

To: Eric Marlatt, city of Santa Cruz Zoning Administrator
From: The Sierra Club
Re: Heritage Tree on Washington St. and PG&E

Date: March 2nd. 2018

Dear Mr. Marlatt,

The Sierra Club appreciates your decision to not approve the cutting down of the red flowering gum tree (*Corymbia*) on Washington St. at your last meeting but instead to request that PG&E conduct a high level review of the feasibility of relocating this relatively short section of underground gas transmission line. Washington is a quiet street with little traffic and relatively few residences.

The beauty of this tree is without question. Saving as many trees as possible is a community good, given the loss of so many trees due to drought, fire and disease, not to mention the carbon sequestration of every mature tree.

Our recommendation for efficiency would be to take advantage of Ground Penetrating Radar to map the roots relative to the pipeline prior to any relocation efforts. For example, if it were determined that the roots are 20 inches above the pipeline, that would rule out any potential problem and the tree could remain in situ.

Regarding the feasibility of relocating the pipeline, we hope that PG&E will conduct an objective assessment and trust there are experts within the city departments to review whatever conclusion PG&E arrives at and that that review take place before the meeting of 3/7/18.

Should PG&E's conclusion be that relocation is not feasible due to cost, we ask that you weigh that claim against the benefits to the community of saving this tree and compared to the enormous fiscal resources available to PG&E.

Should PG&E's conclusion be that relocation is not feasible due to the proximity of underground water and sewer lines, and if city staff concur, we ask that PG&E be required to demonstrate that the roots of this particular tree are indeed within close proximity to the underground pipeline. While PG&E claims that Ground Penetrating Radar is not reliable, experts disagree. Its effectiveness depends on a number of variables and it is used effectively in the field. We request that this technology be used to assess the distance of the roots from the pipeline prior to any decision on removal.

We hope that this tree can be saved. If so, we applaud your leadership in achieving that outcome.

Respectfully submitted,



