

MEMORANDUM

March 28, 2023

To: Mayor Andrew Gilich
City Council Members
Planning Commission
Mike Leonard, CAO
Jerry Creel, Director of Community Development
Zachary Harris, City Arborist

From: City of Biloxi Tree Committee
Tracy Wyman, Chair (Ex-officio); Robin Lang (1); Shirley Robinson (2); Susan Peterson (4); Wendy Lally (5); Christine Davis (6)

Re: 2023-TR 002 – MGCCC Access Road

A new access road is proposed for MGCCC. The project proposes the removal of 23 protected trees as shown in the SUMMARY OF PROPOSED REMOVALS below:

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED REMOVALS OF PROTECTED TREES:

18 Live Oaks (Qty)/DBH	4 Bald Cypress (Qty)/DBH	1 Sthn Magnolia (Qty)/DBH
(2) 42"	(1) 21"	(1) 14"
(1) 32"	(2) 10"	
(2) 18"	(1) 8"	
(2) 16"		
(2) 14"		
(4) 12"		
(3) 10"		
(2) 8"		

Further, the project proposes that no mitigation trees will be planted on-site to replace the loss of the 23 protected trees, but opts to pay into the City of Biloxi Tree Mitigation Trust.

TREE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Tree Committee has met on-site with the City Arborist, and hereby makes the following recommendations:

1. Redesign of the roadway to work around the two 42" Live Oaks between Stations 21 and 22, even if this requires acquisition of more property to do so.
2. Redesign of the roadway to allow for mitigation plantings (Live Oaks) at 30' on center for the length of the roadway on both sides of the road, even if it requires acquisition of more property or narrowing of lanes to do so. It is not in the interest of human health and safety, or economic benefit to the City, to create a 1/3-mile roadway with pedestrian sidewalks, with no ample shade for the pedestrians. The Live Oak Canopy should be restored here, of all places, at the entry-way to one of our institutions of higher learning.

3. Further, it is our understanding that this project was previously approved by the Planning Commission and City Council without going through a Tree Hearing. A project cannot be approved without consideration of the proposed removals of protected species, according to the LDO. For this reason, in addition to those named above, the Tree Committee recommends this project be redesigned and re-routed through DRC.

ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Should the Planning Commission authorize the removals regardless these recommendations, the Committee recommends

- A. The applicant include tree protection plans on their site plan for any protected trees that will remain, according to the LDO;
- B. The applicant be liable for mitigation of all 23 protected trees at a ration of 2:1, or 46 Trees of same species removed as specified in the LDO. The applicant my opt to transfer liability of these plantings to the City of Biloxi via payment to the City of Biloxi Tree Mitigation Trust.