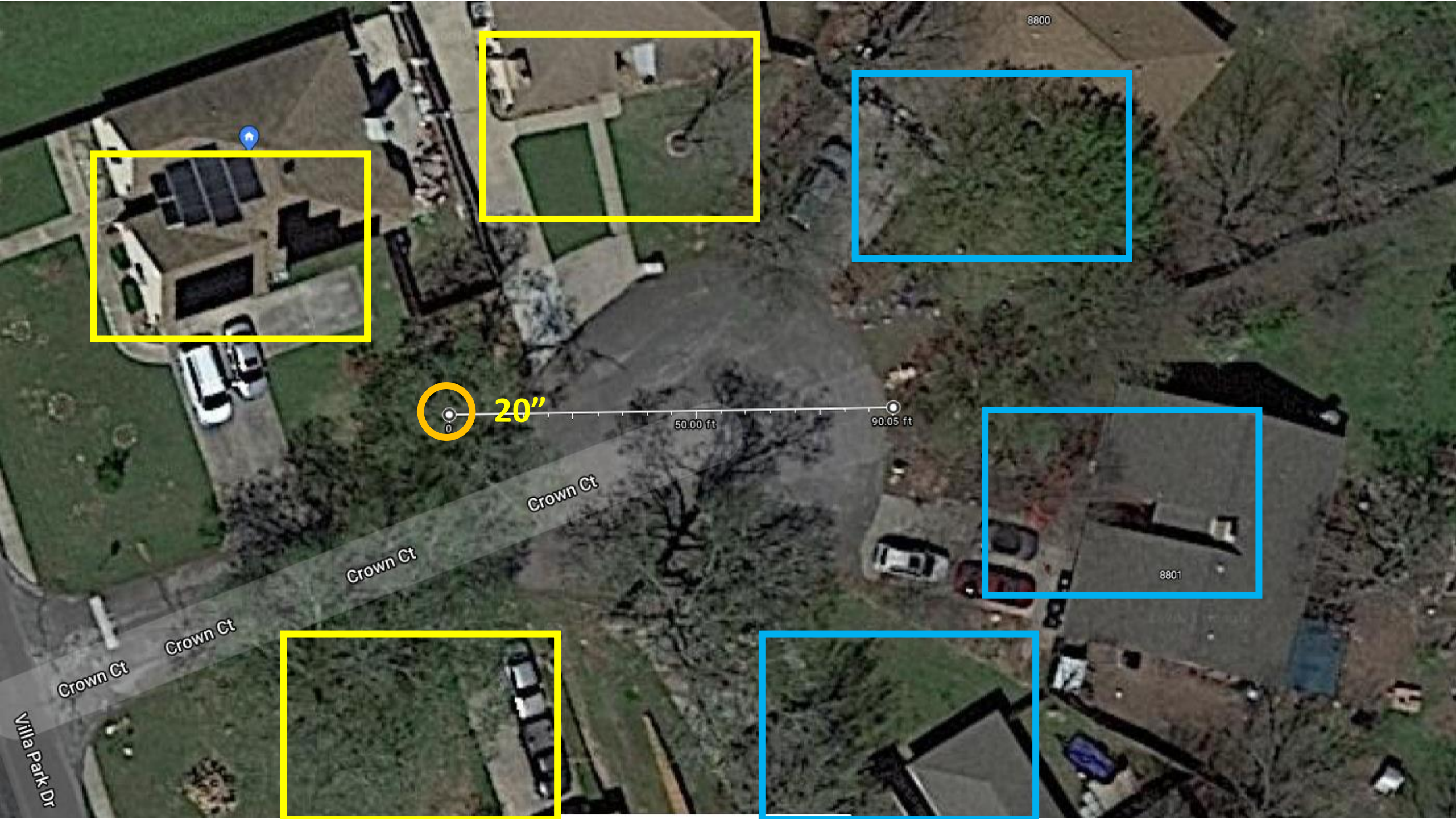


Request to Sustain the Environmental Commission's decision on the removal of a Cottonwood tree (allow removal)

20" Tree Located in the Right of Way on Crown
Ct, Austin TX

INTENDED PURPOSE:

- To communicate and demonstrate the serious issues that this tree causes to the City and adjacent property owners of Crown Ct.
- To demonstrate that removal of this tree is necessary and warranted.
- To seek a sustainment of the Environmental Commission's modified opinion on the removal of this 20" Cottonwood tree.



8800

8801

20''

50.00 ft

90.05 ft

Crown Ct

Crown Ct

Crown Ct

Crown Ct

Villar Park Dr

Background Information on Cottonwood Trees

- It is well documented that cottonwood trees are problematic trees that are not well suited for urban environments.
- Their roots are known to damage pipes and other infrastructure.
- Their “cotton fuzz” seeds are a serious fire hazard and nuisance for municipalities and property owners.
- Hundreds, if not thousands, of municipalities in the US have banned these trees for the above reasons.

“The Dirt Doctor” Article on Cottonwood Trees:

- The author, Howard Garret is:
- Nationally syndicated Organic Gardening talk show host
- Arborist and specialist in natural organic tree care
- Columnist for the Dallas Morning News
- Author of 15 books on organic gardening, landscaping and pest control
- Chairman of Texas Organic Research Center (TORC)
- Organic Advisory Board Texas Department of Agriculture
- https://www.dirtdoctor.com/garden/Cottonwood_vq924.htm

The Dirt Doctor – Cottonwood Trees

- **FINAL SPACING:** Do not plant
- **IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION:** Cottonwood is a very fast growing, upright messy tree. It sends out cotton all over the place in the spring, has brittle wood and it has large limbs. Its root system is extremely shallow, ravenous and destructive. It normally will have quite a bit of dead wood in the tree.
- **PROBLEMS:** Cottonwood is short lived, has a destructive root system and the cottony seed from the female plant is a nuisance and damaging to electrical appliances. Stressed trees are commonly attacked by borers. The root system is susceptible to cotton root rot and other root diseases. This is a dangerous tree because large limbs or the entire tree can fall on cars, structures and even people. This is one tree that should be removed from most residential property.

