

Arborist Report

Tree Inventory - March 2023



**Prepared
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Introduction

Background

Davey Resource Group (DRG) was contracted by Chung Ling (Vicky) Ou to inspect and provide an arborist report and tree protection plan for the property 3804 E Mercer Way in Mercer Island, Washington (PIN: 210700-0100). The client intends to develop the property.

Using a pen tablet computer, the arborist visited each tree on the site which was visually assessed, and the required tree data was collected within a GIS database. Following data collection, specific tree preservation plan elements were calculated that identified each tree's dripline and Limits of Disturbance (LOD) to better ensure survivability during the planned development. The following details are provided in alignment with the information required by the City of Mercer Island Municipal Code ([Mercer Island Municipal Code](#)):

- A numbering system of all existing significant trees on the subject property
- Tree type or species and DSH (Diameter at 4.5' above soil level).
- Identify all Exceptional Trees and differentiate between those less than 24 inches and those greater than or equal to 24 inches in diameter.
- A complete description of each tree's health, condition and viability.
- Determination of significant and exceptional trees as defined by the Mercer Island Municipal Code.
- Determination of the Limits of Disturbance (LOD) of all trees to be preserved and a description of the methods used to establish the Limits of Disturbance (LOD).
- A discussion of the timing for the installation of tree protection measures.
- Any special instructions for tree care when work may be required within the CRZ.
- Map illustrations of tree locations, identification numbers, and dripline dimensions.

Limits of the Assignment

There are many factors that can limit specific and accurate data when performing evaluations of trees, their conditions, and values. The determinations and recommendations presented here are based on current data and conditions that existed at the time of the evaluation and cannot be a predictor of the ultimate outcomes for the trees. A visual inspection was used to develop the findings, conclusions, and recommendations found in this report. Values were assigned to grade the attributes of the trees, including structure and canopy health, and to obtain an overall condition rating. No physical inspection of the upper canopy, sounding, root crown excavation, and resistograph or other technologies were used in the evaluation of the trees.

Methods

Data was collected by Marc Leonard (WE-11849AU), an ISA Certified Arborist, on January 19, 2023. The results will be used to determine the Limits of Disturbance (LOD) and any other tree protection measures required during construction. The location and dripline of all trees six inches or greater in diameter at breast height (DSH, 4.5 ft. above grade) were surveyed.

The following attributes were collected for each site:

Tree Number: Tree ID number was assigned and a numbered aluminum tag was affixed to the tree.

Species: Trees were identified by genus and species, cultivar if evident, and by common name.

Diameter at Standard Height (DSH): Trunk diameter was recorded to the nearest inch at 4.5 feet (standard height) above grade except where noted. When limbs or deformities occurred at standard height, measurement was taken below 4.5 ft. The DSH of multi-trunk trees was determined by taking the square root of the sum of the DSH for each individual stem squared.

Height: Tree Height estimated to the nearest <5ft.

Avg. Crown Radius: Average dripline distance was measured.

Condition: Condition ratings were based on but not limited to:(1) the condition and environment of the tree's root crown; (2) the condition of the trunk, including decay, injury, callusing, or presence of fungus sporophore; (3) the condition of the limbs, including the strength of crotches, amount of deadwood, hollow areas, and whether there was excessive weight borne by them; (4) the condition and growth rate history of the twigs, including pest damage and diseases; (5) the leaf appearance, including abnormal size and density as well as pest and disease damage.

