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Elms to ashes

Need for new trees stems from damage

By **SUSAN BECKER**

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The buzzing of chain saws could be heard at the intersection of South Lemay and Pennock Place on Tuesday as two 60-year-old Siberian elm trees were dismembered.

The two trees, measuring 38 and 58 inches in diameter, had to be removed after sustaining severe root damage during the construction of the new Boston Chicken on the east side of the intersection.

"It was a preventable incident," said senior city planner Ted Shepard.

The damage, caused by a trenching machine used in excavating, weakened the trees' root systems to the point that leaving the trees was deemed unsafe. Shepard said a good gust of wind could have toppled the trees in six to 18 months.

"We decided it was better to solve the problem now than cover them up with dirt and deal with it later," Shepard said.

Boston Chicken will compensate the city for the loss in two ways. The Siberian elms will be replaced with two green ash trees of approximately 4 inches in diameter.

Boston Chicken also will finance the planting of more than 40 new trees in the immediate area, as well as other commercial corridors in Fort Collins, including South College Avenue.

The additional trees will be hearty species of burr oak, honey locust, linden and hackberry. They were chosen for their medium- to fast-growth rate, adaptability to the climate and lack of low branches, thorns and fruit.



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GOING OUT ON A LIMB: Joe Hand of Jordan's Tree Service pushes the top of a tree over while removing two trees from the entrance of Boston Chicken at Lemay Avenue and Pennock Place.