

ITEM #:	<u>53</u>
DATE:	<u>06-09-26</u>
DEPT:	<u>FIRE</u>

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: NUISANCE ASSESSMENT - TREE REMOVAL

BACKGROUND:

City staff removed a dead tree at 624 Duff Avenue in November 2025 after determining that it posed an imminent hazard due to a large cavity extending through the center of the tree. Following multiple unsuccessful attempts to contact the property owner, the City proceeded with removal.

The property owner contacted City staff on November 20, 2025, and expressed appreciation that the hazardous tree had been removed but indicated uncertainty about her ability to pay for the work, after the Community Codes Liaison provided a copy of the invoice totaling \$8,025. The homeowner later contacted the City to discuss concerns regarding the amount of the invoice and to inquire about available payment options.

At the May 12, 2026, City Council meeting, City Council directed staff to reduce the assessed cost to \$4,000 and authorized staff to negotiate a repayment period of either five or ten years. The City Attorney has advised that the property owner requested the ten-year term. Staff is proposing the assessment costs be paid over a term of 10 years, with an annual rate equal to the yield on a 10-year U.S. Treasury (4.59%).

A certified notice of this hearing has been mailed to the property owner:

Sandra Robinson/Major Robinson
624 Duff Avenue
Ames, IA 50010

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize staff to file an \$4,000 assessment of the described tree removal cost with the Story County Treasurer over a term of ten years with an annual interest rate of 4.59%
2. Do not certify this cost with the County Treasurer and instead, absorb the cost.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

City Council approval is necessary to certify these costs to the County Treasurer so they may be collected in the same manner as property taxes. The amount to be collected is higher than a typical assessment for a nuisance issue. Therefore, collecting the total in one payment may present an undue burden on the property owner. Spreading the \$4,000 assessment over a term of 10 years with a 4.59% annual interest rate would allow the costs to be recouped in smaller payments. Therefore, it is the

recommendation of the City Manager that City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.