

Hearing Officer Transmittal Checklist

Hearing Date
06/16/2016
Agenda Item No.
5

Project Number: 92074-(5)
Case(s): Oak Tree Permit No. T201400017
Planner: Steven Jones

- Project Summary
- Property Location Map
- Staff Analysis
- Draft Resolution / Draft Ordinance / 8.5x11 Map (ZC or PA)
- Draft Findings
- Draft Conditions
- Burden of Proof Statement(s)
- Environmental Documentation (ND / MND / EIR)
- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Aerial Image(s)
- Land Use/Zoning Map
- Tentative Tract / Parcel Map
- Site Plan / Floor Plans / Elevations
- Exhibit Map
- Landscaping Plans

Reviewed By: Noosh Pendar



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning



Planning for the Challenges Ahead

June 3, 2015

Richard J. Bruckner
Director

TO: Hearing Officer

FROM: Steven Jones
Land Divisions Section

**SUBJECT: Project No. 92074 – (5)
ROAK No. T201400017
HO Meeting: June 16, 2015
Agenda Item: 5**

The above-mentioned item is a request to authorize encroachments into the protected zones of seven oak trees in conjunction with a proposed community identification project and pond maintenance building within zones RPD-5,000-27U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 5,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 27 dwelling units per acre), RPD-12,000-3.7U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 12,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 3.7 dwelling units per acre) and R-3 (Limited Multiple Residence Zone). The site currently contains vegetation, ground cover, landscaping, and hardscape including fences and retaining walls, and a water feature.

A duly noticed public hearing was held on May 5, 2015 for oak tree permit ROAKT201400017. After opening the public hearing on May 5, 2015 and taking public testimony from the applicant, the Hearing Officer expressed concern regarding the removal of two oak trees and asked the applicant to consider relocating the proposed structures and avoid removal of the trees. Therefore, the Hearing Officer continued the public hearing to June 16, 2015 to allow the applicant sufficient time to redesign the project.

On June 1, 2015, the applicant filed information showing revisions to the project that preserved the oaks by relocating the proposed building. The project now involves encroachment into the protected zones of seven oak trees and avoids any removals. Staff is of the opinion that the materials filed by the applicant meet the burden of proof for authorization of the proposed encroachments.

If you need further information, please contact Steven Jones at (213) 974-6433 or sdjones@planning.lacounty.gov. Department office hours are Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Department is closed on Fridays.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

I MOVE THAT THE HEARING OFFICER CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND APPROVE OAK TREE PERMIT NO. 201400017.

NP:sdj

Enclosure(s): Site plan, received June 1, 2015
HO memo
Factual
Draft findings and conditions



Department of Regional Planning
 320 West Temple Street
 Los Angeles, California 90012

PROJECT NUMBER
 92074-(5)

HEARING DATE
 June 16, 2015

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENT
 Oak Tree Permit No. ROAK201400017

PROJECT SUMMARY

OWNER / APPLICANT

Tesoro Del Valle Master Homeowner's Association

MAP/EXHIBIT DATE

June 1, 2015

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The applicant requests an Oak Tree Permit to authorize encroachments into the protected zones of seven oak trees in conjunction with a proposed community identification project within zones RPD-5,000-27U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 5,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 27 dwelling units per acre), RPD-12,000-3.7U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 12,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 3.7 dwelling units per acre) and R-3 (Limited Multiple Residence Zone). The site currently contains vegetation, ground cover, landscaping and hardscape including fences and retaining walls and a water feature. The community identification signs will include monument structures and a logo on a proposed maintenance building for the existing pond water feature, and colored concrete along Avenida Rancho Tesoro and Tesoro Del Valle Drive. The improvement will increase the enhancement of the area at the entrance to the unincorporated community known as Tesoro Del Valle by expanding the pond area and using familiar architectural designs consistent the surrounding structures in the monuments and building. The applicant proposes to encroach into the protected zones of oak trees that are up to 25 feet tall and 12 inches in diameter and in good-to-fair health. Tesoro Del Valle is a 1,791 residential unit community with 6.2 acres of commercial use, 61.8 acres of active parks, a 13.9 acre recreation center area, an elementary school, historical site and permanent open space. The project sites are proposed at the primary access points, Tesoro Del Valle and Avenida Rancho Tesoro, along Copperhill Drive.

LOCATION

Tesoro Del Valle Drive and Avenida Rancho Tesoro

ACCESS

Copper Hill Drive

ASSESSORS PARCEL NUMBER(S)

2810-119-014, 3244-177-034, 3244-159-069 and 3244-159-062

SITE AREA

11.21 gross acre

GENERAL PLAN / LOCAL PLAN

Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan

ZONED DISTRICT

Newhall

LAND USE DESIGNATION

H30 (UR5 - Urban Residential)

H18 (UR4 - Urban Residential)

H5 (UR 2 - Urban Residential)

ZONE

RPD-5,000-27U

RPD-12,000-3.7U

R-3

PROPOSED UNITS

None

MAX DENSITY/UNITS

N/A

COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT

N/A

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION (CEQA)

Class 4 Categorical Exemption – Minor Alterations to Land

KEY ISSUES

- Consistency with the Los Angeles County General Plan and the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan
- Satisfaction of the following Section(s) of Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code:
 - 22.52.970, et seq. (Special-purpose signs)
 - 22.56, Part 16 (Oak Tree Permits)

CASE PLANNER:

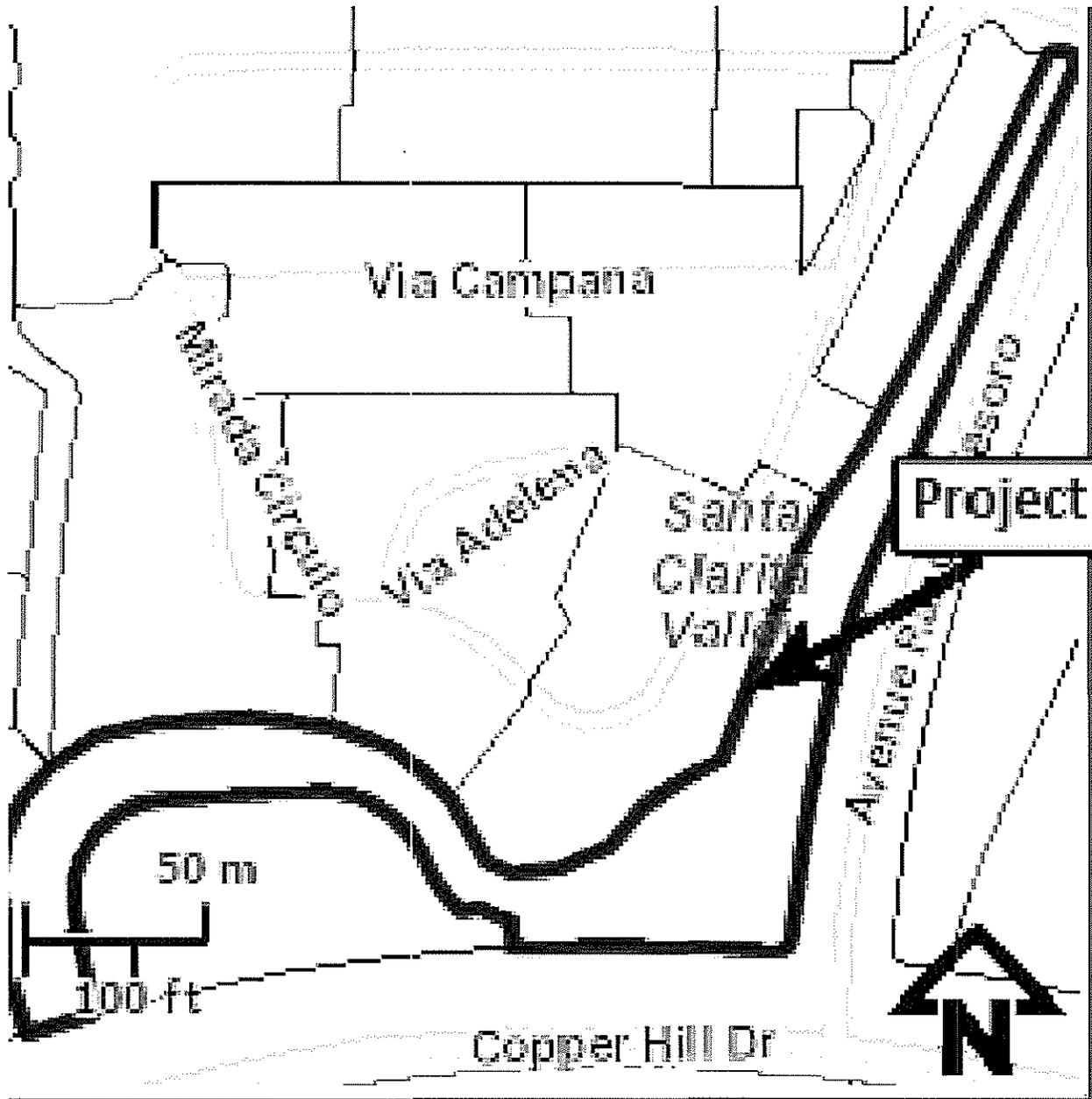
Steven Jones

PHONE NUMBER:

(213) 974 - 6433

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

sdjones@planning.lacounty.gov



ENTITLEMENTS REQUESTED

- Oak Tree Permit (OTP) for the removal of two (2) and encroachment into the protected zone of six (6) oak trees, in zones RPD-5,000-27U (Residential Planned Development – 5,000 square feet minimum lot area – 27 dwelling units per acre), RPD-12,000-3.7U (Residential Planned Development – 12,000 square feet minimum lot area – 3.7 dwelling units per acre) and R-3 (Limited multiple residence) pursuant to County Code Section 22.56.2060.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Tesoro Del Valle Master Homeowner's Association (HOA), is requesting to remove two (2) protected oak trees in order to install a pond maintenance building. The applicant is also requesting to encroach into the protected zones of six (6) oaks for the construction of monuments to be used as community identification signs within the HOA-maintained area of the project sites. The community identification signs will include monument structures and a logo on a proposed maintenance building for the existing pond water feature, and colored concrete along Avenida Rancho Tesoro and Tesoro Del Valle Drive. The improvement will increase the enhancement of the area at the entrance to the unincorporated community known as Tesoro Del Valle. In order to complete the work, grading and construction will necessitate the removal of the oak trees located within the project area. While the scope of the improvement project spans multiple parcels, the location of the four (4) mitigation trees required under this permit will be on a separate, HOA-owned and maintained mitigation property nearby.

The location of the proposed removals is currently part of the existing 1,795 acres approved for the large scale mixed use project known as Tesoro Del Valle (TR51644). The property is currently improved with landscaping, fencing, walls and a water feature.

The oak trees to be removed are identified as Oak Tree Nos. 13 and 14 in the Oak Tree Report prepared by Sean H. Brown, a registered arborist of SB Horticulture, dated February 22, 2014. Both trees to be removed are adjacent to Avenida Rancho Tesoro.

The oak trees to be removed are, on average, 25 feet in height, 12 inches in diameter and in good-to-fair health. Both trees to be removed are adjacent to Avenida Rancho Tesoro.

The applicant proposes to encroach into the protected zones of oak trees that are, on average, 15 feet tall and 10 inches in diameter. The applicant proposes to encroach into the protected zones of oak trees identified as Oak Tree Nos. 1, 2, 4, 15, 16 and 17.

The project area is located within the southern portion of the Tesoro Community where all residents access the community. Tesoro Del Valle is a 1,791 residential unit community with 6.2 acres of commercial use, 61.8 acres of active parks, a 13.9 acre recreation center area, an elementary school, the Harry Carey Ranch Interpretive Center historical site and permanent open space. The project sites are proposed at the primary access points, Tesoro Del Valle and Avenida Rancho Tesoro, along Copperhill Drive.

