



Council Agenda Report

From: Darren Nash, Associate Planner

Subject: Oak Tree Removal Permit 17-004 (1600 Country Club Dr.) – Request to remove one hazard oak tree within Fairway No. 5 of the Paso Robles Golf Club.

Date: March 21, 2017

Facts

1. The Paso Robles Golf Club is located at 1600 Country Club Drive (See Vicinity Map/Tree location Map, Attachment 1).
2. One 54" Valley Oak tree is within fairway No. 5. The Arborist recommends that the tree be removed immediately to prevent from falling into fairway. See Report by Carolyn B. Leach, dated March 9, 2017, attached as Exhibit A of Draft Resolution – A (Attachment. 2).
3. The Arborist indicates that tree is located in the middle of the fairway in a location where many golfers stop to hit their second shot. The report concludes that as a result of visible cavities, root crown stability, and other trunk and branch issues, the tree is in "imminent risk of sudden failure".
4. Planning Staff inspected the site to review the trees. Since the trees show signs of growth, the Director could not make the determination that the tree is "clearly dead or diseased beyond correction." Therefore, Section 10.01.050.C of the Oak Tree Ordinance required the City Council to make the determination of whether the tree should be removed or not, after consideration of the factors listed in Section 10.01.050.D.

Options

1. Approve OTR 17-004, authorizing the removal of one 54-inch Valley Oak based on the Arborist concluding that the tree has major health issues and has the potential for sudden failure, as indicated in the Arborist Report and require ten (10) 1.5-inch diameter Oak replacement trees (or a reduced number of larger diameter replacement trees adding up to 13.5-inches) be planted on site at the direction of the Arborist.
2. Deny OTR 17-004 with findings and require the oak trees to remain and be protected.
3. Refer back to staff for additional analysis.

54-inch Valley Oak Tree (deciduous during winter) within Fairway No. 5

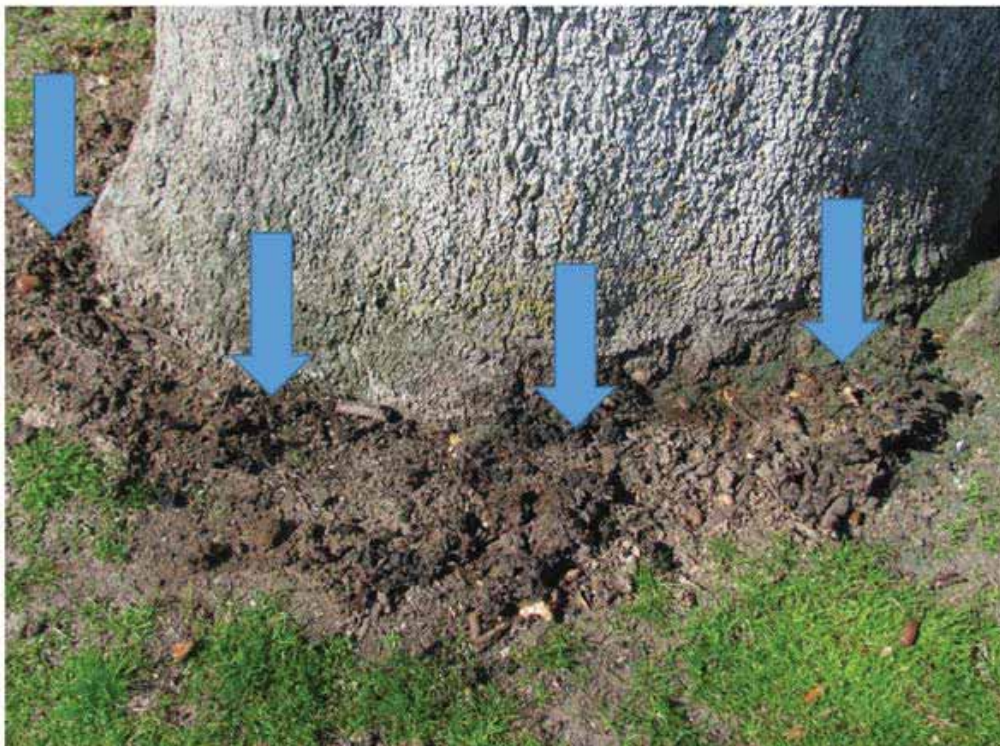


Photo of tree indicating rot at base of trunk

Analysis and Conclusions

As shown in the photos and described by the Arborist, the tree shows signs of disease and is in danger of failing. Allowing the removal of the tree would seem to be consistent with finding D.1 below, based on the trees being in poor condition, and danger of the trees falling into the golf fairway where many golfers are present throughout the day.