Southern Living Article on Cottonwoods:

- **6 Trees You Should Never, Ever Plant**
- **Terrible Tree #4 -- Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*)**
- What's wrong with it: Extremely messy, very weedy, breaks up in storms, short-lived, very prone to insects and diseases, roots crack pavement and invade water lines.
- Comment: As with hackberry, most people saddled with this garbage tree live with it because no other trees will grow there. I can't think of a messier tree. In addition to the sticks, twigs, broken branches, and leaves that shower down almost every day, it also blankets the yard around it in early summer with cottony seeds -- hence, the name "cottonwood." The cotton rolls up into lumpy pillows of foam that roll across the ground and pile up against houses, walls, and fences. The only good use for this nasty tree is as firewood. Burn one today!
- <https://www.southernliving.com/garden/grumpy-gardener/6-trees-you-should-never-ever-plant>

Trees That Can Be Planted Over Water Pipes

By Angela Ryczkowski Updated December 14, 2018

- Trees are usually prized elements in a landscape, but a sprawling root system may sometimes pose a threat to sidewalks, buried utilities and other features, including water pipes. Most sound pipes are able to withstand some amount of contact with tree roots. However, roots may penetrate or damage water pipes when the pipes are perforated drain pipes or are old, or the tree has a particularly strong, aggressive root system. Choosing a suitable tree species or cultivar and preparing the site well helps to protect water pipes.

- *Trees to Avoid*

- Certain trees should never be planted near water lines, as they are often fast-growing with particularly aggressive roots. Many species in the Acer (maple) genus, Populus species, ashes, sycamore, several oaks, willows, basswood, tuliptree, elms, birches, mulberry, figs, large eucalyptus and beeches are unsuitable for planting near water pipes and other underground or surface structures.

- **Cottonwood Trees are in the Populus species**

- <https://homeguides.sfgate.com/trees-can-planted-over-water-pipes-28358.html>

Zillow Article on Cottonwood Trees: Don't Plant These Trees in Your Urban Yard

By Mary Boone on 8 May 2013

While it's true that many trees can add beauty, privacy and shade to your property, others have the potential to wreak havoc thanks to invasive root systems, prickly thorns, messy fruit or weak branches. Choosing the best tree for your urban backyard is a tough decision. Make a bad choice, and remorse will be yours for years to come.

- When you're thinking about the perfect tree for your urban lawn, here are a few that you probably should avoid:
- **Cottonwood (Populus)**
- These trees are generally so weak and unstable that even mild storms can cause branch failures. While the trees' invasive root systems and branch shedding habits can be beneficial in rural and forested settings, they're not a great choice in urban areas. Their size is often overwhelming, they give off a urine-like scent, and their fast-spreading root systems can crack foundations and sidewalks. Cottonwood trees have been banned from planting within many U.S. neighborhoods and cities because the "cotton" from them clogs filters and is generally untidy.
- <https://www.zillow.com/blog/dont-plant-these-trees-in-your-urban-yard-118479/>

What Complications Arise from Cottonwood Trees?

Joshua Wilke | July 1, 2019

Cottonwoods are a trouble-making tree for many reasons. They have those irritating seeds that float into every nook and cranny, and sticky buds that fall off everywhere. These buds are troublesome to get off of cars and will stain carpets yellow if tracked inside.

Even though they can practically grow all over the United States and in many environments, cottonwoods are not as resilient as they seem. They are a fast-growing species. In fact, they are the fastest growing trees in North America, growing 6 feet or more in height per year. This puts them at risk for having weaker, more porous wood than other types of trees. They have a propensity to be penetrated by infestations, to rot, and to break more easily. Because their weak wood is more likely than other trees to be diseased, rotten, or bug infested, they are more likely to die, break, and fall. The summer season is especially dangerous as it is a time when cottonwoods are growing too fast for their own good, thus making them more vulnerable to breakage.

Because they grow so easily and quickly in many places, their root systems are likely to spread where they shouldn't and tear underground things, like pipes, apart. They also are a major culprit in the destruction of wetlands and retaining ponds.

<https://www.skyhightreeremoval.com/2019/07/01/what-complications-arise-from-cottonwood-trees/>

Are Cottonwood Trees Illegal to Plant In Denver?

by [Jon Cook](#) / October 1, 2018 / [Tree Maintenance](#)

This may surprise you, but cottonwoods have been outlawed in much of the Denver metro area for the greater part of the past ten years. So, why is it illegal to plant cottonwoods in Denver? Because they are a massive and invasive tree species, and they have a habit of wanting to share your living space and even your utilities.

Cottonwoods are part of the populus tree species, the same species family as aspens. If you're familiar at all with aspens, then you know that an entire mountainside of aspens may, in fact, be only one tree that branched out, sprouted up, and continued growing. It's because aspens and cottonwoods are highly invasive in their surrounding areas. While some trees have a taproot (one main root that grows straight down), cottonwoods and aspens grow a wide range of roots that have a voracious appetite for water.

This all sounds well and good until someone plants a cottonwood tree in a front yard less than 20 feet away from the main water supply. Within a matter of years, a normal cottonwood will quickly find and break into the water supply ductwork. This means massive cleanup on the behalf of the homeowner, not to mention the financial cost of repairs and the hassle of a messy front yard.

And, it can get worse, because it's not just incoming water sources that cottonwoods love. They search for any 'liquid', water-type source, so your outgoing sewer line is often just as easily the victim of thirsty cottonwoods. That's when you end up in deep 'stuff', as well as having the same type of problem as before but with a horrible smell.

Cottonwoods also have incredibly strong root systems, which serves them well for longevity and poses another threat to homeowners. Cottonwoods planted too close to structures, namely basement walls and garage foundations, will break through the concrete walls over time. You may love having a big basement, but no basement is meant to have a cottonwood as a live-in guest.

