

**MOBILE TREE COMMISSION
CERTIFICATION**

Date: June 21, 2016

LOCATION

111 S Royal Street and 65 Government St

(East side of S Royal Street, between Government Street and Church Street; and South side of Government Street, between Water Street and S Royal Street; and North side of Church Street, between S Royal Street and Water Street)

**TREES TO BE
REMOVED**

Eight live oak trees in front of the History Musuem at 111 South Royal Street, two live oaks on the south side of the History Museum on Church Street, and seven live oak trees on the north side of the Gulf Coast Exploreum along Government Street. (See attached letter)

**CITY COUNCIL
DISTRICT**

District 2

PRESENT ZONING

T-6

CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to State Code, the Mayor has certified that the removal of the above trees is necessary to prevent a public hazard or to provide efficient or economical service to the public. Such certificate shall be conclusive evidence for the approval of the application. (See Attached)

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



June 13, 2016

Mobile Tree Commission
Post Office Box 1827
Mobile, Alabama 36633-1827

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to Act 929, H. 1365 of the 1961 Regular Session as Amended (2015), I hereby certify that the need to remove trees and that it is or may become reasonably necessary to do so to prevent a public hazard or to provide efficient or economical service to the public.

The following trees require removal: eight live oak trees in front of the History Museum at 111 South Royal Street, two live oaks on the south side of the History Museum on Church Street, and seven live oak trees on the north side of the Gulf Coast Exploreum along Government Street. All of these trees are undermining the sidewalks and creating tripping hazards for pedestrians as well as for the impaired who are using wheelchairs and/or motorized scooters. Additionally, the root structure of these trees, even the more diminutive of the sample, poses a current or looming threat of encroaching upon the utilities under the sidewalks and threatening their integrity as well as the foundation of the History Museum. (See letters from City Staff).

The purpose of this certification is to protect the safety of those using the sidewalk, and to protect the efficient and economical operation of critical infrastructure from further tree damage. The removal of these trees is necessary to prevent a public hazard and to provide efficient and economical service to the public.

The plans for the beautification and/or replacement will be coordinated by Cart Blackwell, the Assistant Director of the Mobile Historic Development Commission and Architectural Historian. The plans will be in keeping with the current planting plans that exist in Downtown Mobile. I appreciate your cooperation on this matter and would be pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding this certification.

