

REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

DATE ISSUED:	April 3, 2025	
HEARING DATE:	April 15, 2025	AGENDA ITEM:
PROJECT NUMBER:	PRJ2024-000982-(5)	
PERMIT NUMBER(S):	Oak Tree Permit No. RPPL2024003171	
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT:	5	
PROJECT LOCATION:	APN: 3270-004-018, Pocahantas Drive, Val Verde	
OWNER:	Willian and Sayra Alvarado	
APPLICANT:	Willian and Sayra Alvarado	
PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD:	N/A	
INCLUSIONARY ZONING ORDINANCE (IZO):	The Project is not subject to the IZO because it does not propose five or more dwelling units.	
CASE PLANNER:	Chris La Farge, Regional Planner clafarge@planning.lacounty.gov	

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:

Los Angeles County Planning staff ("Staff") recommends **APPROVAL** of Project Number PRJ2024-000982-(5), Oak Tree Permit ("OTP") Number RPPL2024003171, based on the Findings (Exhibit C – Findings) contained within this report and subject to the Draft Conditions of Approval (Exhibit D – Conditions of Approval).

Staff recommends the following motion:

CEQA:

I, THE HEARING OFFICER, CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND FIND THAT THE PROJECT IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES.

ENTITLEMENT(S):

I, THE HEARING OFFICER, APPROVE OAK TREE PERMIT NUMBER RPPL2024003171 SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Entitlement(s) Requested

Oak Tree Permit (“OTP”) to authorize encroachment into the protected zones of three coast live oak trees, including one heritage oak, in conjunction with the new construction of a single-family residence (“SFR”) in the R-1 (Single-Family Residence) Zone pursuant to County Code Section 22.174.030 (Oak Tree Permit, Applicability).

B. Project

Mr. Paciano Diaz (“applicant”) is requesting an OTP to authorize proposed encroachment into the protected zones of three coast live oak trees on an undeveloped lot. One of the three is a heritage oak tree. The encroachment is associated with the new construction of an SFR totaling 2,126 square feet, which is under concurrent review through Site Plan Review (“SPR”) No. RPPL2024001451. A total grading amount of 200 cubic yards (100 cubic yards of fill and 100 cubic yards of cut) is proposed.

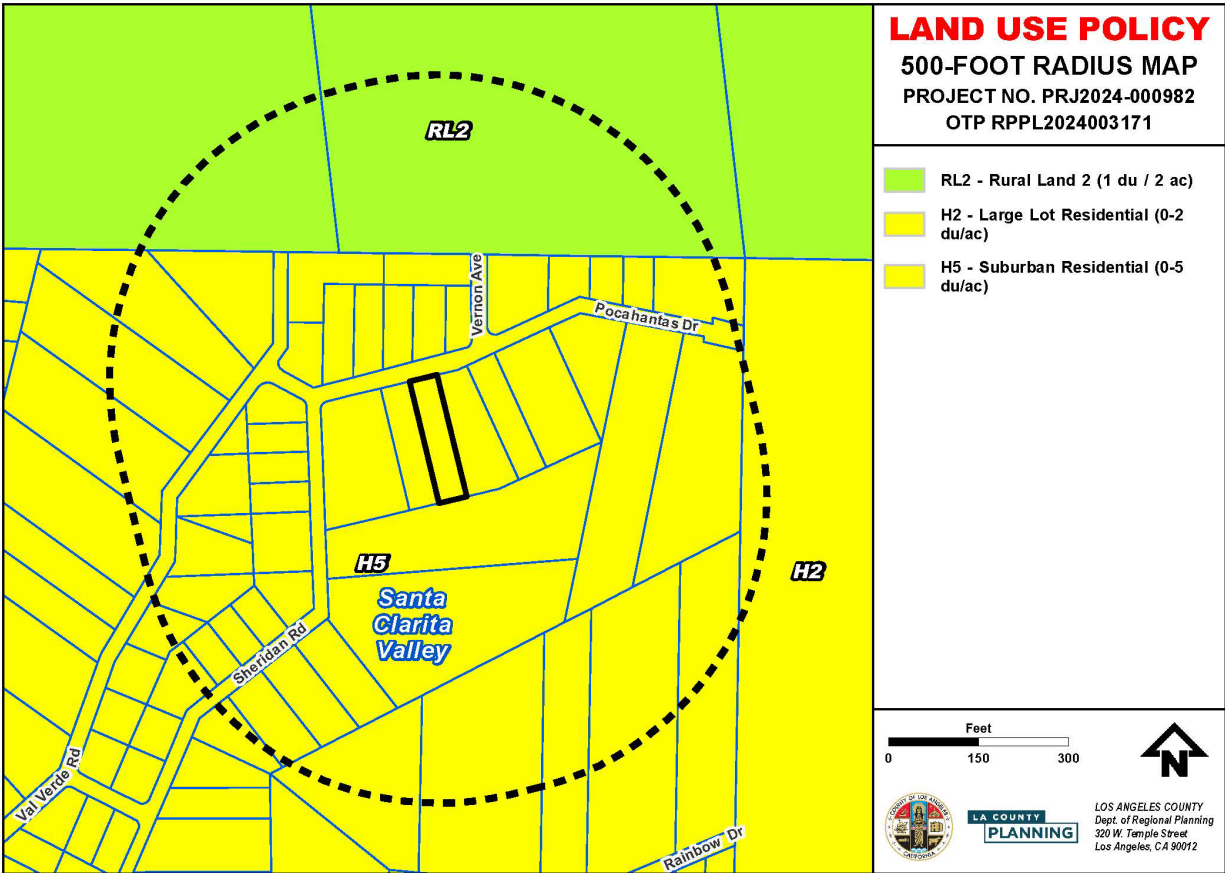
The subject property is a vacant 10,000-square foot lot located on Pocahantas Drive, Assessor’s Parcel Number (“APN”) 3270-004-018, within the R-1 Zone in the Newhall Zoned District and Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (“Project Site”). The Project Site is accessible through the existing access from Pocahantas Drive, a 26-foot wide public street to the north.

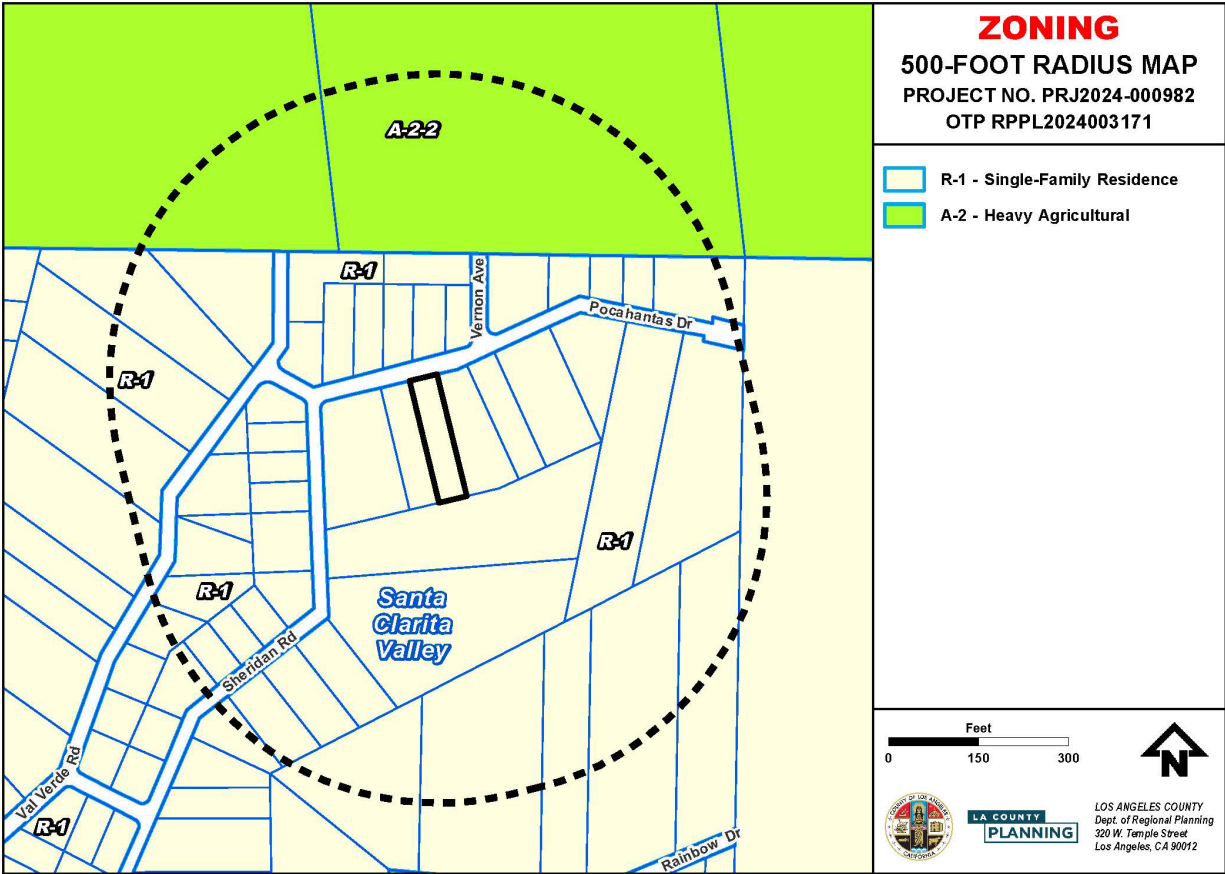
An oak tree report has been prepared for the Project. The report identifies a total of three coast live oak trees with protected zones to be encroached upon, Oak Trees No. 1, 2, and OP3. Among the three affected oaks, Oak Tree No. OP3 is a heritage tree.

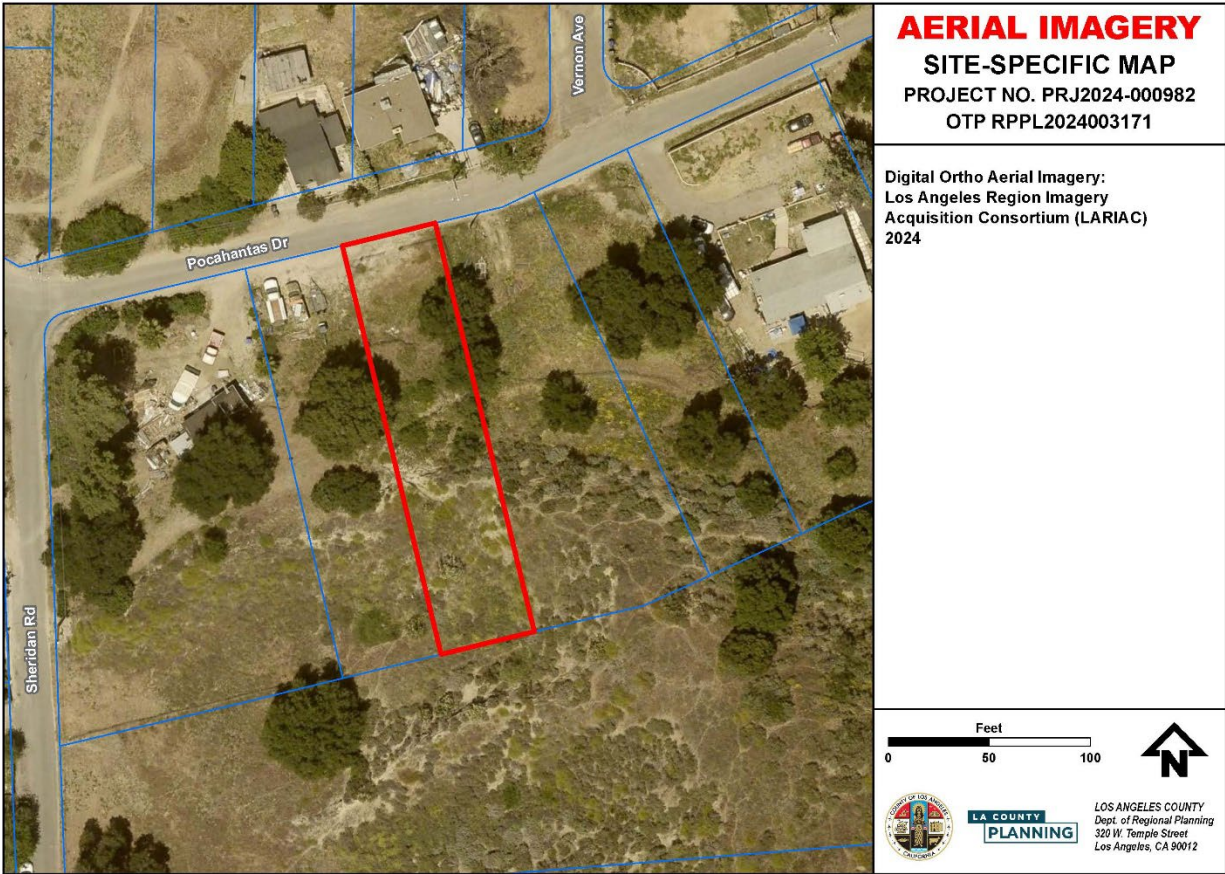
SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SURROUNDINGS