This is why cottonwood trees are largely illegal to plant in the Denver metro area. Homeowners, HOAs, city officials, and repair crews are tired of cleaning up after cottonwoods. However, if you have a significant amount of property, you may still consider planting a cottonwood. We highly recommend checking with your local forestry service, HOA, and/or city authorities to see if cottonwoods are permissible for new plants.

<https://fieldingtreeandshrubcare.com/homeowners-guide-taking-care-cottonwood-trees-denver/>

Municipalities identified that have banned Cottonwood Trees: (Not an exhaustive list)

- **Madison, WI**
- **Denver, CO**
- **Windsor, CO**
- **Lone Tree, CO**
- **Oklahoma City, OK**
- **Winnemucca, NV**
- **Albuquerque, NM**
- **Beloit, WI**
- **Franklin, WI**
- **Mukwonago, WI**
- **Reno, NV - ROW banned**
- **Clinton, IA - ROW banned**



Spokane Municipal Code

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 Highlight Word

[Title 13](#) Public Utilities and Services

[Chapter 13.05](#) Interference with Utilities

[Section 13.05.020](#) Poplar and Cottonwood Trees a Nuisance

Planting and/or maintenance of cottonwood and poplar shade trees along the sides of streets of the City is hereby declared to be a nuisance and menace to sewer and water pipes and hydrants, and no person may plant or maintain such trees at such locations, including locations within fifty feet of any water or sewer pipes.

Date Passed: Monday, October 15, 2007

Effective Date: Wednesday, November 28, 2007

Recodification ORD C34122 Section 1

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Common Council of the City of Franklin 8-5-1997 by Ord. No. 97-1461 as Sec. 9.08 of the 1997 Code. Amendments noted where applicable.]

§ 240-8 Cottonwood and Box Elder trees prohibited.

Each and every female tree of the species *Populus deltoides*, variety *Populus balsamifera* or other pistillate form of the genus *Polulus*, commonly known as "Cottonwoods," every female tree of the species *Acer negundo*, commonly called the "seed-bearing Box Elder," which is now or may hereafter become infested with *Leptocoris trivittatus*, commonly known as the "Box Elder" bug, or any other tree or shrub whose seeds, fruits or flowers shall fall in such manner as to interfere with the storm drainage system is hereby declared to be a public nuisance, and any person having any such tree on his or her premises shall cause the same to be destroyed.

707.06 CERTAIN TREES PROHIBITED.



(a) Any silver maple, honey locust, poplar, basswood, box elder, catalpa or willow upon private property in the City in such close proximity to any public place including, but not limited to, the tree lawn right-of way of residential property, in the City as will permit the roots of such tree to penetrate through or under the surface of any public place in the City, is hereby declared to be a public nuisance and may be abated by the City Arborist as provided in Sections [707.02\(c\)](#) and [707.08](#).

(b) Any cottonwood tree is hereby declared to be a public nuisance and may be abated by the City Arborist.

When the City Arborist finds it necessary to remove a cottonwood tree, he or she shall serve a written order to remove such tree or trees upon the owner, operator, occupant or other person responsible for the property upon which such tree exists. The order shall set forth a reasonable time limit for compliance. Upon noncompliance with the City Arborist's order, the City Arborist shall remedy the condition or contract with others for the purpose of abating the condition. The person abating the condition shall have the authority to enter the subject premises for that purpose and shall be charged with the cost of the abatement. If the cost for abatement is not paid within thirty days of the notice of the same, such cost shall be levied against the property upon which such cottonwood tree existed as a special assessment. The levying of such assessment shall not affect the liability of the person to whom the order is directed to fine as provided herein.

Municipalities that have banned Cottonwood Trees (Cont'd):

- **Madison, WI - Madison ordinance number 23.27:** "Cotton bearing poplar trees restricted. No person shall sell or plant any female cotton bearing tree of the poplar family commonly called the Eastern Cottonwood, *Populus deltoides*, and the White Poplar, *Populus alba*, within the boundaries of the City of Madison."
- **Windsor, CO - Charter and Municipal Code, Chapter 7 - Health, Sanitation and Animals, Article IV - Trees, Section 7-4-10. - Cotton-bearing cottonwood trees.**
 - (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, plant, transplant, keep or maintain any cotton-bearing cottonwood trees in the Town.
 - (c) For purposes of the enforcement of the ordinance codified herein, the Town declares cotton-bearing cottonwood trees to be a nuisance and subject to the provisions of this Code with regard to the abatement of nuisances.

Municipalities that have banned Cottonwood Trees (Cont'd):

- **Oklahoma City, OK - ordinance chapter 53 - Trees & Shrubs, 53-5 - Certain Trees Prohibited** "No person shall plant or permit the planting of black locust, seed-bearing female cottonwood, or any other tree condemned by the Director of Parks and Recreation for the purpose of protecting the public health or to prevent destruction of other plants by spread of disease. The male non-seed-bearing cottonwood tree is specifically excepted from the provisions of this section. The Director shall prepare a list of condemned trees and file it with the City Clerk. "

Texas Municipalities that have exempted Cottonwood Trees from protection:

- ***Coppell*** - means any living tree species, six inches DBH or larger, which is not on the "unprotected tree list" that shall be subject to the preservation, protection, and replanting requirements of article 34, division 2.
- ***Duncanville*** - any tree having a caliper of six inches or more that is not one of the following: mesquite, bois d'arc, thorny honey locust, hackberry, cottonwood, cedar, china-berry (common), native black willow, and native red/white mulberry.

Texas Municipalities that have exempted Cottonwood Trees from protection:

- ***Frisco*** - trees that meet one of the following requirements and determined to be healthy by the Director of Planning or his/her designee: Any tree eight (8") inches or larger in diameter when measured at a point four and one-half feet (4' 6") above the ground level and which normally attains a height of at least twelve (12') feet at maturity, and located within the Protected Area; A tree(s) 20.1 caliper inches and larger; A Stand of Trees. The following trees shall not be included in the above definition of Protected Trees: Silver Leaf Maple, Sugarberry, Honey Locust, Bois d' Arc, Mimosa, Mulberry, White Poplar, Cottonwood, Mesquite, and Willow.

