



## Preliminary Arborist Report

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**3521 Homestead Road  
Santa Clara, CA**

**PREPARED FOR:**  
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**November 2024**



# Preliminary Arborist Report

3521 Homestead Road  
Santa Clara, CA

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***Preliminary Tree Disposition Form***

# Preliminary Arborist Report

3521 Homestead Road  
Santa Clara, CA

## Introduction and Overview

The PulteGroup, Inc. is preparing plans to redevelop the property located at 3521 Homestead Road in Santa Clara. The proposed project area consists of commercial buildings, parking lots, driveways, a field, and associated landscaping. HortScience | Bartlett Consulting (Divisions of The F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company) was asked to prepare an **Arborist Report** for trees that would potentially be impacted by development in accordance with City of Santa Clara requirements.

This report provides the following information:

1. An assessment of each tree's health, structure, suitability for preservation, and protected status within and adjacent to the proposed project area.
2. An evaluation of impacts to trees based on plans provided by the client.
3. Guidelines for tree preservation throughout the planned construction phase of the project.

## Assessment Methods

Trees were assessed on October 30, 2024. All trees measuring 6 inches and greater in diameter were included in the assessment, as required by Santa Clara City Code, Chapter 12.35 (Trees and Shrubs). Eight off-site trees were included in the assessment. The assessment procedure consisted of the following steps:

1. Identifying the tree species;
2. Tagging each tree with an identifying number and recording its location on a map;
3. Measuring the trunk diameter at a point 54 inches above natural grade;
4. Evaluating the health and structural condition using a scale of 1 – 5:
  - 5** - A healthy, vigorous tree, reasonably free of signs and symptoms of disease, with good structure and form typical of the species.
  - 4** - Tree with slight decline in vigor, small amount of twig dieback, minor structural defects that could be corrected.
  - 3** - Tree with moderate vigor, moderate twig and small branch dieback, thinning of crown, poor leaf color, moderate structural defects that might be mitigated with regular care.
  - 2** - Tree in decline, epicormic growth, extensive dieback of medium to large branches, significant structural defects that cannot be abated.
  - 1** - Tree in severe decline, dieback of scaffold branches and/or trunk; most of foliage from epicormics; extensive structural defects that cannot be abated.
5. Rating the suitability for preservation as "high", "moderate", or "low". Suitability for preservation considers the health, age, and structural condition of the tree, and its potential to remain an asset to the site for years to come.

**High:** Trees with good health and structural stability that have the potential for longevity at the site.

**Moderate:** Trees with somewhat declining health and/or structural defects that can be abated with treatment. The tree will require more intense management and monitoring and may have a shorter life span than those in the 'high' category.

**Low:** Trees in poor health or with significant structural defects that cannot be mitigated. Tree is expected to continue to decline, regardless of treatment. The species or individual may have characteristics that are undesirable for landscapes, and generally are unsuited for use areas.

### Description of Trees

Twenty-five (25) trees were assessed, representing five species. Mexican fan palm was the most common species with eight trees. Most trees were located along the perimeter of the site. Eight trees were located off-site with branches that extended onto the subject property. None of the assessed species are native to the area. Overall, three trees (12%) were in good condition, 12 (48%) were in fair condition, and 10 (40%) were poor (Table 1). Descriptions of each tree can be found in the **Tree Assessment Form** and approximate locations are shown on the **Tree Assessment Map** (see Exhibits).

**Table 1. Tree condition ratings and frequency  
3521 Homestead Road Santa Clara, CA**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Condition			Total
		Poor (1-2)	Fair (3)	Good (4-5)	
Red ironbark	<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	1	1	-	2
Evergreen ash	<i>Fraxinus uhdei</i>	4	1	-	5
Southern magnolia	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	2	4	1	7
Chinese elm	<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>	-	3	-	3
Mexican fan palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	3	3	2	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>

Mexican fan palm was represented by eight trees. Most grew adjacent to the south boundary in landscape strips or planters. Trees #171 and 174 were in good condition, three were fair, and three were poor. Development stage was mostly mature with trunk diameters that averaged 16 inches in diameter. Taller trees were wind-burned with low vigor while younger, shorter trees were vigorous in good and fair condition. Tree #156 was located off-site in a 4-foot landscape strip with a root base that had grown over the curb (Photo 1). Palm #171 was an immature tree in good condition with excellent vigor and 6 feet of brown trunk.

