4/16/2020

Neighborhood Association Representatives
McDuffie Twin Parks, Nob Hill and Summit Park NA

Dear Representative,

I am writing to present you with information on our proposed tree removal/replacement plan for Bataan Park for this year. We are proposing to have a contractor come in and remove 5 trees this spring, to be followed up with planting 14 new trees this coming fall/early winter. The contractor will also be pruning out dead branches and obviously weak living branches throughout the park.

As you may know, management of this park is informed by its status as a City Landmark, a NM State Registered Cultural Property, and the Bataan Memorial Park Management Plan written by William Perkins in 2009. Following all of those guidelines, we will be replanting new elm trees in approximately the same locations from which they are to be removed (or from which they have been missing for some time. Our plan is to use the American elm variety 'Princeton' for all of these plantings. Going forward, some future replacement plantings inside the park might use other varieties or species of elm, but we will keep the same type for all perimeter plantings, as per the mentioned guidelines.

The 5 trees to be removed are represented on the attached map by red circles. The 2 on Marmac are in really poor condition, and overhang the street where people frequently park (see also attached images of Tree 83 and Tree 90). The other 3 are at the southwest corner of the park. While they are not yet as far gone as 83 and 90, two of them (Tree 59 and Tree 60) have large lightning strike wounds that have breached the protective layer of bark for many tens of feet along main trunk and side branches. Lightning damage is hard to assess, but the exposed wood left by these strikes is prime territory for wood-decaying fungi to get into the heartwood. As the fungus grows up and down the stems, those become increasingly weaker and prone to failure. Both of these trees have large branches overhanging the granite columns of names there at that corner. Failure of a large branch could easily break columns below, and we really, really want to avoid that. The third of those trees, Tree 57, has been pruned back a lot due to past limb failure and is not in good condition. Removing these three trees opens up that area to replant four new trees, without those getting stunted from lack of light due to overhead branches. To successfully replant small groves like this, we need to ensure the young trees get sufficient light. This process allows us to begin regrowing the elm canopy that makes this park so appealing, while reducing potential risk from aging, failing trees.

The map also shows 9 blue circles. These represent areas where trees have already been removed, some even before the Management Plan was written in 2009. We have some level of irrigation to the perimeter, and we will tweak that as needed to get sufficient water to the new trees that we plant along that perimeter.

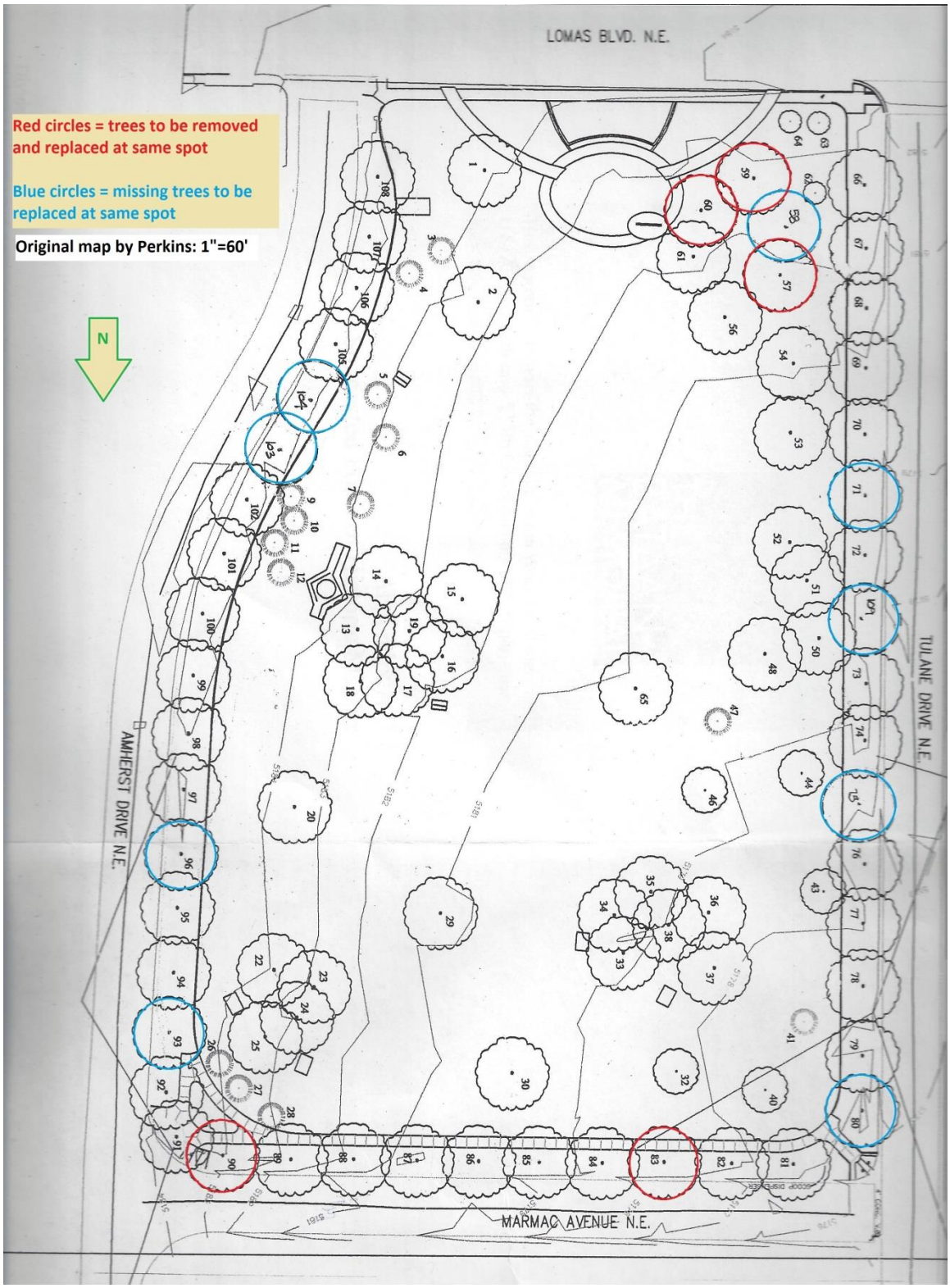
I realize this seems like a lot of work as this park, and it is. However, the biological reality of trees is that they do have finite lifespans, and when they grow in public parks, the risk factor they represent as they age and begin failing goes up. By taking this approach now, we can begin the long process of getting a new tree canopy growing while simultaneously reducing overall risk. This will result in a more diverse age/size range for the trees, which begins to get us away from the dire possibility of losing many trees in a short time frame, and provides a safer environment for park users to enjoy.

Thank you very much,

JORAN VIERS
city forester
park management division
p.o. box 21037
albquerque, nm 87154
o: 505-768-5196
m: 505-377-3073
javiers@cabq.gov

RM 7080 BM
Tree Risk Assessment Qualified

Map showing location of proposed removals and replacements.



Tree 83:

Tree 90:

Tree 59:

Tree 60:

Tree 57:

Trees 59 & 60 overhanging granite columns and shade structure: