

Oak Tree Permit Update

Comments & Questions: Meeting #3

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response
9/2/2025	Margot Eiser	Meeting #3 Chat	How do the County rules apply to individual cities? Do County rules apply and have to be enforces in each city in the County?	<p>No, the LA County Oak Tree Permit only applies to unincorporated communities within LA County and does not apply to any cities within LA County.</p> <p>Eight-eight cities (incorporated areas) are located within the geographical area that is LA County and about 36 of them have their own tree protection ordinances. To learn more about each city's tree protection, visit their municipal website and search for "oak" or "tree ordinance" or "tree protection".</p>
9/2/2025	Jessica Richards	Meeting #3 Chat	Is there a hearing held for removals proposed by the city as well?	LA County Planning's jurisdiction does not extend to any incorporated areas (cities) such as City of Los Angeles. LA County Planning's ordinances apply only to unincorporated communities.
9/2/2025	Jessica Richards	Meeting #3 Chat	Does the public hearing requirement apply only to private permits?	LA County Planning issues permits (such as the Oak Tree Permit) on private property.
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	How does permitting for oak trees tie in with Zone Zero or required insurance pruning?	An Oak Tree Permit will NOT be required to comply with a legally required and approved fuel modification plan from the Fire Department.
9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	<p>There are also new state forestry guidelines, the Zone Zero rules, that are going to require pruning an oak tree up to at least 5 feet above the roof surface of the structure. That's something that is required, but then you're going to trhow in an oak tree permit into that, adding additional expense for that person.</p> <p>And potentially, a permit that is discretionary and could be denied. So they'll be in conflict with one law being in conflict with another law. So that's something I think that needs to be thought through.</p>	<p>LA County Planning has been following the proposed Zone 0 regulations by the California Board of Forestry (BOF). The BOF regulations are still in development and will be finalized in December 2025. Local fire protection regulations will soon follow.</p> <p>An Oak Tree Permit will NOT be required to comply with a legally required and approved fuel modification plan from the Fire Department.</p> <p>An Oak Tree Permit will NOT be required to comply with a legally required and approved fuel modification plan from the Fire Department.</p>

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9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	Some of these guidelines will conflict with fire protection guidelines. At least in Significant Ecological Areas, deadwooding is considered something that requires an oak tree permit. And yet your fire protection guidelines say you are required to deadwood.	<p>An Oak Tree Permit will NOT be required to comply with a legally required and approved fuel modification plan from the Fire Department.</p> <p>A permit is also not needed in Significant Ecological Areas for complying with an approved fuel modification plan from the Fire Department.</p> <p>See Exemption "I" under Significant Ecological Areas, § 22.102.040: "Legally required fuel modification and brush clearance activities with the exception of tilling and discing, as approved by the Fire Department, associated with existing legal structures for the purpose of fire protection."</p> <p>Link: https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO_DIV5SPMAAR_CH22.102SIECAR_22.102.040EX</p>
9/2/2025	Leslie Lowes	Meeting #3 Chat	And I'd like to second an earlier statement about the conflict between the need to keep large branches away from the roof for fire/insurance, and spending \$\$ on a permit to remove larger branches.	An Oak Tree Permit will NOT be required to comply with a legally required and approved fuel modification plan from the Fire Department.
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	During plan intake for oak tree permits, are all plans checked for accurate representations of oaks with the tree protection zone and fencing shown?	<p>Yes, the planner checks aerial imagery when the application is submitted and both the Planner and County Forestry visit the site.</p> <p>No, in the existing Oak Tree Permit, impacts are considered separately.</p>
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	Do encroachments into the TPZ include the combined impacts to roots and canopy?	In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are considering creating a Type II review, and setting the threshold between a Type I and Type II impact to be 30% for encroachments, and 25% for pruning living foliage within a 2 year period. Crossing the threshold for either impact would shift a proposed project from a Type I to a Type II permit review. Two or more non-heritage or any heritage oak removal would remain a Type III review. We are still investigating whether creating a Type II review is a possibility.
9/2/2025	Pat Ruiz	Meeting #3 Chat	Are the diagrams of drip zones what is being proposed or what is current?	<p>The site plan must show diagrams of current, existing drip zones, as verified by aerial imagery.</p> <p>In the Oak Tree Permit update, we are proposing to explicitly prohibit efforts to "shrink" oak trees by pruning branch tips so the dripline and tree protected zone become smaller because this harms oak trees.</p>
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	It should be existing, current. People sometimes try to cut trees back to reduce the canopy size.	Yes. Thank you for your comment.

