



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: February 23, 2022
TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Parks Division, Parks and Recreation Department
SUBJECT: Street Tree Advisory Committee Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission:

A. Conditionally approve the following street tree removal requests:

1. 425 Garden St. – *Brachychiton discolor*, Queensland Lacebark – Greg Reitz

The Committee reviewed the Queensland Lacebark proposed for removal, noting the tree was in good health and well maintained. They evaluated the reasons listed on the application for removal, and received a brief presentation from the applicant. The primary reason provided for the removal of the tree was to create a parking pocket within the public right of way to serve as a service pull off for large delivery and trash vehicles. The property is zoned manufacturing/ commercial and has no on-site parking requirement. The applicant explained that the property was undergoing significant redevelopment and during preliminary design review, Transportation staff provided comments that they were concerned that the lack of on-site parking could create scenarios where large vehicles servicing the property would park on Garden Street, since there is no space for them to access the inside of the proposed development. The Committee discussed the proposed parking pocket design, including the proposed replacement trees to mitigate the loss of the existing tree. After review, they determined the request was a practical development of the property and that the new trees would adequately offset the loss in biomass of the existing tree.

The Committee recommends (5/0) that the Commission approve the removal on the condition the applicant plant 2 new street trees in a location determined by the City Arborist.

2. 2 S. Quarantina St. and Quinientos St. – (1) *Ficus rubiginosa*, Rusty-Leaf Fig, (1) *Eucalyptus globulus*, Blue Gum, and (2) *Koelreuteria bipinnata*, Chinese Flame Tree – Derek Carlson with Marborg Industries, Inc.

The Committee reviewed the four trees proposed for removal, noting the trees were in fair shape and reasonably maintained. The project proposes removing the

trees to improve the public right of way, which will include developing the right of way to include new parkways and sidewalks. The trees are currently in locations that prevent installation of the new sidewalk. As part of the right of way improvements, the applicant proposes to install nine new designated street trees along S. Quarantina and three new designated street trees along Quienientos Street. The Committee was generally supportive of the planned improvements, but did note that the Rusty-Leaf Fig was a particularly nice specimen and warranted retention if feasible. The location of the Rusty-Leaf Fig does not allow for a continuous straight stretch of sidewalk. Ultimately, after review the Committee determined the tree was of enough value to warrant further exploration of retaining the tree and modifying the planned right of way improvements to preserve this specimen. Staff explained that they would be willing to work with the applicant and Transportation staff to explore the feasibility of modifying the new sidewalk to accommodate the tree.

The Committee recommends (5/0) that the Commission approve the removal of the *Eucalyptus globulus*, Blue Gum, and (2) *Koelreuteria bipinnata*, Chinese Flame Trees, and deny the request to remove the *Ficus rubiginosa*, Rusty-Leaf Fig. Additionally, the Committee commented that staff should work with the project applicant and Transportation staff to explore the feasibility of retaining the Rusty-Leaf Fig tree.

B. Deny the following street tree removal requests:

1. 110/114 S. Quarantina St. – *Lophostemon confertus*, Brisbane Box – Derek Carlson with Marborg Industries, Inc.

The Committee reviewed the tree, noting it was in good health and well established. The project proposes to remove the tree due to redevelopment of the property, specifically the installation of a new driveway apron immediately adjacent to the tree. During review of the item, there was consensus amongst the members that, based upon the information provided, there appeared to be adequate space to install the new driveway approach without requiring removal of the existing tree. Further, the Committee commented that installation of root barrier along the new driveway apron would help prevent any future potential hardscape disturbance.

The Committee recommends (5/0) that the Commission deny the removal of the *Lophostemon confertus*, Brisbane Box.

2. 816 W. Anapamu St. – *Olea europaea*, Olive – Sally Glasgow

The Committee discussed the Olive tree, noting it was in good health and well maintained. They reviewed reasons listed on the application for removal, including debris and safety concerns, noting that these same concerns exist in almost all cases involving street trees. After review, there was consensus amongst the

members that there was no justifiable rationale to support the removal of the street tree at this time.

The Committee recommends (5/0) that the Commission deny the removal.

3. 2526 Oak Crest Dr. – *Eucalyptus polyanthemos*, Silver Dollar Gum – Alicia and Gregory James

The Committee reviewed the Silver Dollar Gum proposed for removal, noting it was in good health, well maintained, and a particularly nice specimen. They discussed reasons listed on the application for removal, including safety concerns, private sewer lateral damage, and damage to surrounding public and private hardscape. Members and staff discussed private sewer lateral damage with the applicant, noting that a prior failure in the private sewer lateral must be present to allow for root entry. Staff additionally reiterated that, in almost all cases, removal of street trees is not required to repair sewer laterals. The applicant explained that the sewer lateral repair had already taken place. Staff explained that it was unlikely they would experience any further issues. After discussion and review, the Committee determined there was no supportable rationale for tree removal at this time.

The Committee recommends (4/1) that the Commission deny the removal of the *Eucalyptus polyanthemos*, Silver Dollar Gum.

