

Austin Parks and Recreation Department

# Barton Springs Pool Tree (Flo)

August 28, 2023

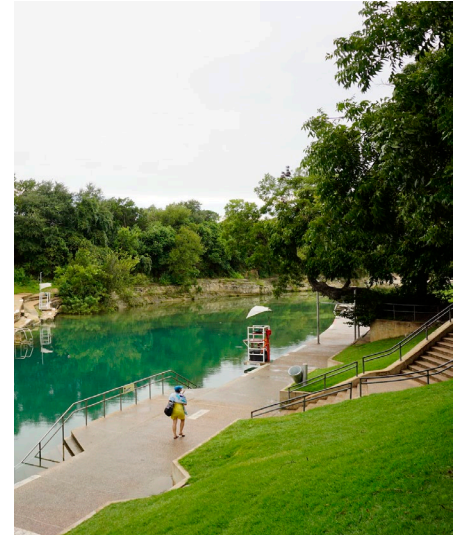
Staff Briefing



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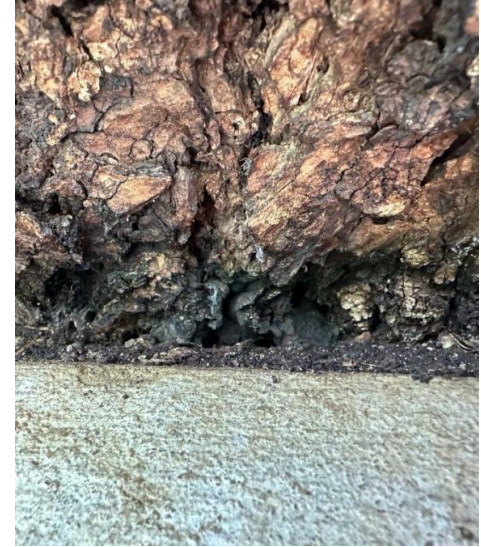
# Background

- Tree has leaned over pool deck since the 1920's
- Supported by cables and permanent steel structure
- Trunk cavity partially filled with concrete around 1958
  - Help close the tree "wound" (no longer an industry best practice)
- Fencing around critical root zone reduces soil compaction
- Second pecan tree planted uphill to replace canopy loss if/when "Flo" declined.



# Diagnosis

- July 6<sup>th</sup> – PARD staff noticed a fungal fruiting body at tree's base
  - Sample sent to Plant Diagnostic Lab at Texas A&M
- August 15<sup>th</sup> – Results confirmed brittle cinder fungus (*Kretzschmaria deusta*)
- PARD contacted three independent ISA Certified Arborists for follow up inspections
- There is no effective treatment for brittle cinder fungus



# Safety Precautions

- Brittle cinder fungus can cause healthy looking trees to collapse
- Additional support rope has been installed
- Area immediately below the tree has been restricted from public access



# Next Steps

- PARD awaits assessments and recommendations from three independent ISA Certified Arborists
- Recommendations will inform next steps
- If removal is necessary, PARD will ensure there are opportunities to honor Flo
- Staff is working to minimize the potential for fungus to spread



# Questions