Of seven southern magnolias assessed, four were in fair condition. Trees #162, 178, and 179 were poor while tree #160 was in good condition with good structure and vigor. Overall, development stage was semi-mature with trunk diameters that ranged from 8 – 17 inches. Trees #160 - 163 were located off-site in a 4-foot-wide landscape strip and had branches which extended approximately 7 – 15 feet onto the subject property. Trees #177, 178, and 179 grew in a 15 x 40-foot open space adjacent to the sidewalk.



**Photo 1:** Mexican fan palm #156 was off-site with a root base that extended over the curb (inset).

Five evergreen ash trees grew around the perimeter of the site. Condition was mostly poor with four trees having poor structure and a history of poor pruning. Three trees (#157, 158, and 159) grew off-site in a 4-foot-wide landscaping strip (Photo 2). Tree crowns had been raised over the parking lot and repeatedly topped. Surface roots were extensive, root flare had been cut flat on the east, and roots significantly disrupted curbs (Photo 3). Branches extended approximately 20 feet onto the subject property. Tree #176 grew at the edge of a field adjacent to a parking lot. It was in poor condition with multiple narrow attachments at the base and a history of poor pruning. Tree #180 was a large specimen tree located 5 feet from the sidewalk at the northeast corner. The crown was raised and reduced away from power lines, had a history of branch failure, and was severely asymmetric to the south (Photo 4). Condition, however, was fair with extensive shoot growth.



**Photo 2:** Evergreen ashes #157, 158, and 159 (L-R) grew in a narrow planter. Root flares had been cut flat and crowns were repeatedly topped.



**Photo 3:** Significant curb displacement adjacent to trees #157, 158, and 159.

**Photo 4:** Evergreen ash #180 was a mature specimen tree with a severely asymmetric crown.



Three Chinese elms were located in landscape islands within the parking lots. Trunk diameters measured between 15 – 18 inches indicating a semi-mature development stage. Condition was fair. Trees were vigorous with wide, flat crowns that had been raised above the parking lot. Tree #164 had a large pruning wound between attachments at 7 feet, while #165 had been repeatedly topped and stripped of interior branches.

Mature red ironbarks #166 and 167 grew in separate planters between a driveway and building. Tree #166 was in poor condition with a crook at 6 feet, poor structure, a high crown, and history of branch failure (Photo 5). Tree #167 was in fair condition and vigorous with poor structure, extensive epicormic growth, and a dense crown. Extensive girdling roots were amassed on the east side of the base (Photo 6).



**Photo 5:** Red ironbark #166 was in poor condition with poor structure and a high crown.



**Photo 6:** Red ironbark #167 had a dense vigorous crown and girdling roots (inset).



### City of Santa Clara Tree Protection Requirements

As stated in City Code, Chapter 12.35.080, the following trees shall not be removed without first obtaining a permit from the City:

- (a) Heritage trees in all zoning districts.
- (b) All specimen trees with a diameter of twelve (12) inches or more when measured at fifty-four (54) inches above natural grade of the following species on private property:
  - a. *Aesculus californica* (California buckeye);
  - b. *Acer macrophyllum* (big leaf maple);
  - c. *Cedrus deodara* (deodar cedar);
  - d. *Cedrus atlantica* "Glauca" (blue Atlas cedar);
  - e. *Cinnamomum camphora* (camphor tree);
  - f. *Platanus racemosa* (western sycamore);
  - g. *Quercus* (native oak tree species), including:
    - i. *Quercus agrifolia* (coast live oak);
    - ii. *Quercus lobata* (valley oak);
    - iii. *Quercus kelloggii* (black oak);
    - iv. *Quercus douglasii* (blue oak);
    - v. *Quercus wislizeni* (interior live oak);
  - h. *Sequoia sempervirens* (coast redwood); and
  - i. *Umbellularia californica* (bay laurel or California bay).
- (c) Approved development trees.
- (d) A private tree which has a trunk with a diameter of thirty-eight (38) inches or more measured at fifty-four (54) inches above natural grade.
- (e) A multibranching private tree which has major branches below fifty-four (54) inches above the natural grade with a diameter of thirty-eight (38) inches or more measured just below the first major trunk fork (Ord. 2036 § 2, 12-7-21).