Using an average of the above factors together with the arborist's best judgment, the general condition of each tree was recorded in one of the following categories adapted from the rating system established by the International Society of Arboriculture and 10th Edition of the Council of Tree & Landscape Appraisers (CTLA) *Guide for Plant Appraisal*¹ :

- **Excellent (81%-100%):** High vigor and near-perfect health with little or no twig dieback, discoloration, or defoliation. Nearly ideal and free of structural defects. Nearly ideal form for the species and generally symmetrical.
- **Good (61%-80%):** Vigor is normal for the species and has no significant damage due to disease or pests. Twig dieback, discoloration, or defoliation is minor. Well-developed structure with minor defects that can be corrected easily. Minor asymmetries/deviations from species norm. Function and aesthetics are not compromised.
- **Fair (41%-60%):** Reduced vigor. Damage due to insects or diseases may be significant and associated with defoliation but is not likely to be fatal. Twig dieback, defoliation, discoloration, and/or dead branches may comprise up to 50% of the canopy. A single structural defect of a significant nature or multiple moderate defects. Structural defects are not practical to correct or would require multiple treatments over several years. Major asymmetries/deviations from species norm. Function and aesthetics are compromised.
- **Poor (21%-40%):** Unhealthy and declining in appearance. Poor vigor and low foliage density and poor foliage color are present. Potentially fatal pest infestation. Extensive twig or branch dieback.

¹ Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers. (2019). *Guide for Plant Appraisal, 10th Edition, Second Printing*. Atlanta, GA: International Society of Arboriculture.

A single serious structural defect or multiple significant defects. Observed structural problems cannot be corrected. Failure may occur at any time. Largely asymmetrical or abnormal form. Form detracts from aesthetics or intended use to a significant degree.

- **Very Poor (6%-20%):** Poor vigor and appears to be dying. Little live foliage. Single or multiple severe structural defects. Visually unappealing and provides little or no function in the landscape.
- **Dead (0%-5%)**

Observations

A total of five (5) trees were inspected at the site and an additional three (3) trees were inspected off-site. The trees on-site are growing in terraced and landscaped areas of the property and appear to have a pruning history. Landscaping trees and shrubs are primarily located on the western side of the property in the front yard. One Cherry laurel tree has a calculated DSH of 24 inches and is considered to be an **Exceptional Tree** per the City of Mercer Island. The lawn in the backyard slopes downhill toward the lakefront neighbor to the east where Tree IDs #1 and #2 are growing. Tree ID# 3 is growing on the property to the north and has limited growing space due to the presence of overhead utilities.

On-site

- A total of five (5) trees were inspected at the site. Four (4) trees are in fair condition. One (1) tree is in poor condition.
- One tree (Tree ID #8448) has a DSH of 24 inches and is considered to be an **Exceptional Tree** per the City of Mercer Island.

Off-site

- A total of three (3) trees were inspected off-site. Two (2) trees are in good condition. One (1) tree is in poor condition.
- Tree ID #1 and #2 are located on the parcel to the east (PIN: 210700-0090).
- Tree ID #3 is located on the parcel to the north (PIN: 210700-0060).

Analysis & Recommendations

As with most tree preservation planning, a critical element is in minimizing root disturbance. When evaluating tree root disturbance during construction there are two considerations; the removal of absorption roots and the removal of anchoring roots. Removal (or compaction in the area) of the absorption roots can cause immediate water stress and a significant decline in tree health. The ability of a tree to survive the loss of absorption roots is dependent on its tolerance of drought, tree health, and the ability to form new roots quickly. Removal of the larger anchoring roots can lead to structural instability. Trees that suffer substantial root loss or damage are seldom good candidates for preservation.

The Critical Root Zone (CRZ) is considered the ideal preservation area of the root zone of a tree. It is measured as one (1) foot of radius for every inch of trunk diameter measured at 4.5 feet from grade. CRZ measurements are calculated from DSH and may not be an accurate representation of the actual dimensions of the root zone of the trees in the field. Many factors can limit root growth and expansion such as the degree of slope, present hardscape or heavily compacted areas, and/or tree health. Final selections for tree preservation are largely determined by the percentage of Critical Root Zone impacted using a commonly accepted method established by Dr. Kim Coder in Construction Damage Assessments: Trees and Sites².

Tree Removal and Replacement Requirements

There are three (3) trees identified for removal along with a previously removed western red cedar (see addendum). According to MIMC 19.10.070, replacement trees are required based on tree size. A total of ten (10) replacement trees could be required to mitigate tree removals.

