

AGENDA
TOWN OF JUPITER ISLAND
BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2026, 11:00 AM
ISLAND ROOM – TOWN HALL – 2 BRIDGE ROAD

1. Welcome (New Committee Members)*
2. Approval of Minutes of the Meeting Held November 10, 2025
3. Bridge Road Ficus Tree Removal and Replacement*
4. Bridge Road Ficus Allée Management Plan Discussion
5. Other Items*
6. Adjournment*

** No advanced materials provided*

STATE MANDATED STATEMENT

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, agency, or commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Any person requiring a special accommodation at this meeting because of a disability or physical impairment should contact the Town prior to the meeting. Please contact the Town Hall, 2 Bridge Road, Hobe Sound, FL 33455, telephone (772) 545-0103.

MINUTES
BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 10, 2025 – 11:00 A.M.
TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT: Committee Members: Staff: John Duchock, Assistant Town Manager
 Ken McBrayer Robert Garlo, Town Manager
 Judy Light Trenton Warren, Assistant Town Clerk
 Joyce Vicenzi Jason Coppock, Assistant Public Works
 Richard Redmond
 Debbie Textor

1. WELCOME

Director Duchock called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. and welcomed those present. He introduced the staff and Consultant Brian Fischer from King Tree Services. Chair McBrayer established a quorum.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD MAY 7, 2025

MOTION: Member Redmond/Member Light moved to approve the minutes of May 7, 2025.
ACTION: Motion Passed 5-0.

3. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP DISCUSSION

Director Duchock informed the committee that Members Stephanie Flinn and Nancy Rowden have put in their resignation. Member Redmond recommended Steven Bartrum as a potential replacement candidate due to his educational and work background as a landscaper. Discussion continued among the members, but no other name was recommended.

4. TOWN HALL ENTRANCE – STRANGLER FIG PILOT PROJECT

Director Duchock explained that the trees at the Town Hall entrance had become sparse and weak over the last few years. He presented a report on the summer project that removed eleven of the non-native Ficus trees and replaced them with ten new Strangler Figs. He stated the purpose of this project was to act as a “pilot project” to introduce the new Strangler Figs to the residents. He clarified that the original inter-planting plan approved in May had become unviable.

Member Textor expressed some disapproval of the change in plans being made without the Committee approval. Director Duchock explained there was an attempt to create a meeting in June, but a quorum could not be established.

Member Light inquired about potential cross contamination of diseases. Consultant Fischer assured her the current choice of Ficus Allee are very resistant to diseases.

Member Textor inquired about the number of Ficus Trees needed. Director Duchock clarified 140 trees will be needed to complete the Town Hall and Bridge Road projects.

5. BRIDGE ROAD FICUS TREE REMOVAL (3 DEAD/DYING TREES)

Director Duchock informed the Committee that King Tree Service identified three dying trees currently infected with hypoxylon on Bridge Road. He presented several options for replacement including planting new young Strangler Figs or relocating larger Ficus trees currently in the Town's nursery. Discussion ensued between the Members and Consultant Fischer on the best option.

Chair McBrayer encouraged using Beautification Funds to replace the trees as needed. He commented that the status of the trees has been very positive for the last several years. He recommended a slower approach to this project as a result. Consultant Fischer recommended replacing trees as they die instead of proactive removal when they display disease. He stated there is very little concern about the current longevity of the Ficus Trees on Bridge Road. He estimated the current trees are roughly 50 to 75 years old, and may live as long as 100 years old.

Member Textor inquired about the potential of the hypoxylon spreading to the other healthy Ficus trees. Consultant Fischer recommended removing the infected limbs to avoid spreading diseases to the other trees. He also suggested relocating trees from the island as much as possible, potentially even from private properties.

Member Redmond asked if there are any permitting requirements for relocating trees across the island. Director Duchock explained that if a Ficus tree were to be removed from a resident's property, it would be included in their landscape plans.

The Committee ultimately recommended removing infecting branches for now and replacing the trees with larger Strangler Fig trees from the nursery during the planting season next spring.

6. BRIDGE ROAD FICUS ALLEE MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTLINE DISCUSSION

Director Duchock reviewed the Plan Outline with the Committee. He also gave out copies to each member. He encouraged the Committee members to submit any comments or concerns to him as they review it. He outlined the current goal is to have a draft plan completed by February, with a final plan submitted to the Town Commission by April 2026.

