

File No.: 2026-132

April 17, 2026

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1)

Re: **Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")**

I am responding to your request of February 5, 2026 under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* for:

Record of Arborist report titled "Tree Removal for Dunbar Slope Assessment Project" from January 2026. Date range: January 1, 2026 to February 4, 2026.

All responsive records are attached. Some information in the records has been severed (blacked out) under s.15(1) and s.22(1) of the Act. You can read or download these sections here: http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00.

Under Part 5 of the Act, you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your FOI request by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, info@oipc.bc.ca or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number (2026-132); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request; and 4) detailed reasons why you are seeking the review.

Yours truly,

Kevin Tuerlings, FOI Case Manager, for

[Signed by Kevin Tuerlings]

Siân Madsen, MA, MAS
Acting Director, Access to Information & Privacy

If you have any questions, please email us at foi@vancouver.ca and we will respond to you as soon as possible. You may also contact 3-1-1 (604-873-7000) if you require accommodation or do not have access to email.

Encl. (Response package)

:pm

Tree Removal for Dunbar Slope Assessment Project, City of Vancouver



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January 30, 2026

BLACKWELL CONSULTING LTD.





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackwell Consulting Ltd. was retained by the City of Vancouver to assess the health and conditions of 10 target trees on a steep slope at the foot of Dunbar St. and north of Cameron Ave.

The target trees play a role in reducing soil erosion, and any treatments, including pruning, should be carried out with consideration for the long-term health of the trees. It is recommended that pruning be conducted in smaller amounts over a period of 3-5 years to reduce stress on the trees. Each tree's response should be documented, and corrective actions should be taken when the response is negative.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Blackwell Consulting Ltd. (Blackwell) was retained by the City of Vancouver to assess the health and conditions of 10 trees (target trees) and evaluate the impacts of required pruning on their long-term health (Map 1). The objectives of this report are to:

- 1- Reassessment of the target trees. collected attributes include height, diameter at breast height (DBH), canopy spread, and general health and condition.
- 2- Field assessment of the impact of pruning on the long-term health of the target trees.
- 3- Recommendations regarding the deadline for pruning with respect to the bird nesting season.

1.1 Property Description

The Subject Area is located at the foot of Dunbar St. and north of Cameron Ave. The southeastern section of the Subject Area overlaps a portion of the property at 3595 Point Grey Road, PID #010-240-951.



Map 1. The Point Grey Slope Remediation project area.

1.2 Qualifications



The City of Vancouver requires that an Arborist Report completed by a Certified Arborist be submitted as part of the slope remediation project, as per the request for proposals. Ali Rahi, RPF, ISA Certified Arborist and Tree Risk Assessor #PN-8885A meets this requirement.

1.3 Methodology

An arboricultural assessment of trees and site was conducted on January 13, 2026, by Ali Rahi. The weather that day was cloudy with light rain and 11°C.

The target trees are #1, 2, 8, 9, 7, 11, 12, 13, 18, and 20. They have been assessed in February 2023. For the assessment, the following attributes were collected:

- Species;
- Diameter at breast height (1.4m height; DBH);
- Total height; and
- General condition (Good, Fair, Poor and Dead).

Diameters of the tree with multiple stems at or below 1.4m height were measured as combined diameters of the three largest stems (trunks) at 1.4m height. Target trees were photographed but not tagged. As a safety measure, qualitative visual assessment (i.e., remote assessment) was conducted from a safe distance for trees # 1, 2, 7, 12, 13, 18 and 20 on the steep sections of the slope.

Recommendations regarding bird nesting season will be based on the available provincial and federal information applicable to the subject area. For additional information or field assessment, a qualified person (e.g., bird biologist) should be consulted.

1.4 Site Description

The Subject Area is facing northeast and located on a steep slope that leads down from Cameron Ave. to the beach area and is divided by a staircase into north and south sections (Figure 1). Adjacent private properties are 3595 Point Grey Road to the east, 3607 and 3617 Cameron Ave to the north, and 1509 Dunbar St to the southwest. It is located between 0-20m above sea level with a northeast aspect and located within the Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) Zone of the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification system of British Columbia (BEC)1. The site falls within the Dry Maritime (CWHdm) subzone which is defined by wet winters, relatively dry and mild summers. The site was dominated by red alder (*Alnus rubra*), and bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) with some Sycamore maple (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and beech (*Fagus sp.*). English ivy (*Hedera helix*) and Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*) were the main invasive plant species found throughout the site. Some of the trees are heavily covered by English ivy which would add extra load to the trees on the steep slope.