- Tree#8448 (24" DSH) is an **exceptional tree** and will require 3 replacement trees.
- Tree#8449 (11" DSH) is a regulated tree and will require 2 replacement trees.
- Tree #8450 (12" DSH) is a regulated tree and will require 2 replacement trees.
- A western red cedar (Estimated 26" DSH) had been removed from the site at some time in the recent past. This tree will require 3 replacement trees (see addendum).

Limits of Disturbance & Timing

To ensure the long-term viability of trees and stands identified for protection, construction activities shall comply with the minimum required tree protection through established Limits of Disturbance (LOD) for those trees determined to remain on the site.

- LOD fencing will be installed outside the dripline, at a minimum, of all retained trees. It is recommended that LOD fencing be installed to encompass as much of the tree's root zone as is allowable by design plans.
- Preventative measures are recommended in addition to the installation of tree protection barriers for retained trees including mulching over the drip line, supplemental fertilization for stressed trees, supplemental irrigation as necessary, soil amendments and soil aeration, and pruning to remove deadwood or create clearance on trees to be protected.

² Dr. Kim Coder, University of Georgia June 1996

- Mulch the root zones of all significant trees to be retained during construction with 3” of organic mulch or arborist wood chips to help maintain moisture, avoid soil compaction, and avoid runoff.
- Install tree protection fencing for all remaining significant trees on the site and all those trees with canopies that extend onto the subject property.
- LOD fencing will follow the edge of building/road/paved paths where necessary and is not required to extend to the dripline where impervious surfaces are determined to be the limiting factor for root development (fence following existing curb does not trigger ‘impact’ status). Tree protection fencing may be installed at the edge of the impermeable or paved surfaces for those trees whose driplines extend over the edge.
- LOD fencing shall be a minimum of 4 feet high, constructed of chain link or polyethylene laminar safety fencing or similar material.
- “Tree Protection Area - Keep Out” or similar signs are required to accompany the LOD fencing at regular intervals and include the contact information of the consulting arborist or entity responsible for enforcing tree protection standards.
- LODs shall be constructed in such a fashion as to not be easily moved or dismantled.
- LODs shall remain in place for the entirety of the project and only be removed, temporarily or otherwise, with authorization by an ISA-certified arborist after submission and approval of intent.
- Any entry or work within the LOD of retained trees is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to the storage of materials, parking, or contaminating soil by washing out equipment.
- Retain a site arborist for the duration of the project that may conduct periodic site visits to investigate tree protection compliance and any changes to tree condition.

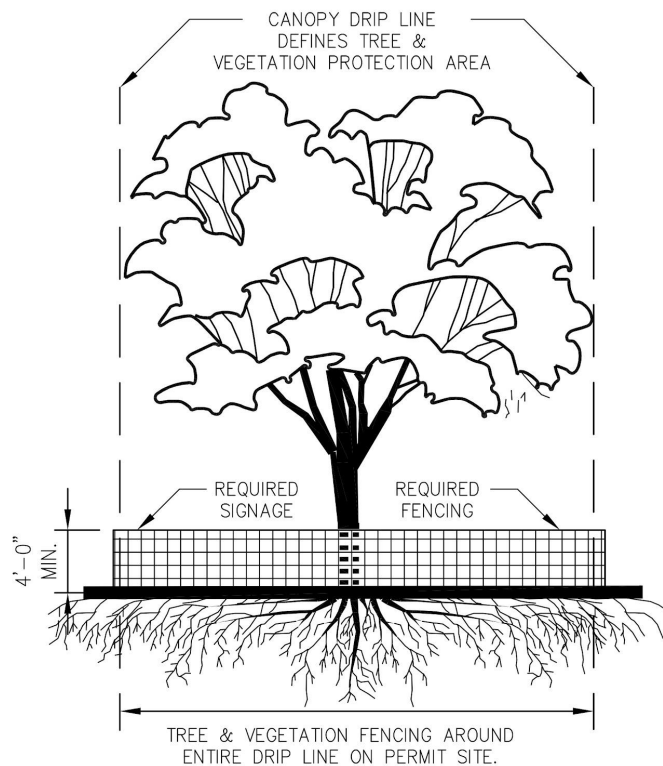


Image 1. An example of a Limits of Disturbance barrier. Contact information of the site manager or consulting arborist should also be included on the sign.