7. TOWN HALL PLANTER BOXES

Director Duchock presented several photos of the new planter boxes for the outside of Town Hall. These boxes will be cube and rectangle shaped and will be placed above ground on the tile instead of the grass. He opened the floor to comments and suggestions from the Committee. Discussion ensued, and the Committee made these suggestions:

Member Light suggested the planters have each plant labelled with placards so that residents can see what species are being planted.

Member Textor recommended changing and planting new flowers along the fountain with support from the Jupiter Island Garden Club.

8. OTHER MATTERS

Chair McBrayer strongly urged the Committee to have more meetings to review the Ficus project as it unfolds. Director Duchock suggested the next meeting should be sometime in January once enough progress has been made. The Committee reviewed their calendars and tentatively set the next meeting for January 12, 2025 at 11am.

Member Light suggested posting an article about the Ficus trees in the Town Newsletter to alleviate worries or fears of the residents; informing them a plan is in place to replace them long term.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trenton Warren
Assistant Town Clerk



1957

Town of Jupiter Island
Bridge Road Ficus Allée Management Plan
Draft Work In Progress: January 2026



2025

Bridge Road Ficus Allée Management Plan

1. Introduction/History

Through the foresight of its founding residents, the Town of Jupiter Island has cultivated a community character focused on serenity and the environment. One of the iconic features of the Town is the canopied entrance along Bridge Road, conceptualized by Mrs. Permelia Reed (Hobe Sound Land Company) and established by the residents in 1945. The tree canopy entrance into Jupiter Island is renowned for its beauty as described below.

“Bridge Road is the grand entrance to Jupiter Island. Motorists are often surprised by the beauty of this two-lane road, cocooned by ancient banyan trees. Aerial prop roots wrap around the trunks of these huge trees in layers, resulting in a design only Mother Nature could create. Above, branches form a tunnel-like canopy, making the drive almost mystical.”

Source: (<https://www.orlandomagazine.com/best-road-trips-for-orlando-residents-jupiter-island/>)

The original ficus allée consisted of 130 trees, planted in a staggered but equally spaced pattern along the north and south sides of Bridge Road between Gomez Road on Jupiter Island and SE Gomez Avenue on the mainland. Over time, hurricanes and winter storms have impacted the planted trees. A hurricane in 1949 destroyed twelve of the original trees. More recently, seven trees were lost to hurricanes in 2003 and more than twenty trees were toppled over during a tornado in June 2024. While many damaged trees have been re-righted and re-rooted, over time more than 20 trees have been replaced with other ficus trees. Presently, there are 125 ficus trees and 16 oak trees for a total of 141 trees lining the three-quarter mile long allée.

2. Existing Tree Condition and Inventory

Figures 1 and 2 depict the location and inventory numbering assigned to the existing ficus trees along the Bridge Road corridor, east and west of the lagoon. There are 54 ficus trees (predominantly *Ficus nitida*) east of the bridge on Jupiter Island. These are numbered N-1 through N-24 for the 24 trees on the north side of Bridge Road and S-1 through S-25 for the 25 trees on the south side. A second row of five ficus trees (S-26 to S-30) exists south of Bridge Road near the approach to the bridge. These trees are monitored and treated, but are not being considered a focus of this management plan. West of the lagoon on the mainland there are 71 ficus trees (also predominantly *Ficus nitida*) lining Bridge Road between SE Gomez Avenue and the bridge. These are numbered N-25 through N-60 and S-31 through S-65 for trees located on the north and south sides of Bridge Road, respectively.

King Tree Service has provided arborist consulting services for the Town, including tree health inventory and assessments of the ficus allée trees. Attached to this plan is the August 2025 tree inventory, indicating the health of each tree, along with recommendations for treatment, trimming, or removal. It should be noted that per the August 2025 assessment, three trees were identified for removal or heavy trimming. As of December 2025, N-5 was removed due to hypoxylon canker, and S-5 and S-19 were pruned to remove diseased/dead/dying limbs.

3. Plan Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this document is to establish a ficus allée management plan for the Bridge Road corridor on Jupiter Island, providing background information, guidance for maintenance, and a playbook for future tree replacement. The objectives of the plan are as follows:

- Establish and maintain a scenic, ecologically beneficial canopy road.
- Enhance biodiversity, provide shade, and preserve native flora.
- Ensure public safety, minimize infrastructure conflict, and promote long-term tree health.