On the south section, a thin layer of soil covers the rock formation, and its thickness is subject to the gravitational movement of the particles and the position of the trees. On the north section, the soil profile appears to be thicker, however, sectional soil erosion is evident. All target trees are located on the south

1 Field Guide for Site Identification and Interpretation for the Vancouver Forest Region
<https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/pubs/docs/lmh/lmh28.pdf>

section where the slope ranges between 45° (near the staircase) to 90°. The soil consists of a thin layer of loamy sand mineral soil mixed with organic matter at different stages of decomposition over the rock formation. Trees are mostly adapted to the steep slope, low soil content and exposure to wind by growing multiple branches with shorter and well tapered main stem that grows along the slope, as opposed to growing upright. A few trees with upright main stem grow on less-steep sites.

2.0 RESULTS

2.1 Tree Assessment

The target trees are located on a steep slope and play an important role in preventing erosion of the soil layer that has accumulated there. Since the last arborist assessment in February 2023, 1 of 10 target trees (tree #8) has failed, resulting in minor erosion. There were no noticeable changes in the conditions of the other target trees, and the site conditions appear to remain unchanged.

Overall considerations for pruning the trees

During pruning of the target trees (Table 1), long-term health and stability should be considered. Excessive pruning stresses the tree by reducing total leaf surface area and its ability to photosynthesize and produce energy. Dead, diseased, or damaged branches should be prioritized during the pruning. All trees should be pruned in a way that the weight of the remaining crown is distributed evenly to avoid tree instability. Excessive removal of branches on one side may lead to instability and failure and should be avoided.

Several target trees, especially at the top of the slope, have been previously topped, triggering the growth of epicormic sprouts (water sprouts) that require the tree to allocate energy to replace the lost branches. Repeated pruning can reduce the tree's vigour and increase its susceptibility to pests and diseases. The resulting sprouts are often weakly attached and prone to breaking in a windstorm.

The occurrence of invasive species, especially English ivy (*Hedera helix*) and, to a lesser extent, Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), varies, but it is worse in the most southerly part of the subject area. The growth of ivy on the tree trunk and crown will increase weight, reduce photosynthetic capacity by covering the leaves, and weaken overall tree health. However, the presence of vegetation, including ivy and blackberry on the ground, helps retain soil and reduce erosion. It is recommended to remove the ivy that has moved on the tree trunk and crown and leave the part growing on the ground for soil protection.

A summary of expected responses from the three species of the target trees are:

Bigleaf maple is generally resilient to pruning and responds with vigorous sprouting. Pruning can be done during late fall and mid-winter, and small corrective pruning (removing a few branches) can also be done in late summer.

Sycamore maple is generally resilient to pruning; however, it may respond to heavy pruning (>25%) by vigorous water sprouts, which are weaker and thinner than regular sprouts. In some cases, winter or spring pruning may also cause heavy sap bleeding, making late summer or early fall a better time for maintenance. If pruning is scheduled for late winter or early spring, it is recommended to prune a few branches and monitor for any unusual sap bleeding before continuing.

Red alder usually responds well to pruning, especially in early ages (5-10 years old). To avoid vigorous sprouting, light pruning (less than 15%) every 3-5 years is likely better than a single heavy pruning (~20%).

Table 1. Vegetation inventory table.