Pre-Development Tree Care

Successful tree preservation efforts begin in the planning and design phase. In order to select the appropriate trees for preservation and then incorporate those trees into future development plans, site managers and designers need detailed information on the health and status of the existing trees. This report satisfies the conditions of the critical first step in the preservation process: a tree inventory, assessment, and analysis conducted by a qualified professional. The resulting findings guide the beginning stages of the preservation process.

Condition rating and preservation priority rating help nominate potential candidates for preservation. Development plans should ensure that no impact or root damage occurs within the inner root zone and plans should take into consideration the significant reduction in the likelihood of tree survival when the root zone is impacted. After individual trees are selected for preservation, the following action steps are recommended prior to development activities:

- **Prune** trees, as necessary, to remove existing deadwood and stubs. This strategy controls potential future vectors of decay. Clean cuts made at branch collars allow the tree to undergo its natural process of compartmentalizing wounds, preventing the spread of decay. During the pruning process, remove as minimal amount of live foliage as possible and no more than 25% removal in any one season while allowing for the safe and unimpeded operation of construction activities.
- **Install Limits of Disturbance (LOD)** fencing out to the furthest possible radius distance from the tree.
- If the soil within the LOD is compacted, then **aerate the soil** using an air spade to alleviate compaction and promote the flow of oxygen and water to the roots.
- **Add a 3-inch layer of mulch** to the portion of the root zone protected by the LOD. Be sure not to cover/bury the tree root collar. Mulch aids the soil in water retention and also helps insulate the soil from hot and cold weather extremes.
- Where possible, **add a 12-inch layer of wood chips** over any parts of a root zone not protected by the LOD. This aids in reducing the impact of soil compaction from heavy equipment during the upcoming construction activities.

Two (2) trees are dead and were not mapped. The dead trees were tagged in the field as ID#s 8388 and 8397. They are recommended for removal prior to development.

Tree Care During Development

Once development begins, several measures are necessary to help ensure optimal outcomes for all trees selected for preservation:

- **Retain a Certified Arborist** on site to monitor activities and assess impacts to trees. The arborist can make as-needed recommendations to improve tree preservation activities throughout the development process. This is particularly important in order to make a timely response when a preserved tree is accidentally damaged or otherwise impacted during development.
- **Signage** instructing site workers not to enter Limits of Disturbance should be posted throughout the job site. Signage should be posted in both English and Spanish as well as any other language as deemed necessary by site managers.
- **Discuss tree protection** regularly at required staff meetings. Reiterate the importance of respecting the Limits of Disturbance as critical to the safety of staff working on site and the success of tree preservation efforts.
- Strictly **enforce** the Limits of Disturbance as “No-Go” zones. No activity, human or machinery, should breach the established LOD.
- **Root prune** where any grading or trenching occurs within the critical root zone.
- Ensure the area within the LOD receives the **weekly watering** equivalent to the amount of average natural rainfall for the specific development site. When the amount of natural rainfall received is less than the historical average, manual watering methods should be employed. The on-site Certified Arborist can make the determination when additional manual watering is necessary.
- **Do not raise or lower the soil grade near the LOD.** A tree relies upon small, non-woody roots called feeder roots for the absorption of water and nutrients. These roots predominantly reside in the upper several inches of soil, just below grade. Lowering the soil grade, even just a few inches, will sever these feeder roots and compromise tree health. Raising the soil above existing grade, such as through the addition of fill soil, buries feeder roots too deep and restricts feeder root access to water and oxygen.