The following chart provides property data within a 500-foot radius:

LOCATION	SANTA CLARITA VALLEY AREA PLAN LAND USE POLICY	ZONING	EXISTING USES
SUBJECT PROPERTY	H5 (Residential 5 – Five Dwelling Units per Acre)	R-1	Vacant
NORTH	H5, RL2 (Rural Land 2 – One Dwelling Unit per Two Acres)	R-1, A-2-2 (Heavy Agricultural – Two Acre Minimum Required Lot Area)	Vacant, SFRs
EAST	H5, H2 (Residential 2 – Two Dwelling Units Per Acre)	R-1	Vacant, SFRs
SOUTH	H5	R-1	Vacant, SFRs
WEST	H5	R-1	Vacant, SFRs







PROPERTY HISTORY

A. Zoning History

ORDINANCE NO.	ZONING	DATE OF ADOPTION
7486	R-1	3/3/1959

B. Previous Cases

CASE NO.	REQUEST	DATE OF ACTION
Certificate of Compliance RPPL2024000510	Certificate of Compliance	Recorded 2/22/2024

C. Violations

CASE NO.	VIOLATION	CLOSED/OPEN
RPCE2021003014	Unpermitted Storage, Oak Tree Encroachment, Fence/Wall Height – Front Yard, Unpermitted Use	Opened 9/7/21 Closed 8/17/2022

ANALYSIS

A. Land Use Compatibility

The subject property is currently undeveloped. It is surrounded by vacant land and SFRs. While the request is for an OTP to authorize encroachment into three oak trees, including one heritage oak tree, the associated construction of a new SFR does not conflict with the surrounding land uses.

B. Neighborhood Impact (Need/Convenience Assessment)

The Project Site is surrounded by vacant land and SFRs to the north, south, east and west. The request is for an OTP to authorize encroachment into three oak trees, including one heritage oak tree, in order to construct a new SFR. The proposed use is compatible with the surrounding area. Because of the locations of the impacted oak trees and the proposed SFR, encroachment into the protected zones of the trees is unavoidable in order to construct the SFR. The heritage oak tree (Oak No. OP3) is located on a neighboring parcel (APN: 3270-004-018), but the protected zone of OP3 includes a portion of the Project Site where the SFR is proposed.

According to the oak tree report, Oak No. 1 (non-heritage) has suffered from drought stress and has a large cavity in the main trunk filled with decay organisms. These organisms have degraded the structural integrity of the tree. The entire tree has a possible likelihood of failure. Therefore, the encroachment associated with the proposed SFR could adversely impact Oak No. 1. The report recommends pruning of approximately 25% of Oak No.1's canopy in order to make space for the house and this should be done by a crew directly supervised by a Certified Arborist. Only the minimum amount of foliage should be removed in order to achieve the requisite clearance. The combined effects of the pruning and disturbance of this oak's root zone could significantly impact the tree's health. In the event any non-heritage oak tree dies as result of the encroachment, one of the conditions of approval requires the applicants to provide mitigation trees at the rate of two to one (2:1). These replacement trees must be located on site.

C. Design Compatibility

The proposed oak tree encroachment is associated with the construction of a proposed SFR, which is under concurrent review pursuant to SPR RPPL2024001451 and is required to meet the applicable development standards for the R-1 zone. The proposed

new SFR construction would not require any oak tree removals but encroachment is necessary due to the location of the proposed SFR. The proposed SFR location near the front of the lot is the most feasible location due to the steep slopes in the rear portion of the lot. The County Forester (“Forester”) provided recommended conditions of approval that will ensure the impacted oaks are protected during construction. While the request is for an OTP to authorize encroachment into three oak trees, including one heritage oak, the surrounding SFRs have no cohesive architectural character for the area and the contemporary design of the proposed SFR at the subject property will not be in conflict with existing development in the surrounding area. The Project Site is located within the Castaic Area Community Standards District (“CSD”). Because the Project includes development within a Hillside Management Area, County Code Section 22.312.060.E (Hillside in CSD) is applicable. The related development of the SFR will conform to the standards listed in this section. No development is proposed near a Significant Ridgeline. Compliance with these standards will be verified before the Site Plan Review is approved. None of the CSD standards apply to the oak encroachment so the Project is consistent with the applicable requirements of the CSD.

GENERAL PLAN/COMMUNITY PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Project is consistent with applicable goals and policies of the General Plan and Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. Consistency findings can be found in the attached Findings (Exhibit C – Findings).

ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

The Project complies with all applicable zoning requirements. Consistency findings can be found in the attached Findings (Exhibit C – Findings).

BURDEN OF PROOF

The applicant is required to substantiate all facts identified by Section 22.174.60 (Oak Tree Permits, Findings) of the County Code. The Burden of Proof with applicant’s responses is attached (Exhibit E – Applicant’s Burden of Proof). Staff is of the opinion that the applicant has met the burden of proof.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Staff recommends that this project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 Exemption, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures and Class 4 Exemption, Minor Alterations to Land) under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and the County environmental guidelines. The Project is exempt because the oak tree encroachment is related to new construction in the condition of private land and vegetation that does not involve the removal of healthy mature, scenic trees. No trees will be removed as part of this Project.

The County Biologist visited the Project Site on January 28, 2025, and determined the oaks constitute a moderately degraded oak woodland. The impacts to the woodland by the related

development of the SFR are not enough to be considered a significant impact and therefore do not warrant an exception to the Categorical Exemption. The County Biologist recommended that in the event any oak fails due to the impacts of construction, it be replaced by the planting of two new oaks on site. This 2:1 replacement is required in the draft conditions of approval.

The proposed construction of a new SFR would not substantially alter the general topography of the area. The combined effects of the pruning and soil disturbance within the root zone of Oak Tree No. 1 could adversely impact its health due to its current condition, as this tree has an existing cavity in the main trunk. The County Forester has reviewed the Project and recommended standard conditions such as temporary fencing around the protected zone during construction and the planting of mitigation trees in the event that one or more oak trees dies as a result of the encroachment and requirements for maintenance and monitoring of any mitigation trees. The Forester requires mitigation of trees at the rate of two to one (2:1) for any tree or ten to one (10:1) for any heritage tree. The County Biologist recommended a 2:1 rate for any tree.

No exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply to the Project per Section 15300.2 of the California Code of Regulations. The Project Site is not located within or near a historical resource, a hazardous waste site, scenic highway, or an environmentally sensitive area. The surrounding area consists of vacant lands and a residential neighborhood. The subject property and its surrounding area are partially developed with roadways, driveways, buildings, utility poles, and other infrastructure. There is no significant effect due to unusual circumstances and no cumulative impacts are anticipated. Therefore, staff recommends that the Hearing Officer determine that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA. An environmental determination (Exhibit F – Environmental Determination) was issued for the project.

COMMENTS RECEIVED

A. County Department Comments and Recommendations

The County Fire Department, Forestry Division, in a letter dated July 24, 2024, recommended conditions of approval for the Project.

B. Public Comments

Staff has not received any comments at the time of report preparation.

Report

Reviewed By:



Samuel Dea, Supervising Regional Planner

Report
Approved By: 
Susan Tae, Assistant Deputy Director

LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS	
EXHIBIT A	Plans
EXHIBIT B	Project Summary Sheet
EXHIBIT C	Draft Findings
EXHIBIT D	Draft Conditions of Approval
EXHIBIT E	Applicant's Burden of Proof
EXHIBIT F	Environmental Determination
EXHIBIT G	Informational Maps
EXHIBIT H	Photos
EXHIBIT I	County Fire Department Letter
EXHIBIT J	Oak Tree Report



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PROFESSIONAL SEAL :

[illegible]

PROJECT TITLE:

ALVARADO RESIDENCE

30500 POCAHANTAS DRIVE
VAL VERDE, CA 91384

DRAWING TITLE:

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

Project number	22-GG-1034
Date	APRIL26, 2022
Drawn by	DRW
Checked by	CHK

A1.0

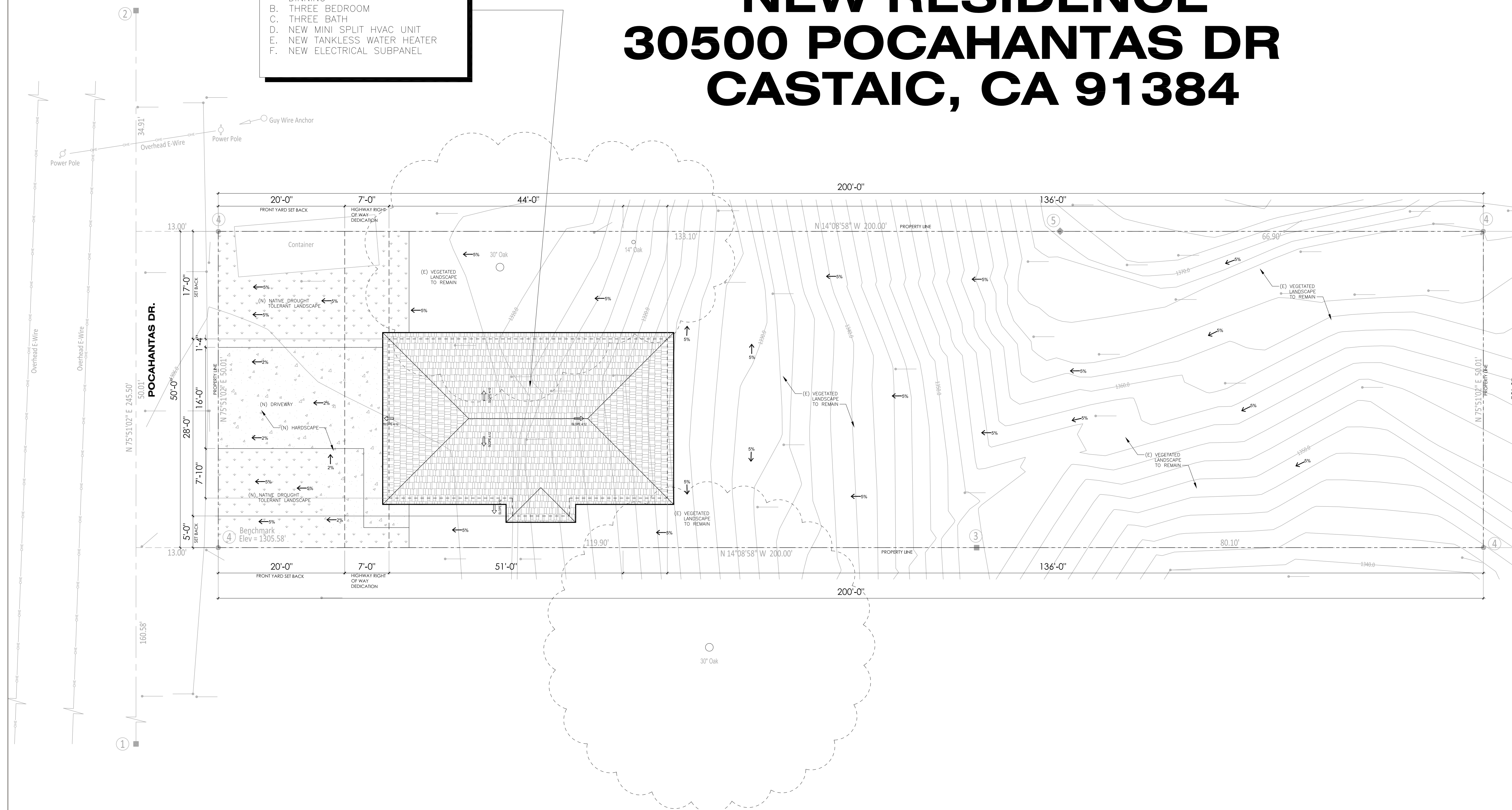
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Scale	$1/4" = 1'-0"$

SCOPE OR WORK:

NEW 2,126 SF, 3-STORY, RESIDENCE
WITH 440 SF, 2-CAR GARAGE TO
INCLUDE:

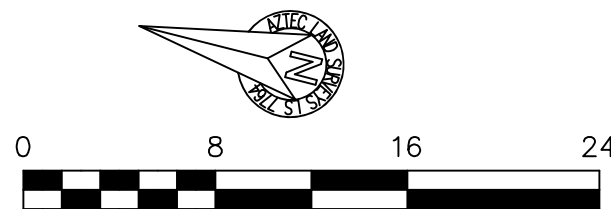
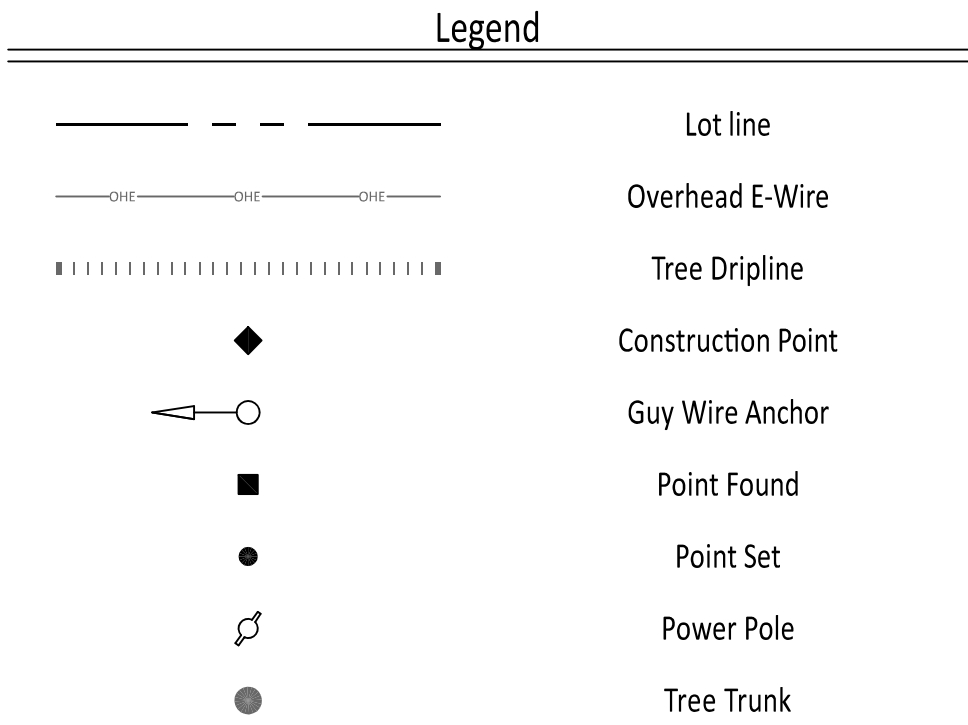
- A. KITCHEN & LIVING ROOM & DINNING
- B. THREE BEDROOM
- C. THREE BATH
- D. NEW MINI SPLIT HVAC UNIT
- E. NEW TANKLESS WATER HEATER
- F. NEW ELECTRICAL SUBPANEL

NEW RESIDENCE
30500 POCAHANTAS DR
CASTAIC, CA 91384



1 PROPOSED SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Boundary & Topographic Survey	Aztec Land Surveys, Inc.	Project Number	Client:	Benchmark - Rebar with LS 7764 Cap Elevation = 1305.58 Feet	Basis of Bearings: Bearing = North 75°51'02" East	Revisions	Date
30500 Pochantas Drive Castaic CA 91384 Lot 236 Tract No. 5317 M.B. 108 Pages 1 - 5 APN 3270-004-018	Aztec Land Surveys, Inc. License No. LS 7764 17812 Sierra Hwy, Unit E Canyon Country, CA 91387 Call Text 818-724-4011 map@azteclandsurveys.com	22-0150 3-24-2022 Drawn AV Approved MP Scale 1" = 8' Sheet 1 of 1	William Alvarado 14209 Vanowen St. Van Nuys CA 91405 (703) 944-9649 walvarado11@outlook.com	Rebar with LS 7764 Cap at Northwest property Corner. Elevation per GNSS Datum EGM96 Geoid.	Centerline of Pochantas Drive per Tract No 5317 M.B. 108 Pages 1 - 5.		



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30500 POCAHANTAS DRIVE
VAL VERDE, CA 91384

DRAWING TITLE:

ZONING REQUIREMENTS

Project number	22-GG-1034
Date	APRIL 26, 2022
Drawn by	DRW
Checked by	CHK

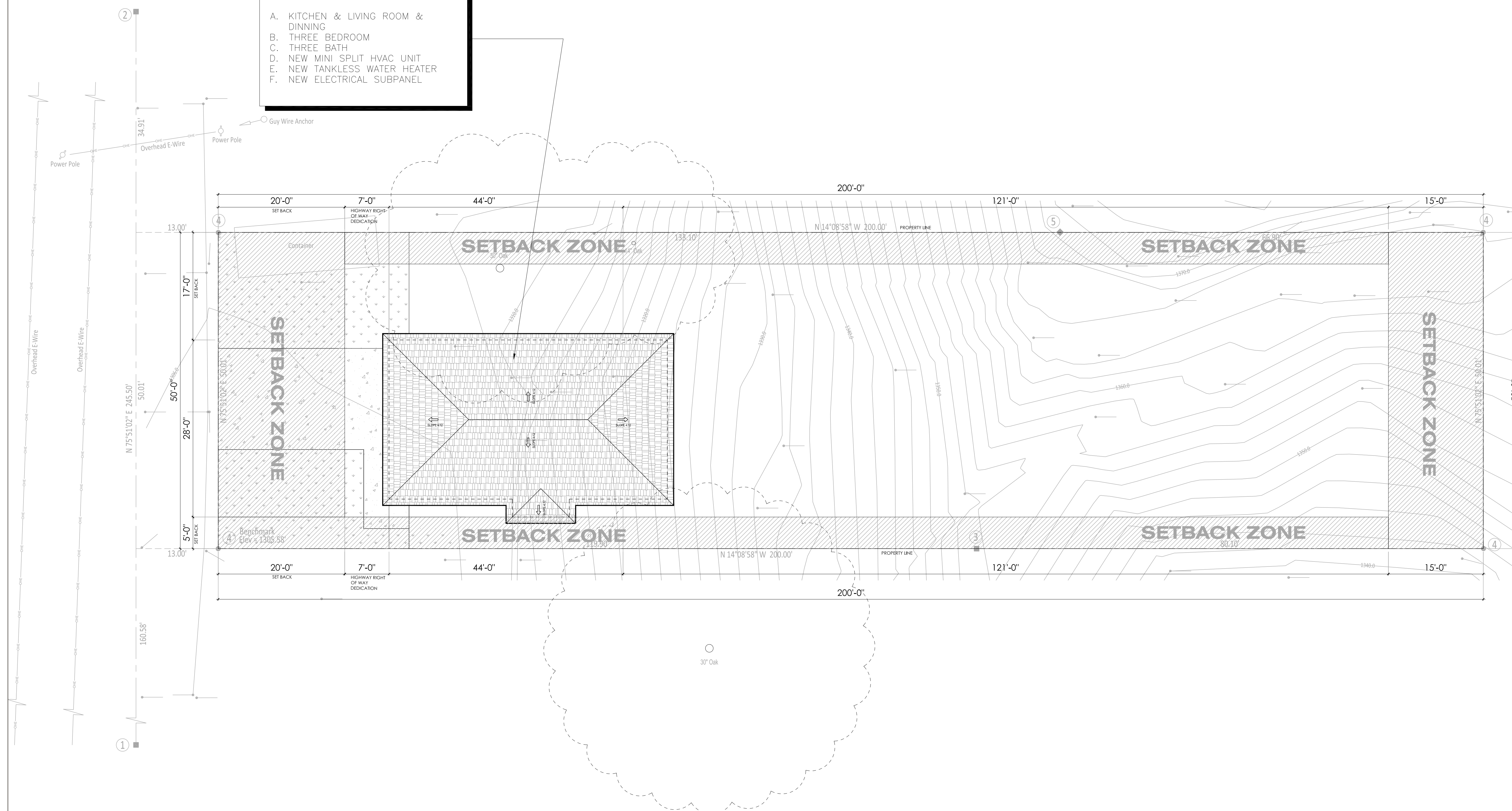
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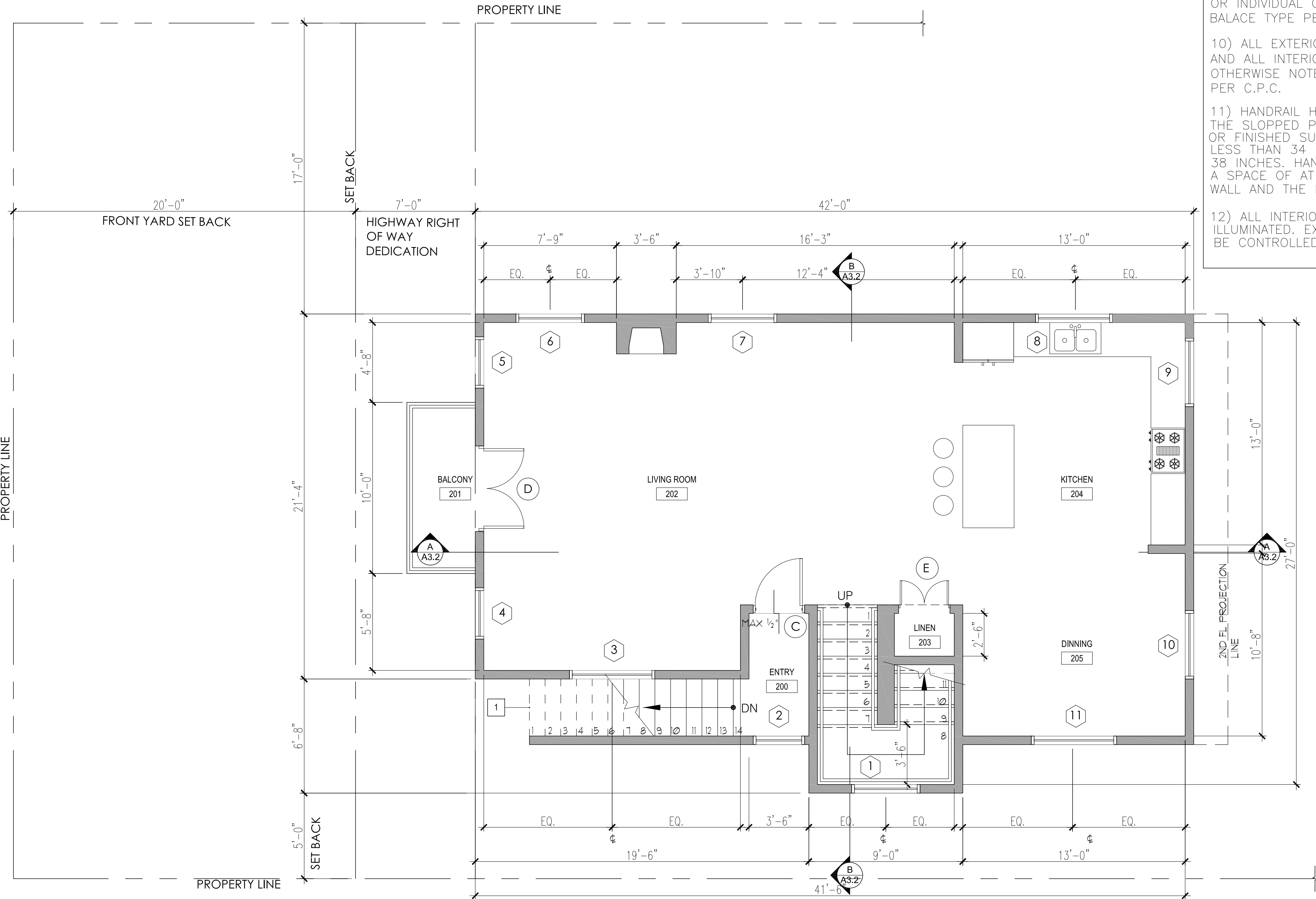
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NEW 2,126 SF, 3-STORY, RESIDENCE
WITH 440 SF, 2-CAR GARAGE TO
INCLUDE:

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- B. THREE BEDROOM
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- F. NEW ELECTRICAL SUBPANEL







1 ZONING SETBACK REQUIREMENTS N

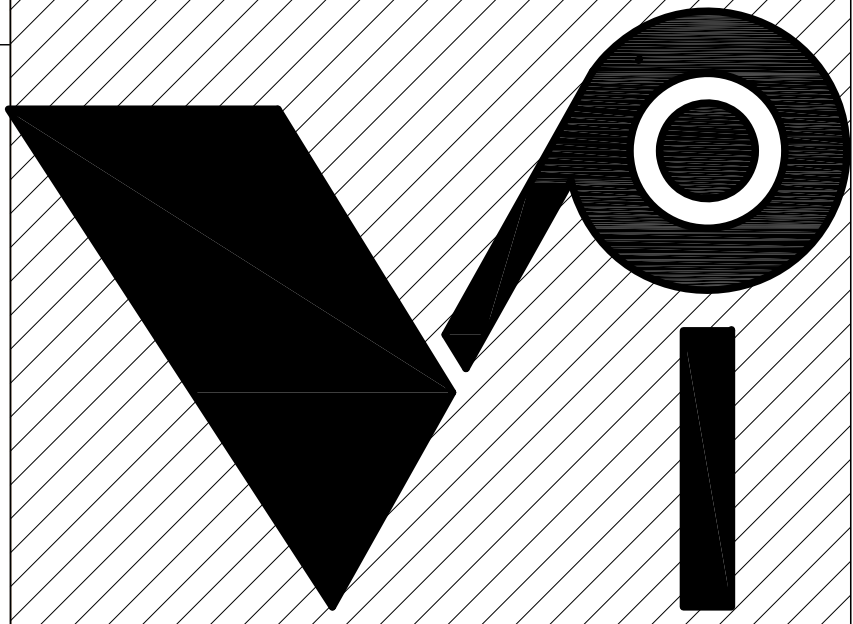


- 1) WASHER SPACE- PROVIDE PLUMBING CONNECTIONS (WASTE AND WATER RECESSED IN WALL)
- 2) DRYER SPACE- PROVIDE VENT TO OUTSIDE AIR.
- 3) DRYER VENT- 4" DIAMETER VENT, MAX. 14'-0" LONG WITH TWO ELBOWS.
- 4) SQUARE FOOTAGE- REFER TO SHEET A1.0
- 5) REFER TO ELECTRICAL PLAN FOR LOCATION OF ALL SWITCHES LIGHTS, RECEPTACLES, SMOKE DETECTORS, ETC
- 6) SMOKE DETECTORS SHALL BE PERMENTLY WIRED AND SHALL BE EQUIPPED WITH A BATTERY BACKUP
- 7) ALL BEDROOMS SHALL HAVE AT LEAST ONE EXTERIOR DOOR OR OPERABLE WINDOW FOR EMERGENCY ESCAPE OR RESCUE. ESCAPE OR RESCUE WINDOW SHALL HAVE A MINIMUM NET CLEAR OPERABLE AREA OF 5.7 SQ. FT WITH A MINIMUM CLEAR HEIGHT OF 24", A MINIMUM CLEAR WIDTH OF 20" AND A MINIMUM SILL HEIGHT OF 44" ABOVE FINISH FLOOR
- 8) BEDROOM BRANCH CIRCUITS WILL BE ARC FAULT PROTECTED PER NEC ART.
- 9) ALL SHOWERS AND TUB/SHOWER COMBINATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A THERMOSTATIC MIXING VALVE TYPE OR INDIVIDUAL CONTOL VALVES OF PRESSURE BALACE TYPE PER C.P.C.
- 10) ALL EXTERIOR WALLS SHALL BE 2x6 STUD WALLS AND ALL INTERIOR WALL 2x4 STUD WALLS, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. VALVES OF PRESSURE BALACE TYPE PER C.P.C.
- 11) HANDRAIL HEIGHT, MEASURED VERTICALLY FROM THE SLOPPED PLANE ADJOINING THE TREAD NOSING OR FINISHED SURFACE OF RAMP SLOPE, SHALL BE NOT LESS THAN 34 INCHES AND NOT MORE THAN 38 INCHES. HANDRAIL ADJACENT TO A WALL SHALL HAVE A SPACE OF AT LEAST 1-1/2 INCHES BETWEEN THE WALL AND THE HANDRAIL (R311.7.8.1 AND R311.7.8.2)
- 12) ALL INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR STAIRWAYS SHALL BE ILLUMINATED. EXTERIOR STAIRWAY ILLUMINATION SHALL BE CONTROLLED FROM INSIDE OF DWELLING (R303.7)

- 1) THE CONTRACTOR AND SUB-CONTRACTORS SHALL CAREFULLY, AND SPECIFICATIONS TO OBTAIN FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF JOB CONDITIONS. ANY DISCREPANCIES OR CONDITIONS NEEDING CLARIFICATION SHALL BE REPORTED TO THE OWNER PRIOR TO BEGINNING WORK. NO ALLOWANCES SHALL GIVEN FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE OR ANY CONDITIONS THAT CAN BE DETERMINED BY EXAMINING THE DRAWINGS, AND SPECIFICATIONS.
- 2) THE CONTRACTOR AND SUB-CONTRACTORS SHALL VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS ON DRAWINGS AND SHALL IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE OWNER OF ANY DISCREPANCIES PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION LAYOUT. NO ALLOWANCES CONSTRUCTION LAYOUT. NO ALLOWANCE SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE CONTRACTOR OR SUB-CONTRACTOR FOR CHANGES RESULTING FROM FAILURE TO COMPLY W/ THESE REQ'TS
- 3) DO NOT SCALE THE DRAWINGS. ALL DIMENSIONS SPECIFIED GOVERN. DIMENSIONS ARE NOMINAL AND ARE TO FACE OF OBJECTS UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.
- 4) EACH SUB-CONTRACTORS IS CONSIDERED A SPECIALIST IN HIS RESPECTIVE FIELD AND SHALL, PRIOR TO SUBMISSION OF HIS BID OR PERFORMANCE OF THE WORK, NOTIFY THE CONTRACTOR AND OWNER OF ANY WORK CALLED OUT IN DWGS OR SPECS WHICH WHICH CAN NOT BE FULLY GUARANTEED OR CONSTRUCTED AS DESIGNED OR DETAILED.
- 5) ALL SHOWER AND TUB-SHOWER COMBINATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A THERMOSTATIC MIXING VALVE TYPE OR INDIVIDUAL CONTROL VALVES OF THE PRESSURE BALANCE TYPE PER (UPC. 410.7). REFER TO PLUMBER PLAN TO VERIFY ROUGH & SHOWER VALVES SPECIFICATIONS. 2" H x 2" W x VARIES LENGHT SHOWER CURB TO BE LOCATION UNDER CLEAR TEMPERED GLASS ENCLOSURE AND DOOR WITH CHROME HARDWARE. FINISH TO BE WHITE TILE, UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE ON PLAN. PROVIDE WATERPROOF MEMBRANE UNDER TILE. THE SHOWER'S CLEAR TEMPERED GLASS ENCLOSURE & DOOR'S REFER TO ELEVATIONS FOR DIMENSION AND SPECIFICATIONS. REFER TO ELECTRICAL PLANS FOR LOCATIONS OF ALL SWITHES, LIGHTS, AND RECEPTACLES. WITH FLUSH-MOUNTED SWITCH PLATE: TRUFIG OR SIMILAR.
- 6) FINISH MATERIAL POLLUTANT CONTROL SEC.4.504.2: THE FOLLOWING FINISH MATERIALS SHALL COMPLY WITH THE VOC CONTENT LIMITS SET FORTH IN CALGREEN SECTIONS 4.504.2 THROUGH 4.504.5:
-ADHESIVE SEALANTS AND CAULKS PAINTS AND COATINGS, CARPET SYSTEMS, CUSHIONS AND ADHESIVE RESILIENT FLOORING, AND RESILIENT COMPOSITE WOOD PRODUCTS USED ON THE INTERIOR OR EXTERIOR
- 7) BATHROOM EXHAUST FANS SEC. 4.506.1.
MECHANICAL EXHAUST FANS WHICH EXHAUST DIRECTLY FROM BATHROOMS SHALL BE ENERGY STAR COMPLIANT DUCTED TO TERMINATE OUTSIDE THE BUILDING AND CONTROLLED BY A READILY ACCESSIBLE HUMIDISTAT OR A WHOLE HOUSE VENTILATION SYSTEM.
- 8) SHOWER FLOORS AND WALLS ABOVE BATHTUBS WITH INSTALLED SHOWER HEAD SHALL BE FINISHED WITH A NONABSORBENT SURFACE TO A HEIGHT NOT LESS THAN 6 FT. ABOVE THE FLOOR (CRC R307.2).
- 9) A MINIMUM 4" MOISTURE EXHAUST DUCT MUST BE PROVIDED (CMC 504.3.1) A FLEXIBLE DUCT CANNOT EXTEND MORE THAN 6FT. AND CANNOT BE CONCEALED (CMC 504.3.1.1) DRYER EXHAUST CANNOT EXCEED 14 FT. WITH A MAX. OF TWO 90 DEG. ELBOWS (CMC 504.3.1.2).

- | | |
|---|---|
|  | DEMO WALLS |
|  | NEW WALLS |
|  | NEW 1-HR RATED WALL AND STC 50
SOUND RATED |
|  | NOT IN SCOPE OF WORK |

1 (N) STAIRS



**VICTORY
PARTNERS, INC.**

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PROFESSIONAL SEAL :

[illegible]

PROJECT TITLE:

ALVARADO RESIDENCE

30500 POCAHANTAS DRIVE
VAL VERDE, CA 91384

DRAWING TITLE

PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN

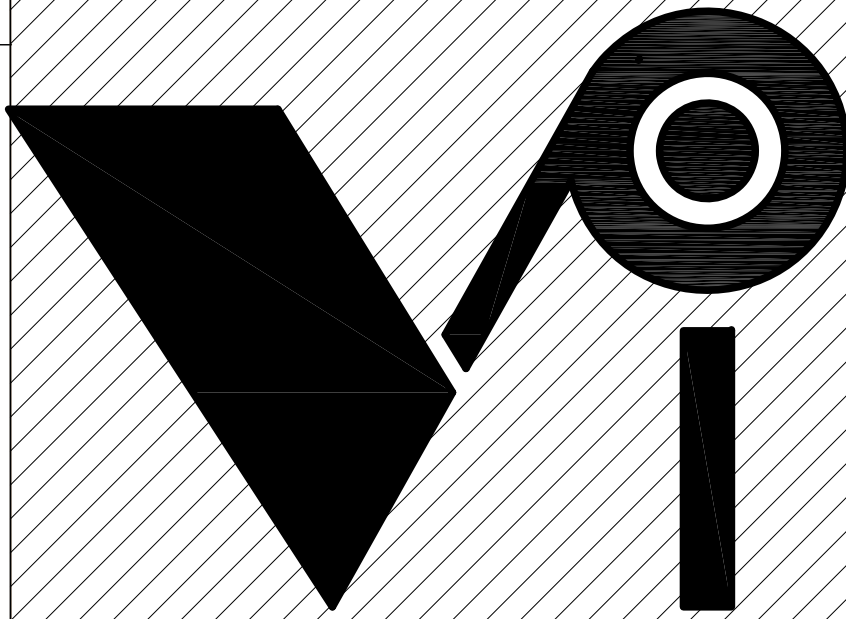
Project number	22-GG-1034
Date	APRIL26, 2022
Drawn by	DRW
Checked by	CHK

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Scale	$1/4" = 1'-0"$



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Scale	$1/4" = 1'-0"$



EXTERIOR MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS WILL COMPLY WITH 707A-1 707A.5

707A.1 SCOPE. THE PROVISION OF THIS SECTION SHALL GOVERN THE MATERIAL AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS USED TO RESIST BUILDING IGNITION AND/OR SAFEGUARD AGAINST THE INTRUSION OF FLAMES RESULTING FROM SMALL EMBERS AND SHORT-TERM DIRECT FLAME CONTACT EXPOSURE.