Sincerely,

William S. Stimpson
Mayor

WSS/mc

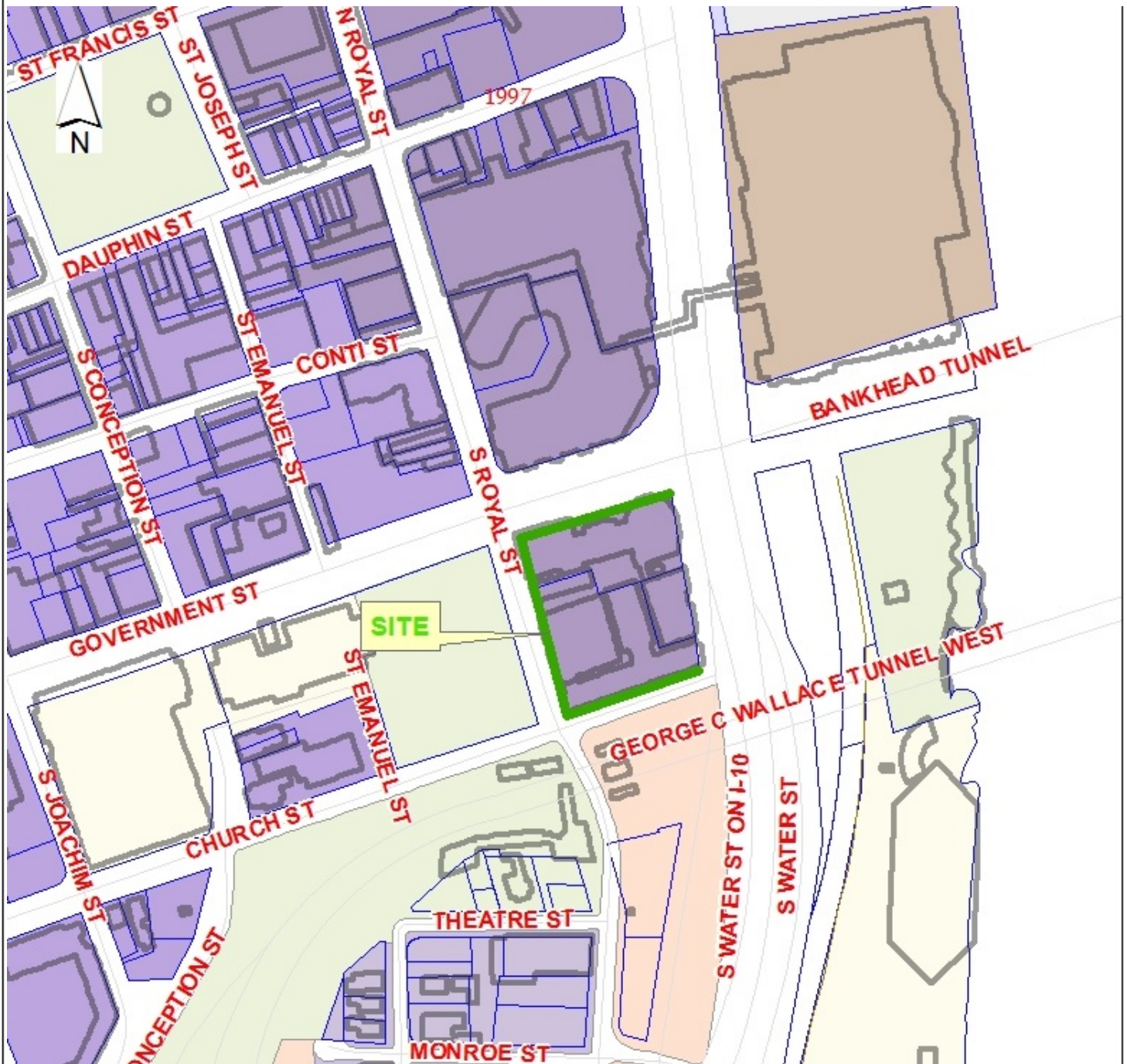
Mobile Tree Commission



Application	Certification	Date	June 21, 2016
Location	111 S Royal and 65 Government St		
Request	Removal of 17 live oak trees		