If the Council approves the tree removal, on-site replacement trees will be required.

According to Section 10.01.050.D, there are several factors that the City Council needs to review when considering the removal of a "healthy" oak tree. These factors along with Staff's analysis of each factor are listed below:

- D. If a request is being made to remove one or more healthy oak trees for which a permit to remove is required, the director shall prepare a report to the City Council, outlining the proposal and his recommendation, considering the following factors in preparation of his recommendation.*
- 1. The condition of the oak tree with respect to its general health, status as a public nuisance, danger of falling, proximity to existing or proposed structures, interference with utility services, and its status as host for a plant, pest or disease endangering other species of trees or plants with infection or infestation;*
Based on the trees being in poor condition, as a result of the proximity of the trees within the golf course fairway and danger of the tree falling into the fairway, the tree appears to be good candidate for removal.
 - 2. The necessity of the requested action to allow construction of improvements or otherwise allow reasonable use of the property for the purpose for which it has been zoned. In this context, it shall be the burden of the person seeking the permit to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the director that there are no reasonable alternatives to the proposed design and use of the property. Every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid impacting oak trees, including but not limited to use of custom building design and incurring extraordinary costs to save oak trees;*
There is no development being considered for this project, the reason for the request for removal is to prevent the tree from falling into the golf course fairway.
 - 3. The topography of land, and the potential effect of the requested tree removal on soil retention, water retention, and diversion or increased flow of surface waters. The director shall consider how either the preservation or removal of the oak tree(s) would relate to grading and drainage. Except as specifically authorized by the planning commission and city council, ravines, stream beds and other natural water-courses that provide a habitat for oak trees shall not be disturbed;*
The removal of the trees would not result in negative effects on soil retention, water retention or surface water flows for the neighborhood.
 - 4. The number, species, size and location of existing trees in the area and the effect of the requested action on shade areas, air pollution, historic values, scenic beauty and the general welfare of the city as a whole;*
There are numerous other trees on the site that will be preserved.
 - 5. Good forestry practices such as, but not limited to, the number of healthy trees the subject parcel of land will support.*
The removal of the trees will require replacement trees to be planted on site, additionally; the remaining trees on site will be protected.

Option 1: Approve tree removal. Based on the arborist report, removal of the tree appears warranted to prevent potential damage to the golf course fairway, and to ensure safety to golf course staff and golfers. After consideration of the factors listed in Section 10.01.050.D (listed above) authorize the removal of one oak tree. On-site replacement trees will be required as mitigation to the tree removals.

Option 2: Deny tree removal. After consideration of the factors listed in Section 10.01.050.D (listed above), deny the request to remove the tree, based on findings.

Option 3: Council may wish to refer the item back to staff for additional analysis.