Tree #	Species	DBH (cm)	Height (m)	Condition	Comments	Recommendation
1	Red alder	28	7	Poor	Repeatedly topped, multiple stems (5), on 80-90% slope, dense ivy and blackberry	>20% pruning over 3–5-year period
2	Red alder	35	13	Good	Vigorous young tree perched on edge of cliff precipice, healthy	>20% pruning over 3–5-year period
7	Big-leaf maple	50	12	Fair	Mid slope, exposed sloughing soil, topped, multiple stems, vigorous re-growth	>20% pruning over 3–5-year period
8	Big-leaf maple	40	10	Dead	Multiple stem (6), only 1 alive, exposed root from tide and wave action	-
9	Big-leaf maple	42	13	Fair	Multiple stem (2), mechanical injury lower bole, exposed roots from tides	>15% pruning over 3–5-year period
11	Sycamore maple	33	13	Good	Vigorous, beside stairs, codominant stem at 2 m	>20% pruning over 3–5-year period
12	Red alder	25	5	Fair	10 stems, vigorous regrowth, topped repeatedly, top of bank	>20% pruning over 3–5-year period
13	Big-leaf maple	100	9	Fair	5 large stems, 32 30 30 28 25, topped multiple times, old tree, vigorous new growth, top of slope	>20% pruning over 3–5-year period
18	Red alder	25	7	Fair	Repeatedly topped, multiple stems (5), 80-90% Slope, dense ivy and blackberry, beside top walkway	>20% pruning over 3–5-year period
20	Sycamore maple	26	6	Fair	Young codominant with 2 stems and heavily included bark, mid slope	>15% pruning over 3–5-year period

Top of slope

Trees # 1, 12, 13, and 18 are located on top of the slope and have been previously topped (Figure 1 - 3). Their canopy is mainly formed with multiple sprouts. They are in fair condition and play an important role in retaining the soil and preventing erosion. Trees #1 and 13 are partially covered with ivy, which needs to be removed to offload some of the weight. For all trees #1, 12, 13, and 18, it is recommended to limit pruning to below 20% and to prioritize dead and diseased branches. It is recommended to conduct the pruning over a 3-5-year period in smaller sessions. The pruning should be performed in a uniform fashion to maintain the current shape of the crown without leaving the side of the tree leaning towards the slope more heavily. The trees' health and condition should be monitored within 6–12 months after each session, and any visible decline in health should be documented.



Figure 1. Tree #1, photos taken in 2026 (left) and 2023 (right).



Figure 2. Tree #12 (left) and 18 (right).



Figure 3. Tree #13 the trunk (left) and view of branches (right).

Middle of slope

Tree #2, a red alder on a $\sim 85^\circ$ slope, plays an important role in retaining soil and preventing erosion (Figure 4). It is in good condition, however, since the last site visit in 2023, ivy has grown and covered most of its trunk. The tree may sustain up to 20% pruning, but it is recommended to distribute it in smaller amounts (5%) over a 3–5-year period. The first-year pruning should include removing ivy from the trunk and branches. Removal of the large branch towards the slope may relieve some weight but also trigger sprouting that requires periodic pruning. It is recommended to monitor the tree's health and stability 6–12 months after each pruning session.



Figure 4. Tree #2 taken in 2026 (left) and 2023 (right). Growth of ivy since the last visit in 2023 is visible.

Tree #7 is a bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) in fair condition, located on the mid-slope. It has been topped and responded in vigorous sprouting (Figure 5). Soil erosion is visible around the base of the tree, which may be accelerated, as tree #8, which holds some of the soil, has now failed. It is recommended that the pruning be limited to under 20% and be conducted in smaller sessions over a period of 3–5 years. The first pruning session should focus on dead and diseased branches. Since tree #7 plays an important role in reducing erosion, its health and stability should be monitored within 6–12 months after each pruning session.



Figure 5. Tree #7 taken in 2026 (left) and 2023 (right).

Tree #11 is a sycamore maple just beside the staircase rail at mid slope in good condition (Figure 6). It consists of two co-dominants with a relatively straight form. Pruning should be limited to no more than 20% in a balanced way to prevent stress, and dead or decayed branches must be prioritized. The pruning should be done in a smaller amount (~5%) over a 3-5-year period. Since heavy sap bleeding can occur, especially during winter and early spring, it is recommended to try a small pruning session in late summer or early fall and monitor the tree's response.



Figure 6. Tree #11.

Tree #20 is located at mid-slope in fair condition (Figure 7). Due to its role in soil retention and erosion prevention, pruning should be limited to less than 15% and spread over several sessions over a 3-5-year period. The tree response should be monitored within 6-12 months after each session.



Figure 7. Tree #20 the trunk (left) and view of branches (right).

Foot of slope

Tree # 8, located at the foot of the slope, has recently failed (Figure 8). The cause of failure was likely a combination of exposure to high tide and wind, and low nutrient availability. The remaining limbs and branches can be left at the site.



