



City of Pacific Grove

Urban Forestry Standards

Tree Reports

A tree report is needed for development projects and tree removal permits. The report must be prepared by a certified arborist for the applicant and submitted to the city for the purpose of providing accurate information and opinion regarding the condition, welfare, maintenance, preservation or value of a protected or designated tree.

1 – When a Written Report is Required

Generally, there are two circumstances in which tree reports are required: 1) When a tree removal permit is sought, and 2) To complete and verify a site plan, assess tree impacts and establish tree protection for property development when within the Critical Root Zone of a protected or designated tree.

2 – Who May Prepare the Report

The tree report is to be prepared by a certified arborist retained by the applicant or property owner. This person shall possess a current ISA certification, be a member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists; or a member of good standing in another nationally recognized tree research, care, and preservation organization.

Types of Reports

There are four types of reports, each of which are discussed below, namely:

1. Letter Report
2. Tree Survey Report
3. Tree Protection and Preservation Report
4. Tree Appraisal

1 – Letter Report

A brief format is acceptable for removal and development related activities (described below), and can generally be used for assessing one or two trees. The report is to be on letterhead stationery of the individual preparing the report, including their ISA Certification number.

Removal

For a tree removal, not in connection with a property development, the report shall provide information and determination whether the tree is dead, High risk or constitutes a nuisance under the Pacific Grove Municipal Code Chapter 12.40.

Development

For development on a single family residential lot (not a subdivision), the report shall also clearly indicate whether or not any Protected or Designated tree is so close to the building area or building footprint that it will be killed or permanently injured by disturbance. The report must make specific recommendations to protect and preserve the tree during the course of construction consistent with the specifications within these standards.

Submittal Requirements

Standard information

All letter reports shall contain the following information:

- Arborist name and certification number;
- Purpose of the report and for whom;
- Site address; date of the inspection(s);
- A to-scale diagram of the tree(s) location;
- Accurate size of the trunk diameter (measurement taken at 54-inches above natural grade);
- Perimeter of leaf canopy;
- Proximity to structures;
- Condition of the tree health (and/or decay presence);
- Condition of the tree structure;
- Imminent danger of failing (ISA Hazard Rating, see High risk Trees, above);
- Interface with utility services;
- Conclusion and recommendation(s);
- Photographs (encouraged); and,
- Tree protection instructions (if applicable).

Specific Situations

Other conditions may require the following additional information on an as needed basis if requested by the reviewing city staff: tree protection plans; appraised value (see Tree Appraisal, below); and any other supporting information, photographs, diagrams, etc. that may be necessary.

2 – Tree Survey Report

A more extensive Tree Survey Report is required for all development projects except those identified above (Letter Report). The Tree Survey Report shall inventory all trees that are greater than 4-inches in diameter (measured at 12-inches above natural grade) on site, including trees to be removed, relocated and retained on the property (including trees on neighboring properties that overhang the project site) and all Public trees in the right-of-way within 30-feet of the project site. In addition to the information required in a Letter Report, the Tree Survey Report shall also include an inventory of the trees, site plan, appraised value (see Appraisals, below) of the trees and any other information pertinent to the project.

Submittal Requirements

Items to include:

All Tree Survey Reports shall contain all items required for a Letter Report (identified above) as well as the following information:

- Cover letter;
- Title page;

- Table of contents (if necessary);
- Date of the inspection(s);
- Site plan (showing each tree location by number that correlates with the tree inventory on plans;
- A separate list of all Protected Trees with location numbers;
- Tree inventory data (include tree species, size, health, structure, etc. for all trees on the project site, including those to be removed (tables may be used);
- Condition of the trees (include information with respect to health, structure, decay, imminent danger of falling, existing property lines, structures and utility services);
- The monetary value that each tree contributes to the real estate value of the property shall be determined and listed separately. The formula used should be noted (see Tree Appraisal, below); and,
- Conclusion, recommendation(s) and ratings for suitability for preservation.

If necessary, other supporting information, photographs, diagrams, etc. may be required or provided.

3 – Tree Protection and Preservation Plan

All Protected or Designated Trees to be retained on a development site shall be shown on approved sets of civil, building and landscape plans and shall be protected during the construction process. A Tree Protection and Preservation Plan submitted for review by the Community Development Department and the City Arborist is required when trees to be saved may be injured by disturbance.

The Tree Protection and Preservation Plan shall assume compliance with the standards described below in the section on Tree Protection and Preservation During Development. In addition, the following submittal information must be included in the report:

Submittal Requirements

Disclosure of All Trees On and Near the Site

The property owner or designee shall provide accurate information to the project arborist to develop the tree protection measures and to enable accurate recommendations to insure their survival. This site plan shall accurately show the surveyed location, species, size of trunk and leaf canopy; show the Critical Root Zone of any neighboring trees that may overhang the site and Public trees that are within 30 feet on each side of the project. Failure to show a tree on the plans and later determined to be affected by construction may require the work to stop until mitigation can be agreed upon by the property owner and the city.

Final Improvement Plans

In addition to the above information, final improvement plans shall include and show the following information: show the Critical Root Zone of any tree to be retained and the protective fencing around the protected zone of each tree or group of trees (to be clearly identified as such on all plans as a bold-dashed line); permeable paving located within the Critical Root Zone area; approved utility pathways; grade changes; surface and subsurface drainage and aeration systems to be used; walls, tree wells, retaining walls and grade change barriers, both temporary and permanent; landscaping and irrigation within Critical Root Zone of trees.