Fiscal Impact

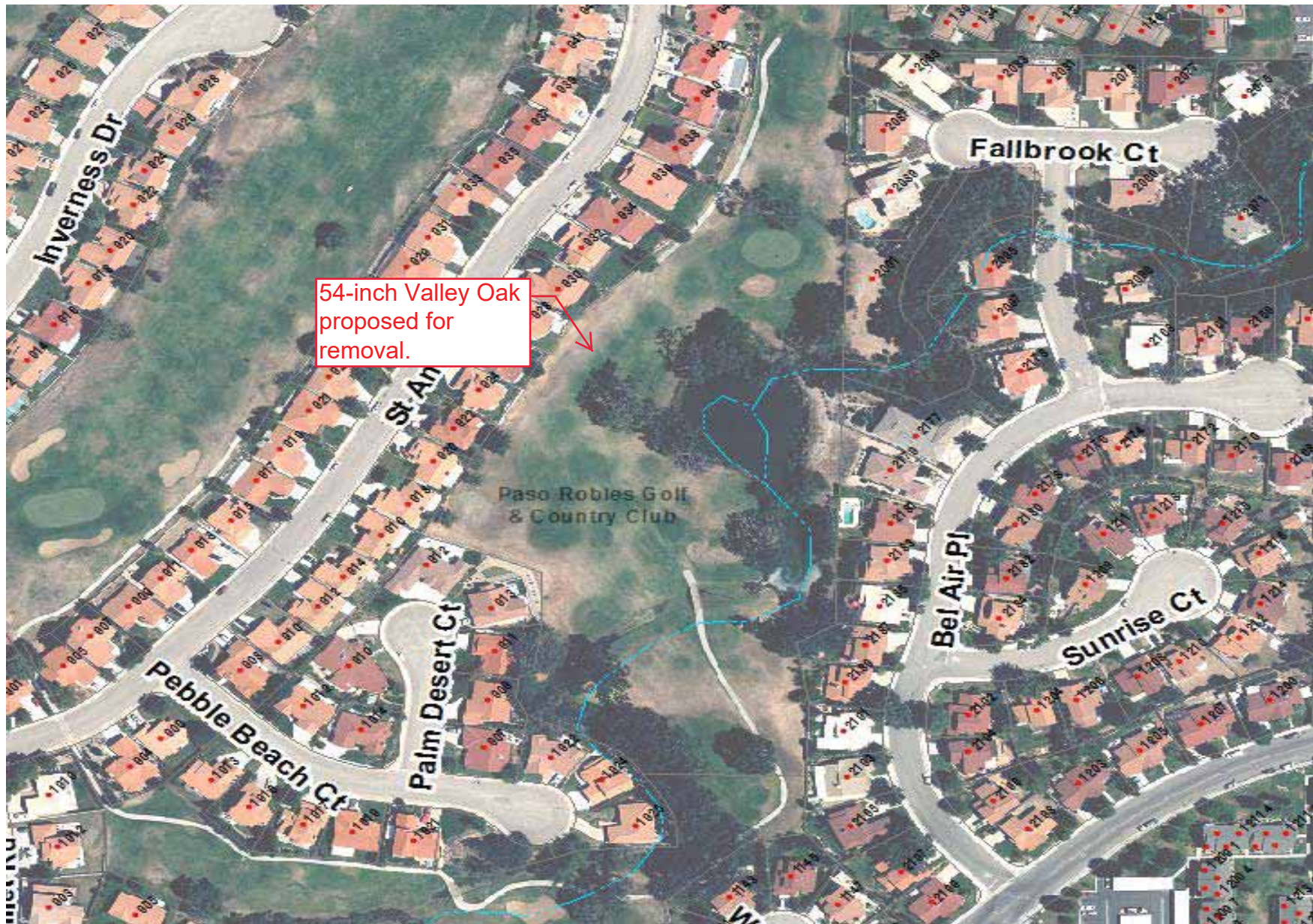
There is no fiscal impact to the City related to this oak tree removal request. Oak trees can provide value to a property, and be an aesthetic value to the City as a whole.

Recommendation

Approve Draft Resolution 17-xxxx, approving OTR 17-004, authorizing the removal of the 54-inch Valley Oak based on the trees being in poor condition with the potential for sudden failure as indicated in the Arborist Report; and require that ten 1.5-inch diameter Oak replacement trees (or a reduced number of larger diameter replacement trees adding up to 13.5-inches) be planted on site at the direction of the Arborist.