707A.2 GENERAL. THE FOLLOWING EXTERIOR COVERING MATERIAL AND/OR ASSEMBLIES SHALL COMPLY WITH THIS SECTION:

1. EXTERIOR WALL COVERING MATERIAL
2. EXTERIOR WALL ASSEMBLY
3. EXTERIOR EXPOSED UNDERSIDE OF ROOF EAVE OVERHANGS
4. EXTERIOR EXPOSED UNDERSIDE OF ROOF EAVE SOFFITS

707A.3 EXTERIOR WALLS. THE EXTERIOR WALL COVERING OR WALL ASSEMBLY SHALL COMPLY WITH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

1. NONCOMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL
2. IGNITION-RESISTANT MATERIAL

707A.4 OPEN ROOF EAVES. THE EXPOSED ROOF DECK ON THE UNDERSIDE OF UNENCLOSED ROOF EAVES SHALL CONSIST OF ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. NONCOMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL
2. IGNITION-RESISTANT MATERIAL
3. ONE LAYER OF 5/8-INCH TYPE X GYPSUM SHEATHING APPLIED BEHIND AN EXTERIOR COVERING ON THE UNDERSIDE EXTERIOR OF THE ROOF DECK

707A.5 ENCLOSED ROOF EAVES AND ROOF EAVE SOFFITS. THE EXPOSED UNDERSIDE OF ENCLOSED ROOF EAVES HAVING EITHER A BOXED-IN ROOF EAVE SOFFIT WITH A HORIZONTAL UNDERSIDE, OR SLOPING RAFTER TAILS WITH AN EXTERIOR COVERING APPLIED TO THE UNDERSIDE OF THE RAFTER TAILS, SHALL BE PROTECTED BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. NONCOMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL
2. IGNITION-RESISTANT MATERIAL
3. ONE LAYER OF 5/8-INCH TYPE X GYPSUM SHEATHING APPLIED BEHIND AN EXTERIOR COVERING ON THE UNDERSIDE OF THE RAFTER TAILS OR SOFFIT
4. THE EXTERIOR PORTION OF A 1-HOUR FIRE RESISTIVE EXTERIOR WALL ASSEMBLY APPLIED TO THE UNDERSIDE OF THE ROOF RAFTER TAILS OR SOFFIT INCLUDING ASSEMBLIES USING THE GYPSUM PANEL AND SHEATHING PRODUCT LISTED IN THE GYPSUM ASSOCIATION FIRE RESISTANCE DESIGN MANUAL

707A.6 BOXED-IN ROOF EAVE SOFFIT ASSEMBLIES WITH A HORIZONTAL UNDERSIDE THAT MEET THE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TEST PROCEDURES SET FORTH IN SFM STANDARD 12-7A-3

708A.2.1 GLAZED DOOR ASSEMBLIES SHALL COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

1. BE CONSTRUCTED OF MULTIPANEL GLAZING WITH A MINIMUM OF ONE TEMPERED PANEL MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 2406 SAFETY GLAZING, AND HAVE A FIRE RESISTANCE RATING OF NO LESS THAN 20 MINUTES WHEN TESTED ACCORDING TO NFPA 257, OR BE TESTED TO MEET THE PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS OF SFM STANDARD 12-7A-2

707A.1 VENTILATION OPENINGS WILL COMPLY WITH A706A.1 – A706A.3

706A.1 GENERAL. WHERE PROVIDED, VENTILATION OPENINGS FOR ENCLOSED ATTIC, ENCLOSED EAVE SOFFIT SPACES, ENCLOSED RAFTER SPACES FORMED WHERE CEILING ARE APPLIED DIRECTLY TO UNDERSIDE OF ROOF RAFTERS, A UNDER FLOOR VENTILATION SHALL BE ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION I 203 AND SECTION 70A.1 THROUGH 706A.3 TO RESIST BUILDING IGNITION FROM THE INTRUSION OF BURNING EMBERS AND FLAMES THROUGH THE VENTILATION OPENINGS.

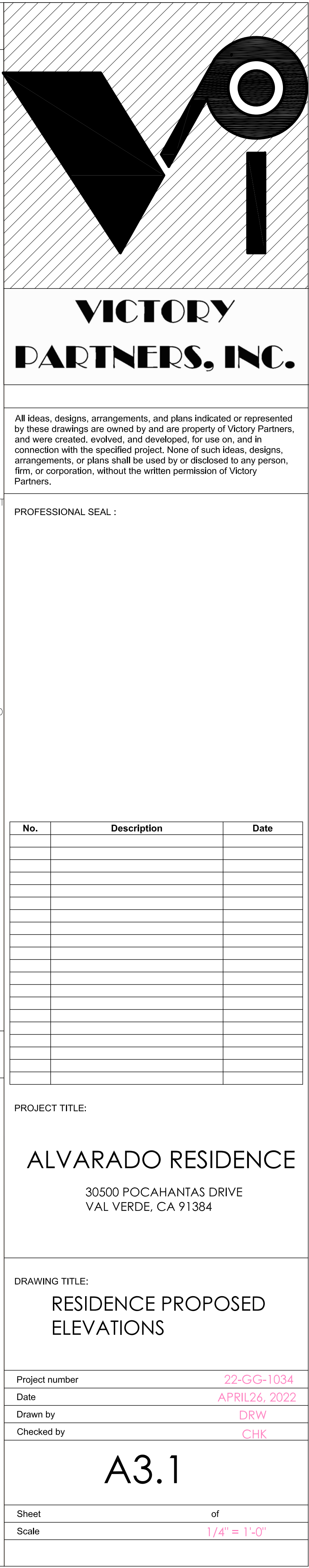
706A.2 REQUIREMENTS. VENTILATION OPENINGS FOR ENCLOSED ATTICS, ENCLOSED EAVE SOFFIT SPACES, ENCLOSED RAFTER SPACES WHERE CEILING ARE APPLIED DIRECTLY TO THE UNDERSIDE OF ROOF RAFTERS , AND UNDER FLOOR VENTILATION OPENING SHALL BE FULLY COVERED WITH METAL WIRE MESH VENTS, OTHER MATERIALS OR OTHER DEVICES THAT MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS.

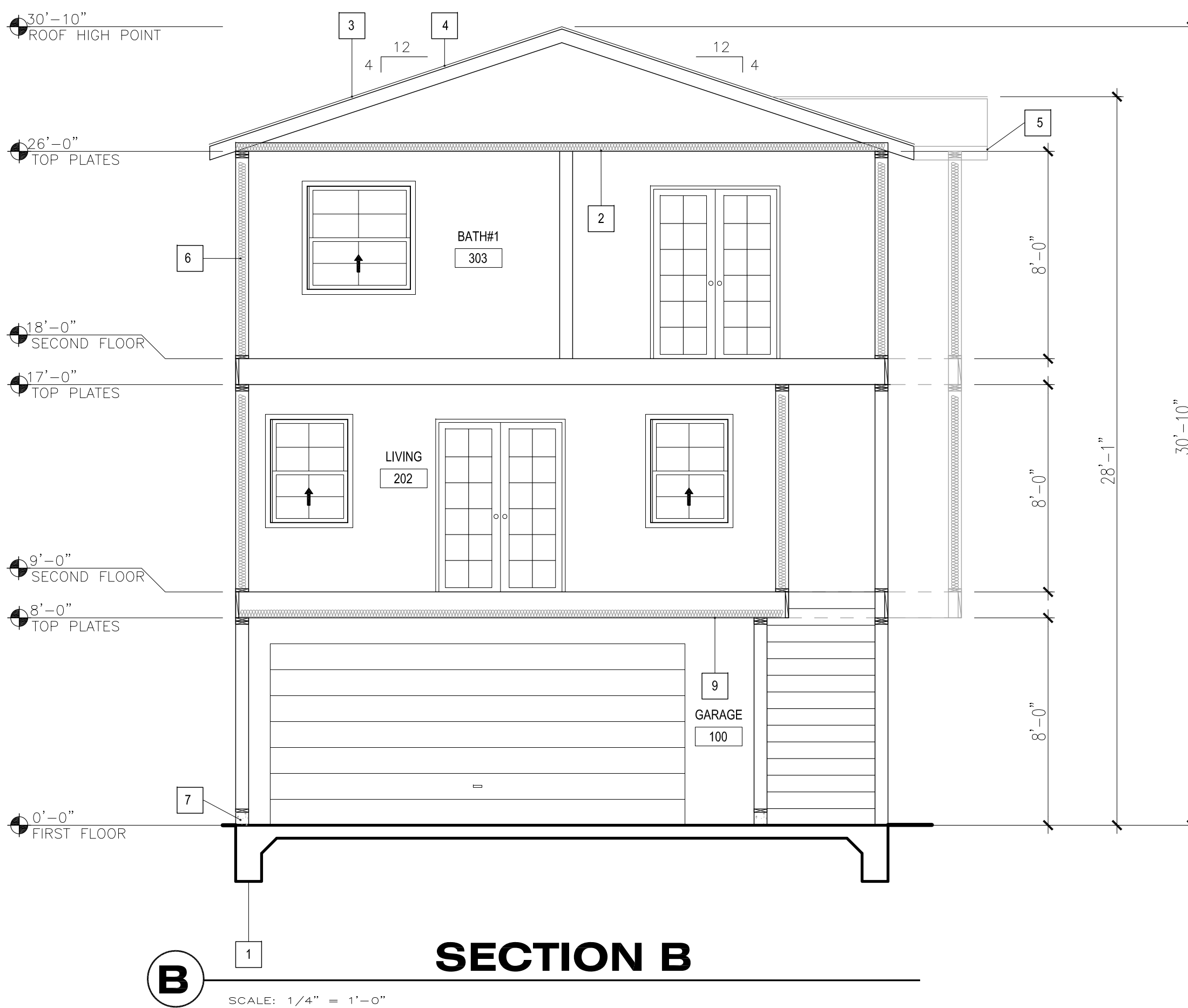
THE DIMENSIONS OF THE OPENING THERE SHALL BE IN A MINIMUM OF 1/16-INCH (1.6mm) AND SHALL NOT EXCEED 1/8-INCH (3.2mm). THE MATERIAL USED SHALL BE NONCOMBUSTIBLE.

EXCEPTION: VENTS LOCATED UNDER THE ROOF COVERING, ALONG THE RIDGE OF ROOF, EXPOSED SURFACE OF THE VENT COVERED BY NONCOMBUSTIBLE WIRE MESH, MAYBE OF COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS. THE MATERIALS USED SHALL CORROSION RESISTANT

8. RAIN GUTTERS VERIFY LOCATION WITH HOME OWNER

1	(N) FASCIA
2	(N) STUCCO EXTERIOR FINISH, U.N.O. OVER PAPER BACKED METAL LATH (PER SECTION 2508.2001 CBC) WITH TEXTURE AND COLOR MATCH IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT
3	WINDOW PER SCHEDULE, TYP.
4	STAIRS REFER TO SHEET A5.1
5	HANDRAIL
6	DOOR PER SCHEDULE, TYP.
7	(N) ROOFING CLASS "A" ASPHALT SHINGLES CERTAIN TEE CRCC PRODUCT ID# 0668--0072 COLOR SILVER BIRCH OVER 15 (ICC-ES-ESR-3537 OR APPROVED EQUAL) INSTALL PER MANUFACTURERS SPECIFICATIONS





Sheet	of
Scale	$1/4" = 1'-0"$



PROJECT NUMBER
PRJ2024-000982-(5)

HEARING DATE
April 15, 2025

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENT(S)
Oak Tree Permit No. RPPL2024003171

PROJECT SUMMARY

OWNER / APPLICANT

Willian and Sayra Alvarado

MAP/EXHIBIT DATE

October 2, 2024

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The applicant requests an Oak Tree Permit to authorize proposed encroachments into three oak trees (including one heritage oak), for the proposed construction of a new single-family residence under concurrent review through Site Plan Review No. RPPL2024001451.