Based on these criteria, evergreen ash #180 is *Protected* and will require a permit for removal.

### Suitability for Preservation

Before evaluating the impacts that will occur during development, it is important to consider the quality of the tree resource itself, and the potential for individual trees to function well over an extended length of time. Trees that are preserved on development sites must be carefully selected to make sure that they may survive development impacts, adapt to a new environment and perform well in the landscape.

Our goal is to identify trees that have the potential for long-term health, structural stability, and longevity. For trees growing in open fields, away from areas where people and property are present, structural defects and/or poor health present a low risk of damage or injury if they fail. However, we must be concerned about safety in use areas. Therefore, where development encroaches into existing plantings, we must consider their structural stability as well as their potential to grow and thrive in a new environment. Where development will not occur, the normal life cycles of decline, structural failure, and death should be allowed to continue.

Evaluation of suitability for preservation considers several factors:

- **Tree health**  
Healthy, vigorous trees are better able to tolerate impacts such as root injury, demolition of existing structures, changes in soil grade and moisture, and soil compaction than are non-vigorous trees. Mexican fan palms #171 and 174 and southern magnolia #160 were in good condition and would be able to tolerate impacts better than less healthy trees.
- **Structural integrity**  
Trees with significant amounts of wood decay and other structural defects that cannot be corrected are likely to fail. Such trees should not be preserved in areas where damage to people or property is likely. For example, evergreen ash #176 had multiple narrow attachments which would be more likely to fail than normal stems and branches.
- **Species response**  
There is a wide variation in the response of individual species to construction impacts and changes in the environment. Evergreen ash is tolerant of root severance and impacts from construction, whereas red ironbark and southern magnolia are intolerant of both. Coast live oak can tolerate root severance but is intolerant of construction impacts, fill soil piled around the base, and frequent summer irrigation. Chinese elm is moderately tolerant of root severance and construction impacts, and does best with supplemental irrigation post-injury.
- **Tree age and longevity**  
Old trees, while having significant emotional and aesthetic appeal, have limited physiological capacity to adjust to an altered environment. Young trees are better able to generate new tissue and respond to change.
- **Invasiveness**  
Species which spread across a site and displace desired vegetation are not always appropriate for retention. This is particularly true when indigenous species are displaced. The California Invasive Plant Inventory Database (<http://www.cal-ipc.org/paf/>) lists species identified as being invasive. Santa Clara is part of the Central West Floristic Province. Mexican fan palm is listed as having moderate invasive potential.

Each tree was rated for suitability for preservation based upon its age, health, structural condition, and ability to safely coexist within a development environment (Table 2). We consider trees with high suitability for preservation to be the best candidates for preservation. We do not recommend retention of trees with low suitability for preservation in areas where people or property will be present. Retention of trees with moderate suitability for preservation depends upon the intensity of proposed site changes.

**Table 2. Tree suitability for preservation  
3521 Homestead Road Santa Clara, CA**

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<b>High</b>	Trees in this category had good health and structural stability that have the potential for longevity at the site. None of the assessed trees had high suitability for preservation.
<b>Moderate</b>	Trees in this category have fair health and/or structural defects that may be abated with treatment. These trees require more intense management and monitoring and may have shorter lifespans than those in the “high” category. Nine trees had moderate suitability for preservation: Mexican fan palms #171 – 174, southern magnolias #160, 161, 163 and 177, and Chinese elm #175.
<b>Low</b>	Trees in this category are in poor health or have significant defects in structure that cannot be abated with treatment. These trees can be expected to decline regardless of management. The species or individual tree may possess either characteristics that are undesirable in landscape settings or be unsuited for use areas. Sixteen (16) trees, or 40% of the total population, had low suitability for preservation: evergreen ashes #157, 158, 159, 176 and 180, Mexican fan palms #156, 168, 169 and 170, southern magnolias #162, 178 and 179, Chinese elms #164 and 165, and red ironbarks #166 and 167.

