



Arborist Report

Subject: Western Red Cedar – Removal Justification

DBH: 38 inches

Permit Reference: Development Permit #2502-129 (Revision Requested)

Location: 2965 74th Ave SE, Mercer Island, Wa 98040

Inspection Date: February 20th, 2026

Revision Date: 4/13/2026

Summary:

This report evaluates a 38-inch diameter Western Red Cedar in relation to a proposed development project currently permitted under Development Permit #2502-129. This arborist report has been prepared as part of a required submittal revision to include the subject tree for removal consideration, allowing the project to proceed safely and in compliance with applicable regulations.

Findings:

The subject tree is located within a constrained frontage area that is critical for construction access and staging. Its presence creates multiple safety and logistical conflicts with the proposed development activities:

Tree Removal Justification

Removal of the subject Western Red Cedar is requested pursuant to Mercer Island City Code **19.10.060.A.3** and Mercer Island City Code **19.10.060.A.2**.

As previously documented, the tree's location within the active construction corridor creates significant safety and access constraints:

- Required construction equipment, including boom trucks, delivery trucks, and concrete vehicles, will be unable to properly deploy outriggers or safely operate crane arms while maintaining Washington Labor & Industries (L&I) mandated safety setbacks.
- Due to limited lane width, vehicles will be unable to fully clear the access route, resulting in partial blockage of access to the rear residence.
- Emergency vehicle access will be compromised, as there is insufficient space for vehicles to pull off the lane to allow passage.
- Installation of required tree protection fencing at the drip line is not feasible, as it would obstruct the entire frontage and prevent necessary site access.
- Prior subsurface investigation (sonar) has identified existing root damage. Continued nearby excavation and construction-related vibration are likely to exacerbate root loss, further compromising tree stability and health.

Collectively, these conditions demonstrate a **foreseeable risk of harm, unsafe working conditions, and interference with safe construction practices and access**, consistent with the hazard criteria outlined in MICC 19.10.060.A.3. Due to the tree's size, location, and proximity to critical work areas, **no reasonable or feasible mitigation measures exist** (including pruning, protection, or design modification) that would allow for safe retention while meeting required construction and safety standards.

In accordance with MICC 19.10.060.A.2, the project has been designed to **prioritize retention of exceptional trees to the maximum extent feasible**. A total of **6 out of 7 exceptional trees (approximately 84%) will be retained**, with removal limited to this single tree only where necessary to maintain safe site operations and access.

In summary, removal of this tree represents the **minimum necessary action** to address documented safety hazards and access limitations while maintaining a high level of tree retention consistent with the intent of Mercer Island regulations.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

Given the significant conflicts with safe construction operations, emergency access requirements, and the inability to implement adequate tree protection measures, retention of the Western Red Cedar is not feasible. Additionally, existing and anticipated root damage will further destabilize the tree, increasing the risk of failure over time.

Removal of the tree is recommended, and a revision to Development Permit #2502-129 should be approved to include this action. This will allow the project to proceed in a safe, compliant, and practical manner.

Tree Replacement Plan:

To mitigate the loss of canopy and comply with applicable tree replacement requirements, six (6) native conifer trees will be planted on-site following completion of construction. These replacement trees will be installed at the front of the property in the area currently occupied by the subject cedar, where site conditions will be suitable post-development. Species selection will prioritize native conifers appropriate to the region, and planting will occur in accordance with best management practices to ensure establishment and long-term viability.

Sincerely,

Ryan Murphy

The Davey Tree Expert Company | Tacoma

ISA Certified Arborist PN-9949A

Tree Risk Assessor Qualified | TRAQ

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