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9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	The ultimate decision makers on the oak tree permit should be someone with expertise, like a forester. I don't think someone like a planner is the person that ought to be making the ultimate decisions on whether or not an activity on an oak tree is harmful or not.	<p>The Oak Tree Permit requires collaboration among three LA County Departments: Planning, the Fire Department (County Forestry), and Parks and Recreation.</p> <p>County Forestry offers oversight into the Oak Tree Permit process through making site visits to assess oak trees, verifying oak tree reports, discussing applications with Planning, and checking on oak trees until the end of the monitoring period. Planning depends on County Forestry to verify whether or not an activity is harmful or not, but the Oak Tree Permit is administered by Planning.</p>
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	<p>[In response to a Foresters as the ultimate decision makers in Oak Tree Permitting]</p> <p>AGREED! Planners aren't arborists!</p>	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	<p>I feel very strongly about needing a Forester review of oak tree permits. The County Foresters <i>now</i> do a tremendous job when we have clients that need clearance over their structures, because sometimes we have to take bigger branches, and they work with us.</p> <p>I think we need to boost the number of County Foresters so that there's enough of them to go around to the communities that need them. I realize this might take money.</p> <p>Obviously, if I'm advocating for it, I'm also willing to stand up and ask for it, if that's necessary in some locations. And I do think that it needs to be a Forester that's reviewing and partially for the reason that we have so many invasive insects and other things that are attacking trees. You really need somebody with a strong background in both biology and in forestry to look at the things and make a decision about is this okay to take this tree down because it's fully infested with Gold-spotted Oak Borer, or Invasive Shot Hole Borer, or whatever. I do feel strongly about that.</p>	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	I think that pruning only should be managed with input/permitting with LA County Forestry.	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>Will follow up to ask for further discussion.</p>

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9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3	What is the proposed cost of the permit? Because to my understanding, it is currently insanely high. I would call it ridiculously high or unfairly high, and it should be frankly, super affordable, because we want to encourage people to do it the right way.	<p>The current filing fees for the existing Oak Tree Permit without a public hearing (Type I): \$ 1,847 The current filing fees for the Oak Tree Permit with a public hearing (Type III): \$ 15,409</p> <p>In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are considering permitting some impacts such as pruning an oak tree beyond 25% of the canopy under a Type II permit instead of a Type III permit. The filing fee for a Type II permit is: \$3,410. We are still investigating whether this is a possibility.</p> <p>Filing fees are available online under "Fee Schedule": https://planning.lacounty.gov/fees/</p>
9/2/2025	Sara Hammes	Meeting #3 Chat	Unintended consequences from permit costs that are too high??	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>We are considering a Type II discretionary Oak Tree Permit for major impacts that are not removals. A Type II permit has a lower filing fee than a Type III permit. We are still investigating whether this is a possibility.</p>
9/2/2025	Sara Hammes	Meeting #3 Chat	Are there standards as to how much canopy can be removed without damaging the tree?	<p>The existing Oak Tree Permit does not identify a threshold percentage of canopy removal.</p> <p>In the the proposed Oak Tree Permit update we are considering a removal threshold of 25 percent of live foliage within a two-year period for ministerial permits (Type I) within a two-year period. Anything over 25 percent would require a discrestionary permit (Type II). We are still investigating whether this is a possibility.</p>
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	[In response to "Are there standards as to how much canopy can be removed without damaging the tree?"] No standards. Only guidelines.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Sara Hammes	Meeting #3 Chat	[In response to "No standards. Only guidelines" for how much canopy can be removed without damaging the tree] OK. It would seem there needs to be a cap then	Thank you for your comment.

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9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	<p>[In response to "Are there standards as to how much canopy can be removed without damaging the tree?"]</p> <p>Twenty-five percent over 2 years for an older tree still may take too much foliage over time if the tree is not vigorous. ISA discourages percentages in the last best management practices</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>As part of the Oak Tree Permit process, County Foresters will review the applicant's oak tree report and make a site visit to assess the condition of the oak tree. If County Foresters think the oak tree will not survive the proposed pruning, they can inform the planner and the planner will counsel the applicant to make adjustments to the proposed project.</p>
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	I thought that the canopy could... was only allowed to be trimmed up to 20%, not 25. Is that a change?	<p>No, not a change to an existing canopy threshold, this is a proposal to add a threshold to removal of live foliage.</p> <p>The existing Oak Tree Permit does not identify a threshold percentage of canopy removal. The only pruning threshold is the diameter size of the branch. Currently, no Oak Tree Permit is needed for pruning branches 2" in diameter or smaller, but we have heard this may not be helpful when maintaining the health of the tree.</p> <p>In the the proposed Oak Tree Permit update we are proposing a removal threshold of 25 percent of live foliage within a two-year period for ministerial permits (Type I) within a two-year period. Anything over 25 percent would require a discretionary permit (Type II).</p>