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### ***Preliminary Evaluation of Impacts and Recommendations***

Appropriate tree retention is a practical match between the location and intensity of construction activities with the quality and health of trees. The tree assessment was the reference point for tree condition and quality. Impacts from the proposed project were evaluated using the Conceptual Site Plan (CBG, 9/19/2024). This report is preliminary because no site layout, grading, utility, landscape, or other construction plans were reviewed.

The development proposes removal of all existing structures, parking lots, and landscaping. A 153-unit residential development with access roads, parking, and an open space area is planned. The site will be redeveloped from property line to property line and potential impacts to trees will be severe, making it unlikely that any of the on-site trees can be retained. Based on my assessment of the proposed plan and evaluation of the trees, I recommend removal of the 17 on-site trees. Evergreen ash #180 is *Protected* and will require a permit for removal. Recommendations for individual trees are provided in the ***Preliminary Tree Disposition*** (see **Exhibits**).

Off-site trees #156 – 163 can be preserved. Successful retention of the trees to be preserved will depend on the care with which work is performed around the trees and all parties committing to the **Preliminary Tree Preservation Guidelines** (next page).

### **Preliminary Tree Preservation Guidelines**

All on-site trees will be removed. Trees located off-site but close to the project boundary will be retained. The following recommendations will help reduce impacts to off-site trees from development and maintain their health and structural stability through the clearing, grading and construction phases.

#### **Design recommendations**

1. Where possible, include the location of all trees within 10 feet of the project limit. Include trunk locations on all project plans.
2. The project's perimeter security fence will also serve as the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE**. No grading, excavation, construction or storage of materials should occur outside the project limit.
3. All plans affecting trees shall be reviewed by the Consulting Arborist with regard to tree impacts. These include, but are not limited to: demolition plans, grading plans, drainage plans, utility plans, and landscape and irrigation plans.
4. Irrigation systems must be designed so that no trenching severs roots larger than 2 inches in diameter within the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE**.
5. Any herbicides placed under paving materials must be safe for use around trees and labeled for that use.

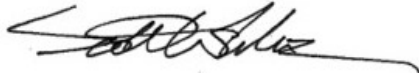
#### **Pre-demolition and pre-construction treatments and recommendations**

1. The project's perimeter security fence will also serve as the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE** for on-site trees. No grading, excavation, construction or storage of materials should occur outside the project limit.
2. Off-site trees to be preserved may require pruning to provide clearance for demolition, grading and construction. The tree care firm providing the pruning shall be a State of California Licensed Tree Contractor (C61/D49). All pruning shall be done by Certified Arborist or Certified Tree Worker in accordance with the latest edition of the Best Management Practices for Pruning (International Society of Arboriculture) and the American National Standard for Tree Care Operations (Z133.1) and Pruning (A300).
3. Tree(s) to be removed that have branches extending into the canopy of tree(s) to remain shall be removed by a Certified Arborist or Certified Tree Worker and not by the demolition contractor. The Certified Arborist or Certified Tree Worker shall remove the trees in a manner that causes no damage to the tree(s) and understory to remain.
4. Trees to be removed shall be felled so as to fall away from the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE** and avoid pulling and breaking of roots of off-site trees to remain. If roots are entwined, the Consulting Arborist may require first severing the major woody root mass before extracting the trees.
5. All tree work shall comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act as well as California Fish and Wildlife code 3503-3513 to not disturb nesting birds. To the extent feasible tree pruning and removal should be scheduled outside of the breeding season. Breeding bird surveys should be conducted prior to tree work. Qualified biologists should be involved in establishing work buffers for active nests.

