

**MOBILE TREE COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT****Date: June 19, 2018**

<u>APPLICANT NAME</u>	Alabama Benin Trade & Cooperative Forum / Dr. Sharon Ingram
<u>LOCATION</u>	3809 Moffett Road (South side of Moffett Road, 715 ± feet east of Moffett Court)
<u>REQUEST</u>	Removal of large oak in the right-of-way along Moffett Road
<u>CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT</u>	District 7
<u>PRESENT ZONING</u>	B-1, Buffer Business District
<u>HEALTH OF TREE</u>	Some die-back is occurring, there is damage at the base of the trunk, and bracket fungi is present on living branches
<u>CONTRIBUTING FACTORS</u>	N/A
<u>ENGINEERING COMMENTS</u>	None
<u>TRAFFIC ENGINEERING COMMENTS</u>	None
<u>URBAN FORESTRY COMMENTS</u>	No comments received.
<u>PLANNING COMMENTS</u>	None.
<u>MAWSS</u>	N/A
<u>ANALYSIS</u>	The applicant is requesting removal of a large live oak in the right-of-way along Moffett Road. The tree appears on a 1971 survey prepared by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) as a 36-inch oak. The tree was not measured by staff during a site visit, but it appears to have a trunk approximately 60 inches in diameter, with a canopy spread of approximately 80 feet.

Based upon a site visit, the tree does appear to be experiencing some die-back, with between one-third and one-half of the canopy affected.

The tree is within a 10-foot wide by 100-foot long planting area, with Moffett Road on one side of the planting area, and paved parking on the other side of the planting area. There are no powerlines in proximity of the tree. Given the existing conditions, it is unlikely that the health of the tree will improve – if anything, it will continue to be stressed. However, with proper trimming, the die-back can be removed and the remainder of the tree saved for a period of time.

Because of the tree's proximity to Moffett Road, an Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) facility, any work in the right-of-way will require approval by ALDOT, and may additionally require an ALDOT permit if the blocking of traffic lanes is necessary for the trimming or removal of the tree. ALDOT may additionally have concerns regarding any proposed replantings, thus should replanting be considered, it should be subject to approval by ALDOT.

It is the policy of the Commission that when removals are approved, replanting at a two to one ratio is to be required. While the Right Tree Right Place document has not been finalized and adopted by the City, given the limited planting area and the proximity to Moffett Road, any replantings should be trees that fall within the group that would fit within the limited planting area. As an alternative, the Commission may consider a donation to the tree bank.

Finally, it should be noted that as of the time of the preparation of this report, no evidence of ownership of the property by the applicant nor the approval of the current property owner has been received by staff. Thus, if no documentation is received by the meeting, the Commission may wish to either holdover the request or deny the request.

RECOMMENDATION **Based on the preceding, it is recommended that the Commission consider all relevant facts and make a decision based upon those facts.**

Should the Commission consider approving the removal request, the following conditions are offered:

1. Obtaining of approvals / permits as necessary from the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) for any work in the right-of-way or for any activities that may require lane closure, prior to any work to trim or remove the tree;
2. All work to be performed by a licensed and bonded arborist, at the owner's expense;
3. Stump to be ground and neutral ground to be restored, including placement of sod or other vegetative groundcover;
4. If replanting is approved by ALDOT, two understory trees in the right-of-way in front of the site shall be provided, at the owner's expense, species and location to be coordinated with the Right Tree Right Place list and the City Arborist;

Revised for the July 17th meeting:

The application was heldover to allow Peter Toler to visit the site and inspect the tree, and to allow the applicant to provide evidence of approval from the property owner for the application.

Mr. Toler inspected the tree on July 7, 2018. The results and recommendation of his inspection are copied below:

Based on the inspection results, my conclusions and recommendations are as follows:

- *The overall likelihood of failure is “Probable” — The tree parts most likely to fail are the dead branches and scaffold leaders. These failures would be under normal weather conditions within this two-year time frame. This timeframe is not to be considered a “guarantee period” because weather and activities in and around the tree can have a significant impact on the overall tree’s condition and the likelihood of failure.*
- *The overall likelihood of Whole Tree Failure is “Possible —This failure would be expected in extreme weather conditions, but is unlikely during normal weather conditions within this two-year time frame.*
- *The overall likelihood of failure and impacting a target area is “Somewhat Likely” — failure of the scaffold leaders or branches could hit several of the target areas (people, parked cars, traffic).*
- *The overall likelihood of whole tree failure and impacting a target is “Somewhat Likely” — failure of the whole tree could hit several of the target areas (people, parked cars, traffic, office building).*
- *The tree has an overall risk rating of “Moderate”.*

The decision for mitigation and timing of prescribed treatments depends on the risk tolerance of the City of Mobile. Residual risk is the risk remaining after the corrective actions are completed. If the decision is made to retain the tree and do mitigation measures described below, the residual risk rating of this tree part would be reduced to Low rating. The risk rating for the canopy of the tree has decreased because of the dead branches and scaffolds will have been pruned from the tree. I do not recommend this course of action because the amount of canopy that would need to be removed from the tree. This amount of pruning would drastically impact the tree’s ability to perform photosynthesis. Without the proper amount of nutrients from photosynthesis combined with other stress factors, the tree would go into a severe state of decline. There are no ways to mitigate the issues of the decay in the root plate and at the cavity at the base of the trunk.