LOCATION

0 – Vacant Pocahantas Drive, Val Verde

ACCESS

Pocahantas Drive

ASSESSORS PARCEL NUMBER(S)

3270-004-018

SITE AREA

10,000 Square feet

GENERAL PLAN / LOCAL PLAN

Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan

ZONED DISTRICT

Newhall

PLANNING AREA

Santa Clarita Valley

LAND USE DESIGNATION

H5 (Residential 5 – Five Dwelling Units per Acre)

ZONE

R-1 (Single-Family Residence)

PROPOSED UNITS

1

MAX DENSITY/UNITS

2

COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT

Castaic Area

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION (CEQA)

Class 3 Categorical Exemption – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures
Class 4 Categorical Exemption – Minor Alterations to Land

KEY ISSUES

- Consistency with the Los Angeles County General Plan and Area Plan
- Satisfaction of the following portions of Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code:
 - Section 22.18.040 (Development Standards for Residential Zones)
 - Chapter 22.174 (Oak Tree Permits)

CASE PLANNER:

Chris La Farge

PHONE NUMBER:

(213) 893-7467

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

clafarge@planning.lacounty.gov

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING
DRAFT FINDINGS OF THE HEARING OFFICER
AND ORDER
PROJECT NO. PRJ2024-000982
OAK TREE PERMIT NO. RPPL2024003171

RECITALS

1. **HEARING DATE(S).** The Los Angeles County (“County”) Hearing Officer conducted a duly-noticed public hearing in the matter of Oak Tree Permit (“OTP”) No. **RPPL2024003171** on April 15, 2025.
2. **HEARING PROCEEDINGS.** Reserved
3. **ENTITLEMENT(S) REQUESTED.** The Permittee, Willian Alvarado ("Permittee"), requests the OTP to authorize proposed encroachments into the protected zones of three (3) oak trees (including one heritage oak) associated with the construction of a new single-family residence (“Project”) on a vacant parcel, APN 3270-004-018, located on Pocahantas Drive in the unincorporated community of Val Verde ("Project Site") in the R-1 (Single Family Residence) zone pursuant to Los Angeles County Code ("County Code") Sections 22.18.030 (Land Use Regulations for Residential Zones) and 22.174.030 (Oak Tree Permits, Applicability).
4. **ENTITLEMENT(S) REQUIRED.** An OTP is required to authorize the encroachments into the protected zones of three oak trees for construction activities pursuant to County Code Section 22.174.030 (Oak Tree Permit, Applicability).
5. **RELATED ENTITLEMENT.** Site Plan Review (“SPR”) No. RPPL2024001451 (“related SPR”) is a related entitlement to authorize the construction of a new single-family residence (“SFR”) totaling 2,126 square feet, pursuant to County Code Section 22.18.030 (Land Use Regulations for Residential Zones). The approval of the SPR is dependent on the approval of this OTP.
6. **PREVIOUS ENTITLEMENT(S).** Certificate of Compliance No. RPPL2024000510, recorded on February 22, 2024, certified that the subject property conforms with the Subdivision Map Act and the County Subdivision Ordinance.
7. **LAND USE DESIGNATION.** The Project Site is located within the H5 (Residential 5 – Five Dwelling Units per Acre) land use category of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan (“Area Plan”) Land Use Policy Map, a component of the General Plan.
8. **ZONING.** The Project Site is located in the Newhall Zoned District and is currently zoned R-1. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.18.030 (Land Use Regulations for Residential Zones), an SPR is required for the underlying SFR and associated work.

9. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

LOCATION	AREA PLAN LAND USE POLICY	ZONING	EXISTING USES
NORTH	H5 (Residential 5), RL2 (Rural Land 2 – One Dwelling Unit per Two Acres),	R-1, A-2-2 (Heavy Agricultural – Two Acre Minimum Required Lot Area)	Vacant, SFRs
EAST	H5, H2 (Residential 2 – Two Dwelling Units per Acre)	R-1	Vacant, SFRs
SOUTH	H5	R-1	Vacant, SFRs
WEST	H5	R-1	Vacant, SFRs

10. PROJECT AND SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.

A. Existing Site Conditions

The Project Site is 10,000 square feet in size and consists of one legal lot. The Project Site is rectangular in shape with a small flat area in the front with steep topography in the middle and rear and it is currently vacant. Approximately 8,100 square feet of the lot's 10,000 SF is in a Hillside Management Area. The Project Site also includes three oak trees and disturbed vegetation throughout.

Two oaks on the property have overlapping canopies. The County Biologist visited the Project Site on January 28, 2025, and determined the oak trees constitute a moderately degraded oak woodland.

B. Site Access

The Project Site is accessible via Pocahontas Drive to the north, a 26-foot-wide public street. Primary access to the Project Site will be via a 16-foot-wide driveway with an entrance/exit on Pocahontas Drive. There is no secondary access to the Project Site.

C. Site Plan

The site plan depicts a proposed 2,126 square-foot SFR with an attached 440 square-foot garage on the northern portion of the Project Site, APN 3270-004-018. Three oak trees, Oak Trees No. 1, 2 and OP3 (heritage), are located adjacent to or near the SFR. Oak Trees No. 1 and 2 are located on the Project Site along the northeasterly property line and Oak Tree No. OP3 is located on the parcel to the west, APN 3270-004-017, but its canopy overhangs onto the Project Site. The protected zones of all three oak trees are encroached upon by the proposed SFR.

D. Parking

While the request is for an OTP, an SFR is required to provide two covered parking spaces if located on a lot less than one acre in size. A two-car garage is proposed for the SFR and will be confirmed through review of the related SPR.

11. CEQA DETERMINATION.

Prior to the Hearing Officer's public hearing, County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning ("LA County Planning") staff ("staff") determined that the Project qualified for a Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) and a Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) categorical exemptions from the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code section 21000, et seq.) ("CEQA"), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines for the County. The Project is categorically exempt because the oak tree encroachments are related to minor alterations in the condition of private land and vegetation that do not involve the removal of healthy mature, scenic trees. No oak trees will be removed as part of this Project.

The existing oak trees constitute a moderately degraded oak woodland and considering its present condition, the proposed development would not result in a significant impact given that the Project will not require the removal or changing the understory. Per section 15304, Class 4 is intended for small-scale grading, new landscaping, and minor trenching, among other activities. The requested encroachments are considered minor impacts that would not result in further loss of an ecosystem. Furthermore, the County Forester and Fire Warden ("Forester") has reviewed the Project for the requested encroachments. The Project's conditions have been determined by the Forester to be sufficient to recover any losses to trees and woodland values. The impacts from the encroachments do not justify an exception to the Categorical Exemption since the woodland is already degraded. A condition has been added to the OTP that should any oak fails due to the impacts of construction, it be replaced by the planting of two new oaks on site.

The proposed construction of a single-family residence would not substantially alter the general topography of the Project Site as the proposed grading is minor and will not cause substantial change to the site condition. Additionally, the County Forester has reviewed the Project and recommended standard conditions such as proper temporary fencing around the protected zone during construction and the use of hand tools or hand-held power tools within the protected zone. By incorporating these recommended conditions, the impacts on the oak trees and woodlands will be minimized.

No exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply to the Project per Section 15300.2 of the California Code of Regulations. The Project Site is not located within or near a historical resource, a hazardous waste site, scenic highway, or an environmentally sensitive area. The surrounding area consists of residential neighborhoods and vacant lands. The subject property and its surrounding area are developed with roadways, driveways, SFRs, utility poles, and other infrastructure. There is no significant effect due to unusual circumstances and no cumulative impacts are anticipated. Therefore, staff recommend that the Hearing Officer determine that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** Staff has not received any comments at the time of report preparation.
13. **AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS.**
County Fire Department Forestry Division: Recommended approval in a letter dated July 24, 2024 with conditions.
14. **LEGAL NOTIFICATION.** Pursuant to Section 22.174.040.E (Application with a Public Hearing, Oak Tree Permits) of the County Code, the community was properly notified of the public hearing by mail and newspaper (The Santa Clarita Valley Signal.) Additionally, the Project was noticed and case materials were available on LA County Planning's website. On December 10, 2024, a total of 105 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners as identified on the County Assessor's record within a 1,000-foot radius from the Project Site, as well as 26 notices to those on the courtesy mailing list for the Newhall Zoned District and to any additional interested parties.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

15. **LAND USE POLICY.** While the Project is for three oak encroachments, the Hearing Officer finds that the related development of the SFR is consistent with the goals and policies of the Area Plan because the H5 designation is intended for SFRs.
16. **GOALS AND POLICIES.** The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the following policies of the General Plan.
 - *Land Use Element Policy LU 3.1: Encourage the protection and conservation of areas with natural resources, and SEAs.*

The request is for an OTP to allow the new SFR to encroach on the protected zones of three oak trees, including one heritage oak. The proposed SFR will be located near the front of the lot thereby avoiding steep slopes in the rear and minimizing grading. The oak trees will remain, and grading and development within the hillside area will be minimized due to the encroachments. The Project Site is not within an environmentally sensitive area.

- *Land Use Element Policy 4.LU:1: Encourage infill development in urban and suburban areas on vacant, underutilized, and/or brownfield sites.*

Val Verde is an established community with public water, publicly maintained streets and trash collection. While the Project is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the related development of the proposed SFR will provide needed housing in the Val Verde community on a vacant lot within an existing residential neighborhood that has access to public infrastructure.

The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the following objective and policy of the Area Plan.

- *Objective CO-3.2: Identify and protect areas which have exceptional biological resource value due to a specific type of vegetation, habitat, ecosystem or location.*

Related SFR development is confined within a small area of the Project Site as the building footprint of the new SFR is 1,232 square feet. The Project will maintain all existing oak trees on site and maintain most of the existing topographic features. The site is in an oak woodland that is already degraded and the encroachments will not create a significant impact.

- Policy CO-3.2.2: Ensure that development is located and designed to protect oak and other significant indigenous woodlands. (Guiding Principle #9)

The Project has been designed to minimize impacts to oak trees, oak woodlands, and the hillside. No oak trees will be removed, and implementation of the OTP conditions will help protect the oaks that will be encroached by the proposed SFR.

ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY FINDINGS

17. **PERMITTED USE IN ZONE.** While the Project request is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the Hearing Officer finds that the related SFR development is consistent with the R-1 zoning classification, as a SFR is permitted in such zone with a Site Plan Review pursuant to County Code Section 22.18.030 (Land Use Regulations for Residential Zones). The related SFR development will be reviewed for conformity with Title 22 by the related Site Plan Review.
18. **REQUIRED YARDS.** While the Project request is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the Hearing Officer finds that the related SFR development is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.18.040 (Development Standards for Residential Zones). The R-1 zone requires a 20-foot front yard setback, five-foot interior side yard setback and 15-foot rear yard setback. The County Department of Public Works is requiring a street dedication of seven (7) feet per their letter to Mr. Diaz dated April 25, 2024. Therefore, the combined front yard setback is 27 feet. The proposed SFR meets these requirements which will be confirmed before approval under the related SPR.
19. **HEIGHT.** While the Project is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the Hearing Officer finds that the related development of the SFR is consistent with the standards identified in County Code Section 22.18.040 (Development Standards for Residential Zones). Every SFR shall not exceed 35 feet above grade. The proposed SFR at the Project Site is under 35 feet in height with a maximum height of 30 feet and 10 inches above grade. This will be confirmed before approval under the related SPR.