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			<p>Lastly, this idea of using percentages bothers me a little bit, because everyone interprets what is 20%, what is 25% differently. I have had full-on knock-down, drag-out screaming arguments with pruning contractors about what is 20% on a tree.</p> <p>I really think it needs to be more related to having a pruning plan. There's a whole new philosophy in our professional organization about developing pruning plans for trees, for structure, and I can send you the information. I really think that if you've got a qualified person doing a pruning plan, you may end up taking 6-inch branches off. Who knows? Hopefully not, but maybe a few, depending on if the tree has major structural problems and it's been pruned wrong its whole life, you might have to do that.</p>	
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	<p>But rather than just putting a number on it, the hard thing about that is your thresholds. Trying to figure out how do you catch people in that how much... how much is too much encroachment.</p> <p>When I worked for the City of Agoura Hills, we figured combined encroachments, 30% was right at our edge, our limit, so that would be root encroachments in the 5 feet outside of the edge of the dripline, <i>plus canopy encroachments</i>. And... and then we had somebody actually monitoring it.</p> <p>And part of the issue might be, it's a staffing thing. Do you have the bodies to pay attention to this? How are you going to have arborists self-certify that that's what really happened? Like, we did a pruning plan, and the people actually did the thing that we told them to do? Because I can tell you that doesn't happen all that terribly often . . . I am happy to answer any questions.</p>	Will follow up to ask for further discussion.
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	Pruning only is an issue also because the permit process is slow	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>Will follow up to ask for further discussion.</p>

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9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3	<p>My wife and I run a tree care company, and, so our questions are coming from that perspective. First of all, it looks like the permitting process is focused on people that are doing construction, but most of our clients aren't doing a construction project, they're just trying to manage their tree. And, it seems like there should be maybe a separate and much quicker, easier, and more affordable way for them to properly manage their tree, if they're trying to do that.</p> <p>So, two examples that sort of tie into this. What happens if a heavier pruning is needed going beyond that 25% in the example of a tree that might have an unstable trunk, that others are recommending for full tree removal? And then we see this could be an opportunity where if we reduce the size of the tree by more than 25%, we could retain that tree. That doesn't seem to be accounted for in the current, proposed permitting process.</p>	<p>In the existing Oak Tree Permit, pruning branches under 2" in diameter is exempt.</p> <p>In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are proposing keep this 2" threshold and to add two more requirements to qualify for the exemption: (1) a removal threshold of 25 percent of live foliage within a two-year period, and (2) a requirement that pruning follow ANSI A300 pruning standards.</p> <p>Will follow up to ask for further discussion.</p>
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	What if the pruning has nothing to do with a construction project?	<p>In the existing Oak Tree Permit, if a branch over 2 inches in diameter will be pruned, then an Oak Tree Permit is required.</p> <p>We are open to reconsidering this existing standard because we have heard from arborists and biologists that this method of pruning may not support the health of the tree.</p>
9/2/2025	Leslie Lowes	Meeting #3 Chat	<p>[In response to routine maintenance of oak trees]</p> <p>I think this is by far the majority of oak tree impacts - people who want to trim their tree.</p>	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3	Is the price different if you're pruning versus trying to remove a tree?	<p>The Oak Tree Permit exempts pruning for the purpose of ensuring tree health for branches up to 2" in diameter.</p> <p>In the existing Oak Tree Permit ordinance, pruning five or more branches that are larger than 2" in diameter may incur the same permit as one non-heritage sized oak tree removal</p> <p>In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are proposing a tiered permitting framework so minor and major encroachments and pruning are differentiated from outright removals.</p> <p>Will follow up to ask for further discussion.</p>

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9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3	What is the criterion considered to be qualified to write the reports? Because the way you described it, it was something, like, as deemed acceptable by the director, and I think it needs to be a lot more cut and dry, that someone can look at it and see if they are or aren't qualified to write these reports.	In the existing Oak Tree Permit, the qualification for writing reports is "an individual with expertise acceptable to the Director". In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are considering requiring the preparer of oak tree reports to be: - ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist or - ISA Board Certified Master Arborist. Over half of the respondents from our online survey have suggested requiring these certifications. The OTP update online survey will be open until 12/15/2025 and the link is here: https://bit.ly/oaktreesurvey2
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	The director could prepare a list of possible qualifications and pre-qualify people who have proven that they can write reports/maps to the County Standards	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	What constitutes "an individual with expertise satisfactory to the director?" That seems vague	Thank you for your comment. This is language from the existing Oak Tree Permit. In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are considering requiring the writer of oak tree reports to be an ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist or ISA Board Certified Master Arborist.
9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	Would you need a permit and have to pay for a permit in order to do the pest control or other safety concerns (to modify a tree for safety concerns)?	If the oak tree may be a hazard and action must be taken on the tree very quickly, the County Forestry Division can assess the oak tree and if warranted, issue a no-cost Emergency Oak Tree Permit for treatment, pruning, and removals. Los Angeles County Fire Department, Forestry Division Environmental Review Unit (818) 890-5719 Fire-ForestryPublicInfo@fire.lacounty.gov

