

EVALUATION INTERPRETATION GUIDE

PACIFIC HORTICULTURE CONSULTANTS

EVALUATION INTERPRETATION GUIDE

AND SITE REVIEW NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

California's diverse environments allow us the unique pleasure of being surrounded with magnificent indigenous trees and a variety of exotic plantings from throughout the world. Appreciated for their beauty, trees also reward us with many additional benefits beyond that of aesthetic surroundings.

Trees, through photosynthesis produce oxygen and help purify atmospheric contaminants, essential to life on earth. Trees are valued in their natural settings and are humanly utilized for their architectural qualities, engineering capabilities, and their climatic and aesthetic functions. We employ trees for space articulation, screening, shading, noise abatement, traffic control, wind reduction and temperature modifications. Other considerations such as timber value, fruit production, wild life habitats and recreational activities are relevant in certain cases.

Trees and other landscape plants enhance property values and increase the liveability within our cities. Increased urbanization has placed an estimable value on the preservation of existing mature trees and a desire to intensify the planting of urban forests.

Because trees are complex living organisms influenced and subject to variable environments, they may be prone to many stresses, defects, hazards, and will eventually decline. The purpose of an evaluation is to determine a plant's current health and aesthetic condition, thereby directing individuals toward a sound tree management program.

Plant investigation and diagnostics requires a basic knowledge of plant physiology, anatomy and biology. Professional plant appraisers should be well versed in plant identification and should be familiar with the habits and cultural necessities of plants, their environmental and soil requirements and most important, the major insects, diseases, and other factors that may cause reduction of vigor or normal growth.

The format for appraising trees and plants was developed from the guidelines prepared by the International Society of Arboriculture and the American Society of Consulting Arborists. The following definitions are provided as a guide to understanding the terminology utilized in the evaluation process.

SPECIMEN DATA

Species	The Botanical and accepted common name of the particular plant.
Tree Number	Trees surveyed in the field are assigned an identification number which may be utilized for evaluation mapping and discussion purposes.
Trunk Diameter	Actual measurement of the tree trunk(s) at 4.5' above existing grade. Usually referred to as DBH (diameter at breast height).
Tree Height	The approximate overall height of the specimen from existing grade.
Canopy Spread	The measurement of the branch and foliage spread in various compass directions.
Leaning	Direction of trunk lean if incline is from the normal vertical position.
Crowded	Conditions that do not allow normal growth and symmetry due to the proximity and/or competition of other nearby plants.
Terrain	The topography of the plant location referenced as slope or flat.

PHYSICAL OBSERVATIONS

Exposed Roots	Roots that are above ground or have been exposed due to some environmental or physical activity.
Girdled Roots	Roots that are twisted, kinked or circling causing girdling or constrictions.
Compacted Soil	Chemical or Physical compaction that prevents soil aeration or the movement of moisture/nutrients into the root zone.
Covered Soil/Debris	Material covering the base of the tree trunk above the normal root collar flare.
Trunk Cavity	A hollow area within the trunk which may be due to injury or decay of wood. Internal decay may be present and is referred to as heart rot. May not be detectable from external observaton.
Epicormic Growth	Excessive trunk and branch sprouting of vegetative growth.
Exudations	The presence of internal sap flowing out of the tree. Generally associated with wounding, decay, or insect activity.
Included Bark	Embedded branch bark at the attachment to the tree trunk. May influence branch strength. Related to angle of branch attachment.
Disease/Insects	Symptoms or signs of disease or insect activity that may cause damage or interfere with the normal physiological function of a plant.
Chlorotic	Yellowing of the foliage that may be caused by nutrient deficiencies, soil problems such as poor drainage or salinity, diseases, or atmospheric conditions.
Stress	The plant exhibits abnormal growth due to lack of care or limited natural environmental contributions toward growth..
Potentially Hazardous	The tree conditons and location present a potential failure of a significant part or of the total tree. Most hazardous trees require immediate remedial action.

RATING

Vigor	The current condition and estimated capacity of a plant for normal growth and survival. Quantatative rating from one (excellent) to five (poor). Takes into considertion age and size of species, twig growth, foliage condition, and freedom of defects.
Health	Quantatative rating of one (outstanding) to five (poor). Relates to overall health condition of the specimen as determined from the physical analysis.

Aesthetics

The overall appearance and conformation of the species. Other factors evaluated include location, functional aspects, balance, symmetry, unique specimen or rare and unusual plant. Numerical rating from 1 (outstanding) to 5 (not significant).

MITIGATIONS

The major treatments recommended for preservation of a specie or removal of the tree due to conditions listed under physical observations.

ACTION

An indication of the urgency for followup on the field survey evaluations. This includes action needed, immediate attention required, further inspection recommended, and annual monitoring suggested.

SITE REVIEW NOTES AND CLAFIFICATIONS

The trees evaluated herein were generally reviewed in accordance with presently accepted industry procedures which are a macro-visual observation and approximate measurements standing at natural grade adjacent to the field specimen. No extensive microbiological, soil-root excavations, upper crown examination, nor internal tree investigations were conducted and therefore, the reportings herein reflect the overall visual appearance of the specimens on the date reviewed and no warranty is implied as to the potential failure, health, or demise of any part or of the whole of any tree described in this report.

It is recommended that due to the general nature of plant growth and development, and continual environmental and physical influences on vegetation at a specific site, quarterly monitoring by a certified arborist be scheduled.

Locations as to property lines or exact tree locations, site amenities, structures or easements are assumed to be as illustrated on any enclosed maps and are a composite of information provided by the client, records of fact and/or on-site field review. No investigation was made to verify these conditions.

This report represents the independent opinion of the signatory consultant and was conducted per the clients scope of request and is therefore limited to the extent described herein.

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