C. Approve the following setback tree removal request:

1. 817 N. Salsipuedes St. – *Ficus benjamina*, Weeping Fig – Wayne Redit

The Committee discussed the Weeping Fig proposed for removal, noting it was in fair health, but its placement was inherently problematic if the tree continued to grow towards its potential mature size. Members discussed the noted disruption to the water service, commenting that the tree's placement could pose a continual problem to the water line for the property. The applicant expressed a desire to plant a new tree, and during review of the item, members commented that the lot was quite small and planting options were limited. Due to spatial considerations, there was consensus amongst them that a conditioned replacement was not required, but that if the applicant were motivated to plant a new tree they would be supportive of their decision.

The Committee recommends (5/0) that the Commission approve the removal of the *Ficus benjamina*, Weeping Fig.

The Committee determined that pursuant to SBMC 15.24.090 A, the Commission could make the finding that principles of good forest management will be best served by the proposed removal.

D. Deny the following setback tree removal requests:

1. 2726 Miradero Dr. – *Cypress sp.*, Cypress – Gail Crivello

The Committee commented that the Cypress tree was in fair health and well maintained. Members did note that there was some level of decline exhibited in the canopy of the tree. The applicant expressed a desire to remove the tree based upon conversations with private arborists who advised them that the tree was in decline and would likely continue to decline over the next couple of years and eventually die. The applicant, who was representing the home owner's association, expressed additional concerns related to safety, stating the property owner immediately adjacent to the tree had concerns with the decline and its potential to impact the property if part or the whole tree were to fail. During discussion of the application, there was public comment from other members of the homeowner's association who expressed a desire to retain the tree, stating it had several years of functional life left and did not warrant removal at this time. There was general agreement throughout the Committee that the tree did still have several potential years of life expectancy left and that at this time it did not satisfy any findings to support removal. Additional comments encouraged the applicant to obtain an arborist report that includes a high-level risk assessment to inform them of any potential risks the tree posed. There was consensus amongst the members that it made practical sense to recommend denial of the application without prejudice to allow the applicant to return in the future, if they so desired, with additional information to support the removal of the tree.

After review, the Committee determined that at this time no findings pursuant to SBMC 15.24.090 satisfied this request.

The Committee recommends (5/0) that the Commission deny the removal of the *Cypress sp.*, Cypress without prejudice to allow the applicant a chance to return in the future with additional information to support the removal.

2. 536 Bath St. – *Pinus pinea*, Italian Stone Pine – Rhonda Wheatley

The Parks and Recreation Commission previously reviewed the application for the removal of the Italian Stone Pine at 536 Bath Street during their regular meeting of June 24, 2020. The Commission concurred with the Street Tree Advisory Committee's recommendation to deny the removal without prejudice to allow the applicant to return with additional information to show that the property damage was from the tree.

The Committee commented that the tree was still in very good health, but could benefit from some routine pruning. They reviewed the additional information provided by the applicant, including several images of tree roots running along the wall that separates the applicant's property from their neighbors. There was consensus from the members that the tree was of significant benefit to the property

and the neighborhood as a whole and its removal would be a material loss to the area. Members noted that due to the significance of the tree, root pruning and possible incorporation of root barrier could reduce the potential for any additional or further property damage from the tree.

After review, the Committee determined that at this time no findings pursuant to SBMC 15.24.090 satisfied this request.

The Committee recommends (4/1) that the Commission deny the removal of the *Pinus pinea*, Italian Stone Pine. Additionally, the Committee commented that the applicant might want to explore utilizing root pruning to allow for repair and/or protection of the surrounding hardscapes.

3. 211 Via Sevilla – *Ficus microcarpa*, Indian Laurel Fig – Gail Gorton

The Committee commented that the existing Indian Laurel Fig tree was in good health and well maintained. There was discussion between the applicant and Committee regarding reasons listed for removal, including the significant hardscape disruptions surrounding the tree, as well as the tree affecting their neighbor's private sewer lateral. During discussion, the applicant explained that a major motivating factor in their submission for tree removal was the tree affecting their neighbor's private sewer lateral and the potential for both civil and monetary issues as a result of the root intrusion. The applicant explained that they had mixed feelings about removing the tree, noting they were still very fond of the tree. The applicant explained they were tolerant of the hardscape disruptions to their property and the Committee commented that it was likely repair of the hardscape would not require removal of the tree. As discussion continued, there was consensus amongst the Committee that it made practical sense to deny the removal without prejudice to allow the applicant to continue to work with their neighbor and to evaluate whether the tree and sewer lateral conflict would affect their homeowners insurance. They agreed that this approach would allow the applicant to return if there was additional information or motivation to support the removal of the tree in the future.

After review, the Committee determined that at this time no findings pursuant to SBMC 15.24.090 satisfied this request.

The Committee recommends (4/1) that the Commission deny the removal of the *Ficus microcarpa*, Indian Laurel Fig, without prejudice to allow the applicant a chance to return in the future with additional information to support the removal.

- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. 425 Garden St.
 2. 2 S. Quarantina St. and Quinientos St.
 3. 110/114 S. Quarantina St.

4. 816 W. Anapamu St.
5. 2526 Oak Crest Dr.
6. 817 N. Salsipuedes St.
7. 2726 Miradero Dr.
8. 536 Bath St.
9. 211 Via Sevilla

PREPARED BY: Nathan Slack, Urban Forest Superintendent

APPROVED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director