LOCATION

The project site is located within The Newhall Zoned District along Copper Hill Drive at Tesoro Del Valle Drive and Avenida Rancho Tesoro, Assessor Parcel Numbers 2810-119-014, 3244-177-034, 3244-159-069 and 3244-159-062.

EXISTING ZONING

The subject properties are zoned RPD-5,000-27U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 5,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 27 dwelling units per acre), RPD-12,000-3.7U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 12,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 3.7 dwelling units per acre) and zone R-3 (Limited Multiple Residence Zone) located within the Santa Clarita Valley.

Surrounding properties are zoned as follows:

North: RPD-20,000-2.8U (Residential Planned Development, 20,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 2.8 dwelling units per acre), RPD-12,000-3.7U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 12,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 3.7 dwelling units per acre) and R-3(Limited Multiple Residence Zone)

South: C-2-DP (Neighborhood Business Development Program Zone)

East: O-S (Open Space)

West O-S (Open Space), RPD-5,000-27U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 5,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 27 dwelling units per acre), RPD-20,000-2.8U (Residential Planned Development, 20,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 2.8 dwelling units per acre)

EXISTING LAND USES

APN 2810-119-014 is developed with an apartment for multi-family dwelling.

APN 3244-177-034 is vacant but improved with landscaping.

APN 3244-159-069 is vacant but improved with landscaping, including signage and a pond as a water feature.

APN 3244-159-062 is vacant but the parkway is improved with landscaping and a sidewalk.

Surrounding properties are developed as follows:

North: Single family residences

South: Commercial uses

East: Vacant

West: Multi-family residences

PREVIOUS CASES/ZONING HISTORY

Ordinance No. 99-0034Z was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 18, 1999 and changed the zoning to the current RPD-20,000-2.8U, RPD-12,000-3.7U and O-S zones in association with the changing regulations for the execution of the General Plan, relating to Castaic Canyon District No. 100 and Newhall Zoned District No. 118

Ordinance No. 2012-0055Z was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 27, 2012 and changed the zoning from R-3-14U-DP to R-3 in association with the adoption and execution of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan update (One Valley One Vision), a part of the Countywide General Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Los Angeles County ("County") Staff recommends that this project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 4 Exemption –Minor Alterations to Land, under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County environmental guidelines. This project is a minor private property alteration in the condition of land and vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature scenic trees and consists of new gardening or landscaping including the replacement of existing conventional landscaping with water efficient or fire resistant and drought tolerant landscaping. The existing and replacement oaks will require less water and the water schedule for the remaining oaks is being reviewed for fewer watering times. The proposed project is in keeping with the Countywide guidelines for general goals and policies in that the project fosters community identity and improves the environmental quality by the compatible interrelation of a systems of centers, major transportation facilities and open space areas mentioned on page G-8, D.46. The removal and encroachment of the oak trees supports the installation of the recognizable structures that identify the project area, encourages a stronger sense of community and connection with the existing built environment and enhances open space. Therefore, staff recommends that the Hearing Officer determine that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

STAFF EVALUATION

General Plan/Community Plan Consistency

The project site is located within the residential land use categories of the Santa Clarita Valley Area – One Valley One Vision Plan (OVOV). OVOV is part of the County of Los Angeles General Plan. OVOV takes precedence over the County General Plan for area land use.

The Residential 5, 18 and 30, urban residential designations are to provide appropriately located areas for the allowable uses and development standards determined by the underlying zoning designations. The removal of the oak trees is necessary to route a 15 inch suction manifold and a 2 inch discharge manifold between the existing pond and proposed maintenance structure housing the pump house and to provide accessibility required by the American's with Disabilities Act.

The following objectives, goals and policies of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan are applicable to the proposed project:

- *Encourage site designs that protect oak trees, hillsides, and biological resources through creative solutions. (Land Use Element Policy LU-7.6.4, Page 66)*

The project site contains a total of nineteen (19) existing oak trees but only two (2) oak trees will be removed as a result of project activity in the area immediately adjacent to the existing pond water feature.

- *Ensure that development is located and designed to protect oak and other significant indigenous woodlands. (Conservation and Open Space Element Objective CO-3.2.2, Page 178)*

The property does not contain oak woodland. The trees exhibited contain canker bark bleeding as a result of overwatering

- *Where appropriate, promote planting of trees that are native or climatically appropriate to the surrounding environment, emphasizing oaks, sycamores, maple, walnut, and other native species in order to enhance habitat, and discouraging the use of introduced species such as eucalyptus, pepper trees, and palms except as ornamental features (Conservation and Open Space Element, Policy CO-3.5.2, pg. 179).*

The area affected by the project activity and where the two (2) oak trees are proposed be removed will be restored with ornamental trees and replanted with native understory which will help to enhance the area's native scenic character and will be more suitable for the hydro-zone.

The understory plantings within the mitigation area under the mitigation oak trees will consist of all non-invasive, indigenous species approved by the County biologist.

- *Protect the scenic character of oak woodlands, coastal sage, and other habitats unique to the Santa Clarita Valley (Conservation and Open Space, Objective CO-6.4, pg. 183).*
- *Continue preserving significant oak trees and woodlands through enforcement of the County Zoning Ordinance. (Action 6. 4, pg. 191).*

The mitigation area is a part of a largely undisturbed area. As a part of the project disturbance area, the two (2) of the nineteen (19) oak trees must be removed but will be restored in an area more suitable to preserve the oaks.

The following policies of the Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan are applicable to the proposed project:

- *Prevent further net loss of oaks woodlands. (Page 22)*

Although the oak trees that are a part of the oak woodlands will be removed, oak trees will be restored in close proximity of other oaks on a nearby parcel owned by the homeowner's association recreating an oak woodland of even larger size due to the required two to one (2:1) mitigation ratio.

- *Coordinate the restoration of oak woodlands with adjacent or connected ecosystem restorations, such as the replacement of non-native annual grasses with native perennial grasses, riparian restoration plans, etc. (Page 23)*

The location of the mitigation site was selected as it provides the most contiguous habitat with favorable aspects within the project boundary for oak survival and growth, is located in the same general area in the vicinity of existing oaks of the same species that will remain in place. Additionally, it incorporates an area that is in the undeveloped lands to the northwest, and is likely to remain undisturbed in the future.

- *Plant an appropriate number of replacement trees and maintain those trees for seven years. (Page 25)*

Four (4) oak trees will be replanted to replace the two (2) oaks trees that are to be removed and will be conditioned to be maintained for seven (7) years.

Zoning Ordinance and Development Standards Compliance

Pursuant to Section 22.56.2060 of the County Code, destroying, removing, relocating, damaging or encroaching into a protected zone of any tree of the oak genus which is 25 inches or more in circumference is prohibited without an OTP. The protected zone is the area extending five feet beyond the dripline of the tree or 15 feet from the trunk, whichever is greater.

Pursuant to Section 22.56.2140 of the County Code, staff referred a copy of the applicant's oak tree report as required by Section 22.56.2090 to the Forester to review the accuracy of statements contained therein, and to inspect the project site.

Pursuant to Section 22.20.460.A of the County Code, auxiliary uses for the RPD zone are permitted and pursuant to Section 22.20.460.B of the County Code, the project has already obtained a conditional use permit for the large scale mixed use project known as Tesoro Del Valle in the Bouquet Canyon Zoned District.

Pursuant to Section 22.52.970 of the County Code community identification signs are permitted in any zone at or near the entrance to an unincorporated community of the county with size, height, lighting and design restrictions. The proposed sign area of the monument approximately nine square feet in size, the signs shall not exceed a maximum of 16 feet, measured from the base of the sign, is not proposed to be internally or externally lighted and are architecturally related to the area in which they are located.

Site Visit

The oak trees on the subject property were inspected by Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning staff biologist, the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Forestry Division, the consulting arborist who prepared the Oak Tree Report, Sean H. Brown. Photos of the site are included.

Burden of Proof

The applicant is required to substantiate all facts identified by Section 22.56.2100 of the County Code. The Burden of Proof with applicant's responses is attached. Staff is of the opinion that the applicant has met the burden of proof.

Neighborhood Impact/Land Use Compatibility

The applicant proposes to erect a pond maintenance building and monuments to be used as community identification signs within the homeowner's association (HOA) maintained area of the project. The community identification signs will include monument structures and a logo on a proposed maintenance building for the existing pond water feature, and colored concrete along Avenida Rancho Tesoro and Tesoro Del Valle Drive. The improvement will increase the enhancement of the area at the entrance to the unincorporated community known as Tesoro Del Valle. The impact of the oak tree removals will be offset by the planting of at least four (4) mitigation trees within the mitigation area, and the other conditions of the OTP will help to protect the remaining trees on the property.

COUNTY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff received a letter from the Forester dated April 2, 2015, which contained comment for this OTP. While there were no objections to the proposed project, it was noted that specific conditions would be imposed at the time of building permits are required for the structures. No objections were received and the letter is attached with the OTP conditions.

The Tesoro Del Valle homeowner's association will assume full responsibility for the maintenance and monitoring of the mitigation oak trees.

LEGAL NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Pursuant to the provisions of Sections 22.56.2130 of the County Code, the community was properly notified of the public hearing newspaper notice. Additionally, the case materials were available on Regional Planning's website and at the Castaic Library. A total of five hundred and thirteen (513) Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to those on the courtesy mailing list for the Newhall Zoned District and those on the OTP courtesy list.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Staff has not received any comments at this time.

FEES/DEPOSITS

If approved, fees identified in the attached project conditions will apply unless modified by the Hearing Officer.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation is made prior to the public hearing and is subject to change based upon testimony and/or documentary evidence presented at the public hearing:

Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of Project Number 92074-(5), Oak Tree Permit Number 201400017, subject to the attached conditions.

SUGGESTED APPROVAL MOTION:

I, THE HEARING OFFICER, CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND FIND THAT THE PROJECT IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT.

I FURTHER MOVE TO APPROVE OAK TREE PERMIT NUMBER 201400017 SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS.

Prepared by Steven Jones, Principal Regional Planning Assistant, Land Divisions Section

Reviewed by Nooshin Paidar, Supervising Regional Planner, Land Divisions Section

Attachments:

Draft Findings

Draft Conditions of Approval

Applicant's Burden of Proof Statement

Site Photographs

Site Plan Plan

Land Use Map

NP:SJ

4/20/15

**DRAFT FINDINGS OF THE HEARING OFFICER
AND ORDER
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROJECT NO. 92074 - (5)
OAK TREE PERMIT NO. T201400017**

1. The Los Angeles County ("County") Hearing Officer conducted a duly-noticed public hearing on May 5, 2015, in the matter of Project No. **92074 – (5)**, consisting of Oak Tree Permit No. T201400017 ("OTP"). (The Oak Tree Permit is referred to as the "Project Permit.") A Revised Exhibit "A" to Conditional Use Permit 92074, which authorized development of the 1,795 acres project site, is concurrently being reviewed in order to install the Tesoro pond maintenance building and monuments to be used as community identification sign.
2. The permittee, Tesoro Del Valle Master Homeowner's Association ("permittee"), requests the Project Permit to authorize encroachments into the protected zones seven (7) oak trees ("Project") on property located within the Tesoro Del Valle community in the unincorporated community of Castaic Val Verde ("Project Site").
3. The Project is located at property located at Tesoro Del Valle Drive and Avenida Rancho Tesoro, Assessor Parcel Numbers 2810-119-014, 3244-177-034, 3244159069, and 3244-159-062, in the unincorporated community of Castaic Val Verde.
4. The Project Permit is a request to authorize the project in zones RPD-5,000-27U (Residential Planned Development – 5,000 square feet minimum lot area – 27 dwelling units per acre), RPD-12,000-3.7U (Residential Planned Development – 12,000 square feet minimum lot area – 3.7 dwelling units per acre) and R-3 (Limited multiple residence) on the project site pursuant to Los Angeles County Code ("County Code") section 22.56.2060.
5. The Project Site is 11.21 gross acres in size and consists of four legal lots. The Project Site is comprised of separate parcels irregular in shape with flat and relatively level to gently sloping topography. The properties with parcel numbers 034, 069 and 062 are developed with landscaping, including ornamental vegetation, hardscape and community identification signs. Parcel 014 is developed with an apartment building, covered and uncovered parking, landscaping, and a community identification sign.
6. The Project Site is located in the Newhall Zoned District and is currently zoned RPD-5,000-27U, RPD-12,000-3.7U and R-3.
7. The Project Site is located within the H30 (UR5 – Urban Residential), H5 (UR2 – Urban Residential) and H18 (UR4 – Urban Residential) land use categories of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan (OVOV) Land Use Policy Map.
8. Surrounding Zoning within a 500-foot radius includes:

North: RPD-20,000-2.8U (Residential Planned Development, 20,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 2.8 dwelling units per acre), RPD-12,000-3.7U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 12,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 3.7 dwelling units per acre) and R-3(Limited Multiple Residence Zone)
South: C-2-DP (Neighborhood Business Development Program Zone)
East: O-S (Open Space)
West: O-S (Open Space), RPD-5,000-27U (Residential Planned Development Zone, 5,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 27 dwelling units per acre), RPD-20,000-2.8U (Residential Planned Development, 20,000 square foot Minimum Required Lot Area, 2.8 dwelling units per acre)

9. Surrounding land uses within a 500-foot radius include:

North: Single family residences
South: Commercial uses
East: Undeveloped?
West: Multi-family residences

10. Ordinance No. 99-0034Z was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 18, 1999 and changed the zoning to the current RPD-20,000-2.8U, RPD-12,000-3.7U and O-S zones in association with the changing regulations for the execution of the General Plan, relating to Castaic Canyon District No. 100 and Newhall Zoned District No. 118
11. The site plan for the Project depicts the Project site with a new 1,250 square foot structure measuring approximately 40 feet by 37 feet, in southern California mission style. The structure is divided into two main areas: (1) a pond maintenance area measuring 494.83 square feet and (2) an attached porch, breezeway area measuring approximately 765 square feet in size with a bell tower. Also included are three separate monument community identification signs proposed to be 16 feet in height.
12. The Project Site is accessible via Copper Hill to the south. Primary access to the Project Site will be via an entrance/exit on Avenida Rancho Tesoro Drive. Secondary access to the Project Site will be via an entrance/exit on Tesoro Del Valle Drive.
13. On November 4, 2014, prior to the Hearing Officer's public hearing on the Project, the permittee submitted to staff an updated status on the health of the tree in a supplemental oak tree report page. The burden of proof statement was also updated to reflect the health of the affected trees.
14. The County Fire Department ("Fire Department") does not object to approval of the Project because the Project will be required to meet standards at the building permit process for all proposed structures.
15. Prior to the Hearing Officer's public hearing on the Project, Regional Planning staff determined that the Project qualified for a Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, categorical exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (Public

Resources Code section 21000, et. seq.) ("CEQA"), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the Environmental Document Reporting Procedures for the County, because the Project involves a minor private property alteration in the condition of land and vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature scenic trees and consists of new gardening or landscaping including the replacement of existing conventional landscaping with water efficient or fire resistant and drought tolerant landscaping. The watering schedule for the oaks is being reviewed for fewer watering times to improve the health of the trees. All necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive.

16. Pursuant to the provisions of sections 22.60.174 and 22.60.175 of the Zoning Code, the community was appropriately notified of the Project's public hearings by mail, newspaper, and property posting.
17. Staff received five letters of opposition regarding the project. Written testimony supported preserving the oaks and suggested redesign of the project.
18. At the public hearing held on May 5, 2015 before the Hearing Officer, the applicant's representative, John Evans, presented testimony in favor of the request and answered questions presented by the Hearing Officer. After a brief discussion that included the assertion that the burden of proof had not been met to justify removal, the Hearing Officer asked if the applicant was willing to redesign the project. After taking all testimony, the Hearing Officer continued the public hearing to June 16, 2015.
19. At the June 16, 2015 public hearing, [RESERVED]. There being no further testimony, the Hearing Officer closed the public hearing and adopted the recommended changes by staff and agreed to by the applicant. Hearing officer added/revised/changed.
20. The Hearing Officer finds that the improvements to the community identification is compatible with the natural and manmade environment because the location for community identification is appropriate and of high quality design standard.
21. The Hearing Officer finds that the enhanced community identification is appropriately located in areas that are not environmentally sensitive or subject to severe natural hazards and in areas where essential services and facilities exist.
22. The Hearing Officer finds that the Project builds on the community's history and natural setting by promoting the beautification of streetscapes and gateways to the community.
23. The Hearing Officer finds that the improvements are compatible with the natural and manmade environment because the oak trees preserved in place and the watering needs accommodated.

24. The Hearing Officer finds that freestanding community identification signs are permitted in the zone at or near the entrance to an unincorporated community pursuant to section 22.52.970 of the County of Los Angeles Zoning Code.
25. The Hearing Officer finds that pursuant to County Code section 22.52.970, the area of the community identification signs shall not exceed 192 square feet in total sign area, 16 feet in height and are architecturally related to the area in which they are located.
26. The Hearing Officer finds that pursuant to County Code Section 22.56.2140, a copy of the applicant's oak tree report as required by Section 22.56.2090 was sent to the County Forester to review the accuracy of the statements contained therein, and to inspect the project site. The County Forester concurred with the oak tree report submitted by the applicant, which was completed by a certified arborist, and supports the approval of the Oak Tree Permit, subject to conditions. Therefore, the proposed construction of the proposed improvements and the proposed encroachments into the protected zones of the subject seven oak trees will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.
27. The Hearing Officer finds that pursuant to County Code Section 22.56.2130, the community was properly notified of the public hearing by newspaper and mailings to the Newhall Zoned District and the oak tree courtesy lists. Additionally, the Project was noticed and case materials were available on Regional Planning's website and at libraries located in the vicinity of Santa Clarita Valley community. On March 30, 2015, a total of 486 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all listees as identified on the Newhall Zoned District and oak tree courtesy lists.
28. The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of proceedings upon which the Hearing Officer's decision is based in this matter is at the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 13th Floor, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. The custodian of such documents and materials shall be the Section Head of the Land Divisions Section, Department of Regional Planning.

BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE HEARING OFFICER CONCLUDES:

- A. That the proposed use with the attached conditions will be consistent with the adopted General Plan and the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan.
- B. That the proposed construction or proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the trees subject to Part 16 of Chapter 22.56, on the subject property.
- C. That the encroachment into the protected zones of the oak trees proposed will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

- D. That the encroachment into the protected zones of the oak trees proposed is necessary to the extent that the cost of alternate development plans would be prohibitive.
- E. That the encroachment into the protected zones of the oak trees proposed will not be contrary to or be in substantial conflict with the intent and purpose of the oak tree permit procedure.

THEREFORE, THE HEARING OFFICER:

1. Finds that the Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to section 15304 of the State CEQA Guidelines (Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land categorical exemption); and
2. Approves Oak Tree Permit 201400017, subject to the attached conditions.

ACTION DATE: June 16, 2015

NP:sdj
06/04/2015

c: Building and Safety

**DRAFT CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROJECT NO. 92074-(5)
OAK TREE PERMIT NO. 201400017**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a request for an Oak Tree Permit to authorize encroachments into the protected zones of seven oak trees for the construction of monuments to be used as community identification signs, construction of a pond maintenance building for the existing water feature and colored concrete along Avenida Rancho Tesoro and Tesoro Del Valle within Tesoro del Valle Homeowner's Association area, subject to the following conditions of approval:

GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "permittee" shall include the applicant, owner of the property, and any other person, corporation, or other entity making use of this grant.
2. This grant shall not be effective for any purpose until the permittee, and the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, have filed at the office of the Los Angeles County ("County") Department of Regional Planning ("Regional Planning") their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all of the conditions of this grant. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Condition No. 2 and Condition Nos. 4, 5, and 8 shall be effective immediately upon the date of final approval of this grant by the County.
3. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "date of final approval" shall mean the date the County's action becomes effective pursuant to Section 22.60.260 of the County Code.
4. The permittee shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County, its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action, or proceeding against the County or its agents, officers, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul this permit approval, which action is brought within the applicable time period of Government Code Section 65009 or any other applicable limitations period. The County shall promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding and the County shall reasonably cooperate in the defense. If the County fails to promptly notify the permittee of any claim, action, or proceeding, or if the County fails to cooperate reasonably in the defense, the permittee shall not thereafter be responsible to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless the County.
5. In the event that any claim, action, or proceeding as described above is filed against the County, the permittee shall within ten days of the filing make an initial deposit with Regional Planning in the amount of up to \$5,000.00, from which actual costs and expenses shall be billed and deducted for the purpose of defraying the costs or expenses involved in Regional Planning's cooperation in the defense,

including but not limited to, depositions, testimony, and other assistance provided to permittee or permittee's counsel.

If during the litigation process, actual costs or expenses incurred reach 80 percent of the amount on deposit, the permittee shall deposit additional funds sufficient to bring the balance up to the amount of \$5,000.00. There is no limit to the number of supplemental deposits that may be required prior to completion of the litigation.

At the sole discretion of the permittee, the amount of an initial or any supplemental deposit may exceed the minimum amounts defined herein. Additionally, the cost for collection and duplication of records and other related documents shall be paid by the permittee according to County Code Section 2.170.010.

6. If any material provision of this grant is held or declared to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the permit shall be void and the privileges granted hereunder shall lapse.
7. Upon any transfer or lease of the property during the term of this grant, the permittee, or the owner of the subject property if other than the permittee, shall promptly provide a copy of the grant and its conditions to the transferee or lessee of the subject property.
8. This grant shall expire unless used within two (2) years from the date of final approval of the grant. A single one-year time extension may be requested in writing and with the payment of the applicable fee prior to such expiration date.
9. The subject property shall be maintained and operated in full compliance with the conditions of this grant and any law, statute, ordinance, or other regulation applicable to any development or activity on the subject property. Failure of the permittee to cease any development or activity not in full compliance shall be a violation of these conditions.
10. If inspections are required to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant, or if any inspection discloses that the subject property is being used in violation of any one of the conditions of this grant, the permittee shall be financially responsible and shall reimburse Regional Planning for all additional enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance. The amount charged for additional inspections shall be \$200.00 per inspection, or the current recovery cost at the time any additional inspections are required, whichever is greater.
11. Notice is hereby given that any person violating a provision of this grant is guilty of a misdemeanor. Notice is further given that the Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") or a Hearing Officer may, after conducting a public hearing, revoke or modify this grant, if the Commission or Hearing Officer finds that these conditions have been violated or that this grant has been exercised so as to be detrimental to the public's health or safety or so as to be a nuisance, or as otherwise authorized pursuant to Chapter 22.56, Part 13 of the County Code.

12. All development pursuant to this grant must be kept in full compliance with the County Fire Code to the satisfaction of said department.
13. All development pursuant to this grant shall conform with the requirements of the County Department of Public Works to the satisfaction of said department.
14. All development pursuant to this grant shall comply with the requirements of Title 22 of the County Code and of the specific zoning of the subject property, unless specifically modified by this grant, as set forth in these conditions, including the approved Exhibit "A," or a revised Exhibit "A" approved by the Director of Regional Planning ("Director").
15. The permittee shall maintain the subject property in a neat and orderly fashion. The permittee shall maintain free of litter all areas of the premises over which the permittee has control.
16. All structures, walls and fences open to public view shall remain free of graffiti or other extraneous markings, drawings, or signage that was not approved by Regional Planning. These shall include any of the above that do not directly relate to the business being operated on the premises or that do not provide pertinent information about said premises. The only exceptions shall be seasonal decorations or signage provided under the auspices of a civic or non-profit organization.