In order to achieve these objectives, a management plan should develop strategies focused on plant selection, general site criteria, and tree spacing and planting guidelines. Based on these supporting strategies, a recommended management plan approach can be developed along with recommendations for future tree replacement, care, and maintenance.

With the assistance of and input from King Tree Service and the Town's Beautification Committee, the plan should be treated as a living document, periodically reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in conditions or preferred approach moving forward.

2025

S-1 Removed 202X (reason?/hurricane?)
S-10 Removed 202X (armillaria root rot)
N-5 Removed 2025 (hypoxylon canker)

S-6 Heavily Pruned 2025 (hypoxylon canker)
S-18 Heavily Pruned 2025 (hypoxylon canker)

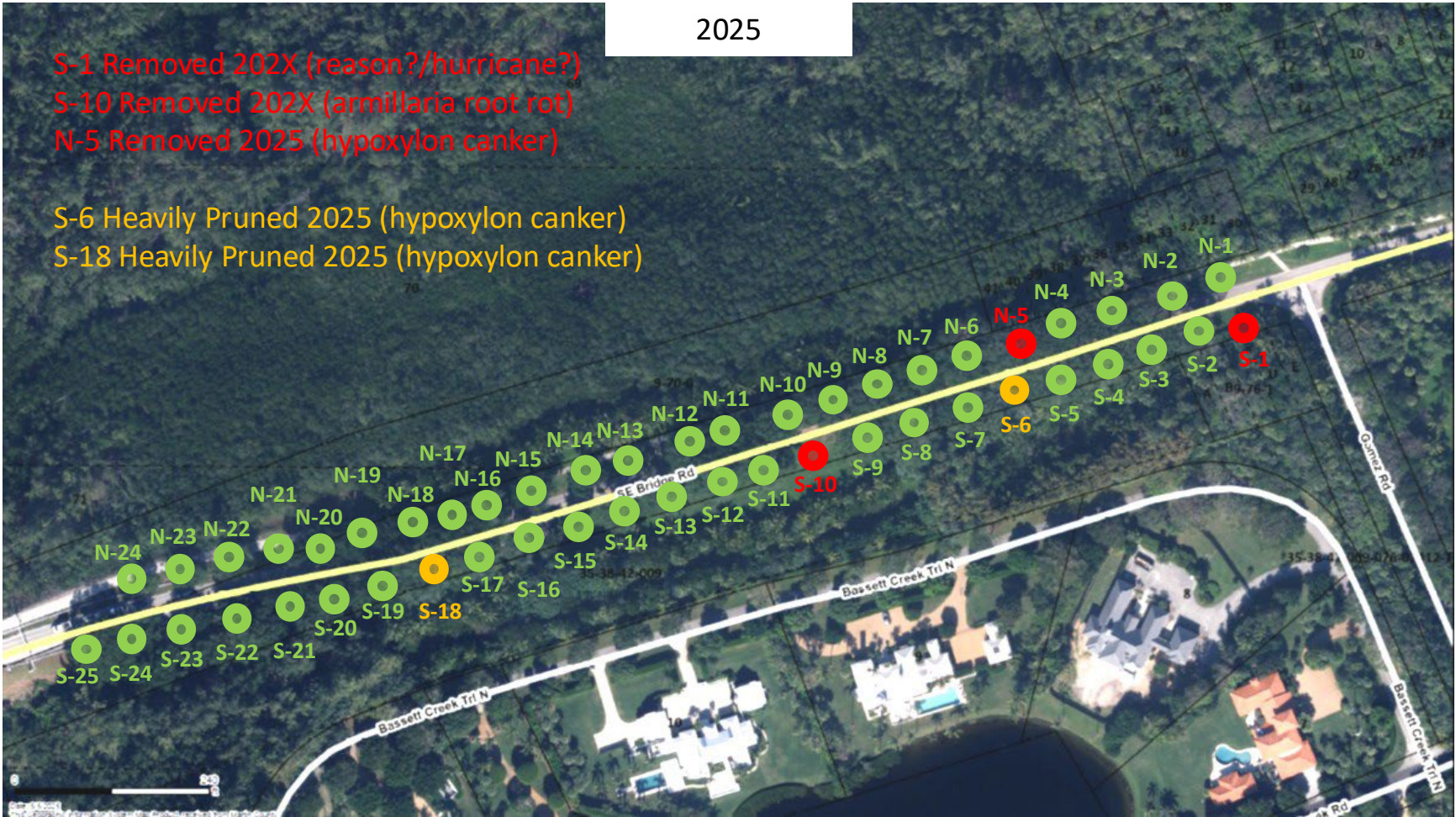


Figure 1 – Tree Location Map (Jupiter Island)