Attachments

1. Vicinity Map/Tree Location Map
2. Draft Resolution A - Approval the removal of the tree
 - a. Carolyn B. Leach Arborist Report



Attachment 2

RESOLUTION 17-XXX

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES
AUTHORIZING THE REMOVAL OF ONE 54" VALLEY OAK TREE
AT 1600 COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE
(OTR 17-004 / PASO ROBLES GOLF CLUB)
APN: 009-461-049**

WHEREAS, Mike Rawitzer of Paso Robles Golf Course has filed a request for the removal of one 54" Valley oak tree within fairway No. 5 of the Paso Robles Golf Course, located at 1600 Country Club Drive; and

WHEREAS, an Arborist Report prepared by Carolyn B. Leach, Certified Arborist has been provided which concludes that the tree has significant disease, including visible cavities, root crown decay and is in imminent danger of failing; and

WHEREAS, the Community Development Director could not make the determination that the tree is "clearly dead or diseased beyond correction," and therefore, Section 10.01.050.C of the Oak Tree Ordinance would consider the tree "healthy" and require that the City Council make the determination of whether the tree should be removed or not, after consideration of the factors listed in Section 10.01.050.D; and

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. All of the above recitals are true and correct and incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2. Findings: Pursuant to Paso Robles Municipal Code section 10.01.050.D., and based on the entire record including all written and oral evidence presented, the City Council finds as follows:

1. Having considered the factors outlined in Section 10.01.050.D.1. of the Paso Robles Municipal Code, and the information provided by the Arborist in Exhibit A, the City Council finds that allowing the removal of the tree would seem to be consistent with finding D.1, based on the trees being in poor condition, and allowing for the removal of the tree would prevent the possibility of the tree falling into the fairway where golfers and golf course employees are present throughout the day. Mitigation trees will be required.

Section 3: Approval. The City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles does hereby:

1. Authorize the removal of one 54" Valley Oak tree located within Fairway No. 5 of the Paso Robles Golf Club, based on the trees being in poor health and in imminent risk of sudden failure, as indicated in the Arborist Report, attached as Exhibit A;
2. Require ten (10) 1.5-inch diameter Valley oak replacement trees (or fewer replacement trees adding up to 13.5-inches) to be plated at the direction of the Arborist.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles this 21st day of March 2017 by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Steven Martin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kristy Buxkemper, Deputy City Clerk

Exhibit A: Arborist Report

Carolyn B. Leach Consulting L.L.C.
444 Blume Street
Nipomo, CA 93444
(805)929-9020
W.C.I.S.A. Certified Arborist #727

March 9 2107

Mr. Darren Nash
City of Paso Robles Community Development Department
1000 Spring Street
Paso Robles, CA 93446

Re: Paso Robles Golf Club

Dear Mr. Nash:

I have recently been asked to inspect 13 oak trees at the Paso Robles Golf Club. My inspection took place on March 7, 2017. I looked at all 13 trees and evaluated their current conditions.

I found several trees with varying problems, such as interior decay and heavy branch weight. I will be preparing a report that makes recommendations to the golf course for future care, such as pruning or, when appropriate, tree removal.



Of the 13 trees, I found one tree in particular that alarmed me with its severe degree of structural deterioration. This tree is located on hole #5, and is the subject of my 3/7/17 letter to Mr. Mike Rawitser, a copy of which I am attaching to this letter. It is also pictured in the photo here.

The tree is a Valley oak with a 54" trunk diameter. It is located in the middle of the fairway just where the hole turns to the right. This location is where most golfers first shot lands from the #5 tee, so is frequently occupied by golfers all day long. Additionally, employees are frequently passing below the tree.

Received
03/9/17
City of Paso Robles
Community Development



I found at least four clusters of dried mushrooms that are most likely Oak root rot disease, *Armillaria mellea*. The photo above of the base of the tree above with the dried mushrooms indicated by the arrows.



Here is a photo of me holding one of the mushroom clusters.

The clusters were located on about 75% of the trunk circumference. When I chipped into the bark at the trunk base, I found the entire bark and inner sapwood to be rotted by the disease.

From the little amount of twigs developed in the canopy last year, the tree has been suffering from this disease for some time now.

This tree will die from this amount of infection.

In the meanwhile, the tree is in extremely high likelihood of falling over. The disease is rotting away all of the structural root support. It is highly hazardous.