20. **PARKING.** While the Project is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the standard identified in County Code Section 22.112.070 (Required Parking Spaces) for SFRs. For an SFR, two covered standard spaces are required. A two-car garage is provided for the proposed SFR. This will be confirmed before approval under the related SPR.
21. **HILLSIDE MANAGEMENT AREA.** While the Project is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the Hearing Officer finds that the Project is exempt from the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit (“CUP”) for development within a Hillside Management Area (“HMA”). The majority of the Project Site is classified as HMA, and the proposed SFR is partially within the HMA. However, pursuant to County Code Section 22.104.030.A (Permit Required in HMA) because the Project proposes under 15,000 cubic yards of grading and is on a single parcel and there is no development proposed on contiguous parcels by the Permittee, the Project is exempt from the need for a CUP. The amount of proposed grading on the Project Site is 200 cubic yards (100 cubic yards of cut and 100 cubic yards of fill). This will be confirmed before approval under the related SPR.
22. **COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT (“CSD”).** While the Project is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the applicable standards identified in County Code Chapter 22.312 (Castaic Area CSD). Because the Project includes development within an HMA, County Code Section 22.312.060.E (Hillsides in CSD) is applicable. The Project will conform to the standards listed in this section. No development is proposed near a Significant Ridgeline. This will be confirmed before approval under the related SPR.
23. **RURAL OUTDOOR LIGHTING DISTRICT.** While the Project is for three oak encroachments, including one heritage oak, the Hearing Officer finds that the Project is consistent with the applicable standards identified in County Code Chapter 22.80 (Rural Outdoor Lighting District). The Project Site is located within a Rural Outdoor Lighting District and is subject to the development standards for residential uses in County Code Section 22.80.050 (Rural Outdoor Lighting District General Development Standards), including a maximum height of 20 feet for any outdoor lighting fixtures, a limit of 400 lumens for any fixture above 15 feet in height, full shielding of outdoor lighting fixtures, and no unacceptable light trespass. Conformance with these standards will be confirmed with the related SPR.

OAK TREE PERMIT FINDINGS

24. **The Hearing Officer finds that the proposed construction or proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the remaining trees subject to Title 22 regulations, if any, on the subject property.** The oak tree report dated September 27, 2022, identifies three ordinance-sized Coast Live Oak trees (including one heritage oak) on the Project Site and an adjacent parcel. The protected zones of all three trees will be encroached upon by the proposed

construction of the SFR. According to the oak tree report, Tree No. 1 has a large cavity in the main trunk and decaying organisms in this cavity have significantly degraded the structural integrity of the tree. The combined effects of pruning and soil disturbance within the root zone of Oak Tree No. 1 could significantly harm its health. With the implementation of the County Forester's and the arborist's recommendations, Tree No. 1 will be protected in place and preserved during construction. With the implementation of the County Forester's and the oak tree report's arborist's recommendations, the other two oak trees including one heritage oak will be protected in place and preserved during construction without compromising their health. In the event that one or more oak trees dies as a result of the encroachments, the planting of mitigation trees will be required. Any mitigation trees would need to be properly maintained and monitored.

25. **The Hearing Officer finds that the removal or relocation 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.** No oak tree is proposed to be removed. Two of the three oak trees, including one heritage oak tree, are anticipated to survive the ground disturbance associated with the construction of the SFR by adherence to the conditions of the OTP. Oak No. 1 which has suffered drought stress and a large cavity in its trunk has a possible likelihood of failure, and its health could be significantly harmed by the effects of pruning and soil disturbance.
26. **The Hearing Officer finds that in addition to the above facts, at least one of the following findings apply: a. That the removal or relocation of the oak trees proposed is necessary as continued existence at present locations frustrates the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that: i. Alternative development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive, or ii. Placement of such oak trees precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized; b. That the oak trees proposed for removal or relocation interferes with utility services 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 trees; or c. That the condition of the oak trees 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.** The three oak trees, including one heritage oak tree, will be encroached upon by the related proposed construction of the SFR but no oak tree is proposed to be removed. The proposed location of the SFR is the most suitable location on the Project Site for development due to the steep slopes over most of the Project Site and the SFR's location in the relatively flatter portion of the Project Site. Relocating the SFR outside of the oak tree protected zones would result in significantly more grading, and even if that were done, grading for the driveway may still require encroachments to the same oak trees. The proposed SFR location minimizes the amount of grading needed and overall Project impacts while preserving the oak trees. The location of the oak trees on the Project Site makes development infeasible unless oak tree encroachments are allowed. The development of an SFR

can be accomplished without removing any oak trees with the protection provided by the OTP conditions.

27. **The Hearing Officer finds the removal 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.** The requested encroachments are consistent with the intent and purpose of the OTP procedure to allow the related construction of the SFR. These oak trees will continue to be monitored by the LA County Forester to ensure their survival when construction is completed. The OTP conditions will help support the health of the trees. In the event any of the oak trees does not survive, the permittee will be required to plant and maintain replacement oak trees at a ratio of 2:1 (10:1 for heritage trees) on the property.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

28. The Hearing Officer finds that the Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15304 (Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures and Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land). The Project is exempt because the oak tree encroachments are related to construction of a SFR and minor alterations in the condition of private land and vegetation that do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. No trees will be removed as part of this Project.

The proposed construction of the SFR would not substantially alter the general topography of the area. While the Project Site contains several oak trees forming a moderately degraded oak woodland, the impacts from encroachments are not a significant impact and therefore are not an exception to the Categorical Exemption.

The proposed construction may compromise the health of one existing tree, Oak No. 1. Additionally, the County Forester has reviewed the Project and recommended standard conditions such as proper temporary fencing around the protected zone during construction and the use of hand tools or hand-held power tools within the protected zone and replacement trees the impacted oaks. By incorporating these recommended conditions, the impacts on the oak trees will be minimized.

No exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply to the Project per Section 15300.2 of the California Code of Regulations. The Project Site is not located within or near a historical resource, a hazardous waste site, scenic highway, or an environmentally sensitive area. The surrounding area consists of residential development and vacant land. The subject property is not developed and its surrounding area is partially developed with residences, roadways, driveways, buildings, utility poles, and other infrastructure and partially vacant. There is no significant effect due to unusual circumstances and no cumulative impacts are anticipated.

ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

29. **LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS.** 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 LA County 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 North County Development Services Section, LA County Planning.

BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE HEARING OFFICER CONCLUDES THAT:

- A. The proposed construction and use could impact the health of one of the three oak trees. The proposed construction and use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the other two oak trees, including Tree OP3 which is a heritage oak, subject to County Code Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) regulations, if any, on and adjacent to the Project Site. The conditions of approval will ensure all the impacted trees are minimized.
- B. There is no removal or relocation of oak trees; the proposed encroachments of the oak trees will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters, which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.
- C. The encroachments of the oak trees is necessary as non-encroachment of the trees at present locations frustrates the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that: i) alternative development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive, or ii) placement of such oak trees precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized.
- D. The Hearing Officer finds the proposed encroachments of the oak trees 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 State CEQA Guidelines sections 15303 (Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) and 15304 (Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land); and
- 2. Approves **OAK TREE PERMIT NO. RPPL2024003171**, subject to the attached conditions.

ACTION DATE: April 15, 2025

SZD:CF

March 5, 2025

c: Hearing Officer, Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING

DRAFT CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
PROJECT NO. PRJ2024-000982-(5)
OAK TREE PERMIT NO. RPPL2024003171

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is to authorize encroachments into the protected zones of three oak trees, identified as Tree Nos. 1, 2 and OP3 (heritage), on a vacant property located on Pocahantas Drive in the unincorporated community of Val Verde 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 ("LA County Planning") their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all of the conditions of this grant, and until all required monies have been paid pursuant to Condition No. 8. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Condition No. 2 and Condition Nos. 3, 4 and 7 shall be effective pursuant to Section 22.222.230 of the County Code.
3. 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.
4. 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 LA County 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 LA County 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.

5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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. No provision of any easement of or any other encumbrance on the property shall exempt the Permittee and/or property owner from compliance with these conditions and applicable regulations. Inspections shall be made to ensure compliance with the conditions of this grant as well as to ensure that any development undertaken on the subject property is in accordance with the approved site plan on file. The Permittee shall deposit with the County the sum **\$882.00**, which shall be placed in a performance fund and be used exclusively to reimburse LA County Planning for all expenses incurred while inspecting the premises to determine the Permittee's compliance with the conditions of this grant. The fund provides for **two (2)** inspections. Inspections may be unannounced and may be conducted utilizing any available technologies, including, but not limited to, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).

If additional 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 LA County Planning for all additional enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance. The amount charged for additional inspections shall be \$441.00 per inspection, or the current recovery cost

established by LA County Planning at the time any additional inspections are required, whichever is greater.

9. 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 22.238 of the County Code.
10. All development pursuant to this grant must be kept in full compliance with the County Fire Code to the satisfaction of the County Fire Department ("County Fire").
11. All development pursuant to this grant shall conform with the requirements of the County Department of Public Works to the satisfaction of said department.
12. 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 LA County Planning ("Director").
13. 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.
14. 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 LA County Planning. These shall include any 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 48 hours of such notification, 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

15. The grant shall authorize encroachments into the protected zones of three oak trees, all three (3) of which are to be encroached by the proposed construction activities, associated with the construction of a new single-family residence. One (1) of the three trees (identified as OP3 in the applicant's Oak Tree Report) is a heritage oak tree.

16. In the event that any of the trees dies as a result of the encroachments, the Permittee shall provide mitigation trees of the oak genus at a rate of two to one (2:1) for any non-heritage trees and rate of ten to one (10:1) for any heritage tree. The location of the replacement trees shall be recorded with a GPS and plotted on an "As-built" plan along with their decimal degree coordinates, to be submitted to LA County Planning. Replacement trees shall be planted within the subject property to the satisfaction of the Director. The As-built plan shall serve as a reference so that replacement trees may be easily located during the condition-compliance inspection. Alternatively, contributing to the Oak Forest Special Fund to the satisfaction of County Fire is an alternative if on-site planting is not possible.
17. The Permittee shall comply with all conditions and requirements contained in the County Fire Forester and Fire Warden, Forestry Division ("Forester"), letter dated July 24, 2024 (attached hereto), to the satisfaction of said Division, except as otherwise required by said Division.

Attachments:

- Exhibit D-1 Forester Letter dated July 24, 2024
Exhibit D-2 Oak Trees: Care and Maintenance Guide



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294
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FOURTH DISTRICT

KATHRYN BARGER
FIFTH DISTRICT

July 24, 2024

Christopher La Farge, Planner
Department of Regional Planning
Zoning Permits Section
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Christopher La Farge:

OAK TREE PERMIT NUMBER RPPL2024003171 30500 POCAHANTAS DRIVE, CASTAIC

We have reviewed the "Request for Oak Tree Permit #RPPL2024003171." The project is located at 30500 Pocahantas Drive in the unincorporated area of Castaic. The Oak Tree Report is accurate and complete as to the location, size, condition and species of the Oak trees on the site. The term "Oak Tree Report" refers to the document on file by James Komen, the consulting arborist, dated September 27, 2022.

We recommend the following as conditions of approval:

OAK TREE PERMIT REQUIREMENTS:

1. This grant shall not be effective until the permittee and the owner of the property involved (if other than the permittee), have filed at the office of the Department of Regional Planning their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all conditions of this grant. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "permittee" shall include the applicant and any other person, corporation or other entity making use of this grant.
2. The permittee shall, prior to commencement of the use authorized by this grant, pay the fees invoiced through EPIC-LA to the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. Such fees shall be used to compensate the County Forester per inspection and to cover expenses

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CALABASAS		INDUSTRY		PARAMOUNT		WHITTIER

incurred while inspecting the project to determine the permittee's compliance with the conditions of approval. These fees provide for one (1) initial inspection prior to the commencement of construction and two (2) subsequent inspections until the conditions of approval have been met. The Director of Regional Planning and the County Forester shall retain the right to make regular and unannounced site inspections.

3. Before commencing work authorized or required by this grant, the consulting arborist shall submit a letter to the Director of Regional Planning and the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Forestry Division stating that he or she has been retained by the permittee to perform or supervise the work, and that he or she agrees to report to the Director of Regional Planning and the County Forester, any failure to fully comply with the conditions of the grant. The arborist shall also submit a written report on permit compliance upon completion of the work required by this grant. The report shall include a diagram showing the exact number and location of all mitigation trees planted as well as planting dates.
4. The permittee shall arrange for the consulting arborist or a similarly qualified person to maintain all remaining Oak trees on the subject property that are within the zone of impact as determined by the County Forester for the life of the Oak Tree Permit or the Conditional Use Permit.
5. The permittee shall install temporary chainlink fencing, not less than four (4) feet in height, to secure the protected zone of all remaining Oak trees on site as necessary. The fencing shall be installed prior to grading or tree removal, and shall not be removed without approval of the County Forester. The term "protected zone" refers to the area extending five (5) feet beyond the dripline of the Oak tree (before pruning), or fifteen (15) feet from the trunk, whichever is greater.
6. Copies of the Oak Tree Report, Oak tree map, mitigation planting plan and conditions of approval shall be kept on the project site and available for review. All individuals associated with the project as it relates to the Oak resource shall be familiar with the Oak Tree Report, Oak tree map, mitigation planting plan and conditions of approval.