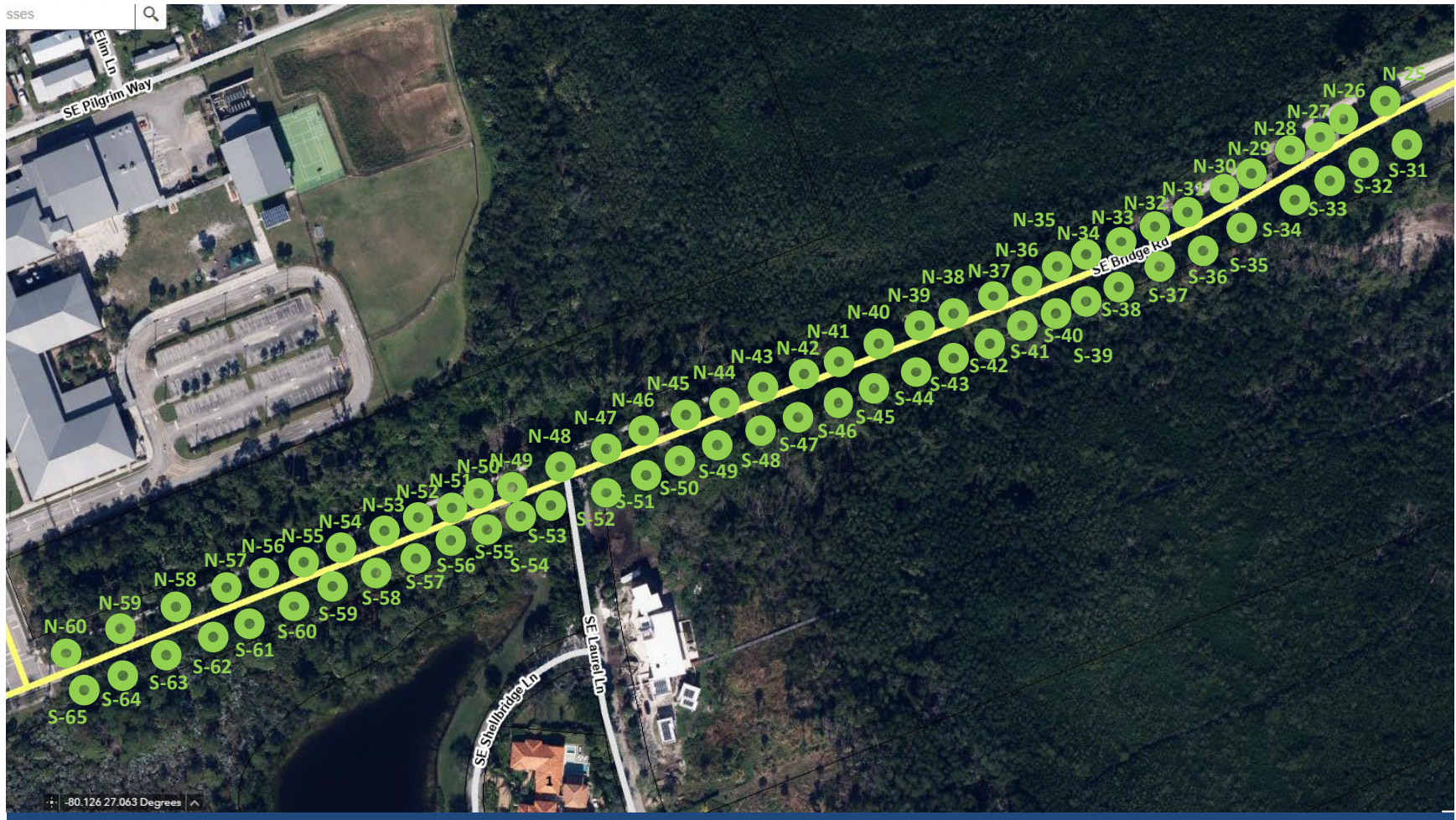


Figure 2 – Tree Location Map (Hobe Sound Mainland)

4. Plant Selection

Today, the ficus allée consist primarily of non-native ficus tree species, predominantly *Ficus nitida* (Indian Laurel) which is also commonly referred to as a species of *Ficus macrocarpa*. As a non-native species, these trees can do well in Florida's sub-tropical climate, however, they can also be more prone to disease and pests compared to other native plant species. Originally planted in 1945, the ficus trees along Bridge Road have grown substantially, creating the closed tree canopy that exists today. This has not been without substantial care by the Town and not without losses due to wind damage and diseases such as hypoxylon canker and armillaria root rot.

In consultation with King Tree Services, the native *Ficus aurea* (Strangler Fig) is recommended as the replacement species for the ficus allée. The *Ficus aurea* is very similar in appearance to the *Ficus nitida* currently comprising the majority of the allée, however, it has many benefits over the *Ficus nitida* species. While not entirely maintenance free, native plants including the *Ficus aurea* generally require less water, pesticides, fungicides and fertilizers once established. Native species support the local ecosystem much better than non-native species. Based on King Tree Service's working experience, the *Ficus aurea* are typically much less susceptible to Whitefly, Hypoxylon and Armillaria than the *Ficus nitida*. Additionally, *Ficus aurea* tend to do better with poorer soil conditions, such as those typically found on a barrier island. In general, the ecological function and value of native plants is significant, and should be favored over reintroduction of non-native species within the allée.

The following provides general information on the Strangler Fig, based on information published by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF-IFAS).

Common Names: Strangler Fig, Golden Fig

Synonyms: *Ficus aurea* var. *latifolia*; *F. ciliolosa*; *F. isophlebia*; *F. jimenezii*

Origin: Florida, Southern Mexico to Panama, Western Caribbean islands

Growth Habit: Large, fast growing, often starting as an epiphyte being vine-like while young, eventually becoming self-supporting. Sturdy branches often near the ground. Non-epiphytic trees mostly with long bole and high branches. Trunks become buttressed with age. With or without slim prop roots and some trees with significant horizontal surface roots. Bark usually gray and smooth. Rapidly semideciduous in late winter or early spring. Irregular coarse-textured crown.

Stipules: Deciduous, paired, usually 1.5-2.0 inches long, and 0.25 inch wide, one longer than the other.

Leaves: *Blade:* Entire, dark green, glossy and smooth, somewhat leathery, elliptical to oblong. Petiole and midrib pale yellow contrasting noticeably with the green of the blade. Typically 4.0-6.0 inches long and 2.0-3.0 inches wide. *Base:* Rounded to subacute. *Apex:* Obtuse or slightly acuminate. *Petiole:* Stout and short, usually 1.0 inch long and 0.1 inch wide.

Fruits: Axillary, sessile or almost sessile, single or paired. From green to red, burgundy or purple at maturity with conspicuous white flecks scattered over the surface. Globose, about 0.75 inch in diameter.

Additional Remarks: Not recommended for small landscapes. Dropped fruits create mess under the tree. *Ficus aurea* is often confused with *F. citrifolia*. Differs from *F. citrifolia* by stalkless fruits. Also, folded leaf ends of *F. citrifolia* usually not aligned, *F. aurea* often aligned.

(source: <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/articles/ficus-trees-stephen-brown.pdf>).

5. General Site Criteria

The following are general site selection and planning considerations for Strangler Fig (*Ficus aurea*) tree planting within the Bridge Road ficus allée.

Soil Requirements: Prefers well-drained, fertile soils; tolerates sandy and calcareous soils.

Hydrology: Moderately drought-tolerant once established; requires irrigation in early years.

Sunlight: Full sun to partial shade.

Space: Ensure ample above- and below-ground space; *Ficus aurea* develops large surface roots.

Road Features: Minimum 30-ft. total road width (for vehicle clearance and root space). Avoid planting near underground utilities, septic tanks, or small stormwater drains.

6. Tree Spacing and Planting

The following are tree spacing and other planting considerations for Strangler Fig (*Ficus aurea*) tree planting within the Bridge Road ficus allée.

Spacing Guidelines: Plant trees 30–50 feet apart to allow for full canopy development without overcrowding. Offset plantings from the road centerline by 15–20 feet to avoid root conflicts with pavement.

Planting Time: Late spring to early summer for optimal root establishment.

Planting Process: Dig a hole 2–3 times wider than the root ball, but no deeper than the root collar. Backfill with native soil; avoid heavy soil amendments. Water deeply after planting and apply 3–4 inches of mulch around the base (keep away from trunk).