In the event of graffiti or other extraneous markings occurring, the permittee shall remove or cover said markings, drawings, or signage within 24 hours of notification of such occurrence, weather permitting. Paint utilized in covering such markings shall be of a color that matches, as closely as possible, the color of the adjacent surfaces.

PERMIT SPECIFIC CONDITIONS – OAK TREE PERMIT

17. This permit shall not be effective until a revised exhibit 'A' is approved for the community identification signs and pond maintenance building, demonstrating the need for the encroachment into the protected zones of oak trees 2, 4, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.
18. The permittee shall comply with all conditions and requirements contained in the County of Los Angeles Forester and Fire Warden, Forestry Division, letter dated April 2, 2015 (attached hereto), to the satisfaction of said Division, except as otherwise required by said Division.

Attachments:

Forester and Fire Warden Department Letter dated April 2, 2015
Oak Trees: Care and Maintenance Guide



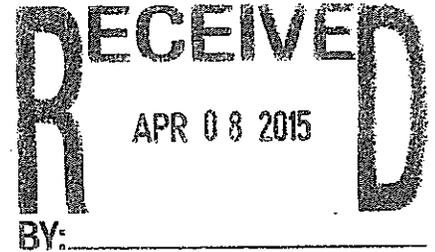
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294

DARYL L. OSBY
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

April 2, 2015



Steven D. Jones, Planning Assistant
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Jones:

INITIAL STUDY, "TESORO," PROJECT NO. 92074, CASE NO. ROAKT201400017,
PROPOSES TO AUTHORIZE THE REMOVAL OF TWO OAK TREES AND THE
ENCROACHMENT INTO THE PROTECTED ZONE OF SIX OTHER OAKS TREES IN
CONJUNCTION WITH A PROPOSED COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION PROJECT,
TESORO DEL VALLE DRIVE AND AVENIDA RANCHO TESORO DRIVE ALONG
COPPER HILL DRIVE, VALENCIA (FFER 201500046)

The Initial Study has been reviewed by the Planning Division, Land Development Unit,
Forestry Division, and Health Hazardous Materials Division of the County of Los
Angeles Fire Department. The following are their comments:

PLANNING DIVISION:

- 1. Section 15, Public Services, Fire Protection, should be corrected to state that
there are currently four fire stations and one under development within five miles
of the project site.

LAND DEVELOPMENT UNIT:

- 1. The development of this project must comply with all applicable code and
ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire flows, and fire
hydrants.

SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

- AGOURA HILLS, ARTESIA, AZUSA, BALDWIN PARK, BELL, BELL GARDENS, BELLFLOWER, BRADBURY, CALABASAS, CARSON, CERRITOS, CLAREMONT, COMMERCE, COVINA, CUDAHY, DIAMOND BAR, DUARTE, EL MONTE, GARDENA, GLENDORA, HAWAIIAN GARDENS, HAWTHORNE, HIDDEN HILLS, HUNTINGTON PARK, INDUSTRY, INGLEWOOD, IRWINDALE, LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE, LA HABRA, LA MIRADA, LA PUENTE, LAKEWOOD, LANCASTER, LAWDALE, LOMITA, LYNWOOD, MALIBU, MAYWOOD, NORWALK, PALMDALE, PALOS VERDES ESTATES, PARAMOUNT, PICO RIVERA, POMONA, RANCHO PALOS VERDES, ROLLING HILLS, ROLLING HILLS ESTATES, ROSEMEAD, SAN DIMAS, SANTA CLARITA, SIGNAL HILL, SOUTH EL MONTE, SOUTH GATE, TEMPLE CITY, WALNUT, WEST HOLLYWOOD, WESTLAKE VILLAG, WHITTIER

Steven D. Jones, Planning Assistant
April 2, 2015
Page 2

2. Specific fire and life safety requirements for the proposed building will be addressed when architectural plans are submitted to the Fire Department for review and approval prior to building permit issuance.
3. The Fire Prevention Division's Land Development Unit appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Initial Study for this project. Should any questions arise regarding the above comments, please contact Juan Padilla at (323) 890-4243 or at Juan.Padilla@fire.lacounty.gov.

FORESTRY DIVISION – OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

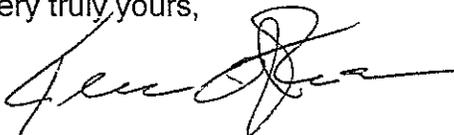
1. The statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Forestry Division include erosion control, watershed management, rare and endangered species, vegetation, fuel modification for Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones or Fire Zone 4, archeological and cultural resources, and the County Oak Tree Ordinance.
2. The areas germane to the statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Forestry Division have been addressed.

HEALTH HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIVISION:

1. The Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD) has no objection to the proposed project.

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (323) 890-4330.

Very truly yours,



KEVIN T. JOHNSON, ACTING CHIEF, FORESTRY DIVISION
PREVENTION SERVICES BUREAU

KTJ:ad



OAK TREES: Care and Maintenance

This Oak Tree Care and Maintenance Guide offers basic information and practical guidelines aimed at the preservation and continued health and survival of oak trees in the residential landscape.

Increasing pressure for development is changing the oak woodland of Los Angeles County. Heritage oaks which once survived in open rolling hills are now being preserved or replanted and incorporated into the community.

How do we protect these trees during the planning and development process, and ensure their survival once they are in the home garden?

The Oak Tree

Oak Trees in the residential landscape often suffer decline and early death due to conditions that are easily preventable. Damage can often take years to become evident, and by the time the trees show obvious signs of disease it is usually too late to help.

Improper watering, especially during the hot summer months, and disturbance to critical root areas are most often the causes. This booklet will provide guidelines on where these critical areas lie and ways to avoid disturbing them, as well as information on long-term care and maintenance of both natural and planted oaks. Lists of additional resources for more information and demonstration areas to visit are also included.

The Oak Tree Ordinance

The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance has been established to recognize oak trees as significant historical, aesthetic, and ecological resources. The goal of the ordinance is to create favorable conditions for the preservation and propagation of this unique and threatened plant heritage. By making this part of the development process, healthy oak trees will be preserved and maintained.

The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance applies to all unincorporated areas of the County. Individual cities may have their own ordinances, and their requirements may be different.

Permit Requirements:

Under the Los Angeles County Ordinance, a person shall not cut, destroy, remove, relocate, inflict damage, or encroach into the *protected zone* (see text) of any ordinance sized tree of the oak tree genus without first obtaining a permit.

Damage includes but is not limited to :

- Burning
- Application of toxic substances
- Pruning or cutting
- Trenching
- Excavating
- Paving
- Operation of machinery or equipment
- Changing the natural grade

Chapter 22.56.2050: Oak Tree Permit Regulations, Los Angeles County, Adopted: August 20, 1982. Amended: September 13, 1988.

For more information about the County Oak Tree Ordinance, visit the Forestry Division's website at:

http://lacofd.org/Forestry_folder/otordin.htm

Or contact:

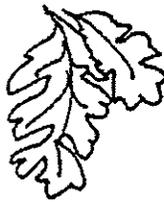
Department of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple Street, 13th floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3284
(213) 974-6411
TDD: (213) 617-2292
<http://planning.co.la.ca.us>

Types of oaks commonly found in Los Angeles County:

Many kinds of oak trees are native to Los Angeles County. A few of the more common ones are shown below, but *all* oak trees are covered by the Oak Tree Ordinance.

Older oaks which have thrived under the natural rainfall patterns of dry summers and wet winters often can't handle the extra water of a garden setting. These trees must be treated with special care if they are to survive.

Those oaks that have been planted into the landscape or sprouted naturally tend to be more tolerant of watered landscapes. These vigorous young trees may grow 1½ to 4 feet a year in height under good conditions. Once established these trees would benefit from the same special care outlined in this guide.



Valley Oak QUERCUS LOBATA

LARGE DECIDUOUS TREE 60'-75' HIGH, BROADLY SPREADING 50'-80' WIDE.

LEAVES: DEEP GREEN, 3"-4" LONG: PAPER-LIKE TEXTURE WITH DEEP ROUNDED LOBES ON THE LEAF EDGE.

TENDS TO FAVOR VALLEY BOTTOMS; FOR THIS REASON THE VALLEY OAK HAS DISAPPEARED FROM THE LANDSCAPE MORE RAPIDLY, IMPACTED SEVERELY BY AGRICULTURE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.



Coast Live Oak QUERCUS AGRIFOLIA

LARGE EVERGREEN TREE WITH A BROAD, ROUND SHAPE AND LARGE LIMBS. 30'-70' HIGH, 35'-80' WIDE.

LEAVES: GLOSSY GREEN, 1"-3" LONG: SPINY, ROUNDED, AND HOLLY-LIKE; BUT DISTINCTLY CUPPED OR CURLED UNDER AT THE EDGES.



Interior Live Oak QUERCUS WIGLIZENII

EVERGREEN TREE 30'-75' HIGH OR A SHRUB 8'-10' HIGH IN CHAPARRAL AREAS. HAS A FULL, DENSE ROUNDED SHAPE, NOT BROAD OR WITH LARGE LIMBS LIKE A COAST LIVE OAK. THEY TEND TO GROW IN CLUMPS RATHER THAN AS A SINGLE TREE.

LEAVES: DARK GREEN, 1"-4" LONG. EDGES EITHER SMOOTH OR SPINY, BUT ALWAYS FLAT-- NOT CURLED UNDER.

OTHER COMMON OAKS:

CALIFORNIA BLACK OAK: QUERCUS KELLOGGI
CANYON LIVE OAK: QUERCUS CHRYSOLEPIS
ENGLMANN OAK: QUERCUS ENGLMANNII

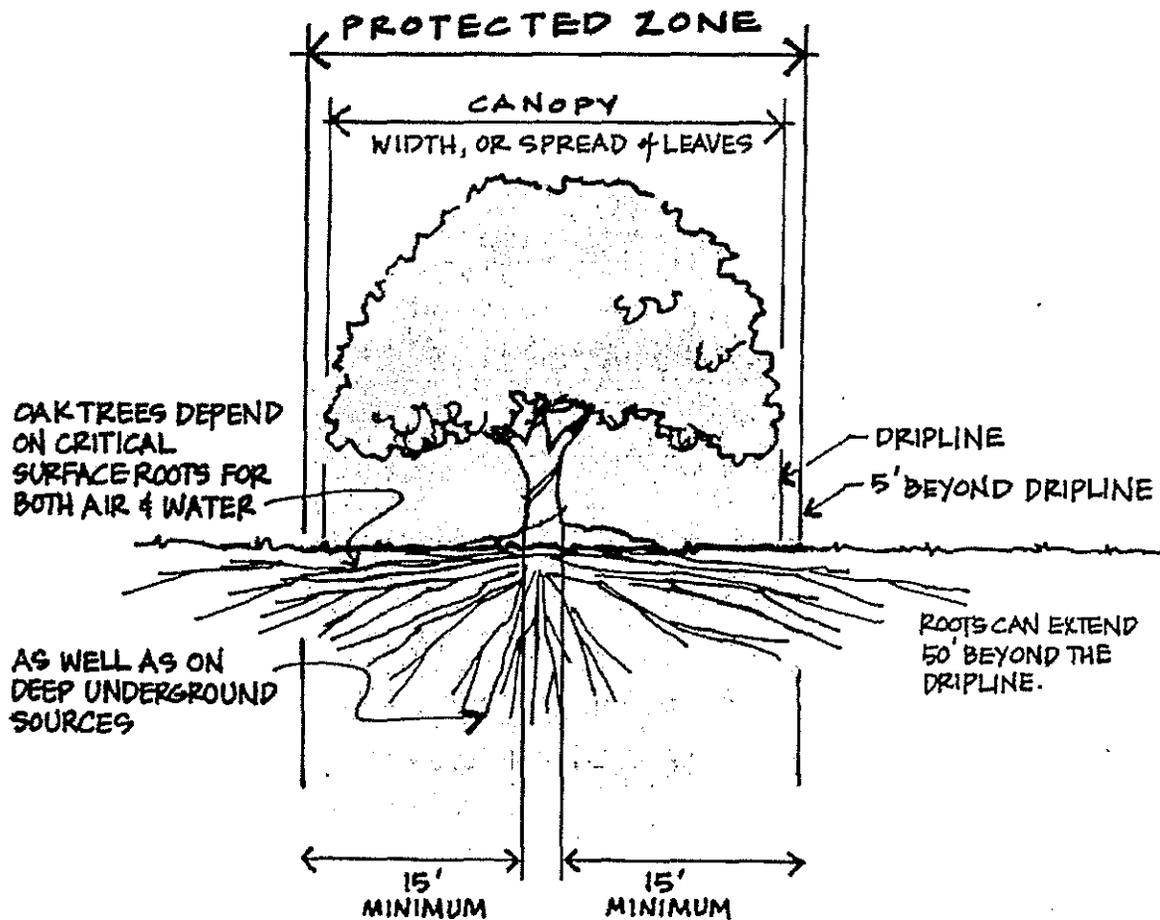
THE PROTECTED ZONE

The *protected zone* defines the area most critical to the health and continued survival of an oak tree. Oaks are easily damaged and very sensitive to disturbances that occur to the tree or in the surrounding environment.