### Recommendations for tree protection during construction

1. Any approved grading, construction, demolition or other work within 5 feet of the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE** should be monitored by the Consulting Arborist.
  2. Any root pruning that will occur within 5 feet of the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE** shall receive the prior approval of and may be supervised by the Consulting Arborist. Roots should be cut with a saw or sharp blade to provide a flat and smooth cut. Removal of roots larger than 2 inches in diameter should be avoided.
  3. If roots 2 inches and greater in diameter are encountered during site work and must be cut to complete the construction, the Consulting Arborist must be consulted to evaluate effects on the health and stability of the tree and recommend treatment.
  4. If injury should occur to any tree during construction, it should be evaluated as soon as possible by the Consulting Arborist so that appropriate treatments can be applied.
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If you have any questions regarding my observations or recommendations, please contact me.



**HortScience | Bartlett Consulting**  
Scott Wheeler, Consulting Arborist  
ISA Board Certified Master Arborist  
ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified



## **Exhibits**

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**Tree Assessment Map**

**Tree Assessment Form**

**Preliminary Tree Disposition Form**



# Tree Assessment Map

3521-3591 Homestead Road  
Santa Clara, CA

Prepared for:  
Pulte Group  
Pleasanton, CA

October 2024



No Scale

### Notes:

Base map provided by:  
Google Earth

Numbered tree locations are approximate.

X = no tree present



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# Tree Assessment

3521 Homestead Road  
 Santa Clara, CA  
 November 2024



Tree No.	Species	Trunk Diameter (in.)	Protected Tree?	Condition 1=poor 5=excellent	Suitability for Preservation	Comments
156	Mexican fan palm	17	No	3	Low	Off-site; 25' brown trunk; in 4' planting strip btwn parking lot and driveway; 10' beard; root boss extends over curb.
157	Evergreen ash	31	No	2	Low	Off-site in 4' planting strip; codominant stems at 10'; topped at 25'; vigorous; shoots arise from topping cuts; epicormics; roots disrupting curbs; root flare cut flat E.
158	Evergreen ash	25	No	2	Low	Off-site in 4' planting strip; codominant stems at 10' and 12'; topped at 25'; vigorous; shoots arise from topping cuts; epicormics; roots disrupting curbs; root flare cut flat E.; significant root flare.
159	Evergreen ash	35	No	2	Low	Off-site in 4' planting strip; multiple attachments at 10'; topped at 25'; vigorous; shoots arise from topping cuts; epicormics; roots disrupting curbs.
160	Southern magnolia	8	No	4	Moderate	Off-site 2' behind retaining wall; overhangs property 7'; crown raised above driveway; good structure; good young tree.
161	Southern magnolia	17	No	3	Moderate	Off-site 2' behind retaining wall; overhangs property 15'; asymmetric crown W.; minor twig and 1" branch dieback.
162	Southern magnolia	16	No	2	Low	Off-site 2' between retaining walls; overhangs property 15'; asymmetric crown W.; poor structure; extensive 1-2" branch dieback.
163	Southern magnolia	13	No	3	Moderate	Off-site 3' behind retaining wall; overhangs property 15'; asymmetric crown W.; poor structure; crowded; suppressed; moderate 1" branch dieback.
164	Chinese elm	17	No	3	Low	In 8x13x13' triangular planter; multiple attachments at 10'; wide rangy crown; gaps through crown; 2' wound btwn attachments W.
165	Chinese elm	15	No	3	Low	In 8x13' planter; codominant stems at 6' and 8'; leans W.; vigorous; wide low crown; lions tailed branches; repeatedly topped at 20'; profuse sprouts arise from pruning wounds.
166	Red ironbark	24	No	2	Low	In 12' planting strip btwn building and driveway; crook at 6'; crown raised above building and parking lot; poor structure; history of branch failure.
167	Red ironbark	34	No	3	Low	In 10' planting strip btwn building and driveway; poor structure; vigorous; profuse epicormics; dense crown; extensive 1-4" girdling roots E.
168	Mexican fan palm	18	No	2	Low	Brown trunk to 35'; low vigor; moderate inflorescence dieback.