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9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3	What happens if someone has a tree that needs to be acted on really quickly, maybe removed, or major limbs removed the very next day, or something like that. Is there a way to get an expedited permit so that that work can be done, you know, without that being called into question later.	<p>If the oak tree may be a hazard and action must be taken on the tree very quickly, the County Forestry Division can assess the oak tree and if warranted, issue a no-cost Emergency Oak Tree Permit for treatment, pruning, and removals.</p> <p>Los Angeles County Fire Department, Forestry Division Environmental Review Unit (818) 890-5719 Fire-ForestryPublicInfo@fire.lacounty.gov</p>
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	I support not allowing removals for just one oak, automatically.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	I really do feel strongly that one tree should probably go into the Type II permit because [an oak tree removal] needs more review, needs more input.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Jessica Richards	Meeting #3 Chat	I support the removal of a non heritage sized oak should be move to a type II review	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	I do believe that one tree removal should be allowed and continue to be ministerial.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3	And then finally, what's the point of allowing someone to remove one tree if the whole point is tree removal?	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Ellen Walton	Meeting #3 Chat	I have never ever heard of any Department making decisions that included considering effects on or effects from an adjacent property.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	[In response to "I have never heard of any Department making decisions that included considering effects on or effects from an adjacent property"] LA City does this.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	[In response to "I have never heard of any Department making decisions that included considering effects on or effects from an adjacent property"] Many cities do include a requirement for survey of adjacent trees - San Marino, Pasadena, South Pasadena, Agoura Hills, LA City. It is very important to preserve canopy cover and prevent 'permitted' damage to neighbor's assets (their trees)	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>Glendale also requires a permit for proposed projects that will impact a neighbor's oak tree.</p>

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9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	Another issue is comparing this with the SEATAC Protected Tree and Plant, guidelines. I have run into conflicts where the SEA guidelines say if you are doing a protected tree study and protected tree permit under SEA guidelines, an oak tree permit is not required, but I've had planners go ahead and require that, or attempt to require that anyway, which puts property owners in double jeopardy because now they're doing two permits and paying for two different studies and a lot of other things like that, and they may get two different results from a planner.	<p>Where different tree protections overlap, the more protective regulation will apply.</p> <p>For example, even if a proposed project is exempted from a Significant Ecological Area Conditional Use Permit, the Oak Tree Permit ordinance is still in effect and an Oak Tree Permit may be required.</p>
9/2/2025	Pat Ruiz	Meeting #3 Chat	Is there someone from the department that is present during pruning to count branches cut? Tree adjacent to my property that was pruned had many branches cut and canopy reduced. I Didn't see anyone supervising.	<p>No, LA County Planning is usually not on site when branches are being pruned.</p> <p>In the proposed Oak Tree Permit ordinance, we are considering requiring the project arborist to be present and to provide photo documentation when construction when activities that may impact oak trees are underway to ensure oak protection guidelines are being followed.</p>
9/2/2025	Pat Ruiz	Meeting #3 Chat	If oak trees have wildlife living in it, is this a factor for better protection? I.e. honey bees, possums, etc..	<p>No. The purpose of the Oak Tree Permit is to preserve and maintain healthy oak trees in the development process.</p> <p><u>Here are some organizations that can help relocate bees:</u> The Beekeepers Assoc. of SoCal has a page dedicated to a list of bee rescuers for unwanted bees. The LA County Beekeepers Assoc. also has a page dedicated to a list of beekeepers that handle removals.</p>

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9/2/2025	Stephanie Landregan	Meeting #3	<p>Seventeen years ago, I was the landscape architect at City of La Verne, and we had a more severe fee and or moratorium that was put on development for anybody who removed a tree without a permit. And, it was a real pleasure to enforce, I want you to know because people would cut down, like, 5 or 6 trees on the lot.</p> <p>But one of the things that is something that should be considered, and it's being considered in other areas, I think this is probably an interesting way to do it, is to have a tree disclosure on any time a property changes hands. Right now, we're going to have to disclose that we're in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone if we sell our house. So now we can make sure that there is a disclosure that you have 25 oaks and you have to have an Oak Tree Plan associated with it when you transfer it, and that trees are protected, and that the loss of any of these trees is \$10,000 for the first but a 5-year moratorium for any further. I would tier it. And I think, truly, what happens is it becomes the cost of doing business and that is a tragedy because the loss from this cost of doing business is going to truly affect how we live here in Southern California, so I highly hope you consider that.</p> <p>Doing the disclosure for how many oak trees are on a property before you can sell it if you have that property.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>Will follow up to ask for further discussion.</p>
9/2/2025	Sara Hammes	Meeting #3 Chat	Disclosures would be a good requirement along with other communication strategies	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Ellen Walton	Meeting #3 Chat	I like the tree disclosure idea.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	<p>I mean, what happens is people won't know...Trees that are really iconic neighborhood landmarks [will] just go away and people don't know about when it is going to happen. I just think that is really important.</p> <p>I'm fine if the fee doesn't have to be so much, but [any proposed removals] still should get noticed.</p>	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	If you are obtaining a discretionary oak tree permit, then you have to do some sort of CEQA document...	The project planner will determine whether a CEQA document is required. Most permits are processed with a CEQA Categorical Exemption § 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land).