The root system is extensive but surprisingly shallow, sometimes radiating out as much as 50 feet beyond the spread of the tree leaves, or canopy. The ground area at the outside edge of the canopy, referred to as the *dripline*, is especially important: the tree obtains most of its surface water and nutrients here, and conducts an important exchange of air and other gases.

The protected zone is defined in the Oak Tree Ordinance as follows:

"The Protected Zone shall mean that area within the dripline of an oak tree and extending there from to a point at least 5 feet outside the dripline or 15 feet from the trunk, whichever distance is greater."



CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY WITHIN THE PROTECTED ZONE

Changes in Grade

Any change in the level of soil around an oak tree can have a negative impact. The most critical area lies within 6' to 10' of the trunk: no soil should be added or scraped away. Water should drain away from this area and not be allowed to pond so that soil remains wet at the base.

Retaining walls designed to hold back soil above or below an existing tree should be avoided if at all possible, especially within the protected zone. These types of structures cause critical areas at the dripline to be buried, or require that major roots be severed. Water trapped at the base of the tree could lead to root rot or other impacts, and to the decline and premature death of a highly valued landscape tree.

Construction activities outside the protected zone can have damaging impacts on existing trees. Underground water sources can be cut off due to falling water tables, or drainage may be disrupted.

Trenching

Digging of trenches in the root zone should be avoided. Roots may be cut or severely damaged, and the tree can be killed.

If trenches must be placed within the protected zone, utilities can be placed in a conduit, which has been bored through the soil, reducing damage to the roots. Insist that as many utilities as allowed be placed in a single trench, instead of the common practice of digging a separate trench for each individual line.

Trenching can also be accomplished using hand tools or small hand held power equipment to avoid cutting roots. Any roots exposed during this work should be covered with wet burlap and kept moist until the soil can be replaced.

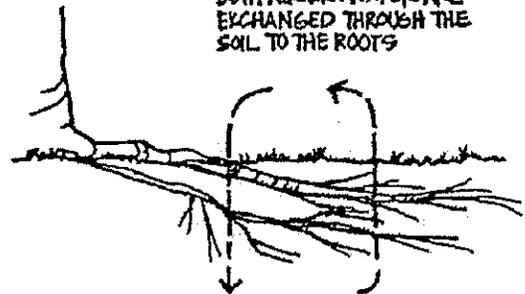
Soil Compaction and Paving

The roots depend upon an important exchange of both water and air through the soil within the protected zone. Any kind of activity that compacts the soil in this area blocks this exchange and can have serious long-term negative effects on the tree.

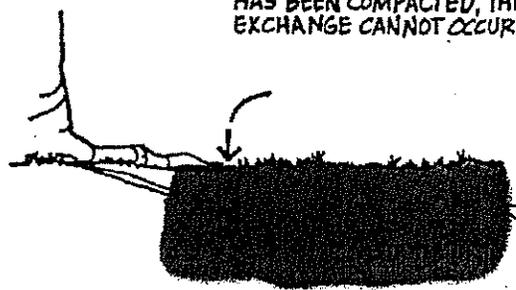
If paving material must be used, some recommended surfaces include brick paving with sand joints, or ground coverings such as wood chips (note the advantages of natural materials for providing nutrients under *mulching*).

SOIL COMPACTION

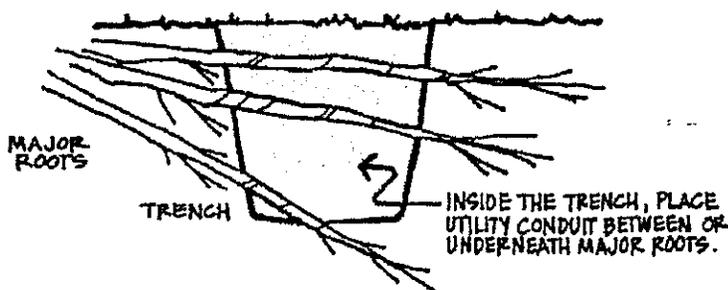
BOTH AIR AND WATER ARE EXCHANGED THROUGH THE SOIL TO THE ROOTS



HOWEVER, IF THE SOIL HAS BEEN COMPACTED, THIS EXCHANGE CANNOT OCCUR.



TRENCHING



MAINTENANCE

Watering

The key is prevention – **do not over water**. Improper watering is often overlooked as the cause of tree death because it can take years for the damage to show. Once the tree shows obvious signs of decline, it is often too late to correct the problem.

The seasonal weather pattern for this region is one of dry summers and winter rain. Oak trees are naturally drought tolerant and adapted to this cycle. If the tree is vigorous and thriving it should not require any additional water.

If the natural source of surface or underground water has been altered, some supplemental water may be necessary, but proceed with caution. The goal of any watering schedule for oak trees should be to supplement natural rainfall and it should occur only when the tree would normally receive moisture. This might be in the winter, if rains are unusually late, or in spring if rainfall has been below normal levels.

Over watering, especially during the summer months, causes a number of problems which can lead to decline and eventual death of the tree. It creates ideal conditions for attacks of Oak Root Fungus by allowing the fungus to breed all year. In addition, both evergreen and deciduous oaks grow vigorously in the spring and naturally go dormant in the summer. Extra water only encourages new tip growth which is subject to mildew. Oaks need this period of rest.

Newly planted oaks may need supplemental watering during their first few summers. After they become established water should be applied according to the previous guidelines.

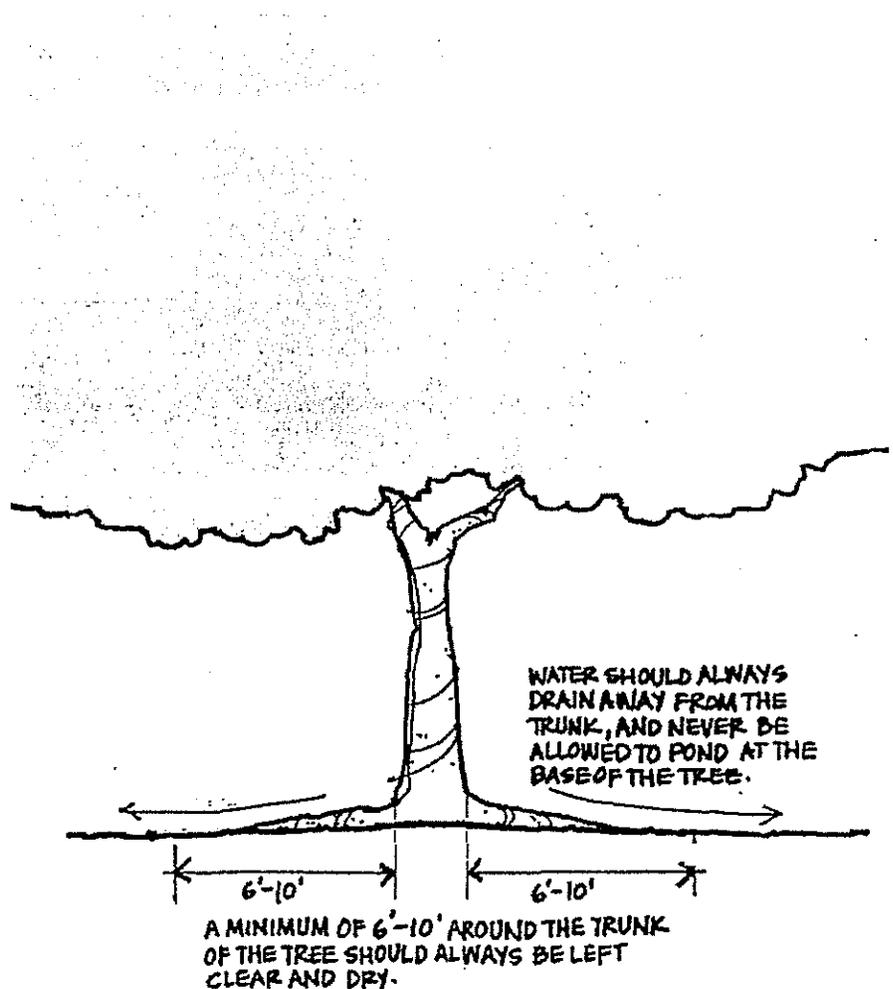
Pruning

For oak trees the periodic removal of dead wood during periods of tree dormancy should be the only pruning needed. Any cutting of green wood opens scars that could allow the entry of organisms or disease.

Before pruning obtain the advice of a certified arborist or other professional and consult the local city or county where the tree is located to find out what regulations apply. Pruning of both live and dead wood can sometimes require a permit.

Mulching

Leaf litter from the tree is the best mulch and should be allowed to remain on the ground within the protected zone. Crushed walnut shells or wood chips can be used, but the oak leaves that drop naturally provide the tree with a source of nutrients. Avoid the use of packaged or commercial oak leaf mulch which could contain Oak Root Fungus. Redwood chips should not be used due to certain chemicals present in the wood.



Disease and Pests

Trees that are stressed, especially because of improper watering practices, are prone to certain diseases and attacks by pests.

The most damaging of these diseases is the Oak Root Fungus *Armillaria mellea*. Occurring naturally in the soil, the fungus thrives under wet conditions and dies back in the summer when soils dry out. This is why summer watering of oaks can be a deadly practice. As noted in the watering guidelines, wet soil in the summer allows the fungus to grow all year. As the population grows, their natural food sources are depleted and they begin feeding on oak tree roots. The fungus does not require an open wound in the tree to gain entry.

Indications of the fungus include:

- die back of branches or tips.
- honey colored fungus at or near the root crown.
- white fan-like fungus between wood and bark.
- the presence of black, shoestring-like growths in the soil.

Once the tree begins to show obvious signs of infection treatment is generally ineffective. The best treatment is to *avoid* the conditions that lead to Oak Root Fungus infections.

Pit Scale, Oak Moth, and other pests: any significant changes in leaf color, branch die back, presence of black sooty materials on leaves or other changes should be noted. Seek the advice of a professional forester, arborist, farm advisor or other expert before the application of any pesticides on an oak tree.

Planting Underneath Oaks

The natural leaf litter is by far the best ground cover within the protected zone. If plants must be placed, the following guidelines should be followed:

There should be no planting within a minimum 6 to 10 feet of the trunk.

Avoid plants that require any supplemental water once established.

