

City of Rancho Cordova Arborist Report Requirements

California Central Valley native oak trees (valley oak, interior live oak, blue oak, oracle oak) and nonnative trees are afforded various levels of protection per the Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Title 19. Protected trees require a permit for major pruning (pruning in a way which reduces the overall canopy of the tree by 10 percent or more, or cutting of roots or branches greater than two inches diameter within a 12-month period) or to remove. For tree permit applications, an arborist report is often required. For development projects that will impact or remove on-site or off-site trees, an arborist report is required as a part of the Planning Application.

“Protected tree” means:

1. Native oak – *Quercus lobata*, valley oak; *Quercus wislizenii*, interior live oak; *Quercus douglasii*, blue oak; or *Quercus morehus*, oracle oak – having a trunk diameter of at least six inches or greater; or
2. Any tree species other than a native oak having a trunk diameter of at least 12 inches or greater on nonresidential property; or
3. Any tree species other than a native oak having a trunk diameter of at least 24 inches or greater on residential property; or
4. Any tree planted as a requirement tree for site development, tree permit condition, landscape plan removal replacement, or other designated condition by the public works director or planning director.

Arborist Report shall contain the following:

- Site address or project title
- Applicant Name, Address and Phone Number
- Arborist Name, Address, Phone Number, ISA Certification Number
- Date of Preparation
- Species List – Construction sites shall include all on-site trees and all off-site trees that have canopies overhanging the site or that may be impacted by off-site project-related construction
- Identification:
 - Name: Both common and scientific name (genus and species)
 - Number: All trees shall be identified by number in the report and on a locator map or exhibit. Heavily treed sites may require identification by a corresponding numbered tag attached to the tree in a manner consistent with current arboricultural practices.
- Assessment:
 - Size: Measured diameter of the trunk at 54 inches above grade, commonly referred to as diameter at standard height (DSH) or diameter at breast height (DBH); if other than DSH then alternate measurement height must be identified. If the tree is multi-trunked and has a common root system that branches at the ground, DSH means the sum of the diameter of the largest trunk and one-half the cumulative diameter of the remaining trunks at four and one-half feet above natural grade. This will be used to determine tree replacement mitigation.

- Tree Health: a measure of overall vigor and vitality of the tree and rated as good, fair or poor based on an assessment of crown density, leaf color and size, active callusing, shoot growth rate, extent of crown dieback, cambium layer health, and tree age.
- Tree Structure: a measure of the tree's structural stability and failure potential and rated as good, fair or poor based on assessment of specific structural features, eg., decay, conks, co-dominant trunks, included bark, abnormal lean, one-sided canopy, history of failure, prior construction impact, pruning history, etc.
- Overall Tree Condition: Based on the foregoing tree health and structural assessment
- Recommendation for Preservation or Removal: Based on the above overall tree assessment, the arborist shall provide a written recommendation either to preserve or to remove the tree. A recommendation for tree preservation during site development shall identify measures necessary for long term maintenance of the tree, such as crown cleanout, deep root fertilization, cabling, annual inspection, mulch placement, etc. A recommendation for removal shall identify all significant health and structural (safety) defects that would justify removal, such as excessive canopy die back, excessive root or trunk decay, etc.
 - General recommendations for the preservation of all protected trees on the site during and after construction. These recommendations should include such things as grading, trenching, filling, or paving beneath oak trees, fencing and landscaping requirements beneath oak trees, construction plan and specification requirements, etc.