



## Public Works - Urban Forestry

25 Prado Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-3218  
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[slocity.org](http://slocity.org)

### Tree Removal Inspection Report/ Permit

TO: City of San Luis Obispo Maintenance Operations

FROM: Anthony Whipple, City Arborist/Urban Forest Supervisor

SUBJECT: Removal Application SR#14483

On Date: January 2, 2024, I inspected one Indian laurel fig (*Ficus microcarpa*) tree(s) at 1120 Marsh Street in response to tree removal application SR#14483. The removal of the mentioned application was submitted based on:

San Luis Obispo Municipal Code 12.24.090. (E)1

b. The tree is dead or dying or diseased or damaged beyond reclamation.

During an inspection of the Indian laurel fig (*Ficus microcarpa*) tree on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, I observed several concerning signs. On the west side of the tree, facing Santa Rosa St., I found multiple dead branches and dieback affecting approximately 50% of the crown. The dieback appears concentrated in the upper branches. Additionally, I noticed two deadwood cuts, each measuring approximately 2-3 inches in diameter. The cuts are recent, and while Ficus Canker is a possible cause of the dieback, other factors such as drought, pests, or other diseases should also be considered. I have attached photos of the affected areas for reference.

#### **Ficus canker—*Neofusicoccum mangiferae* (=Nattrassia mangiferae) and *Botryosphaeria* spp.**

Indian laurel fig, or Chinese banyan, *Ficus microcarpa* = *F. retusa*, when stressed, is highly susceptible to Ficus canker. The disease, also called Ficus branch canker, bot canker, or sooty canker, is caused by a complex of fungi.

#### **Identification**

Apparently healthy branches are often interspersed with diseased or dead branches. New shoots often sprout on the limb or trunk below dead branches.

The main symptoms are branch dieback, crown thinning, and, if the disease progresses to the trunk, eventual tree death. The entire tree can die within 2 or 3 years after the initial symptoms.



### **Life cycle**

The fungi infect Indian laurel fig through mechanical injury or pruning wounds and cause disease when trees are stressed. Disease generally progresses from leaf fading or yellowing, to premature leaf drop, canopy thinning, and then branch death.

Advanced age (which reduces tree vigor) and unfavorable growing conditions (e.g., the root zone compacted or paved over) make Indian laurel fig highly susceptible to disease. Dying trees also commonly received inadequate irrigation, excessive canopy pruning, or root pruning to repair pavement.

### **Solutions**

Provide proper cultural care to minimize tree stress. Avoid severe pruning of Ficus and conduct needed pruning during dry weather. Prune off cankered or dying limbs at least 6 inches below any cankers. To avoid spreading the pathogens, scrub cutting blades clean and disinfect them between cuts and avoid using chain saws.

I contacted our CalFire pathology expert Kim Corella, and she visually confirmed my assessments and I APPROVE the tree removal(s).

Replanting one 36-inch box tree(s) off Master Tree list within 45 days of removal. Owner or Applicant shall submit a photo taken after tree(s) are planted and mailed to Urban Forest Services 25 Prado RD. San Luis Obispo CA 93401 or emailed to City Arborist [awhipple@slocity.org](mailto:awhipple@slocity.org) is a condition of this approval.

NOTE: All trees replanted shall be maintained as a condition of their approved tree removal.

Thank you,

Anthony Whipple,  
City Arborist/Urban Forest Supervisor  
(805) 781-7021 [awhipple@slocity.org](mailto:awhipple@slocity.org)