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9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	I have never seen CEQA done on ministerial oak tree permits or on a discretionary removal of a heritage oak tree.	Thank you for your comment.
				Thank you for your comment.
				This is how to sign up to receive an automated report of applications for Oak Tree Permit by email:
				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Register and create an EPIC-LA account at https://epicla.lacounty.gov/energov_prod/SelfService/#/home. 2.Click on Login or Register 3.After creating an account, email Angelique <acarreon@planning.lacounty.gov> and let her know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •"I wish to be added to the 'Oak Tree Permits Filed'" list, and •Provide the email you used to register for EPIC-LA. 4. You will now receive weekly emails about all Oak Tree Permit applications filed in unincorporated LA County.
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	<p>I have never seen CEQA done on ministerial or other oak tree permits, and as you know, when we complained about the Title 22 changes for ADUs in 2022, that was one of the issues, that you could have a really large amount of oak removals, and it would be a really big impact without even knowing about it.</p> <p>And, of course, we did reach that agreement where you would notify people. One of the problems with the notification is there's no historical data on your website. Like, you send... you send me [information]... I don't know who else is on that list.</p>	<p>To generate reports for historical Oak Tree Permits that have been issued between a certain date range:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.https://epicla.lacounty.gov/energov_prod/SelfService/#/home. 2.Click on "Report", 3.Select Report Type: "All" 4.Choose from the dropdown list for Report: "DRP-Oak Tree Permits Filed" 5.Enter the Start Date: __, 6.Enter the End Date: __, 7.Click on Generate Report
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	I do agree with Lynne that we're seeing a lot of trees coming down for ADUs. I'm seeing it, people asking me to review tree reports where just one tree's coming down. I do think we're losing a lot of trees to ADUs, which may or may not really be providing them much housing, and neighbors are being caught off guard that the tree next door comes down with no warning. So I really do think it is important to do that [noticing].	Thank you for your comment.

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9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	But I can't go back and look at the number of trees over the year that have been removed, because they're not on the website. How many trees are removed, and it's really hard to do any kind of study about how many trees are removed.	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>The number of oak trees removed over the years may be calculated by generating historical oak tree permits (see steps listed above) and then extracting the counts of oak tree removals from each permit. We performed this analysis for all oak tree permits from 1982-2024 as background research for the Oak Tree Permit update and acknowledge this process is cumbersome.</p> <p>Planning is considering developing a process where arborists can upload geocoordinates of oak trees with a csv file as part of the oak tree report so Planning can provide a public-facing map to keep count of oak tree removals and other impacts by year.</p>
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3 Chat	[Native oak trees in LA County] It seems like you forgot about the Valley Oak - Quercus Lobata in Santa Clarita and the Santa Monica Mountains.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	<p>I know you're not supposed to have jurisdiction, but, you know, the Edison Company is doing terrible, horrible things to trees, and so is Spectrum.</p> <p>And I don't know if you can at least have talks with them about that. Maybe that's off topic, but they are not abiding by the oak tree permit at all, which I know, I think technically they don't have to.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>In the past, Planning has organized meetings with SoCal Edison to discuss improper pruning of trees in the Coastal Zone. If residents observe improper pruning again, please notify Planning (oaktree@planning.lacounty.gov).</p> <p>As you noted, utility companies are technically exempt from the Oak Tree Permit.</p>
9/2/2025	Kelly Decker	Meeting #3 Chat	Confirming what Lynne just said about SoCal Edison - they have butchered oak trees here in Kagel Canyon	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>Utilities are exempt from the Oak Tree Permit. We see from comments here that utilities harming trees is a common thread across multiple communities throughout the County.</p>
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	I think [Edison and Spectrum] are selling the wood! They take down branches that they do not need to take down.	Thank you for your comment.

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9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	Edison and Spectrum are terrible bad actors. LA County technically is the franchise holder for Edison, but we have not been able to get, despite a lot of wrangling with Barger's office, have not made any progress with them at all. They are beating up on trees. They just drive around the neighborhood and look for the biggest tree over a power line, and they beat up on the homeowner until they weaken them enough to get them to take it down.	
			We need support from Planning and Barger's office to meet with David Ford's bosses because he will just give us lip service. We need to meet with somebody who actually has the authority and the power to do something about it. Because if you think of it this way, there's an all-out attack on trees in all directions. You've got Zone Zero, likely to take down as many as 14 million trees straightwide. You have Edison and Spectrum taking trees and damaging trees in all of these communities, particularly where there's oaks, than the ADU law allowing more trees to come down. And then people taking advantage of nobody paying attention to what's going on in Altadena, there's oak trees and other trees coming down all over the place up there.	Thank you for your comment.
			We can't stop it. I'm exhausted with the effort. So, I'm grateful, by the way, Mark and Caroline for all that you're doing and your efforts to try to improve this ordinance. I'm not trying to downplay that at all.	
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	How do we get Edison and Spectrum to also treat wood properly to not spread pests.	Thank you for your comment.
				This is a current topic - how to dispose of wood waste - for the LA County Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Team. For more information, contact: APEPQ@acwm.lacounty.gov (562) 622-0426 Fire-ForestryPublicInfo@fire.lacounty.gov

