

August 5, 2021

Laura Niznik Williams, Interim Director, Governmental and Community Relations  
Matt Dulcich, Director of Environmental Planning  
Stephen Reiland, Project Manager Supervisor, Capital Projects  
Joel Swift, Facilities Director

Re: Tree maintenance issues in construction of parking structure between 49th  
and 48th Streets  
Tree Maintenance Issues on the V Street side of parking lot between 48th  
and 45th Streets

Dear Ms. Niznik Williams, Mr. Reiland, Mr. Dulcich, and Mr. Swift,

The above-stated issues have been reported to members of the Elmhurst  
Neighborhood Association Board and tree committee by a concerned observer, who  
said:

I was contacted about some trees along V St. at the Med Center where some  
construction activity is going on. I went by and was sad to see five Chinese  
hackberry with inadequate tree protection. Attached are some photos of the 14 -  
15 inch diameter trees. There is fencing but insufficient tree protection. The root  
system is damaged, no wood chip mulch, and they appear drought-stressed.

It is disappointing since UC Davis has a Horticulture program and an abundance  
of arboricultural expertise. UC Davis should be setting the standard for the  
community.

Could Elmhurst Neighborhood Association contact UC Med Center and bring  
this to their attention?

Furthermore, when I was pedaling around the campus it was disappointing.  
They need some assistance from an arborist. There are too many of the same  
species (Chinese hackberry) planted along the streets. There is turf right up to  
the base of the street trees and also those in the landscape. The turf adjacent to  
the trunk should be removed (min. of 3 ft.) and 4 - 6 inches of wood chip mulch  
installed. There are drought tolerant cork oaks planted in a turf area and  
suffering from overwatering. Research has shown that patients who could see  
trees outside their windows spend less postoperative days in the hospital and  
need fewer pain-killing medicines. Providing sound cultural practices would  
improve the vitality of the trees which would benefit all the patients at the  
hospital.

Attached are some photos of the 14 - 15 inch diameter trees. There is fencing but  
insufficient tree protection. Our board member walked by and to the extent she could

peek through the fencing, there was lumber and other construction materials piled against or up to trees, and they appeared to be in need of protection from the construction activities, including watering and care. (Two of the trees outside of the fencing appear to have been watered recently, but not the trees within the construction fencing.) Without adequate protection for the trees, compaction to the soil caused by construction activity is also detrimental.

If an arborist was involved in providing instructions and advice to the construction site management, that advice is not being followed. It is imperative that the situation be assessed and corrective measures be taken.

As our board member walked further down V Street, she noticed that the trees at the perimeter of the surface parking lot between 48th and 45th streets seem to be in need of care and maintenance as well. On the V Street side there is a concrete strip that appears to have no purpose at present. It appears that at one time it delineated the space for the trees to grow in between the parking lot and the grass leading to the sidewalk (where there is now shrubbery amongst the trees), or in between the shrubbery at the parking lot perimeter and the trees. Over the years, the trees have outgrown the provided space, and broken the concrete all along this stretch of parking lot perimeter. The concrete is now lying on many of their roots or on the soil near or over the tree roots. (See attached photo.) All trees are stressed by the drought at present, and concrete brings heat to tree roots and soil, making matters worse. At the very least, this concrete strip should be removed.

The University of California has an excellent arborist program, and a beautiful arboretum in the town of Davis. Please bring some of this expertise to the Sacramento campus. The trees campus-wide are sorely in need of it.

Please let us know of any corrective measure that will be taken.

Sincerely,

Elmhurst Neighborhood Association  
Board of Directors