# Tree Assessment

3521 Homestead Road  
 Santa Clara, CA  
 November 2024



Tree No.	Species	Trunk Diameter (in.)	Protected Tree?	Condition 1=poor 5=excellent	Suitability for Preservation	Comments
169	Mexican fan palm	16	No	2	Low	Brown trunk to 35'; bows W.; low vigor; 4' beard; moderate inflorescence dieback.
170	Mexican fan palm	24	No	2	Low	Brown trunk to 35'; moderate vigor; 4' beard; significant inflorescence dieback.
171	Mexican fan palm	12	No	4	Moderate	6' brown trunk; sprouts at base; vigorous; good young palm.
172	Mexican fan palm	9	No	3	Moderate	1' from curb; 6" from fence; leans S.; brown trunk to 5'; sprouts at base.
173	Mexican fan palm	17	No	3	Moderate	1' from curb; 3" from fence; slight lean S.; brown trunk to 9'; vigorous.
174	Mexican fan palm	17	No	4	Moderate	Growing into fence post; brown trunk to 7'; vigorous.
175	Chinese elm	18	No	3	Moderate	In 7x14' planter; codominant stems at 6' and 9'; low wide crown; crown raised above parking lot; shoots arise from pruning wounds; good structure.
176	Evergreen ash	14,12,8,8,6	No	2	Low	At edge of field and parking lot; behind fence; roots disrupting asphalt; multiple stems at base; poor structure; epicormics; vigorous.
177	Southern magnolia	12	No	3	Moderate	In 15' planting strip between sidewalk and parking lot; multiple attachments at 5'; asymmetric crown E.; poor structure; moderate twig dieback; vigorous.
178	Southern magnolia	8,8	No	2	Low	In 15' planting strip between sidewalk and parking lot; codominant at 3'; poor structure; crowded; sparse crown.
179	Southern magnolia	10,10	No	3	Low	In 15' planting strip between sidewalk and parking lot; codominant at 3'; open rangy crown.
180	Evergreen ash	50	Yes	3	Low	Specimen tree; 5' from sidewalk; multiple narrow attachments at 7'; seam from base to attachments N.; leans S.; severely asymmetric crown S.; reduced from power lines; history of branch failures; minor 1-4" branch dieback; vigorous; shoots arise from pruning wounds.

# Preliminary Tree Disposition

3521 Homestead Road  
Santa Clara, CA  
November 2024



Tree No.	Species	Trunk Diameter (in.)	Protected Tree?	Disposition	Comments
156	Mexican fan palm	17	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
157	Evergreen ash	31	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
158	Evergreen ash	25	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
159	Evergreen ash	35	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
160	Southern magnolia	8	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
161	Southern magnolia	17	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
162	Southern magnolia	16	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
163	Southern magnolia	13	No	Preserve	Off-site on private property
164	Chinese elm	17	No	Remove	Within development envelope
165	Chinese elm	15	No	Remove	Within development envelope
166	Red ironbark	24	No	Remove	Within development envelope
167	Red ironbark	34	No	Remove	Within development envelope
168	Mexican fan palm	18	No	Remove	Within development envelope
169	Mexican fan palm	16	No	Remove	Within development envelope
170	Mexican fan palm	24	No	Remove	Within development envelope
171	Mexican fan palm	12	No	Remove	Within development envelope
172	Mexican fan palm	9	No	Remove	Within development envelope
173	Mexican fan palm	17	No	Remove	Within development envelope
174	Mexican fan palm	17	No	Remove	Within development envelope
175	Chinese elm	18	No	Remove	Within development envelope
176	Evergreen ash	14,12,8,8,6	No	Remove	Within development envelope
177	Southern magnolia	12	No	Remove	Within development envelope
178	Southern magnolia	8,8	No	Remove	Within development envelope
179	Southern magnolia	10,10	No	Remove	Within development envelope
180	Evergreen ash	50	Yes	Remove	Within development envelope