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response
9/2/2025	Gay Crusius	Meeting #3	<p>I'm from, out in Green Valley. I missed the first couple of meetings, and just checking in, going to share about the Gold-spotted Oak Borer (GSOB). Green Valley was hit with GSOB in 2015. We have lost over, 800 trees up here. And 3 years ago, the LA County put in a grant to inject our trees, and we have injected... the County has injected 2,998 trees here over the last 2 years. And things are looking very good.</p> <p>But those early days were very hard because we had trees dying all over the place, and the County couldn't keep up with getting them permitted or inspecting them. And initially, they were cutting down trees that had maybe oh, maybe 10 or 15 GSOB holes, and now we've gone to the point where I have a tree where it's 80 GSOB holes, and it's been injected 3 times, and it's ALIVE.</p> <p>So, it is something that, as we get into... GSOB is spreading west, it's going up and down the coast, and people need to be understanding that it is a problem in terms of fire, and in terms of what you're going to trim off that tree to try and save it. So, thank you for all your work.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>The LA County Forestry Division issues no-cost Emergency Oak Tree Permits to address trees sick from Gold-spotted Oak Borers (GSOB) and other pests and diseases.</p> <p>If you think your tree is sick, contact the LA County IPM Team: APEPQ@acwm.lacounty.gov (562) 622-0426, and Fire-ForestryPublicInfo@fire.lacounty.gov</p> <p>If you think your tree is hazardous, contact: Los Angeles County Fire Department, Forestry Division Environmental Review Unit (818) 890-5719 Fire-ForestryPublicInfo@fire.lacounty.gov</p>
9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	<p>Are there any variances available, or, for pest control, like the gold-spotted oak borer or other infestation?</p>	<p>If you find an oak tree that may be infested by the Goldspotted Oak Borer, please contact the LA County Invasive Pest Management (IPM) Team to ask for a no-cost visit from a pest inspector. The LA County IPM Team will assess the oak tree and determine whether an infestation is present.</p> <p>If you think your tree is sick, contact the LA County IPM Team: APEPQ@acwm.lacounty.gov Fire-ForestryPublicInfo@fire.lacounty.gov (562) 622-0426.</p>
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	<p>Some people don't have space to keep wood on site. They need a plan for those folks</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>This is a current topic of how to safely dispose of wood waste for the Community Forest Management Committee and the LA County IPM Team. For more information, contact: APEPQ@acwm.lacounty.gov</p>

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response
9/2/2025	Ty Garrison	Meeting #3	I've been involved with people trying to voluntarily get the word out, but realistically, a permit should also have a requirement for appropriate disposal of the wood that is cut down from any trees that are permitted, so that we don't spread these pests. And, you know, something that can be verified that the wood has been chipped up appropriately, and not moved off-site, not moved to another area, not sold as firewood, any of that, because those are the things that are really spreading, the pests.	Thank you for your comment.
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	If a homeowner misrepresents a tree intentionally, what is the penalty?	For the existing Oak Tree Permit, Planning will issue a stop work order until the violation is corrected. The plan must also be redrawn to accurately represent real world existing conditions.
9/3/2025	Rebecca Latta	Email	Here is a notice of violation in Altadena where it looks like there is not a required public hearing... The adjacent property owner - [Redacted] owns the oak tree - his neighbor added 4 ft of fill soil to raise the grade for a view for his new structure and then did damage to the tree to start building a wall. It changed the drainage and is negatively impacting the homeowner with the oak tree. The fill soil changed the drainage, negatively impacting the homeowner with the oak tree. The violator did not show the oak tree on the permit paperwork. I have been told in the past all violations - even 1 tree require a hearing. Is that wrong? We talked about this tonight.	<p>The existing Oak Tree Permit does not require a public hearing for removing one non-heritage sized protected oak tree on the parcel of a single family residence.</p> <p>In the case you describe below, a violation was committed because the resident with the proposed project omitted showing the protected zone of the neighbor's oak tree on the site plan even though the proposed project will encroach into the tree protected zone. As Jose outlined below, the remedy for this violation is to require the violator to obtain a permit after the fact, per our existing Oak Tree Permit procedure. Once the resident obtains the required permit without a public hearing, the violation is addressed.</p> <p>Since no public hearing was required for a single oak tree removal for single family residences in the first place, no public hearing is required to obtain a permit after the fact of a violation either.</p> <p>>>I have been told in the past all violations - even 1 tree require a hearing. Is that wrong?<< Whether or not a public hearing is required depends on what the standard permitting process is for the particular impact to the oak tree. For example, if a proposed project will incur multiple impacts to oak trees, this project requires an Oak Tree Permit with a public hearing. If these multiple impacts occur without a permit, the remedy for this violation is the same: to obtain an Oak Tree Permit with a public hearing, after the violations have occurred. In this case, a public hearing is required, but the public hearing is required only because it was required in the first place, as part of the standard procedure for any proposed project that would incur the same number of impacts to oak trees.</p>