My recommendation to the property owners is to remove the tree as soon as possible.

I am attaching to this letter a form from the International Society of Arboriculture that further describes this tree.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Leach". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Leach
Consulting Arborist

Limiting Conditions:

Information in this report covers only the trees examined and reflects the conditions of the trees at the time of inspection. There is no warranty, either express or implied, that the subject trees will not develop problems or deficiencies in the future. Sources of information used in this report are accepted as standard resources; however, the author cannot guarantee the accuracy of information provided by others. Possession of this report or a copy thereof does not imply the right of publication or use for any purpose by any other than the person to whom it is addressed, without the prior written consent of the consultant. Loss or alteration of this report invalidates the entire report. The inspection is limited to visual examination of tree location, as viewed from the ground, without dissection, excavation, probing, or coring. No review of tree structural conditions or hazard potential has been provided.

No part of this report is to be viewed as engineering, surveying, or any other trade other than arboriculture.

Carolyn B. Leach Consulting L.L.C.
444 Blume Street
Nipomo, CA 93444
(805)929-9020
W.C.I.S.A. Certified Arborist #727

March 7, 2017

Mr. Mike Rawitser
Paso Robles Golf Club
1600 Country Club Drive
Paso Robles, CA 93446

RE: Tree Inspection

Dear Mr. Rawitser:

Today I completed my inspection of 13 large oak trees at your golf course. My work includes checking the trees for visible problems, such as cavities, root crown stability, and trunk or branch issues. I will use this information to formulate my recommendations for future care. I will be writing a report later this week that presents my findings and opinions.



During my inspection, I found a tree in such poor condition that I immediately gave you my verbal opinion that it is in **imminent risk of sudden failure**. This tree, shown in this photo, is in the middle of the #5 fairway. It is a *Quercus lobate* with a 54" trunk diameter. The entire circumference of the root crown area, where the trunk meets the ground, is decayed.

I dug down below soil level all around the tree base and found it entirely rotted. Additionally, I saw the remains of 4 clusters of mushrooms which appeared to be *Armillaria mellea*, also known as oak root fungus. This decaying disease infects the woody roots as well as the root crown area, leaving behind pulpy textured wood with no holding capacity.

I am shocked that the tree is still standing with that vast amount of decay.

Please remove this tree as soon as possible.

Until the tree is removed, I suggest roping off the area with caution tape, to alert the golfers and your employees of the risk.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Leach
Consulting Arborist



Basic Tree Risk Assessment Form

Client: PASO ROBLES GOLF CLUB Date: 3/9/17 Time: 10:45 am
 Address/Tree location: 1600 COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE, HOLE # 5 Tree no.: 5 Sheet 1 of 2
 Tree species: QUERCUS LOBATA dbh: 54" Height: 50'-60' Crown spread dia.: 45'
 Assessor(s): CAROLYN LEACH Time frame: _____ Tools used: HAND SPADE
 DATE OF INSPECTION: 3/7/2017 Target Assessment

Target number	Target description	Target zone			Occupancy rate 1-rare 2-occasional 3-frequent 4-constant	Practical to move target?	Restriction practical?
		Target within drip line	Target within 1 x Ht.	Target within 1.5 x Ht.			
1	GOLF COURSE FAIRWAY / LANDING AREA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3	NO	NO
2							
3							
4							

Site Factors

History of failures: 10", 8" dia. Topography: Flat Slope % Aspect: _____
 Site changes: None Grade change Site clearing Changed soil hydrology Root cuts Describe: _____
 Soil conditions: Limited volume Saturated Shallow Compacted Pavement over roots % Describe: NORMAL TURF
 Prevailing wind direction: _____ Common weather: Strong winds Ice Snow Heavy rain Describe: _____

Tree Health and Species Profile

Vigor: Low Normal High Foliage: None (seasonal) None (dead) Normal % Chlorotic: _____ % Necrotic: _____ %
 Pests: ARMILLARIA ROOT ROT Abiotic: _____
 Species failure profile: Branches Trunk Roots Describe: _____