Texas Municipalities that have exempted Cottonwood Trees from protection:

- ***Helotes*** - trees having a nominal caliper of 12 inches or, if branched below four and one-half feet, measured at the narrowest trunk segment between the lowest branch and the natural grade. All species of woody plants attaining a mature height over 15 feet and meeting the nominal caliper of 12 inches requirement are "mature trees" for the purposes of this article, except those listed immediately hereafter as not protected. The following genus or species are not protected: Ash juniper, Cottonwood, Sycamore, Hackberry, Mulberry, Chinaberry, Boxelder, Chinese Tallow, Mesquite, and Huisache.

Texas Municipalities that have exempted Cottonwood Trees from protection:

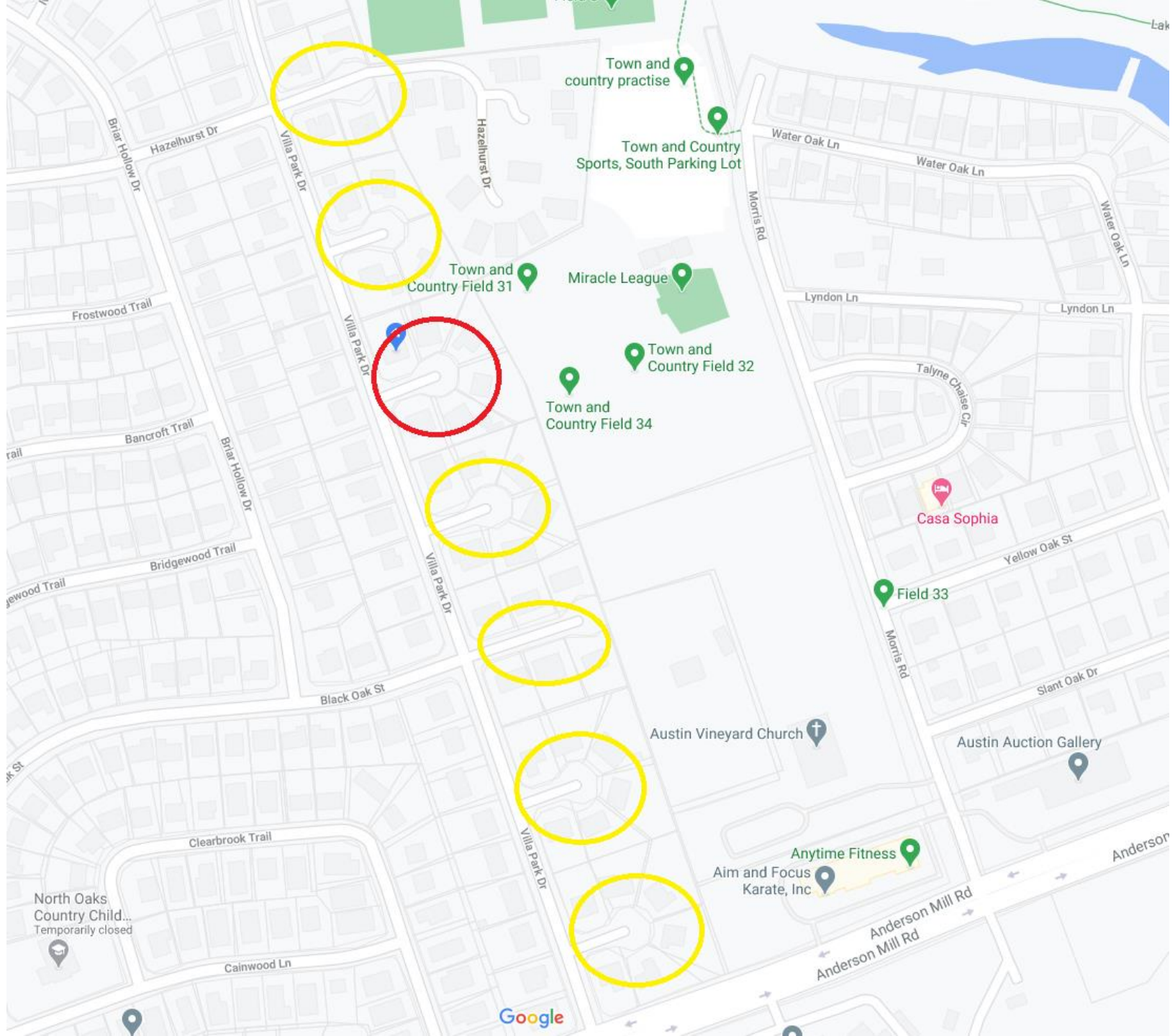
- **Rowlett** - means a tree the trunk of which has a DBH of eight inches (approximate 25-inch circumference), **that is not one of the following trees:** Tree of Heaven, Mimosa or Silk tree, Sugarberry, Horse apple/Bois D'Arc, Chinaberry, Black Willow, Chinese Tallow, Siberian Elm, **Cotton Wood**, Hackberry (11-inch DBH or smaller), Lotus (Buckthorn Family).
- Many other Texas municipalities have tree protection ordinances that have lists of “protected” species or lists of “unprotected” species. Cottonwoods are typically not protected due to the issues they cause and their lack of desirability.

FACTS related to Cottonwood Trees:

- Fast-growing, brittle wood, prone to rot and decay. Entire trees and large branches are prone to fall.
- Aggressive roots destroy City water mains and property owners' water pipes.
- Cotton Fuzz – excessive amounts of fuzz are produced and blanket adjacent properties. The fuzz is an extreme fire hazard, clogs A/C units, and is otherwise a general nuisance that prevents the reasonable use of property.
- The City of Austin and adjacent property owners in Crown Ct have all of these problems with the subject tree.

