



November 15, 2022

## **KENSINGTON PARK ARBORIST'S OBSERVATION**

The majority of the trees to be removed from this site are Monterey Pines. These trees were not chosen randomly, they were specifically selected due to failing health, insect infestation, and/or basal rot or decay. The attached photographs were taken while walking the site and they clearly demonstrate massive boring beetle infestation and/or dangerous basal rot and decay as well as dead branches that are hanging over the school yard.

Monterey Pine Trees as a species have a long-troubled history since the 1980s. Whether because of drought, disease or insect infestation they have suffered greatly and in almost every case it is the far better choice to remove and replace the trees rather than prune them and keep them in place.

It should be noted that Monterey Pines grow extremely fast; this growth rate can lead to structural issues and poor branch attachment. In addition, Pine Pitch Canker has plagued this species for the past couple of decades and the Red Turpentine Beetle has decimated these trees as well. It is believed the drought in the early 1980s stressed many of these trees. A stressed tree is a vulnerable which allows insects and diseases to have an easy time infesting and infecting this species. The beetles are an especially lingering problem as they bore or eat their way into the tree and burrow a tunnel, lay eggs and then leave. The eggs then hatch and each of these those larvae burrow a tunnel then exit the tree and the whole process repeats. The tunnels the burrow destroy the cambium layer; this layer allows nutrient movement and the more it is destroyed the weaker the tree becomes until it dies. These beetles are easily spotted by looking at the base of any Monterey Pine. If one sees pitch tubes and a grainy or powdery pile that is evidence of Frass or bug defecation. This is clearly shown in the attached photos. It should be noted that insecticides are ineffective and not recommended as a control option.

As a final point, the lifespan of Monterey Pine trees is short lived and it is rare if ever that more than 85 rings on any one tree is observed. Multitudes of these tree were planted after World War II as the east bay hills populated and many of them are now at the end of their lifespan.

Common knowledge supports the fact that a dying tree is a dangerous tree and what is what the City of Kensington is mitigating with the removal of these trees. Most of these trees should have been removed long ago.