Mobile Tree Commission



Application Certification

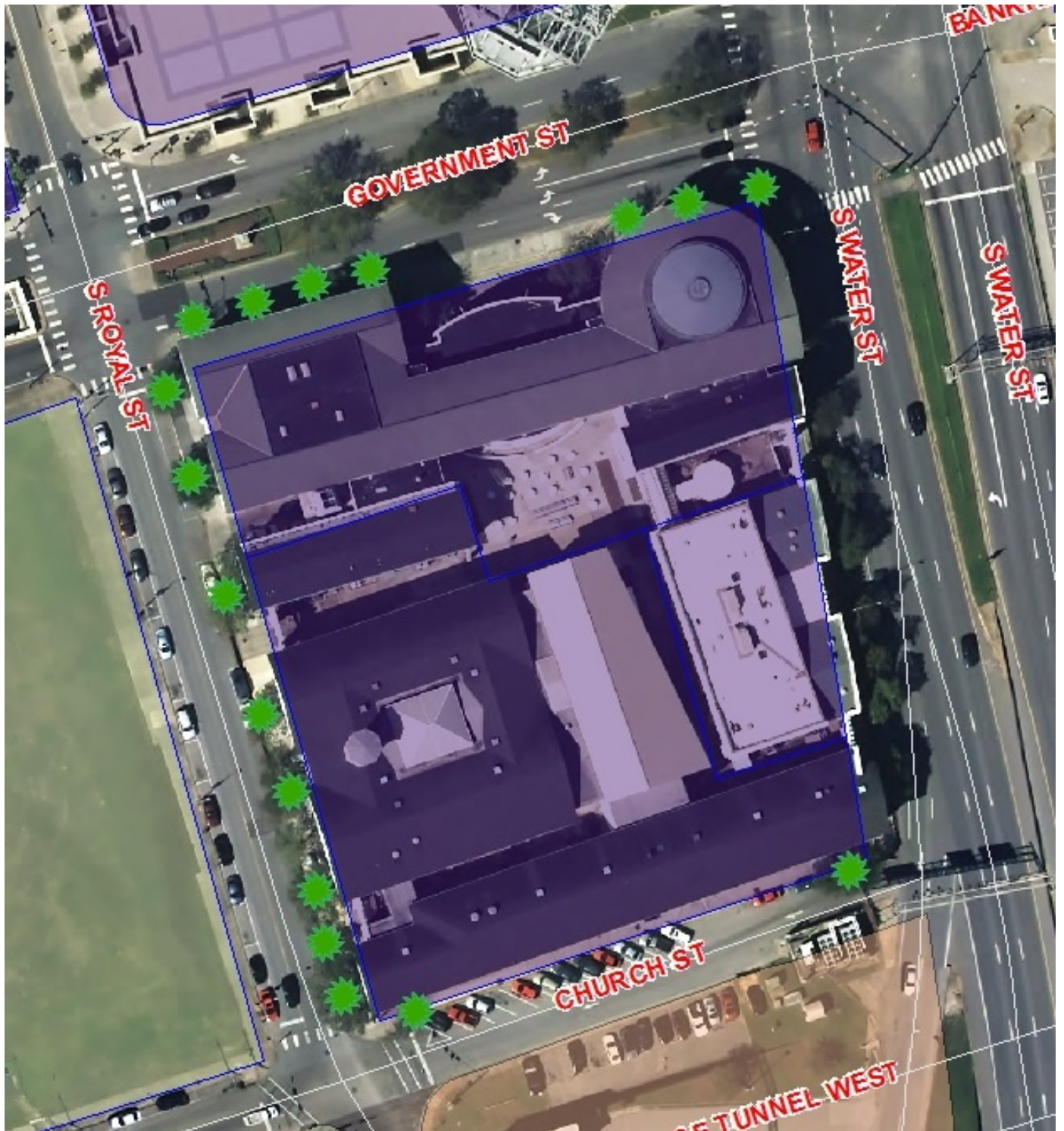
Date June 21, 2016

Location 111 S Royal and 65 Government St

Request Removal of 17 live oak trees



Mobile Tree Commission



Application Certification

Date June 21, 2016

Location 111 S Royal and 65 Government St

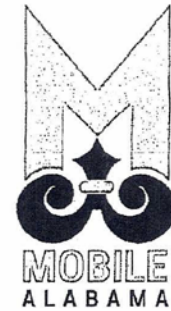
Request Removal of 17 live oak trees



Exhibits: A: Request from Jennifer White, City of Mobile Traffic Engineer,
B: Transcript of request from Sue Farni, Exec. Director, Information Technology
C: Diagram of perimeter tree locations.
D: Photo of Tree D
E: Photo of Tree E
F: Photo of Tree F
G: Photo of Tree G
H: Photo of Tree H
I: Photo of Tree I
J: Photo of Tree J
K: Photo of Tree K
L: Photo of Tree L
M: Photo of Tree M
N: Photo of Tree N
O: Photo of Tree O
P: Photo of Tree P
Q: Photo of Tree Q
R: Photo of Tree R
S: Photo of Tree S
T: Photo of Tree T
U: Copy of article detailing tree issues by Bill Finch

Exhibit A

May 26, 2016



Mayor Stimpson,

There is currently a street light cabinet located on Royal Street in front of the Telecommunications office in the Historic City Hall Building. The foundation of the cabinet has been pushed up over six inches from the tree roots of the oak tree located less than eight feet from the cabinet. As the foundation is being pushed up the electrical lines and conduit in the cabinet are being pulled up also. Eventually this would result in the power to the area street lights being compromised and the conduit breaking.

Repairs to the cabinet would be difficult around the existing tree roots as they may already be growing around the conduit under the sidewalk. We have already experienced difficulty reestablishing power to that location once before.

Any help in mitigating the situation would be appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer P. White', written in a cursive style.

Jennifer P. White, P.E.
Traffic Engineering Director

Exhibit B

Mayor Stimpson,

The street light control box on Royal Street in front of the City of Mobile's Telecom building is being altered by the roots of the tree next to it. This box controls the street lights along Royal street. The street lights along Royal Street are important to our citizens' safety. This control box has been repaired several times because the roots are pushing the sidewalk and box up at an angle away from the underground wiring. The door on the box will no longer close completely which allows rain and dirt inside. The door on the box is sometimes standing open. This is either because someone has pulled it open or it won't completely close or the binding won't allow it to stay closed. There are several hundred amps of electrical service inside of this box and when open it presents a liability to the City and a danger to the citizens. The roots also endanger the conduit below the sidewalk which houses our communications cabling. The tree needs to be removed and the sidewalk and control box repaired.