Load Factors

Wind exposure: Protected Partial Full Wind funneling Relative crown size: Small Medium Large
 Crown density: Sparse Normal Dense Interior branches: Few Normal Dense Vines/Mistletoe/Moss NO
 Recent or planned change in load factors: NO

Tree Defects and Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Failure

— Crown and Branches —

Unbalanced crown LCR < 10% Cracks Lightning damage
 Dead twigs/branches 90% overall Max. dia. 8-10" Codominant Included bark
 Broken/Hangers: Number _____ Max. dia. _____ Weak attachments Cavity/Nest hole _____ % circ.
 Over-extended branches Previous branch failures TO 10" dia Similar branches present
Pruning history
 Crown cleaned Thinned Raised Dead/Missing bark Cankers/Galls/Burls Sapwood damage/decay
 Reduced Topped Lion-tailed Conks Heartwood decay
 Flush cuts Other: _____ Response growth: _____
 Main concern(s): ROOT FAILURE - ENTIRE ROOT CROWN CIRCUMFERENCE AFFECTED
 Load on defect: N/A Minor Moderate Significant ENTIRE TREE
 Likelihood of failure: Improbable Possible Probable Imminent

— Trunk —

Dead/Missing bark Abnormal bark texture/color
 Codominant stems Included bark Cracks
 Sapwood damage/decay Cankers/Galls/Burls Sap ooze
 Lightning damage Heartwood decay Conks/Mushrooms
 Cavity/Nest hole _____ % circ. Depth _____ Poor taper
 Lean _____ Corrected? _____
 Response growth: _____
 Main concern(s): _____
 Load on defect: N/A Minor Moderate Significant
 Likelihood of failure: Improbable Possible Probable Imminent

— Roots and Root Collar —

Collar buried/Not visible Depth _____ Stem girdling
 Dead Decay Conks/Mushrooms
 Ooze Cavity _____ % circ.
 Cracks Cut/Damaged roots Distance from trunk _____
 Root plate lifting Soil weakness
 Response growth: _____
 Main concern(s): ROOT FAILURE, TREE TOPPLING OVER
 Load on defect: N/A Minor Moderate Significant
 Likelihood of failure: Improbable Possible Probable Imminent

Risk Categorization

Condition number	Tree part	Conditions of concern	Part size	Fall distance	Target number	Target protection	Likelihood								Consequences				Risk rating of part (from Matrix 2)				
							Failure				Impact				Failure & Impact (from Matrix 1)								
							Improbable	Possible	Probable	Imminent	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Unlikely	Somewhat	Likely	Very likely		Negligible	Minor	Significant	Severe
1	ROOT + ROOT COLLAR	ARMILLARIA ROOT ROT 100% OF CIRCUM.	54"	60'		NO				X			X				X					EXTREME	
2																							
3																							
4																							

Matrix 1. Likelihood matrix.

Likelihood of Failure	Likelihood of Impacting Target			
	Very low	Low	Medium	High
Imminent	Unlikely	Somewhat likely	Likely	Very likely
Probable	Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat likely	Likely
Possible	Unlikely	Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat likely
Improbable	Unlikely	Unlikely	Unlikely	Unlikely

Matrix 2. Risk rating matrix.

Likelihood of Failure & Impact	Consequences of Failure			
	Negligible	Minor	Significant	Severe
Very likely	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
Likely	Low	Moderate	High	High
Somewhat likely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Low

Notes, explanations, descriptions WOODY TISSUE OF BARK AND INNER WOOD AT ROOT COLLAR 100% DECAYED + SOFT + ROTTED.
ALL STRUCTURAL ROOTS AFFECTED.

Mitigation options REMOVE TREE IMMEDIATELY Residual risk _____
 _____ Residual risk _____
 _____ Residual risk _____
 _____ Residual risk _____

Overall tree risk rating Low Moderate High Extreme Work priority 1 2 3 4
 Overall residual risk Low Moderate High Extreme Recommended inspection interval _____

Data Final Preliminary Advanced assessment needed No Yes-Type/Reason _____

Inspection limitations None Visibility Access Vines Root collar buried Describe _____