7. Bridge Road Allée Tree Replacement Program

Based on consultation with the Town’s arborist, King Tree Service, there are three options for ficus tree replacement along the Bridge Road allée.

1. Interplanting young/small *Ficus aurea* trees between the existing large *Ficus nitida*.

This option does have some appeal on the surface as the large trees can be kept in place while the smaller ones have time to grow. Overall, the amount of shade provided by the large trees would slow the growth of the young trees to a significant degree. Further, many utilities have been put in place in the in-between sections of the existing Ficus trees and significant utility work would be needed in many areas to make this option viable. The current placement of the existing trees is more desirable than changing the locations in the future.

2. Removing at once all existing large *Ficus nitida* and replacing at once with small *Ficus aurea*.

This option would be dramatic in appearance, effectively starting over and removing the existing canopy entrance. Additionally, this option would also be the most costly in terms of upfront expense. For these reasons, this approach is not supported.

3. Replacement through natural attrition.

The recommended option is to replace the ficus allée with *Ficus aurea* as the existing *Ficus nitida* die out naturally. After a thorough inspection by King Tree Service, the existing *Ficus nitida* are in much better condition today than in past years and have considerable life span remaining. While there are several individual trees that need to be pruned and/or removed due to Hypoxylon, the allée as a whole is in good condition and removing otherwise healthy trees is not a recommended approach for management. When replacement is necessary, the Town should locate and evaluate options for large trees grown in close proximity to the allée. This option will provide less of a shock appearance to the allée and will be overall the

least disruptive. An important caveat to this recommended approach is that the costs for this option are heavily dependent upon the continued care, maintenance, and health of the existing trees.

8. General Maintenance Plan

The following is a general program for tree maintenance moving forward.

Years 0–3 (Establishment Phase):

- Weekly watering during dry periods.
- Annual pruning to encourage strong branch structure.
- Weed and grass control around the base.
- Monitor for pests like whiteflies or thrips.

Years 4–10 (Development Phase):

- Prune every 2–3 years to maintain canopy shape and road clearance (minimum 14 ft. height over road).
- Inspect roots annually for signs of heaving or infrastructure conflict.
- Apply slow-release fertilizer if needed, based on soil test.

Mature Trees (10+ years):

- Structural pruning every 5 years.
- Annual inspections for disease or storm damage.
- Mulching to preserve moisture and soil health.

General Maintenance:

- Conduct **biennial arborist inspections** to assess limb stability.
- Remove deadwood, weak crotches, and interfering growth.
- Manage surface roots near pavement with root barriers or strategic pruning.
- Coordinate with utility companies to avoid conflicts with overhead lines.

9. Tree Nursery Program

This section is to be developed further with options for an on-island and off-island nurseries.

10. Long-Term Monitoring and Evaluation

This section is to be developed further focusing on a long-term monitoring and evaluation program to:

Develop and maintain a digital inventory of each tree with ID, health status, GPS location, and pruning history.

Review performance and condition every 5 years using a canopy coverage assessment.

Adapt management strategies based on climate resilience and local development and growth patterns.

KING TREE SERVICE – TREE ASSESSMENT

BRIDGE ROAD FICUS 8/25

NORTH SIDE	RECOMMENDATIONS	SOUTH SIDE	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEGEND
1		1	N	
2	IP	2	DW, MONITOR S SIDE	IP = INTERIOR PRUNING/SUCKER REMOVAL
3	IP	3	IP	R = REMOVE
4	IP	4	IP	DW = DEADWOOD
5	R	5	REMOVE HYPOXYLON LIMB	E = ELEVATION
6	IP	6	R	N = NONE
7	IP	7	IP/DW	
8	IP	8	IP/DW	
9	IP/DW	9	IP/DW	
10	IP	10	NO TREE/REPLACE W NEW	
11	IP	11	IP/DW	
12	IP	12	IP/DW	
13	IP	13	IP	
15	DW	14	IP/DW	
16	IP	15	IP	
17	DW	16	IP/E	
18	IP/DEAD HANGAR	17	IP/DW	
19	IP/E	18	R	
20	IRRIGATION AND FERT	19	DW/E	
22	IP/E	20	IP	
23	IP/E	22	DW	
24	NONE	23	DW	
		24	REMOVE BURLAP	
		25	DW	
		26	IP	
		27	REMOVE HYPOXYLON LIMB E SIDE	
		28	N	
		29	N	
		30	DW	