Post-Development

A successful tree preservation effort continues well past the conclusion of development activities:

- The preserved trees should be **re-inspected** for signs of the impact that may have gone undetected during construction and mitigation measures assigned accordingly.
- The preserved trees should be placed on a **seasonal care plan** for two years that includes both monitoring and routine soil inoculation treatments designed to stimulate new root growth.
- Annual monitoring should continue for several years, as the effects of construction may take anywhere from 3 to 7 years to become visibly apparent.

Concluding Remarks

This report, along with the tree inventory, is the first step in preserving the health, function, and value of the trees on the site during and after development. Trees and green spaces provide benefits and add value to residential properties. Tree preservation starts with a basic understanding of the health and structure of the trees on the site. With proper care and protection, these trees can continue to thrive. Tree protection guidelines and strategies should be shared with contractors and employers prior to any disturbance at the site.

The suitability of a tree for preservation is a qualitative process based on the interaction of a variety of influencing factors. A tree inventory and arborist report provide a snapshot in time of each individual tree assessed across many of the most important observable factors relative to preservation. Healthy, vigorous trees better tolerate impacts from construction and more readily adapt to the new site conditions that exist after the completion of development. Additionally, tolerance to impact from construction activities varies across species and sites. The percentage impact on the Limits of Disturbance also greatly influences the suitability of a particular tree for preservation.

Successful tree preservation requires a team effort to find the right balance and select the appropriate trees. Using the findings of this report as a guiding foundation, planners are equipped to design, prepare, and implement a tree preservation plan tailored to achieving the optimal outcome.

Appendix A: Inventory Site Maps

Map 1- Site map overview showing tree ID number. Aerial photos are only used for reference. Map projections may distort tree canopy size and locations.



Tree Sites

DSH

- 10 - 23 inches
- 24 inches
- Avg. Dripline
- Parcels 2022
- 10 Feet

Tree Inventory

3804 E Mercer Way
Mercer Island, WA
January 2023



* Aerial imagery is from 2021.

* Map projections may distort aerial imagery and should be used for reference only.

Appendix B: On-site Inventory Table

Tree ID#	Species	DSH (in)	Height (ft)	Avg. Canopy Radius (ft)	Condition	Observation	CRZ (ft)	Proposed Status
8448	Cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>)	24	30	15	Fair	Multiple Stems, EXCEPTIONAL	24	REMOVE
8449	Cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>)	11	30	20	Fair	Multiple Stems	11	REMOVE
8450	Pacific dogwood (<i>Cornus nuttallii</i>)	12	25	10	Fair	Topped	12	REMOVE
8451	English holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>)	17	25	10	Fair	Codominant Branches	17	RETAIN
8452	Apple (<i>Malus</i> spp.)	18	20	15	Poor	Trunk Decay	18	RETAIN

Appendix C: Off-site Inventory Table

Tree ID#	Species	DBH (in)	Height (ft)	Avg. Canopy Radius (ft)	Condition	Observation	CRZ (ft)	Proposed Status
1	Bigleaf maple (<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>)	19	75	20	Good	Codominant Branches	19	RETAIN
2	Cherry (<i>Prunus</i> spp.)	17	15	10	Poor	Codominant Branches	17	RETAIN
3	Blue spruce (<i>Picea pungens</i>)	10	40	10	Good	Overhead Utility Lines	10	RETAIN

Addendum

The City of Mercer Island has requested that all previously removed trees from the past five years be accounted for in this report. One tree was possibly removed from the subject property within this timeframe. The tree has been identified and circled in yellow from an image captured on the King County Parcel Map, however, it's unclear when the tree was removed.

Image 2. An overview of the subject parcel with the previously removed tree circled in yellow.



No stump or visible remnants of the trees remained on-site during the field inspection. Google Maps Streetview tool was used in order to determine the approximate size of the tree prior to its removal. The imagery was captured in August 2011. The tree appears to have been a tall-statured Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*). Using other site objects and features as a reference, the estimated size (DSH) of the tree prior to its removal ranges from 26-30 inches. The image of the tree is included on the next page of the report.

Image 3. Google Maps Streetview imagery of the removed tree dated August 2011.