DAMAGE TO CITY PIPES:

- Michael Alvis, from Austin Water, provided repair details for water main repairs from 2000-2020. The City of Austin incurred over \$61,000 in water main repairs in the last 20 years due to these trees.
- The work order dates indicate that as many as 8 repairs have been done in the last 20 years on the water main.
- Urban Forester has been provided this data directly from Mr. Alvis.



6 other Cul-De-Sacs on same Street

- None of the 6 other Cul-de-Sacs have incurred any water main repairs in 20 years. - \$0.00
- All Cul-de-sacs have identical infrastructure and age as Crown Ct's infrastructure.
- Cottonwood trees are known to damage pipes

20" Cottonwood Tree and Water Main

- Base of tree is within feet of the street pavement.
- Street cuts from water main repairs are at the tree.
- Street cuts directly adjacent to this tree indicate that this tree is at least responsible for some of the damage to the water mains.



**Street cuts at
base of tree**

34" Tree and 20" Tree damaging property owner's pipes

- Property owner provided repair invoices and pictures of pipe damage caused by these trees and their roots
- Large roots from both trees are on my water line. Both have caused damage to my pipes.
- Urban Forester was immediately dismissive of these facts.
- Made decisions and assertions without ever visiting or inspecting the situation.
- Made false statements about tree roots and water pipes.
- Refused to assist me with my problems.

Killander, Lisa <Lisa.Killander@austintexas.gov>
To: Patrick Fulker <patrick.fulker@gmail.com>

Sun, May 24, 2020 at 1:18 PM

Patrick,

You seem to believe the trees are actively destroying your water line and that is simply not the case. As I stated in a previous email, the roots will grow towards a leak in the water pipe and can then cause the flow within the pipe to be impeded. These tree roots are not crushing or cracking your waterline. If they were then you would have had ongoing repairs starting after you moved in and throughout the past 14 years that you have lived in your home. You can bring this matter up to your district councilman. They will reach out for my response and I will give the same response I have given you. I am sorry you feel these trees are suddenly a detriment to your property.

Killander, Lisa <Lisa.Killander@austintexas.gov>

to me ▾

Fri, May 22, 3:29 PM



Patrick,

Cutting the roots would cause decay to migrate into other parts of the root system and ultimately cause the tree to become structurally unsound and a risk to your home and pedestrians. In other words the tree could fail at the base and fall onto your house , neighbors drive, or impact the safety of the right of way.

Cottonwoods are prone to decay when wounds are created.



Lisa states that I am not even allowed to cut the roots that are damaging my pipes. Please note her statement that cottonwood trees are prone to decay when the roots are cut.

34" Tree and 20" Tree damaging property owner's pipes

- Urban Forester refuses to acknowledge issues with pipes.
- Urban Forester states that I am not allowed to cut the roots damaging my pipes
- Urban Forester refuses to acknowledge my request to appeal her decision.
- What rights do property owners have in this process?



34" Tree – roots visibly bending water valves on the surface. Urban Forester refused to acknowledge this fact.



Root was excavated
by Austin Water –
Roots are clearly
destroying pipes.







**Large root from 20"
Cottonwood tree over
my water main. Has
previously caused
damage to my pipes.
Yellow line indicates
approximate location of
water line.**

City Council Intervention

- Property owner had to seek assistance from Austin Water, the City Council, and City legal department.
- Urban Forester refused to acknowledge my request for an appeal.
- After city council involvement, Urban Forester reluctantly agreed to re-assess my situation.

From: Killander, Lisa
Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 5:20 PM
To: Mars, Keith
Cc: Robinson, John; Kistner, Shane; Jones, Michael; McMillan, Scott
Subject: Cottonwood at 13213 Villa Park Drive
Attachments: Cottonwood at 13213 Villa Park drive.jpg; Cottonwood root and waterline view.jpg

Mr. Mars,

Public Works Forestry has reviewed the latest information regarding the citizen's request to remove a 34" diameter Cottonwood at 13213 Villa Park Road. This tree poses no risk to pedestrians or vehicles but after the root zone was water excavated by Austin Water staff at the request of the resident it was obvious the extent to which the support roots of this cottonwood are impacting and will continue to impact the water lines to this address as well as the adjacent home whose tap is located in the same place. Please see pictures attached. Austin Water's Pipeline Maintenance

Superintendent, Mile Alvis provided Forestry staff with the cost to relocate the two taps being impacted. Given this cost or costs of future water line/tap repairs it has been decided that these costs to the City exceed the benefits that this tree provides to a few homes within this cul-de-sac.

Hence this large cottonwood will be remove by Public Works Forestry as scheduling allows. The removal of the smaller cottonwood located on this property cannot be justified using the same criteria used for the larger cottonwood and hence it's removal will not take place at this time. I want to thank Mr. Fulker for his efforts in helping the City

understand more clearly the issues with this particular cottonwood that unfortunately developed near the taps for two houses.

Criteria Warranting Removal of the trees.

- Urban Forrester agreed to remove the 34” tree but not the 20” tree.
- No documentation or explanation given to support their decision, except for one vague e-mail.
- The same criteria can and should be used to justify and remove the 20” tree.
- Two arborists, Lisa Killander and John Robinson, inspected the trees and were on-site for about an hour. Almost no information was documented, and no risk assessment was recorded.
- The Urban Forester has no listed criteria for what warrants removal and does not document their work or justify their decisions in any way.

URBAN FORESTER'S CRITERIA TO REMOVE TREE

- Urban Forester stated that the cost to relocate the water main exceeds the value of the 34" tree.
- This is also true for the 20" tree.
- Both trees have caused damage and will continue to cause damage to my pipes.
- Lisa inquired with Mr. Alvis at Austin Water and was told that this 20" tree will most likely continue to cause me problems. This wasn't persuasive to the Urban Forester's decision.

