford' may reach 40' tall, 25' wide and be semi-deciduous in warmest areas. (Occasionally light infections of Fireblight.) Brilliant red fall color, masses of white flowers in spring. No fruit. Tolerant of alkaline and dense soils.

Robinia ambigua 'Idahoensis'

Idaho Locust

To 40' tall with upright branching. Medium green leaves to 12" long divided into 13 to 15, 1-1/2" leaflets. Flowers like deep pink Wisteria in drooping 8" clusters in late spring. Does not reseed. Must prune to form structure first two years.

Category II Evergreen Species:

Ceratonia siliqua

Carob Tree

Dense rounded tree, 30' to 40' tall with equal spread. Dark green, compound leaves 8" to 12" long. Females bear numerous 8" pods. Flowers of male plants have strong odor. Budded male plants unavailable. Oak roots fungus resistant. Thin crown to prevent winter breakage.

Geijera parviflora

Australian Willow

Reaches 25' to 35' tall and wide. Narrow, 3" to 6" long, olive green leaves give the effect of a weeping willow. Use root barriers as street tree. A neat, carefree street tree. Does not tolerate inland valley winters or heavy adobe soil. Thin competing main limbs when young.

Maytenus boaria

Mayten tree

Evergreen tree. Zones 8, 9, 14-21. Slow to moderate growth to an eventual 30'-50'; 20' by 15' spread at 12 years is typical. Long, pendulous branchlets hang down from branches, giving tree daintiness and grace. Habit and leaves (1"-2" long) somewhat like small-scale weeping willow. Better tree for patio than weeping willow-neater and without invasive roots. Flowers and fruit inconspicuous.

Pittosporum undulatum

Victorian Box

Moderate growth to 15' x 15', then slower to 30'. Dark green 2-1/2" long wavy-margined leaves densely cover the round crown. The gray bark, beautiful branching and intensely fragrant white flowers in spring add character. Side branches should be removed from trunk gradually over three years. Some Aphids in spring and Brown Scale are occasional problems.

Quercus suber

Cork Oak

Similar in shape to Coast Live Oak, but growing to 30' tall. Foliage olive green on upper side, gray on underside. Spiny, convex 1" to 1-1/2" leaves. Massive trunks, thick corky bark. Very drought tolerant. Drops old foliage in late spring. Over-fertilizing results in heavy Aphid infestation.

Schinus molle

California Pepper Tree

Fast growing to 25' to 40' high, 30' to 60' broad. Gnarled tan trunk, weeping branches; bright green, pinnately compound leaves create a lacy look. Clusters of rose-colored berries in fall. Little care needed. Susceptible to Verticillium Wilt disease, Pepper Tree Psyllid, and Oak Root Fungus.

Category III

Deciduous Species:

Cercis canadensis

Eastern Redbud

To 30' tall and as wide in good soil. May be trained in a single-stem or multi-stem form. Before leaves in March, 3/4" broad and dark green. Fall color rosy to rust. Not tolerant of constantly wet clay soil.

Lagerstroemia indica

Crape Myrtle

A small tree 6' to 30' tall. Fast growing in hot areas. Smooth, gray-brown bark peels to pink inner bark. Red, purple, or white flowers July to September. Water infrequently but deeply. New hybrids 'Natchez', 'Tuscarora' and 'Muskogee' are mildew resistant. Not tolerant of high-sodium water.

Malus 'Robinson'

Robinson Crabapple

Bronze-green, 3" long leaves turn red-orange in fall. Deep pink flowers follow crimson buds in spring; 3/8" dark red, glossy fruit appears in late summer. A strong, upright grower to 25' tall and wide. Will tolerate heavier soils than most Crabapples. Resistant to Fireblight, Mildew.

Prunus cerasifera cultivars

Purpleleaf Plum

Most mature at 25' to 30' tall and as wide. 'Thundercloud'-some fruit, flowers light pink, dark foliage; 'Krauter's Vesuvius'-no fruit, flowers light pink, darkest foliage; 'Prunus blireiana'- double pink flowers, few fruit. Aphid problem in spring, bronze foliage. Not good in dense soils in lawn.

Prunus serrulata 'Kwanzan'

Flowering Cherry

Branches stiffly upright with large, double deep rosy pink flower in pendant clusters. Display with red young leaves. Does best in full sun.

Sapium sebiferum

Chinese Tallow Tree

Round, light green, 2-1/2" heart-shaped leaves flutter in the breeze. They turn a translucent mixture of red, orange, yellow in fall. Maturing at 30' with training or as a large shrub. The round crown may be scattered with 5" long pendulous clusters of small yellow flowers in summer, followed by waxy white 1/2" seeds. Oak root fungus resistant.