Sue Farni

Executive Director, Information Technology
City of Mobile
651 Church Street
Mobile, AL 36602
(251) 208-7830



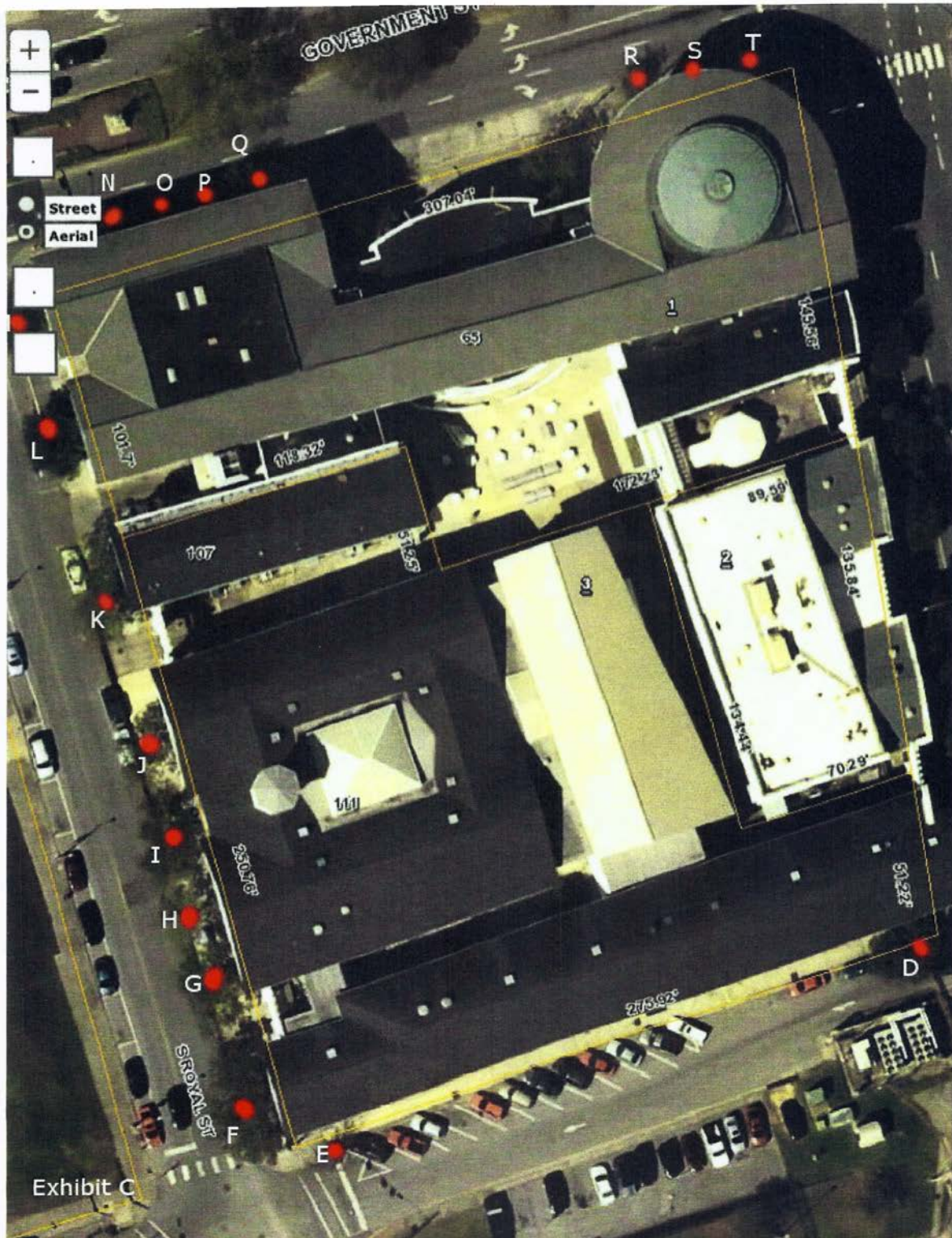


EXHIBIT C



EXHIBIT D

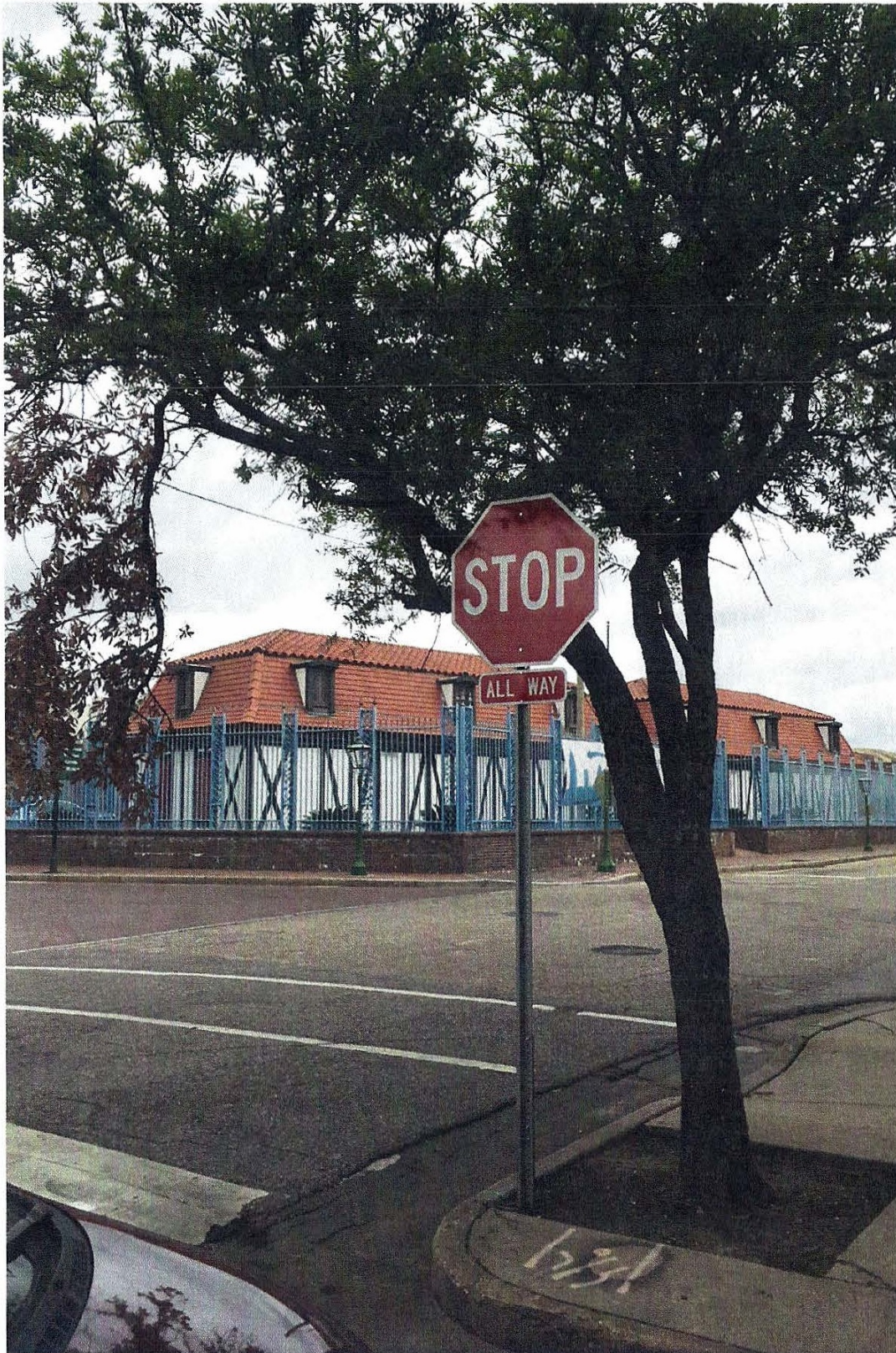


EXHIBIT E



EXHIBIT F



EXHIBIT G



EXHIBIT H



EXHIBIT I