From: Killander, Lisa

Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2020 8:24 AM

To: Alvis, Mike <Mike.Alvis@austintexas.gov>

Cc: Morrow, Scott <Scott.Morrow@austintexas.gov>; Rotramel, Naomi <Naomi.Rotramel@austintexas.gov>; Mars, Keith <Keith.Mars@austintexas.gov>; Robinson, John <John.Robinson@austintexas.gov>; Boswell, David <David.Boswell@austintexas.gov>

Subject: RE: 13213 Villa Park Dr.

Mike,

Thank you for sharing these with me. I will doing a formal assessment on this tree on wed. Did you excavate only one of the two cottonwoods in the ROW adjacent to Mr. Fulker's property? What is your opinion regarding the other cottonwood nearby and its ability to entangle the water system and potentially damage to the waterlines? Thank you.

Lisa Killander

City of Austin

Public Works Department

Office of the City Engineer

Urban Forestry Manager

Certified Arborist TX 3735-A

Lisa asks Mike Alvis of Austin Water about the 20" tree affecting my pipes

Alvis, Mike <Mike.Alvis@austintexas.gov>

Oct 2, 2020, 11:14 AM



to me ▾

Morning Patrick,

I was asked if I exposed both root systems and what my thoughts were about the second (smaller) tree and the possibilities of root intrusion through past experience. I expressed that I wasn't an arborist but, it has been my experience in excavations that we find root systems generally take the path of least resistance and that trench lines for water & wastewater systems can filter and hold ground water in the bedding material. This acts as an attractant for roots systems as they seek moisture. I mentioned again that this wasn't my area of expertise as I'm not an arborist. She thanked me for my input and help with this and stated she would be making a site visit to investigate the area in question. She asked if I could leave the excavated area open for their review. I agreed and requested they notify me when their investigation was complete so I could have the excavation backfilled.

I know we discussed leaving the area exposed until work was complete. Has that happened yet? No rush, I just want to ensure it is addressed.

Michael Alvis

Pipeline Maintenance Superintendent

City of Austin | Austin Water, Distribution System Services

512-972-1182 | C: 512-879-7747

Mike Alvis replies that he feels the tree will continue to affect my waterline

COST TO RELOCATE WATER METER

- Michael Alvis from Austin water provided costs to relocate the water meters affected by the trees. This only reflects the cost to the City and does not include the thousands of dollars that the property owners would also have to pay for their waterlines.
- 13213 Villa Park. Dr.
- Relocate service = \$2k
- Street cut = \$6K
-
- Abandon Existing Service @ main = \$1K
- Street cut = \$6K
-
- 8802 Crown Ct.
- Relocate service = \$2K
- Street Cut - \$6K
-
- Total estimate = \$23K

The Austin Environmental Criteria Manual – Section 3.5.4 states how to value a Tree

A standard formula of one caliper inch of replacement value is equivalent to \$200.00, or \$75 for certified affordable developments and placed into the UFRF. (NOTE: This option is not intended to facilitate the excessive removal of trees.) Trees have varying values based upon numerous tree and site conditions (see ECM [3.5.1](#)). The following mitigation rates apply for medium valued trees; however the City Arborist may raise or reduce these rates for high or low valued trees:

- greater than 19 inches diameter and located in Appendix F - 100%

$$20'' \times \$200.00 \times 100\% = \$4,000.00$$

20" Tree Value Vs Meter Costs

- The 20" tree does not appear to be affecting my neighbor's water-line but its roots have damaged my pipes and will continue to do so.
- The cost on the City to relocate just my water main is \$15k. This exceeds the tree's value of \$4k by more than 300%. The costs to the city alone warrants removal of this tree.
- This is the exact same criteria used by the Urban Forester to warrant removal of the 34" tree.
- I request that the same criteria used to warrant removal be applied to all trees and not just one.

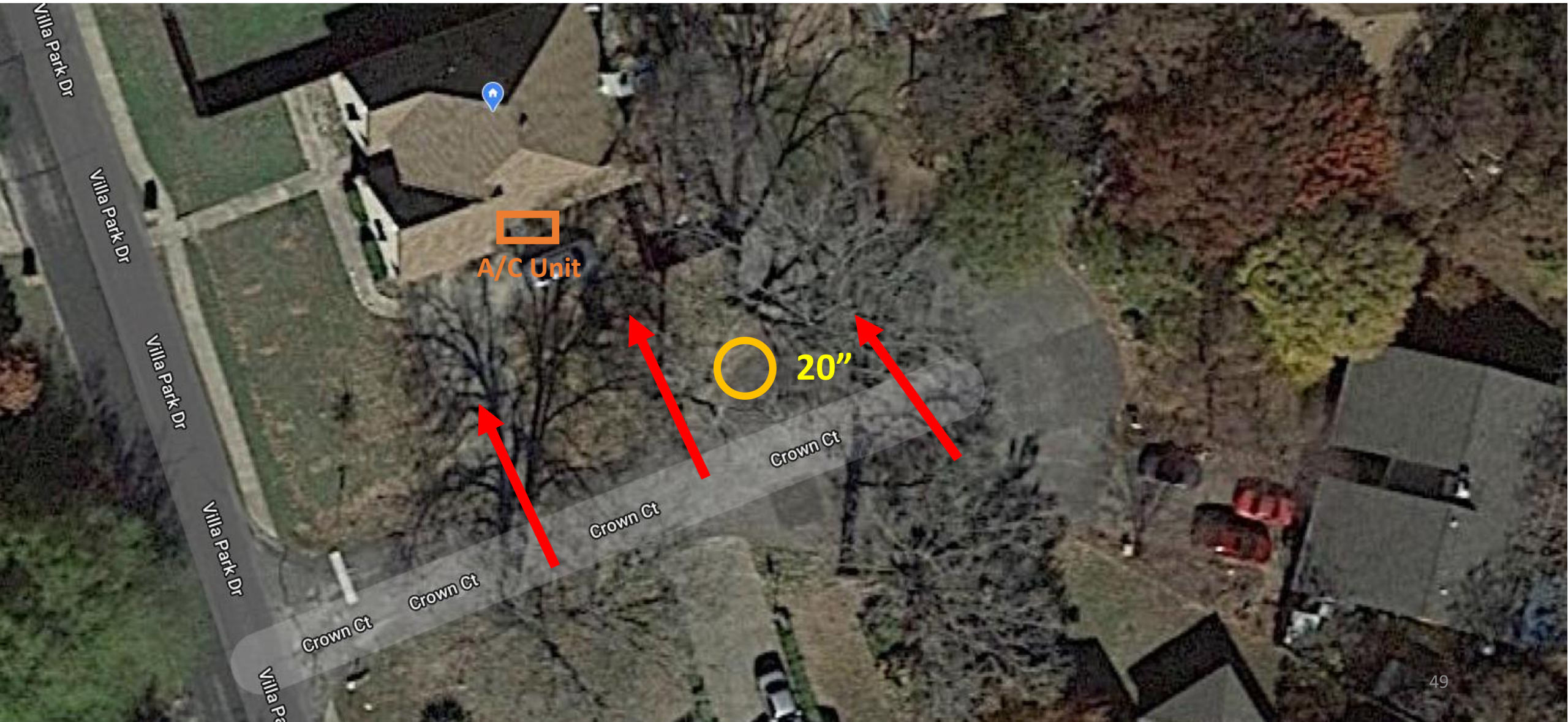
PROBLEMS RELATED TO “COTTON FUZZ”