Choose plants suited for "dry shade." Those listed in the box below offer some good choices. To see some examples of how these plants have been used under oaks refer to the Additional Resources section on the following page.

PLANTS TO CONSIDER:

Plant Name	Description
<i>Arctostaphylos densiflora</i> 'Howard McMinn' Manzanita	3' high, 6' wide. Toughest of available forms. Whitish-pink flowers.
<i>Arctostaphylos edmundsii</i> Little Sur Manzanita	1-2' high, 4-5' wide. Tolerant of full shade.
<i>Arctostaphylos hookeri</i> Monterey Carpet Manzanita	1-2' high, spreading to 12' wide by rooting branches. White to pink flowers.
<i>Ceanothus griseus horizontalis</i> Carmel Creeper	Less than 2 1/2' tall, low & creeping. Clusters of small blue flowers.
<i>Heuchera spp.</i> Coral Bells	2-4' mound. Flowers on an upright stem 2-3" high and spotted with red or pink.
<i>Mahonia aquifolium compacta</i> Oregon Grape	2-4' high, spreading by underground roots. Bright yellow flower clusters.
<i>Ribes viburnifolium</i> Evergreen or Catalina Currant	2-3' high, spreading to 12' wide. Flowers pink to red in small clusters.

NOTES:

Before deciding on plants, check a source such as the *Sunset Western Garden Book* to determine which plants will grow in your area.

When choosing shade tolerant plants, consider that the ground under the south side of the tree will get more sunlight while the northern side will tend to remain more deeply shaded.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES and Places to Visit

Public Agencies

County of Los Angeles Fire Department
Prevention Bureau, Forestry Division
5823 Rickenbacker Road, Rm #123
Commerce, CA 90040-3027
(323) 890-4330
<http://lacofd.org/forestry.htm>

University of California
Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program
163 Mulford Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720-3114
<http://danr.ucop.edu/lhrmp>

Private Organizations

The Theodore Payne Foundation
10459 Tuxford Street
Sun Valley, CA 91352-2126
(818) 768-1802
www.theodorepayne.org

California Native Plant Society
1722 J Street, Suite 17
Sacramento, CA 95814-3033
(916) 447-2677
www.cnps.org

The California Oak Foundation
1212 Broadway, Suite 810
Oakland, CA 94612-1810
(510) 763-0282
www.californiaoaks.org

Arboretums and Botanic Gardens

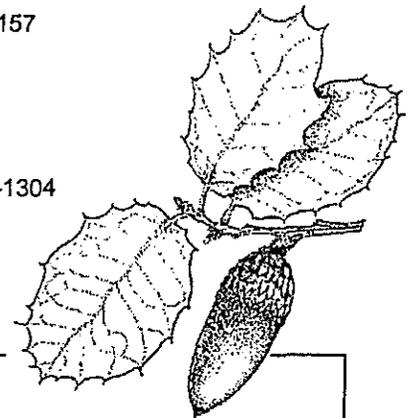
Los Angeles County Arboreta and Botanic Gardens
301 N. Baldwin Ave.
Arcadia, CA 91007-2697
(626) 821-3222
www.arboretum.org

Los Angeles County South Coast Botanic Garden
26300 Crenshaw Blvd.
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274-2515
(310) 544-6815
www.southcoastbotanicgarden.org

Los Angeles County Descanso Gardens
1418 Descanso Drive
La Canada-Flintridge, CA 91011-3102
(818) 949-4200
www.descansogardens.org

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
1500 North College
Claremont, CA 91711-3157
(909) 625-8767
www.rsabg.org

The Lummis Home
200 E. Avenue 43
Los Angeles, CA 90031-1304
(213) 222-0546



Publications

Compatible Plants Under and Around Oaks. Bruce W. Hagen... [et al]. The California Oak Foundation. 2000.

Growing California Native Plants. Marjorie G. Schmidt, Univ. California Press. 1981.

Illustrated Guide to the Oaks of the Southern Californian Floristic Province. Fred M. Roberts. FM Roberts Publications. 1996.

Living Among the Oaks: A Management Guide for Landowners. University of California Integrated Range Management Program. 1995.

Oaks of California. Bruce M. Pavlik...[et al]. Cachuma Press & the California Oak Foundation. 1995.

Proceedings of the Fifth Symposium on Oak Woodlands: Oaks in California's Changing Landscape. GTR PSW-GTR-184. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2001.
Available from the University of California Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program.

Regenerating Rangeland Oaks in California. University of California Integrated Range Management Program. 2001.



County of Los Angeles Fire Department Forestry Division

County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

Gloria Molina, First District
Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Second District
Zev Yaroslavsky, Third District
Don Knabe, Fourth District
Michael D. Antonovich, Fifth District

County of Los Angeles Fire Department

P. Michael Freeman, Fire Chief

Brush Clearance Unit
605 N. Angeleno Avenue
Azusa, CA 91702-2904
(626) 969-2375

Camp 17
6555 Stephens Ranch Road
La Verne, CA 91750-1144
(909) 593-7147

Environmental Review Unit
12605 Osborne Street
Pacoima, CA 91331-2129
(818) 890-5719

Fire Plan/Interpretive Unit
12605 Osborne Street
Pacoima, CA 91331-2129
(818) 890-5783

Fuel Modification Unit
605 N. Angeleno Avenue
Azusa, CA 91702-2904
(626) 969-5205

Henninger Flats Forestry Unit
2260 Pinecrest Drive
Altadena, CA 91001-2123
(626) 794-0675

Lake Hughes Forestry Unit
42150 N. Lake Hughes Road
Lake Hughes, CA 93532-9706
(661) 724-1810

Malibu Forestry Unit
942 N. Las Virgenes Road
Calabasas, CA 91302-2137
(818) 222-1108

San Dimas Forestry Unit
1910 N. Sycamore Canyon Road
San Dimas, CA 91773-1220
(909) 599-4615

Saugus Forestry Unit
28760 N. Bouquet Canyon Road
Saugus, CA 91390-1220
(661) 296-8558

Vegetation Management Unit
12605 Osborne Street
Pacoima, CA 91331-2129
(818) 890-5720

CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY WITHIN THE PROTECTED ZONE

Changes in Grade

Any change in the level of soil around an oak tree can have a negative impact. The most critical area lies within 6' to 10' of the trunk: no soil should be added or scraped away. Water should drain away from this area and not be allowed to pond so that soil remains wet at the base.

Retaining walls designed to hold back soil above or below an existing tree should be avoided if at all possible, especially within the protected zone. These types of structures cause critical areas at the dripline to be buried, or require that major roots be severed. Water trapped at the base of the tree could lead to root rot or other impacts, and to the decline and premature death of a highly valued landscape tree.

Construction activities outside the protected zone can have damaging impacts on existing trees. Underground water sources can be cut off due to falling water tables, or drainage may be disrupted.

Trenching

Digging of trenches in the root zone should be avoided. Roots may be cut or severely damaged, and the tree can be killed.

If trenches must be placed within the protected zone, utilities can be placed in a conduit, which has been bored through the soil, reducing damage to the roots. Insist that as many utilities as allowed be placed in a single trench, instead of the common practice of digging a separate trench for each individual line.

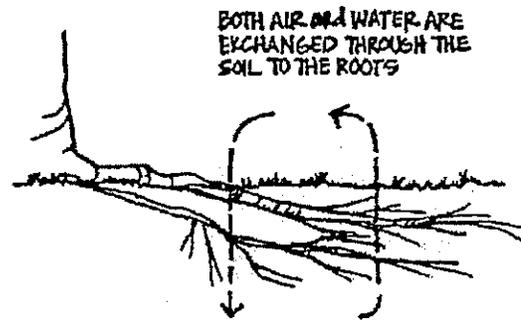
Trenching can also be accomplished using hand tools or small hand held power equipment to avoid cutting roots. Any roots exposed during this work should be covered with wet burlap and kept moist until the soil can be replaced.

Soil Compaction and Paving

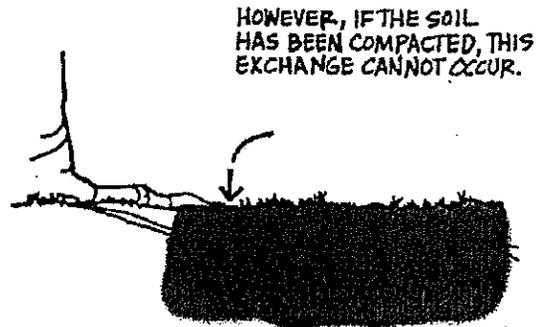
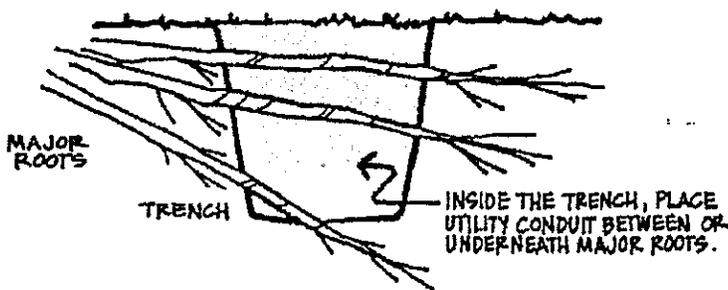
The roots depend upon an important exchange of both water and air through the soil within the protected zone. Any kind of activity that compacts the soil in this area blocks this exchange and can have serious long-term negative effects on the tree.

If paving material must be used, some recommended surfaces include brick paving with sand joints, or ground coverings such as wood chips (note the advantages of natural materials for providing nutrients under mulching).

SOIL COMPACTION



TRENCHING



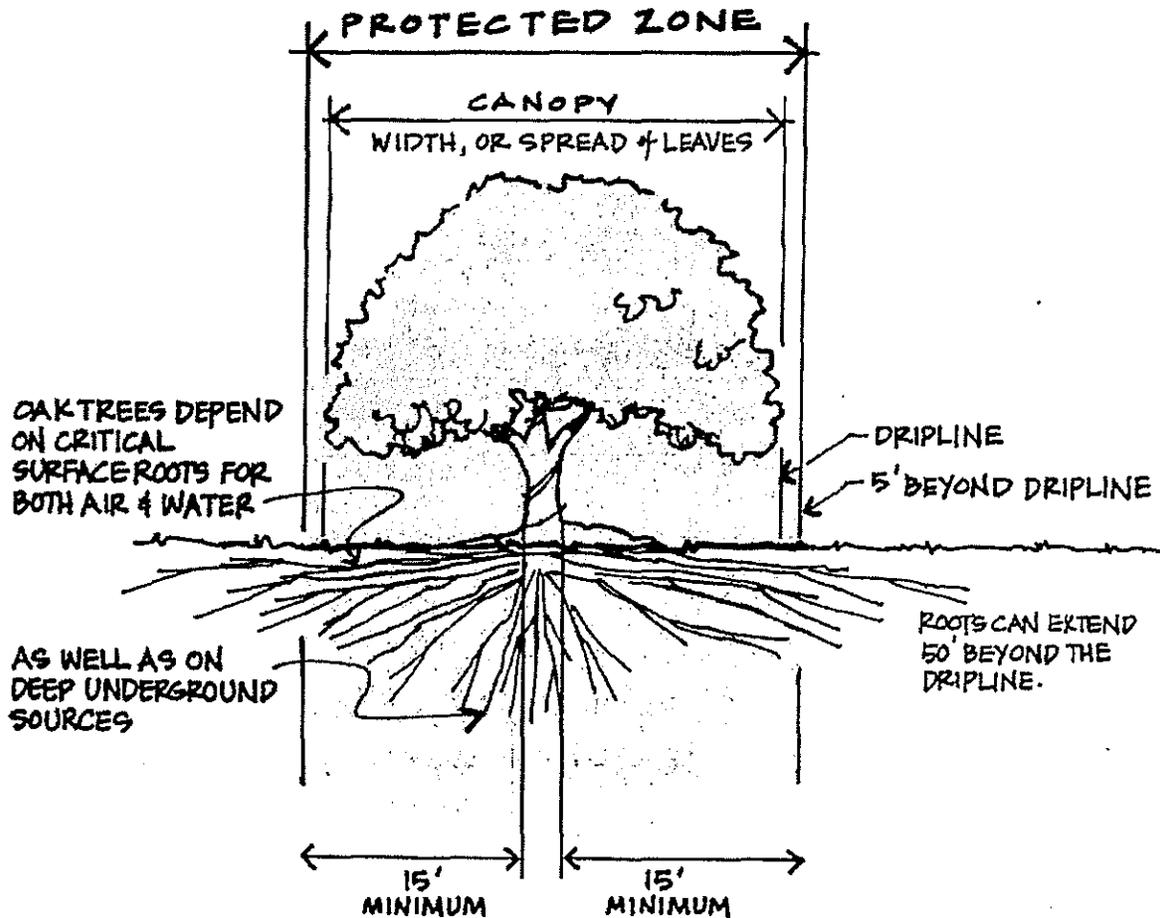
THE PROTECTED ZONE

The *protected zone* defines the area most critical to the health and continued survival of an oak tree. Oaks are easily damaged and very sensitive to disturbances that occur to the tree or in the surrounding environment.