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response
				<p>No, not all violations require a public hearing.</p> <p>In the existing Oak Tree Permit, the remedy for a violation is to obtain the proper permit required in the first place.</p> <p>Thus, if the impact involved in the violation <i>would have</i> required a Ministerial (Type I) permit had the proper permit process been followed, then the remedy for such a violation is to obtain the proper Ministerial (Type I) Oak Tree Permit <i>after the fact</i>. A Ministerial (Type I) Oak Tree Permit does not require a public hearing.</p>
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3 Chat	Do all oak tree violations require a public hearing?	<p>Similarly, if the type of impact involved in the violation <i>would have</i> required a Discretionary (Type III) permit with a public hearing, then the remedy for such a violation is to obtain a Discretionary (Type III) permit with a public hearing <i>after the fact</i>. In this case, a public hearing <u>is</u> required - but not because the impact was unpermitted and a violation, but because the type of impact required a discretionary oak tree permit with a public hearing, in the first place.</p> <p>In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we will introduce requiring a Restoration permit for unpermitted impacts and violations. We will cover this topic in Meeting #6 (10/14 or 10/16).</p>
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	<p>I'd also like to see a single violation to the oak tree ordinance, especially if it's egregious, go straight into a hearing. Make those people pay that \$10,000.</p> <p>I just watched a client go through this and, the neighbor damaged the tree, he got off with his \$1,500 or \$2,000 fine, and he got off, easy. He didn't have to go after the hearing, and he did a lot of damage to the tree.</p>	<p>In the existing Oak Tree Permit ordinance, when a violation occurs, the violator must obtain an Oak Tree Permit, <i>after the fact</i>. If the impact would have required a ministerial permit (Type I), then no public hearing is required. If the impact would have required a discretionary permit (Type III), then a public hearing is required.</p> <p>The cost of a Ministerial Oak Tree Permit (Type I) in 2025 is \$1847 and a public hearing is not required. The amount paid (e.g. "\$1,500 or \$2000) was likely not a fine.</p>
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	I agree with the person at the beginning, I'm sorry, I forgot her name, that the penalties need to be bigger. And more robust, because right now, people are, like, \$2,500, no big deal.	When unpermitted impacts to oak trees take place, the existing Oak Tree Permit ordinance does fine a violator for unpermitted actions. The violator is required to obtain the proper permit (a ministerial Oak Tree Permit without a public hearing or a discretionary Oak Tree Permit with a public hearing) after the unpermitted actions are discovered by Zoning Enforcement.

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response
9/2/2025	Stephanie Landregan	Meeting #3 Chat	<p>[In response to the low cost of violations]</p> <p>Yes it just the cost of doing business. There should be a 6 month stop work order for egregious harm.</p>	<p>A Stop Work order is issued when there is an open violation. The Stop Work order remains effective until the violation is rectified. In the case of an unpermitted oak tree impact, the existing Oak Tree Permit requires obtaining required permits, after the fact of the violation.</p> <p>The proposed Oak Tree Permit update will suggest requiring a restoration permit. This will be discussed in Meeting #6 on 10/14 (or the Alternative Meeting #6 for Altadena on 10/16).</p>
9/2/2025	Ellen Walton	Meeting #3 Chat	<p>I think the City of Calabasas has the 5 year stall in development.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Will follow up with Calabasas.</p>
9/2/2025	Kelly Decker	Meeting #3	<p>There's something that I have heard talked about at various county agencies for at least 10 years now, but I've never seen anybody actually try to implement it or be able to implement it. And the way that I've heard it referred to historically is a "Scorched Earth Policy." And the concept is, if you go onto a lot, and you cut down a tree and think you're gonna pay \$10,000 and just move on with your life, that's not gonna happen, because what comes along with that is a 5-year moratorium on being able to get a permit from Planning and Zoning, or Building and Safety, so that they essentially can't just get away with what they're trying to get away with. And I think if that were a consequence, people cannot get a permit to build for a period of years, whether that's 5 years or 10 years, and that goes with the land, not with the human. So they can't just turn around and sell the lot, and now it's perfectly buildable. That would be a way to reduce harm that we're seeing here in the canyon on oak trees.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>We are aware this policy was implemented in another jurisdiction. However, the outcome was the City Council decided to reduce the moratorium from 10 to two years which is equivalent to the amount of time needed to complete permitting.</p>
9/2/2025	Kelly Decker	Meeting #3	<p>I am Kelly Becker, I'm a resident of Kagle Canyon, and I wanted to tack on to what Rebecca just said a minute ago about the penalties needing to be high for folks who take action against trees. And she suggested that, you know, they should immediately have to go to a hearing to pay the \$10,000 fine.</p> <p>And I would like to take that a step farther, because a problem that we have here in Kagle Canyon is that people buy vacant lots, and the vacant lots have oak trees. And the people who buy them, who want to build a house, just cut down the oak trees, however many there are, because they think the maximum that's going to happen to them is having to pay \$10,000 a tree. So, from memory, there was a lot here that had 8 mature oak trees. And the person who bought the lot cut down the trees, and was like, okay, well, it's \$80,000 cost of doing business that I will just tack on to what is the value of my house going be. So, that's what they did, and there was no consequence, and I don't think that's right.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>As mentioned above, the existing Oak Tree Permit, if an unpermitted impact occurs and Zoning Enforcement is notified, the violator will have to obtain permits after the fact. Depending on the impact (e.g., number of pruned branches over 2" in diameter, number of removals, etc), the necessary oak tree permit may or may not require a public hearing to come into compliance.</p>

