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Arborist Report

June 18, 2024

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Definition of assignment:

Inspect large oak tree on property of Community Garden, 310 Mason St., Healdsburg, Ca, to determine the failure likelihood of the tree toward the garden area and provide mitigation option(s), to aid in minimizing the likelihood(s) for failure.

Observations:

The large oak tree on the property is a California Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*), measuring approximately 48" DBH (diameter at breast height), with an approximate height of 60 feet and an approximate crown spread diameter of 80 feet. The tree appears to be of poor/moderate health based on canopy conditions, leaf mass, foliage color and density, as well as presence of large dead limbs throughout the tree. The tree was evaluated on June 18, 2024 under good light conditions. A level two assessment was performed. The timeframe for this risk evaluation is over a three-year period.

Based on a conversation with Kasey Williams from the County of Sonoma, it was brought to my attention that the use of the property will increase in the near future, as a community garden will be installed and maintained. This will include volumes of people at lengthy intervals.

Upon inspecting the tree, I noticed significant lesions at the base of the tree along with missing bark and decomposing wood. There was a large, open wound on southern side of tree, approximately 2 1/2 feet in width and 8 feet in height (see photo #1). A sounding mallet was used in the lower portion of the tree trunk. This yielded tonal changes throughout the majority of the circumference of lower trunk area (see photos #2 and 3).



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The tree possessed a notable lean uphill, toward garden area.

Several cables were seen in the tree's upper canopy. In addition, many large diameter, dead limbs were present throughout the tree (these are observations only and not felt a contribution to tree trunk failure risk).

Utilizing both the TRAQ (tree risk assessment qualification) matrices and the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Tree Risk Assessment form to aid in substantiating the current risk rating assessment of the tree, I also generated mitigation option(s), as well as a residual risk rating following the proposed mitigation.

Interpretations and Recommendations:

The presence of decomposing wood in the lower portion of the stem and circumference loss of sound tissue to the exterior, combined with the tree's apparent low vigor, suggest that significant internal decay is likely present in this tree. The tonal changes experienced during the sounding process are indicative of internal wood quality being poor and decay being likely extensive around the tree's lower circumference. Based on experience, species characteristics and the visible presence of decay in the lower trunk wood, my opinion is that total stem failure(s) is likely to occur in the timeframe, especially in absence of any mitigation steps being performed.

It has been my experience that trees of low vigor are less able to resist decay organisms and therefore lends to my assumption that a greater amount of decay exists inside of the stem, than that witnessed on the exterior.

Because of the lean posture uphill, toward garden area, there is a higher likelihood of failure onto that uphill portion of the property, should the tree fail at the lower trunk level.

Utilizing the matrices in the ISA Tree Risk Assessment form, I have concluded that the risk rating for the garden area as a target is high in the tree's current state.

If mitigation steps are taken (see below for mitigation) as advised in the following



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portion of this report, the risk rating for the target area falls from high to a low/moderate risk, based on the same matrices.

If retention is desired, I recommend an aggressive weight and height reduction pruning to minimize overall size and loading throughout the tree (see photo #4). This would reduce the tree's overall failure likelihood. In coordination with the aforementioned reduction pruning, a fence or other restrictive structure should be installed around the tree to eliminate access to areas beneath the tree. Efficacy of the fencing/structure as a deterrent will depend strongly on its ability to maintain the area inside of fencing free of targets.

Weight/height reduction in combination with fencing and ongoing assessment by an ISA Certified Arborist on at least an every six month basis will allow for a proactive maintenance approach and inherently maintain both a lower failure likelihood, as well as lower overall risk to target area.

If target area is not able to be maintained free of targets, I recommend removal of the tree in its entirety, given its high risk rating

Conclusion:

Based on the current condition of the tree, its overall risk rating of high, as it relates to the likelihood for failure as well as the likelihood for impact and consequences of failure to its target area (garden area), it is my opinion that the tree be removed entirely.

Alternatively, have the tree's weight and height significantly reduced for load management throughout the tree, along with fencing off of the tree's failure target zone to eliminate pedestrian access. This will not eliminate all risk, yet reduce it.

If pruning is elected, due to the sensitive nature of pruning a tree like this one, it should be performed and/or overseen by an ISA Certified Arborist to ensure the highest likelihood of proper execution of the care. The tree should then be monitored diligently by an ISA Certified Arborist (recommended is every six months, or until a different interval is deemed appropriate) and that the fenced off area be maintained inaccessible to pedestrians.

While these pruning/mitigation options will result in a reduction of the tree's



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current risk, removal of the entire tree or its parts of concern are the only way to eliminate the respective risk(s).

Assumptions and Limiting Conditions

1. Any legal description provided to the consultant/appraiser is assumed to be correct. Any titles and ownerships to any property are assumed to be good and marketable. No responsibility is assumed for matters legal in character.
2. It is assumed that property is not in violation of any applicable codes, ordinances, statutes or other governmental regulations.
3. Care has been taken to obtain all information from reliable sources. All data has been verified insofar as possible; however, the consultant/appraiser can neither guarantee nor be responsible for the accuracy of information provided by others.
4. The consultant/appraiser shall not be required to give testimony or to attend court by reason of this report unless subsequent contractual arrangements are made, including payment of an additional fee for such services.
5. This report and any values expressed herein represent the opinion of the consultant/appraiser, and the consultant/appraiser's fee for this report is in no way contingent upon the reporting of a specified value, a stipulated result, nor upon any finding to be reported.
6. Unless expressed otherwise: 1) the information in this report covers only the items that were examined and reflects the condition of those items at the time of inspection; and 2) the inspection is limited to visual examination of accessible items without dissection, excavation, probing, or coring. There is no warranty or guarantee expressed or implied that problems or deficiencies of the plants or property in question may not arise in the future.
7. Loss or alteration of any part of this report invalidates the entire report.



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Sincerely,

Fredrick Frey
ISA certified Arborist
WE-4209