The root system is extensive but surprisingly shallow, sometimes radiating out as much as 50 feet beyond the spread of the tree leaves, or canopy. The ground area at the outside edge of the canopy, referred to as the *dripline*, is especially important: the tree obtains most of its surface water and nutrients here, and conducts an important exchange of air and other gases.

The protected zone is defined in the Oak Tree Ordinance as follows:

"The Protected Zone shall mean that area within the dripline of an oak tree and extending there from to a point at least 5 feet outside the dripline or 15 feet from the trunk, whichever distance is greater."





OAK TREE PERMIT BURDEN OF PROOF

Please identify the number of oak trees proposed for:

0 Removal 12 Encroachment 19 To Remain 19 Total existing oak trees

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 22.56.2100, the applicant shall substantiate the following:

(Do not repeat the statement or provide Yes/No responses. If necessary, attach additional pages.)

A. That the proposed construction or proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the remaining trees subject to Part 16 of Chapter 22.56, if any, on the subject property.

Prior to construction implementation, all oak genus species trees on site will be staked at the grading limits or impact zone as approved by LA County. Fencing will be supervised by a horticultural consultant to assure no construction activity will adversely impact the trees.

B. That the removal or relocation of the oak tree(s) proposed will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

No increased soil erosion shall occur, to any impacted trees due to adjacent construction activity. The adjacent grades are designed to flow away from the oak trees.

C. That in addition to the above facts, at least one of the following findings must apply:

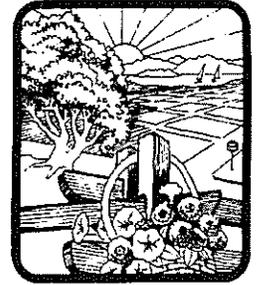
1. That the removal of oak tree(s) proposed is necessary as continued existence at present location(s) frustrates the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that:
 - a. Alternate development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive, or
 - b. Placement of such tree(s) precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized, or
2. That the oak tree(s) proposed for removal or relocation interfere with utility service or streets and highways, either within or outside of the subject property, and no reasonable alternative to such interference exists other than removal of the tree(s), or
3. That the oak tree(s) proposed for removal, with reference to seriously debilitating disease or danger of falling, is such that it cannot be remedied through reasonable preservation procedures and practices.

No oak trees are to be removed; the proposed pump house building layout has been modified to a location of 8 feet to the north, thereby saving them from removal. Oaks #13 and #14 will be have minimal impacts by pvc pipes that will be installed between the two oaks. due to the 8 ft shift #15 is now closer to the building, but is not impacted by footings or deep root impacts.

D. That the removal of the oak tree(s) proposed will not be contrary to or be in substantial conflict with the intent and purpose of the oak tree permit procedure.

The oak trees impacted are not native, native seed stock to the area, or mitigation trees. They are part of the community common area landscape plant pallet plan where approx. 400 oak trees were planted, with the original development.

SCOPE
Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment
TO PROMOTE, PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT, ECOLOGY
AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE SANTA CLARITA VALLEY
POST OFFICE BOX 1182, SANTA CLARITA, CA 91386



5-2-15

Steven Jones
Los Angeles County Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sent via email to: sdjones@planning.lacounty.gov

**Re: Opposition to removal of two oak trees for a monument sign, Agenda Item 7, May 5th, 2015
Tesoro Del Valle Project #92074, ROAK20140017**

Dear Mr. Jones:

We object to the approval of this project. The County of Los Angeles and the City of Santa Clarita both pride themselves on preservation of this important native tree. Destroying trees for a monument sign indicates the developer's apparent lack of concern for the community in which he intends to build.

Removal of 2 oaks and encroachment on 6 others, possibly endangering their health for mere advertising, should not be permitted. The sign should be re-designed to accommodate the oaks, not remove the oaks to accommodate the sign, or the sign should be re-located entirely away from native trees.

Preservation of our native trees is especially important in this time of drought. Native oaks use less water than other non-natives and protect and shade the area where they are located. Trees reduce overall temperature and remove air pollution.

New replacement trees may be hard to successfully start during periods of drought and require more water than existing oak trees.

We therefore urge you to veto this project.

Thank you for your time and attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lynne Plambeck'. The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and somewhat stylized.

Lynne Plambeck
President

Steven Jones

From: Barbara Wampole [barbara@wampole.com]
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2015 2:17 PM
To: Steven Jones
Subject: Opposition; Agenda Item 7, May 5th, 2015 Tesoro Del Valle Project #92074, ROAK20140017
Attachments: Oak Tree Removal letter.doc

Dear Mr. Jones,

Attached and copied below is my letter of opposition to the removal of oak trees for the proposed project.
Agenda Item 7, May 5th, 2015 Tesoro Del Valle Project #92074, ROAK20140017

Thank you for your consideration of my position on this issue.

Sincerely

Barbara Wampole

Barbara Wampole 28006 San Martinez Grande Canyon Road, Castaic, CA 91384

May 4, 2015

Steven Jones
Los Angeles County Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sent via email to: sdjones@planning.lacounty.gov

Re: Opposition to removal of two oak trees for a monument sign, Agenda Item 7, May 5th, 2015 Tesoro Del Valle Project #92074, ROAK20140017

Dear Mr. Jones:

I object to the approval of this project.

Our communities have so adversely impacted the natural surroundings it is no surprise that the County of Los Angeles and the City of Santa Clarita both pride themselves on preservation of oak trees in our community. What spectacular benefit could possibly be cited to justify destroying oak trees for a monument sign? None is likely. This indicates the developer's apparent lack of appreciation and concern for the community in which he intends to build.

Removal of 2 oaks and encroachment on 6 others, possibly endangering their health for mere advertising, should not be permitted. The sign should be re-designed to accommodate the oaks, not remove the oaks to accommodate the sign, or the sign should be re-located entirely away from native trees.

Preservation of our native trees is especially important in this time of drought. Native oaks use less water than other non-natives and protect and shade the area where they are located. Trees reduce overall temperature and remove air pollution.

We have watched as, one by one, trees around this valley that have been moved or newly planted and then die, due to lack of attention to their needs during times of stress. New replacement trees may be hard to successfully start during periods of drought and require more water than existing oak trees.

I therefore urge you to veto this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration for my concerns.

Sincerely,
Barbara Wampole
43 year SCV resident / Vice Chair of Friends of the Santa Clara River / CalArts Alumni
--

Barbara Wampole
28006 San Martinez Grande Road
Castaic, CA 91384-2306
661-257-3036 home

barbara@wampole.com
<http://www.imageg.com>
<http://FSCR.org>
<http://www.wampole.com>

When you drink the water, remember the spring / Chinese Proverb

Please call my home phone number and leave a message if you need my immediate attention - I do not check email routinely.

Thank you

Steven Jones

From: Judy Reinsma [judywrites@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, May 01, 2015 8:35 PM
To: Steven Jones
Subject: Oak Tree Permit Tesoro del Valle

As a long-time (34 years) resident of San Francisquito Canyon and someone who has watched the progression of the Tesoro del Valle project across the hills and valleys which were once graced by numerous native trees of various types and sizes, I wish to request that **Project 92074-(5) Permit ROAK201400017** be denied

While I have no problem with the development company advertising their product, I do not think any "identification project" should be placed on any portion of their property where it will remove and/or impact any Oak trees.

I find it ironic that the name of the development means "treasure of the valley", but they have no problem destroying what adds value to the "treasure"; the native trees and other natural vegetation like manzanita, and holly-leaf cherry that once covered these hills.

I sincerely hope that Regional Planning will ask the requesting party to return to the drawing board and find a site for their project that will not require any oak tree removal or impact.

Sincerely,

Judy Reinsma
29750 San Francisquito Cyn. Rd.
Santa Clarita, CA 91390

Steven Jones

From: Steven Jones
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2015 1:04 PM
To: 'Randy Martin'
Subject: RE: Opposition to Oak Tree Removal #92074, ROAK20140017

Thank you Dr. Martin for your comments.

This is part of the public record and will be given to the Hearing Officer prior to the hearing.

If you have any questions regarding the file material, or our process, please feel free to contact me.

Steven Jones
(213)974-6433

From: Randy Martin [<mailto:drrandymartin@gmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, May 03, 2015 10:48 PM
To: Steven Jones
Subject: Opposition to Oak Tree Removal #92074, ROAK20140017

5-3-15

Steven Jones

Los Angeles County Dept. of Regional Planning

320 W. Temple St.

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sent via email to: sadjones@planning.lacounty.gov

Re: Opposition to removal of two oak trees for a monument sign, Agenda Item 7, May 5th, 2015 Tesoro Del Valle Project #92074, ROAK20140017

Dear Mr. Jones:

I object to the approval of this project. The County of Los Angeles and the City of Santa Clarita both pride themselves on preservation of this important native tree. Destroying trees for a monument sign indicates the developer's apparent lack of concern for the community in which he intends to build.

Removal of 2 oaks and encroachment on 6 others, possibly endangering their health for mere advertising, should not be permitted. The sign should be re-designed to accommodate the oaks, not remove the oaks to accommodate the sign, or the sign should be re-located entirely away from native trees.

Preservation of our native trees should be a priority at all times but is especially important in this time of drought. Native oaks use less water than other non-natives and protect and shade the area where they are located. Trees reduce overall temperature and remove air pollution.

New replacement trees may be hard to successfully start during periods of drought and require more water than existing oak trees, creating unnecessary expenditures.

As an urban planner who has worked for more than 10 years for the County of Santa Cruz, CA, I have seen Santa Cruz County make a priority of saving and preserving Oak Trees. Here in LA County we should follow suit. It's the right thing to do from an environmental planning point of view.

I urge you to veto this project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Randy Martin, MUP, OMD
Master of Urban Planning
Doctor of Chinese Medicine
23812 Spinnaker Court
Valencia, CA 91355

Steven Jones

From: Susana [cowgirlcad@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, May 01, 2015 8:07 PM
To: Steven Jones
Subject: Tesoro del Valle

Tesoro del Valle is proposing to remove oak trees and significantly impact others to put up a "identification project" which means a big sign advertising their development. They already wiped out about 50 huge trees in the canyon wash area, plus a lot of others up in the hills.

I am against Tesoro del Valle, applying for a permit to remove oak trees from our beautiful area, just so they can put their identification project. They have already wiped out enough. How much more are they going to be allowed to destroy nature?