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response
9/2/2025	Nick Araya	Meeting #3 Chat	[In response to a violation fee] \$10,000? Or \$1,000 per inch DBH?	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are suggesting all oak tree reports include the reproduction cost of the oak tree as part of the oak tree inventory component of the oak tree report.</p>
9/2/2025	Sara Hammes	Meeting #3 Chat	I think there needs to be a clear policy around development and removal of trees. Does there need to be a moratorium on development overall?	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>We do not think a moratorium on development is needed at this time, given recent events.</p>
9/2/2025	Lynne Plambeck	Meeting #3	[Violators] should be paying the ISA value of the tree. One time that we [...] for illegally cutting down valley oaks, to credit of the Planning Commission, they did fine them the ISA value, which was, like, \$25,000 a tree. But they would have had to pay for that, anyways.	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
9/2/2025	Suzanne Mitus-Urbe	Meeting #3 Chat	How do we get the ISA value of a tree? So Cal Edison cut our 50' tree that survived the fire...and killed it	<p>The Council of Tree & Landscape Appraiser produces a <i>Guide for Plant Appraisal</i> (newest is the 10th edition) which describes various methods for appraising the value of a tree.</p> <p>In the existing Oak Tree Permit, the appraised value of the tree may or may not be included in the oak tree report and a method for determining the value is not specified.</p> <p>In the proposed Oak Tree Permit update, we are suggesting all oak tree reports include the reproduction cost of oak trees as part of the oak tree inventory.</p>
9/2/2025	Rebecca Latta	Meeting #3	People apply ISA appraised values in a lot of different ways, and they actually tend to not value oak woodland trees as high as you might think. The new 10th edition doesn't really value Habitat in that way.	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response
9/11/2025	Pat Ruiz	Email	1-I think the biggest help, besides owners complying to conditions, is if the enforcement divisions can hire more people to check sites when there is an issue within 24 hours. I seen how fast a contractor can make changes, sometimes irreversible changes. Really, this expedited enforcement needed for all types of violations.	Thank you for your comments.
			2-certified arborist fee to be included in permit. Pre approved Arborist list to choose from. Just the idea of arborist being hired directly by owner/contractor seems to be a conflict.	
			3-addressing hallows in trees. What to do and not to do. Considering tree health and wildlife. Would hate for a possum to be sealed alive in a tree.	
			4-Documentation(photo and dimensions) of protected zone fencing when first installed at original canopy perimeter +5' is and comparing location before and during work begins near Oak area. Who knows how many contractors have been moving fence and hurting the roots.	
			5-Keeping canopy free of trash or storage.	
9/2/2025	Michael D. Bicay	Meeting #3 Chat	6-Some how—Arborist and inspector coordination that work follows approved drawings and work complying w/Oak permit conditions.	Thank you for your comment.
			Stephanie is absolutely correct. Most of our discussion is “inside baseball.” Many — if not most — LA County residents do not even know that oak trees are protected. I suggested to the County years ago that an “oak tree info brochure” be mandatory for all residential property purchases in LA County.	<p>LA County Planning developed a brochure explaining the importance and value of oak trees and their protected status in collaboration with the Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment (Lynne Plambeck), California Oaks (Angela Moskow), the Santa Monica Mountains Resource Conservation District (Rosi Dagit), and the Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation (Kim Lamorie).</p> <p>Links to this brochure are here: https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/oak-tree-program/documents/ Brochures are also available in Armenian and Korean (not yet posted online). Please email oaktree@planning.lacounty.gov if you would like a pdf of these translations.</p>