EXHIBIT J



EXHIBIT K



EXHIBIT L



EXHIBIT M



EXHIBIT N



EXHIBIT O

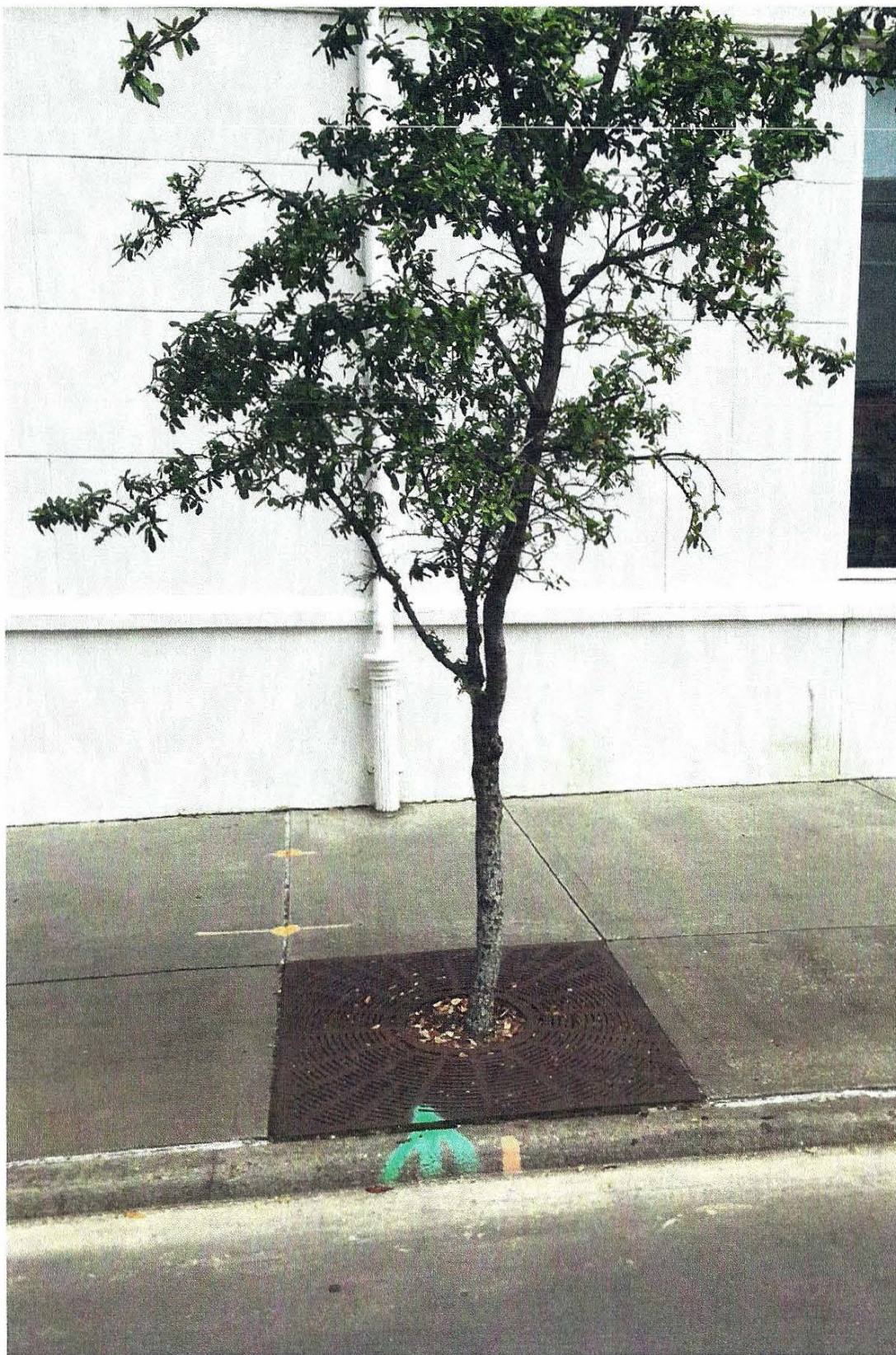


EXHIBIT P



EXHIBIT Q



EXHIBIT R



EXHIBIT S



EXHIBIT T

Exhibit U

Mobile

Mobile's circus forces live oaks into tiny cages

By **Bill Finch**

on May 27, 2016 at 8:26 AM, updated May 27, 2016 at 12:11 PM

This month, the circus announced elephants should no longer be part of its act. I reckon the circus owners decided that the caging and abuse required to keep these giant beasts from trampling down the tents was no longer worth the public outcry.