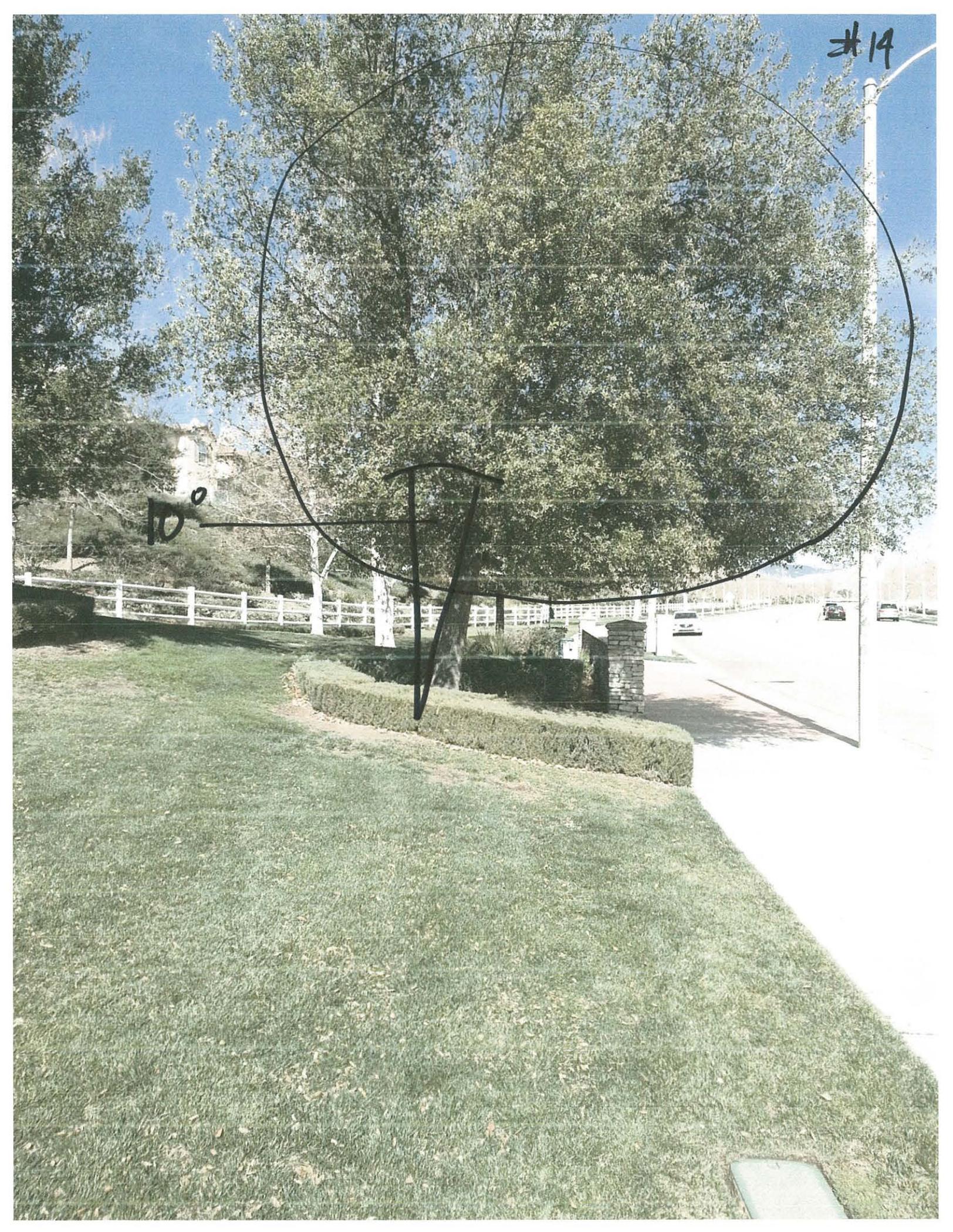
Tesoro del Valle, can find a different location where it will not require tree removal.

Regards.
Susana Rovero
661-296-8580

resident of San Francisquito canyon

#14

100



100

100

100

100



14

AVENUE 14
TOWN OF SHERWOOD







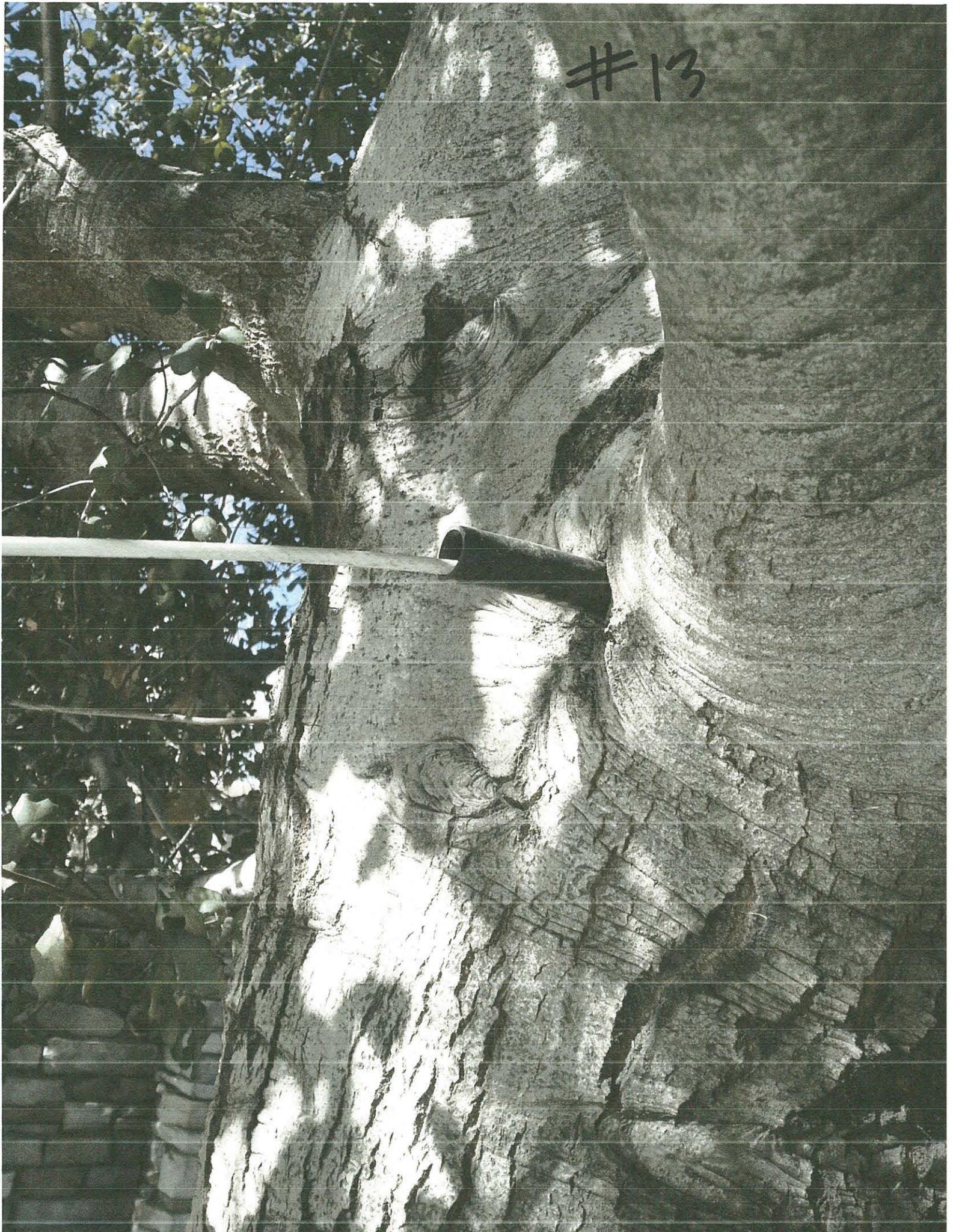
#14



100

100

#13





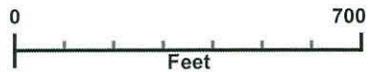




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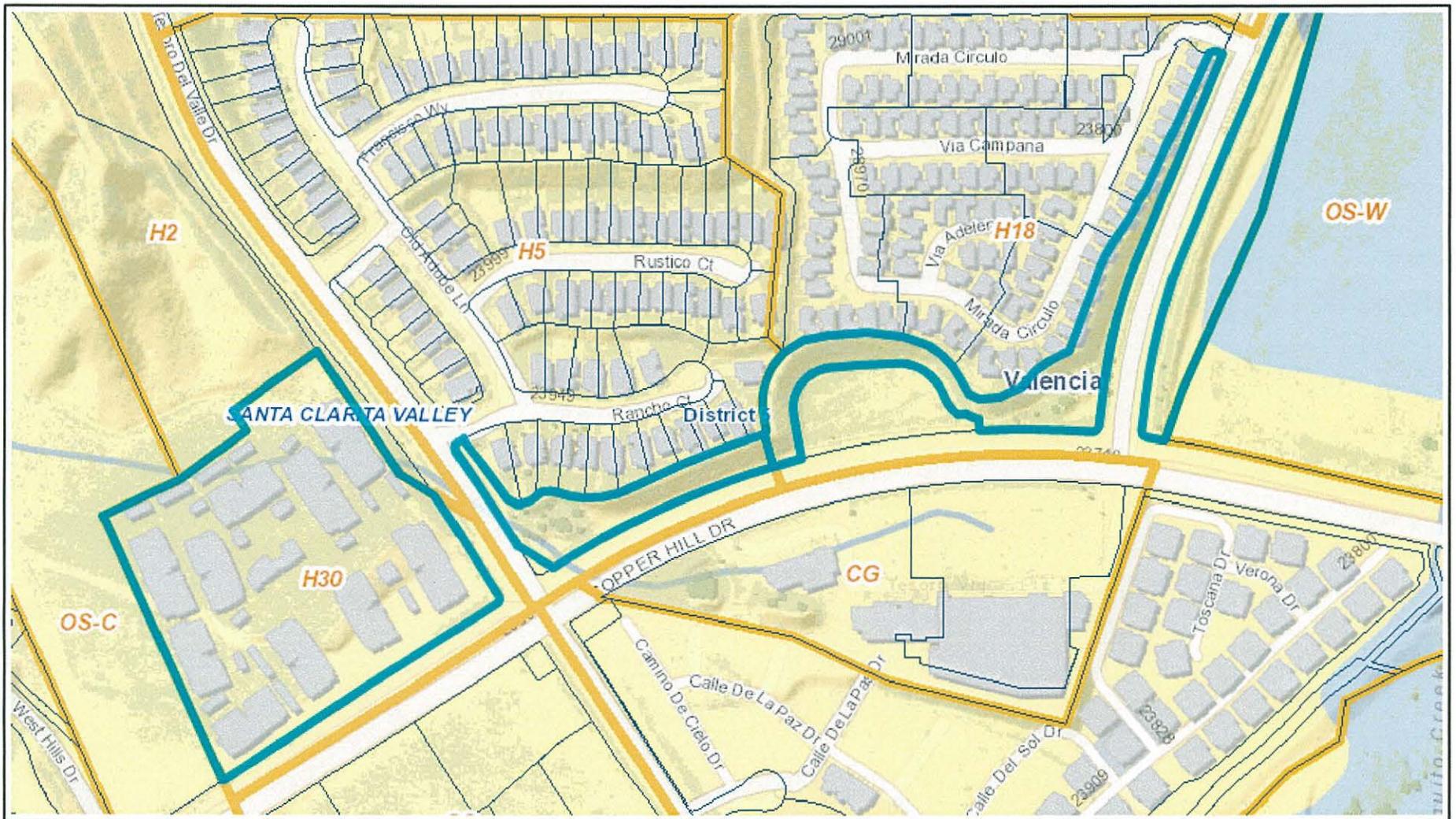
2011 AERIAL IMAGERY

Printed: Apr 23, 2015



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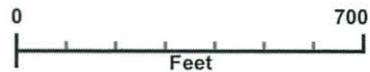




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LAND USE

Printed: Apr 23, 2015



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