Recommendations:

- *My recommendation is for removal of the Live Oak based on the characteristics of the wood decay fungus combined with the overall decline in the canopy. Both of these factors lead me to believe that the root plate has significant loss. Testing the strength of the root plate is not available or very accurate, other visual factors are taken into consideration when determining the amount of root loss. There are several visible signs throughout the canopy that leads me to believe that the root plate has lost several structural roots as described in the findings. Trees with decaying root plates are more likely to fail during significant weather conditions, as root plates are in part the structural anchor points for the tree.*

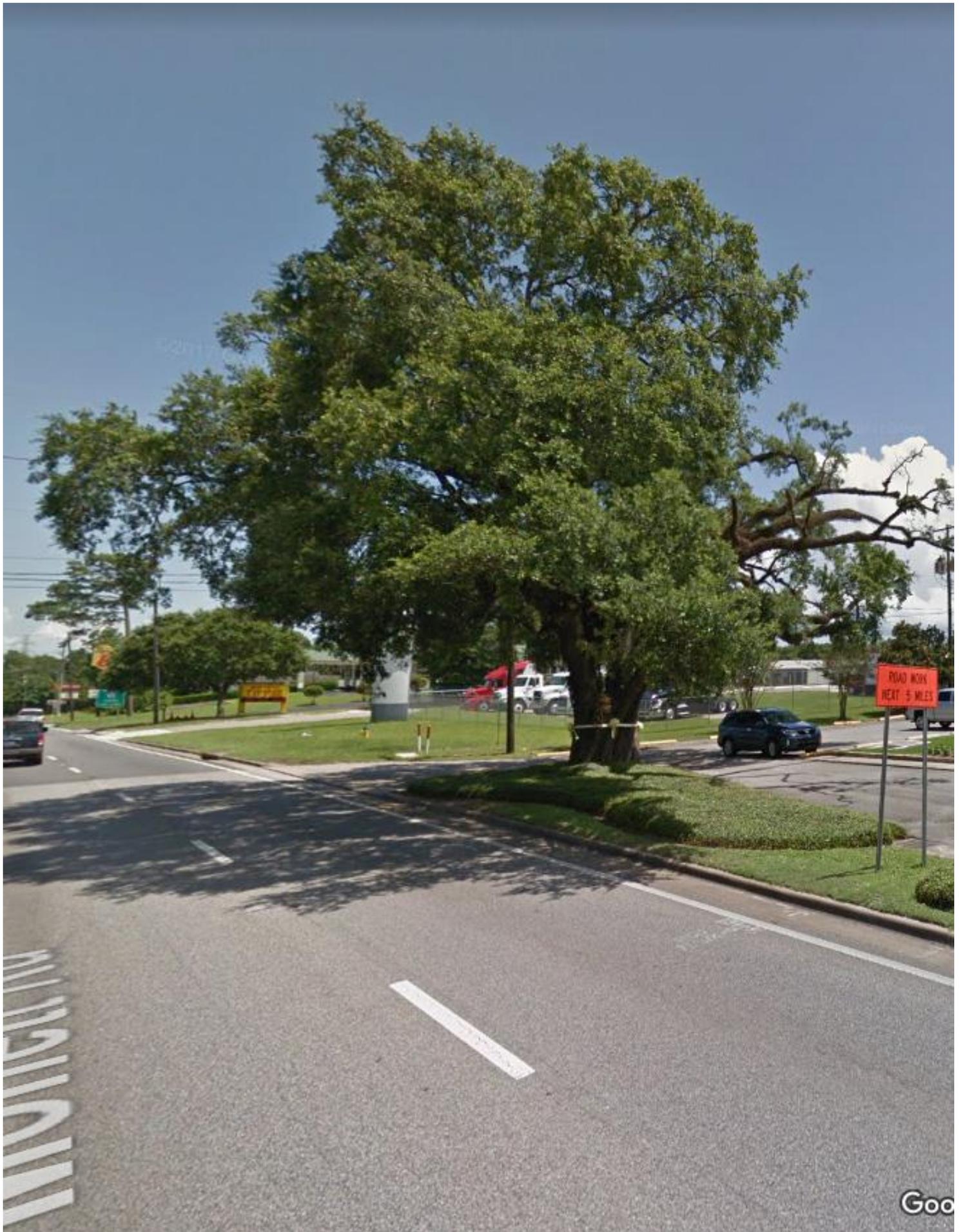
RECOMMENDATION **Based on the preceding, it is recommended that the Commission approval removal of the tree, subject to the following conditions:**

1. Submission of written approval for removal of the tree from the property owner;
2. Obtaining of approvals / permits as necessary from the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) for any work in the right-of-way or for any activities that may require lane closure, prior to any work to trim or remove the tree;
3. All work to be performed by a licensed and bonded arborist, at the owner's expense;
4. Stump to be ground and neutral ground to be restored, including placement of sod or other vegetative groundcover; and
5. If replanting is approved by ALDOT, two understory trees in the right-of-way in front of the site shall be provided, at the owner's expense, species and location to be coordinated with the Right Tree Right Place list and the City Arborist.



Moffett Rd

Google









3809 Moffett Rd Mobile AL 36618 US
132 deg(T), 7/7/18, 11:28:40 AM



West Side Drilling Areas

3809 Moffett Rd Mobile AL 36618 US
187 deg(T), 7/7/18, 11:30:25 AM



4' probe in root flare cavity