Reading about it, I was naturally reminded of the plight of so many of Mobile's trees.

Mobile's live oaks are as thrilling as the lions, tigers and elephants at the circus: Big, beautiful, and ultimately a little dangerous. It's not just the sweep of those limbs that catches our eye. It's the realization that live oak branches as massive as most tree trunks could instantly crush a building or car. It's the immense power of those roots heaving up from the ground, throwing off the shackles of sidewalks, curbs, roadways, telephone poles, and yes, even buildings.

And that's something we admire until we realize that the leafy elephants roaming our city streets can go on a rampage, endangering our houses and our sidewalks and power supply. The evidence of how bad it can be is all over downtown, where massive live oaks have been forced to grow up in tiny holes cut into the sidewalk, with no more than five feet for the live oak to stretch its 50 foot limbs before it slams – bam – into some historic building.

So we periodically have to bring in the trainers to whip them back in line, and there's a public outcry, and we inevitably do a really poor job of trying to stuff these lumbering old live oaks back into the tiny little boxes we've forced them to grow in. The trees suffer, the city suffers, we all suffer. And yet we keep pretending it's OK to force our beautiful elephants to walk such a narrow line.

Take a look at the circus going on all around Mobile's original City Hall, surely one of the most impressive pieces of historic architecture anywhere in the city. Many may even have forgotten how beautiful that building is, because back in the 1970s, somebody decided it would be a good idea to force elephants (er, live oaks) into tiny cages (I mean, tree wells) all across the front of the building.

The trees have struggled. But like the beasts they must inevitably become, they've finally gotten a firm foothold, and their dense canopies have begun to hide virtually every important architectural detail of the building.

One tree next to the entrance to the city museum has erupted through the sidewalk to the point that only the most athletic visitor has an easy time passing inside. Another one has set a power pole askew. Don't even look at what the live oaks have done to the critical police communications system box (I mean, who needs police communications in a city like ours?). And they're all continuing to grow, fast.

On the Water Street side, where there's a narrow sidewalk separating the building from the interstate on-ramp, a row of growing live oaks has completely obscured the big green highway signs directing motorists. ALDOT is not going to let that slide.

I've told the city's forestry commission and city officials multiple times: There are no easy compromises when it comes to keeping elephants or live oaks. Either you have the room for them, or you don't. Some people would argue that you should cut off the live oaks' feet and legs so that the city can keep rebuilding the sidewalk. I'm sorry. I'm not cruel enough to do that to the live oaks, and

not foolish enough to want to see the equivalent of a rootless elephant collapsing on pedestrians, cars and buildings.

Others want to whack away at the crown, or shoot em full of anti-growth hormones. But I've never seen that make things better, have you? And it ultimately defeats the whole purpose of having big, beautiful live oaks place in the first.

To a lot of us who love these live oaks and watch them closely, it's long been obvious: Something will have to be done. And very soon. No, we're not going to give up our live oaks. But we are going to finally have to acknowledge that they are the great and beautiful beasts they are. And at some point, very soon, we're going to have to quit trying to force them to perform in the tiny cages we have made for them.

I've asked the city to carefully review the history of trees in our downtown area, and in downtown areas similar to ours all across the Gulf Coast. What they'll find is that in traditional downtown areas like New Orleans' French Quarter and along narrow streets in our older commercial areas downtown, large trees were not historically part of the city landscape, and for good reason: There's just not enough room.

And I've asked them, as part of their new city planning and zoning process, to get knowledgeable advice and put together sensible recommendations for what trees are suitable for different locations around downtown.

I'm just one voice. But as near as I can tell, the mayor and the council are ready to listen. And I think they'd like to hear from other folks who are tired of seeing us try to whip big elephants back into tiny cages.

We're going to be talking more about our city tree scape and its future on our regular Plain Gardening radio show, this Sunday from 9 until 11 on 106.5 FM (or catch us streaming on FMTALK1065.com). If you've got concerns about the living conditions of our grand old elephants, give us a call during the show, 251-343-0106, and let's talk about it.

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