- The subject tree is a large female cottonwood tree.
- This tree produces prolific amounts of seeds (“Cotton Fuzz”) from mid-March to mid-July (over 4 months).
- The fuzz inundates the adjacent properties clogging A/C units and creating a serious fire hazard.
- Daily cleaning (for 4 months) is necessary just to keep my breaker box and A/C unit cleaned.
- Cleaning this fuzz from my entire $\frac{1}{4}$ acre lot is impractical and would require several hours each day to maintain.

WIND DIRECTION IN AUSTIN, TX

- The predominant average hourly wind direction at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport varies throughout the year.
- The wind is most often from the *south* for *10 months*, from *February 3* to *December 8*, with a peak percentage of *77%* on *July 13*.
- The Wind in Austin is predominantly from the south when the Fuzz is present. These trees are all south of my property.
- The wind deposits a lot of this fuzz onto my property and clogs my A/C unit.

WIND DIRECTION



THE FUZZ IS A SERIOUS FIRE HAZARD

Please see the linked videos for information on the serious fire hazard these trees present for property owners:

Please note the amount of fuzz in the air and on the ground

<https://www.coloradoan.com/story/news/2016/06/23/fluffy-gasoline-raises-fort-collins-fire-concerns/86281998/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIHvPxQF1Ng>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXsVTIQW57k>

NEIGHBORS SENT MULTIPLE E-MAILS TO SHARE THEIR CONCERNS TO THE CITY:

- Over the last 18 months multiple e-mails have been sent by Renee Houseman and Krenda Rodis regarding members of the Crown Ct cul-de-sac.
- On July 9, 2020, both Krenda and Renee sent e-mails to City personnel falsely accusing neighbors of poisoning the trees in the cul-de-sac.
- These false accusations caused the City to open an investigation on the accused neighbors. A City employee with a badge questioned the accused and stated that this could be a felony or misdemeanor charge if true.
- The investigation was not documented by City personnel, but it was stated that no evidence of poisoning was uncovered.

From: renee houseman
To: [Dear, Douglas](#)
Subject: Permit for two trees
Date: Thursday, January 16, 2020 8:53:38 AM

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

Mr. Dear, 2020-004908 to

And 2020-004728 to, I would like to correspond briefly about the two trees on the cul-de-sac of Crown Court, on the edge of the property that do a wonderful job giving us shade. Six children that are six and under, enjoy riding their tricycles and bicycles in the cul-de-sac and playing throughout the year. These wonderful trees shade the afternoon sun from baking the cul-de-sac. That is why this is a very sensitive subject, the cutting down of these trees. I was informed by the gentleman, who is requesting to have them cut down, that he needed to cut them down in order to qualify for 100% rebate and had to cut these trees down. I know for a fact that Austin Energy never recommends cutting down trees. I spoke to Austin energy and to Sam McClendon at Austin Energy conservation, he verified this. After much research regarding the solar panel rebate question, consider my surprise when I reviewed the permits for cutting down the trees and find that they are now claiming it's because "of the health the trees". The first incorrect claim that the dangerous trees pose a threat to multiple homes. Clearly They do NOT have any branches that overhang any houses. The nearest branch to a roof distances about 10 feet. Has there been an occasional pipe issue with tree roots? In the 20 years I've lived here yes but the house that I live in was built in 1978. In that amount of time it would not surprise me to have an occasional pipe issue just because the pipes are old. This is a very sensitive subject I'm sure you can understand. But there is something not being honestly represented here, why? Thank you for listening to me there are any other questions I can answer for you please feel free to email me at Renee [REDACTED] or call at [REDACTED]

> From: Krenda Johnson <[REDACTED]>
> Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 9:31 AM
> To: City Arborist <Cityarborist@austintexas.gov>
> Subject: Need HELP/ guidance ASAP!!!!

>
> *** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

>
> Hello, my name is Krenda Rodis. I live at 8801 Crown CT. Austin TX 78729. I AM DESPERATELY AFRAID FOR THE LIFE OF MY NEIGHBORHOOD TREES!!! By that statement, I am saying I have one neighbor Crazy with anger he cannot get anyone to cut down the trees on the easement to the city(Patrick). This has been going on months now, but he is riling the older neighbors and starting to manipulate the neighbors through fear where there should be none. One neighbor directly across the street on Crown Ct and Villa Park drive (Vangie) he advised to hysterically call the city, worked up, say "I fear for my life because of a city tree that needs to be cut down" then hang up. . . So the words couldn't be twisted, His constant anger and complaints have given the neighbor next to him (Brad) a boldness for action.