Figure 8: Soil erosion after tree #8 failure (top) and remaining branches (bottom).

Tree #9 is a bigleaf maple located at the foot of the slope in fair condition, which, due to the exposure to tides and salt, will get worse over time (Figure 9). It has also sustained mechanical damage, and it is recommended to limit the total pruning to below 15% and in several sessions over a 3-5-year period. The first session should focus on the heavy branch on the north side of the tree to offload some of the load and improve stability. Similar to tree #8, this tree is also exposed to high tide and wind, as well as low nutrient availability, and its failure is probable. If the City is concerned about its risk, a follow-up tree risk assessment (Level 2) is recommended within the next year.



Figure 9. Tree #9 the trunk (left) and view of branches (right).

2.2 Bird Nesting Period

The subject area falls into Zone A1, and the nesting calendar is shown in Figure 10.² On the south coast of BC, the bird-breeding season can run from March 1st to August 31st. Some species, such as bald eagles, may start nesting in early to mid-January. If bird activity is detected in the area, a biologist should be consulted before removal or pruning. All work activities must comply with the federal *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (1994) and the *Migratory Birds Regulation* (1994), which protect migratory birds, their eggs, and nests.

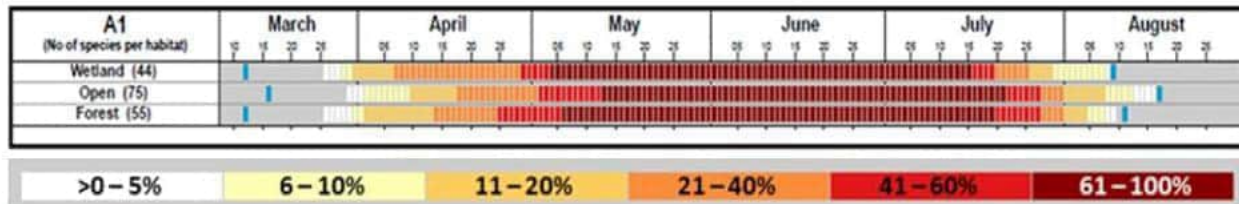


Figure 10. Bird nesting calendar in A1 Zone. Number of species shown in percentage. The blue marks show extreme dates predicted for some atypical parts of the nesting zone where it can start earlier or end later.

² https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds/general-nesting-periods/nesting-periods.html#_zoneA_calendar



LIMITATIONS

This assessment report is based on site observations noted on the date(s) specified only. The project arborist has endeavored to use his skill, education, and knowledge to provide accurate representation. Every effort has been made to ensure that the opinions expressed are an accurate assessment of the tree information and site conditions.

The inherent characteristics of trees are that they are unpredictable and can fail due to environmental or internal problems. It is not possible for the Consultant to detect every condition or defect that could result in failure of a tree, shrub, or part thereof. Trees, as living organisms, are prone to attack by insects, disease, and other abiotic factors such as wind, snow, and frost. Given these factors, the Consultant cannot guarantee that the tree will be safe and healthy under all situations and treatments or for a given amount of time. Any prescribed mitigation measures for tree health or safety cannot be assured.

Adjustments, assumptions, and the conclusions drawn in this report are based on the professional experience of Ali Rahi RPF, ISA Certified Arborist and Tree Risk Assessor of Blackwell Consulting Ltd. (the 'Consultant'). The opinions expressed below are also based on written and verbal information supplied in part by other parties.

The Consultant cannot accept responsibility for any issues or events that have arisen since the date of the inspection and the date the report was written, or for any treatment the Client chooses to undertake. The Consultant accepts that the report represents professional judgment and that the Consultant's responsibilities are limited to the content of this report.

TREE CONDITION DEFINITION

Excellent: a specimen with full and symmetrical crown, great form, and no visible defect or concern about stability.

Good: has good form and crown with no concern about long-term stability, may have a few defects with no structural weakness.

Fair: have some minor to moderate structural defects and/or noted health problems, signs of crown thinning can exist.

Poor: low vigour and thinning crown, may have major structural defects, unlikely to survive within the next 5 years.

Dead: has no live branch.



SIGNATURES

Project Forester

s.15(1), s.22(1)



Ali Rahi, RPF, ISA Certified Arborist
Blackwell Consulting Ltd. Ltd.

January 30, 2026