>
> Yesterday, a neighbor was spotted Brad with gloves on, dumping something down an empty clay pot sitting on an open city water/ sewage pipe less than 7 feet from the base of a protected tree. The neighbor stood up and looked around him as if to see if anyone saw what he just did. . . .

>
> I don't know how long he's been dumping stuff down that pipe but the clay pot has been there months now. . . There are a few wisps of minor branches that now have no leaves and this tree was fully leafed out this spring.

>
> It has long been thought this tree has messed with the city water line, in fact there was a fix and patch job a few years back.

>
> But I'm here to tell you these trees are LOVED! They are NECESSARY!!!! I have kids, who love to PLAY OUTSIDE!!!!!! These trees offer a 10-15 degree cooling to the culdassack. . . . With all the shade provided. Without these trees our

culdasack would get only sun from NOON on. It would change the whole culdasack with them gone, the black top would be too hot to even play on! Please save the trees!!!! Please, what can I do? I know the neighbors on both sides of me want the trees alive also. On a side note , the trees obviously help with pollution. My neighbors Nikki and Patrick, Nikki likes to sit in her Running car to work and get alone time, sometimes a few hours, all while running the AC. Without the trees my culdasack would fill up with her exhaust fumes. YUCK!!!!

>

> Can you come out inspect the trees so you have a point of reference, can you have the city lock the water access point so nothing further can be dumped into the line to damage my Neighborhood trees via the city water / sewage line? Also, is it possible to plant additional trees so someday when the cottonwoods do need to come down we have healthy established trees in the neighborhood. PLEASE HELP SAVE OUR TREES!!!! GUIDE ME ON WHAT I CAN DO, PLEASE.

>

> Thank you for your help and time.

>

> Krenda Rodis

>

> Sent from my iPhone

-----Original Message-----

From: renee houseman <reenehouseman@att.net>

Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 5:19 PM

To: City Arborist <Cityarborist@austintexas.gov>

Subject: Crown court trees

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

This email is regarding the trees on Crown Court. Two of which a permit was requested and denied. There are two other trees on the cul-de-sac that are also of concern and consideration. They are three families on the cul-de-sac of five houses that are totally in love with the trees, for the comfort and shade that they give us. This allows our children to play on the cul-de-sac even in the heat of the summer because of the shade and comfort that it brings. See attached pictures taken at 4:45 it is almost 100° outside and those trees are providing the shade and actually lowering the temperature maybe 1° or 2° but it's at least making it more comfortable by blocking the intense afternoon sun rays. Our children ride their bikes around the circle play soccer kicking the ball back-and-forth or throwing planes and other such fun things. We are very close knit neighborhood and that is why this whole thing is breaking my heart. most birthday parties holidays Etc. are spent together in the cul-de-sac with the children playing. When the first permits were requested I looked up to see what had been done and realize that there were miss statements on the permit request and that is the only reason that I responded the first time , even though I hoped with everything in me that it would be declined. After that point I thought everything had been dropped. But much to my surprise as I was talking to a neighbor who needed me to water their plants etc. while they were away on vacation they informed me That the gentleman who

another neighbor to call the 311 yell that she's afraid for her safety because the tree is damaged and could fall on their house and hang up (this would be the tree in the front of the house at 8805 Crown Court.). I know that you Did received a text from Miss Krenda Rodis as she just told me. I have to be honest and upfront , she miss spoke when she said I saw something being poured into the pot on the ground. I said that he was oddly standing at that area and we had always wondered what that pot was for. He looked around as he stood up and put his gloves on the whole thing was odd. It was odd because there had been many meetings of the gentleman , (those who want the trees cut down) they stand at the base of the trees. And one particular day I was sitting under a tree watching my grandson play and I saw Patrick ,the gentleman who originally requested the permits , and his neighbor and the gentleman who was working on cutting down some trees in Patrick's backyard that day. They were talking At the base of the the tree With the pot. I wasn't listening to intensely until I heard the gentleman who is working for the tree cutting company say "I could lose my license for that!!?" And then I tried to listen more intensely they saw me sitting there and Quickly concluded their conversation. My concern is you can't UN kill a tree . so if someone is trying to do damage to these trees so that there can be a permit to cut them down for "safety sake " . I want to stop it before the trees are damaged. I have however not been able to find out if or what the fine is for someone who damages or poisons a tree. I don't know if you've run into this before but I can only assume that Might you have. It would break my heart As these trees are such a comforting part of our neighborhood . And we are close friends and spend a lot of times together and so the debate in my heart and my stomach is the trees over the friendships or the trees and take the time to repair the friendships but again you can't UN kill the tree. I would be more than glad to speak to you if you have any questions and I will be perfectly honest with what I know, my name is Renee Houseman and my phone number is 512-696-5616 I have been told by Miss Rodis that this was forwarded to Daniel I don't know if that'll be helpful I know when this COVID-19 work schedule type time it's hard to get everything you guys have on your plate to be done. Please advise, again I feel like I'm trying to save these trees and time is running out. I don't know where to go. Thank you Renee Houseman Sent from my iPhone

SUMMARY OF TREE ISSUES:

- Roots from trees have damaged city infrastructure exceeding \$61,000 in repairs. Future damage is also likely.
- Roots of the 20" tree have damaged my pipes and will continue to do so.
- The cost to relocate the pipes is high and exceeds the value of the trees, thus warranting removal.
- The fuzz from the tree is excessive, a nuisance, clogs appliances, and is a serious fire hazard.
- Unfortunately, the only cost-effective way to alleviate all of these problems is to remove the tree.

THANK YOU!

- I would like to thank the Planning Commission for their time and consideration with this matter.
- I like trees and do not take their removal lightly. I feel there is no other cost-effective way to mitigate the multitude of problems this tree causes.
- Please understand that I put a lot of time and effort into communicating my situation and having these serious issues addressed. I would not have done so if these issues were not real or serious concerns for me.