PERMITTED OAK TREE ENCROACHMENT:

7. This grant allows encroachment within the protected zone of three (3) trees of the Oak genus identified as Trees Number 1, 2 and OP3 (heritage) on the applicant's site plan and Oak Tree Report. Trenching, excavation, or clearance of vegetation within the protected zone of an Oak tree shall be accomplished by the use of hand tools or small hand-held power tools. Any major roots encountered shall be conserved and treated as recommended by the consulting arborist.
8. In addition to the work expressly allowed by this permit, remedial pruning intended to ensure the continued health of a protected Oak tree or to improve its appearance or structure may be performed. Such pruning shall include the removal of deadwood and stubs and medium pruning of branches two-inches in diameter or less in accordance with the guidelines published by the National Arborist Association. In no case shall more than 20% of the tree canopy of any one tree be removed.

9. Except as otherwise expressly authorized by this grant, the remaining Oak trees shall be maintained in accordance with the principles set forth in the publication, "Oak Trees: Care and Maintenance," prepared by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division. A copy of the publication is enclosed with these conditions.

MITIGATION TREES:

10. The permittee shall provide mitigation trees of the Oak genus at a rate of two to one (2:1) for any tree or ten to one (10:1) for any heritage tree specified above that dies as a result of the approved encroachments. In addition, any tree that reaches ordinance size during the construction and monitoring period shall be included in this permit and subject to these conditions of approval.
11. Each mitigation tree shall be at least a 15-gallon specimen in size and measure one (1) inch or more in diameter one (1) foot above the base. Free form trees with multiple stems are permissible provided the combined diameter of the two (2) largest stems of such trees measure a minimum of one (1) inch in diameter one (1) foot above the base.
12. Mitigation trees shall consist of indigenous varieties of Quercus agrifolia, grown from a local seed source.
13. Mitigation trees shall be planted within one (1) year of the permitted Oak tree removals. Mitigation trees shall be planted on site or within the same community if approved by the County Forester. If mitigation trees are deemed impossible by the County Forester, only then a contribution to the County of Los Angeles Oak Forest Special Fund may be made in the amount equivalent to the Oak resource loss. The contribution shall be calculated by the consulting arborist and approved by the County Forester according to the most current edition of the International Society of Arboriculture's "Guide for Plant Appraisal."
14. The permittee shall properly maintain each mitigation tree and shall replace any tree failing to survive due to a lack of proper care and maintenance with a tree meeting the specifications set forth above. The two-year maintenance period will begin upon receipt of a letter from the permittee or consulting arborist to the Director of Regional Planning and the County Forester, indicating that the mitigation trees have been planted. The maintenance period of the trees failing to survive two (2) years will start anew with the new replacement trees. Subsequently, additional monitoring fees shall be required.
15. All mitigation Oak trees planted as a condition of this permit shall be protected in perpetuity by the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance once they have survived the required maintenance period.

NON-PERMITTED ACTIONS AND VIOLATIONS:

16. Encroachment within the protected zone of any additional tree of the Oak genus on the project site is prohibited.

17. Should encroachment within the protected zone of any additional tree of the Oak genus on the project site not permitted by this grant result in its injury or death within two (2) years, the permittee shall be required to make a contribution to the Los Angeles County Oak Forest Special Fund in the amount equivalent to the Oak resource damage/loss. Said contribution shall be calculated by the consulting arborist and approved by the County Forester according to the most current edition of the International Society of Arboriculture's "Guide for Plant Appraisal."
18. No planting or irrigation system shall be installed within the dripline of any Oak tree that will be retained.
19. Utility trenches shall not be routed within the protected zone of an Oak tree unless the serving utility requires such locations.
20. Equipment, materials and vehicles shall not be stored, parked, or operated within the protected zone of any Oak tree. No temporary structures shall be placed within the protected zone of any Oak tree.
21. Violations of the conditions of this grant shall result in immediate work stoppage or in a notice of correction depending on the nature of the violation. A time frame within which deficiencies must be corrected will be indicated on the notice of correction.
22. Should any future inspection disclose that the subject property is being used in violation of any one of the conditions of this grant, the permittee shall be held financially responsible and shall reimburse the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division for all enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance.

To schedule a County Forester inspection, please contact the Environmental Review Unit at (818) 890-5719.

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (818) 890-5719.

Very truly yours,



KIEN TAN, DEPUTY FORESTER, FORESTRY DIVISION
PREVENTION SERVICES BUREAU

KT:jl

Enclosure

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

DETERMINATION DATE: April 3, 2025
PROJECT NUMBER: PRJ2024-000982-(5)
PERMIT NUMBER(S): Oak Tree Permit No. RPPL2024003171
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT: 5
PROJECT LOCATION: Vacant Lot on Pocahantas Drive, Val Verde
OWNER: Willian and Sayra Alvarado
APPLICANT: Willian and Sayra Alvarado
CASE PLANNER: Chris La Farge, Regional Planner
clafarge@planning.lacounty.gov

Los Angeles County ("County") completed an initial review for the above-mentioned project. Based on examination of the project proposal and the supporting information included in the application, the County proposes that an Exemption is the appropriate environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project qualifies for a Class 3 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures and Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land Categorical Exemptions under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304. The Project is categorically exempt because the oak tree encroachments are related to minor alterations in the condition of private land and vegetation associated with the construction of a new single-family residence that do not involve the removal of healthy mature, scenic trees. No trees will be removed as part of this Project.

The proposed construction of the single-family residence would not substantially alter the general topography of the Project Site as the proposed grading is minor and will not cause substantial change to the site condition. The County Biologist determined the oaks form a moderately degraded oak woodland and considering its present condition, the proposed development would not result in a significant impact given that the project is not proposing removal or changing the understory. Per section 15304, Class 4 is intended for small-scale grading, new landscaping, and minor trenching, among other activities. The requested encroachments are considered minor impacts that would not result in further loss of an ecosystem. Furthermore, the County Forester and Fire Warden ("Forester") has reviewed the Project for the requested encroachments. The Project's conditions have been determined by the Forester to be sufficient to recover any losses to trees and woodland values. The impacts from the encroachments do not justify an exception to the Categorical Exemption since the woodland is already degraded.

The proposed construction may compromise the health of Oak Tree No. 1. Additionally, the County Forester has reviewed the Project and recommended standard conditions such as proper temporary fencing around the protected zone during construction and the use of hand tools or hand-held power tools within the protected zones. By incorporating these recommended conditions, the impacts on the oak trees will be minimized. In the event any oak tree dies due to the encroachments, the Forester has also recommended the planting of mitigation trees at the rate of two to one (2:1) for any oak and ten to one (10:1) for any heritage oak.

No exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply to the Project per Section 15300.2 of the California Code of Regulations. The Project Site is not located within or near a historical resource, a hazardous waste site, scenic highway, or an environmentally sensitive area. The surrounding area consists of residential neighborhood, and vacant lands. The subject property is not developed and its surrounding area is partially developed with residences, roadways, driveways, buildings, utility poles, and other infrastructure and partially vacant. There is no significant effect due to unusual circumstances and no cumulative impacts are anticipated.

OAK TREE PERMIT WITH PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

Please identify the number of oak trees proposed for:

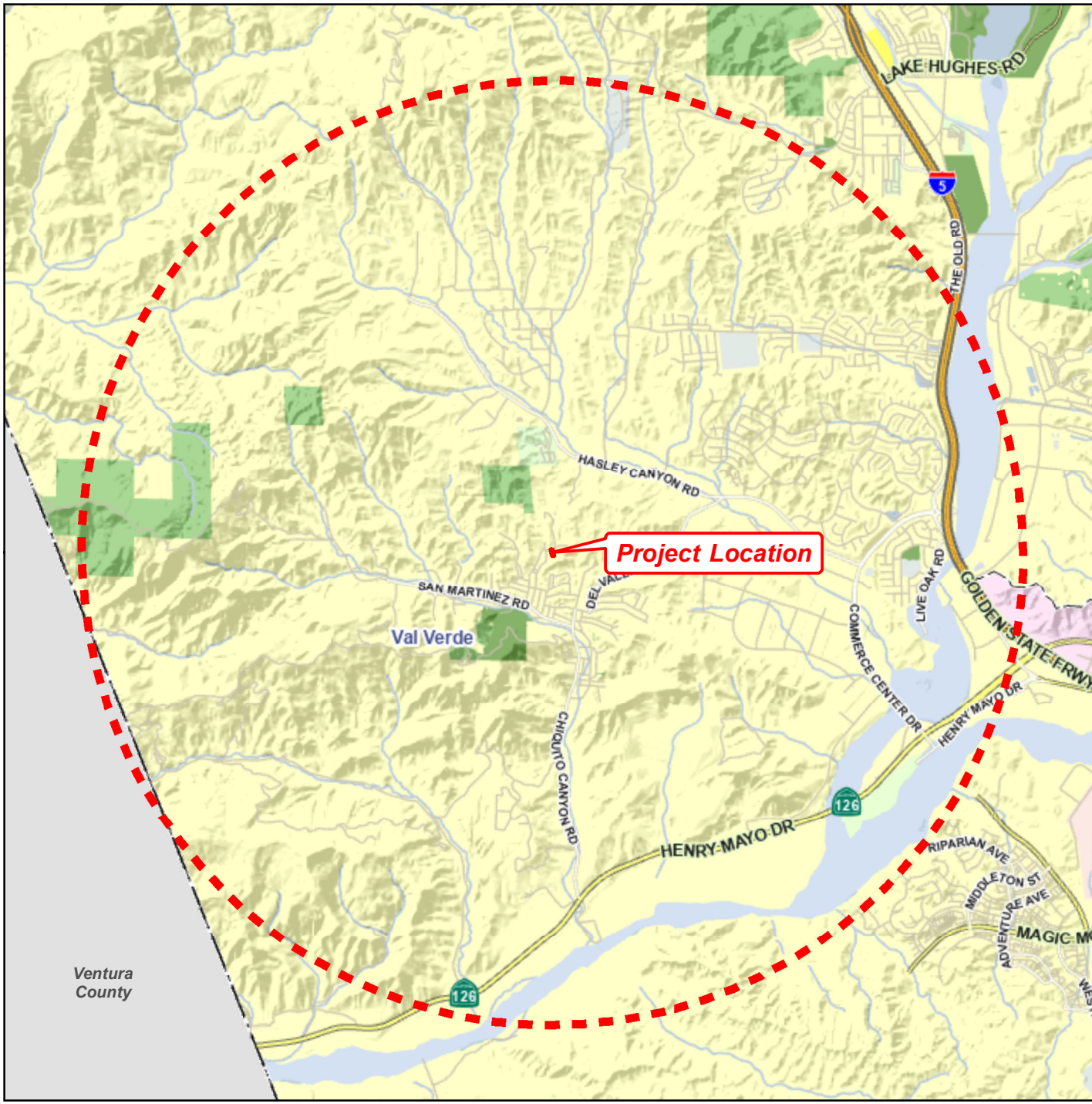
_____ Removal _____ Encroachment _____ To Remain _____ Total existing oak trees

Pursuant to County Code Section [22.174.060](#): Findings, the applicant shall substantiate the following:

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

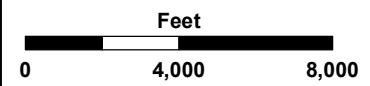
B.1	The proposed construction or proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the remaining trees subject to Title 22 regulations, if any, on the subject property.
B.2	The removal or relocation of the oak trees proposed will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.
B.3	In addition to the above facts, at least one of the following findings apply:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. That the removal or relocation of the oak trees proposed is necessary as continued existence at present locations frustrates the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Alternative development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive, or ii. Placement of such oak trees precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized; b. That the oak trees proposed for removal or relocation interferes with utility services 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 trees; or c. That the condition of the oak trees 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.

B.4	The removal 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.



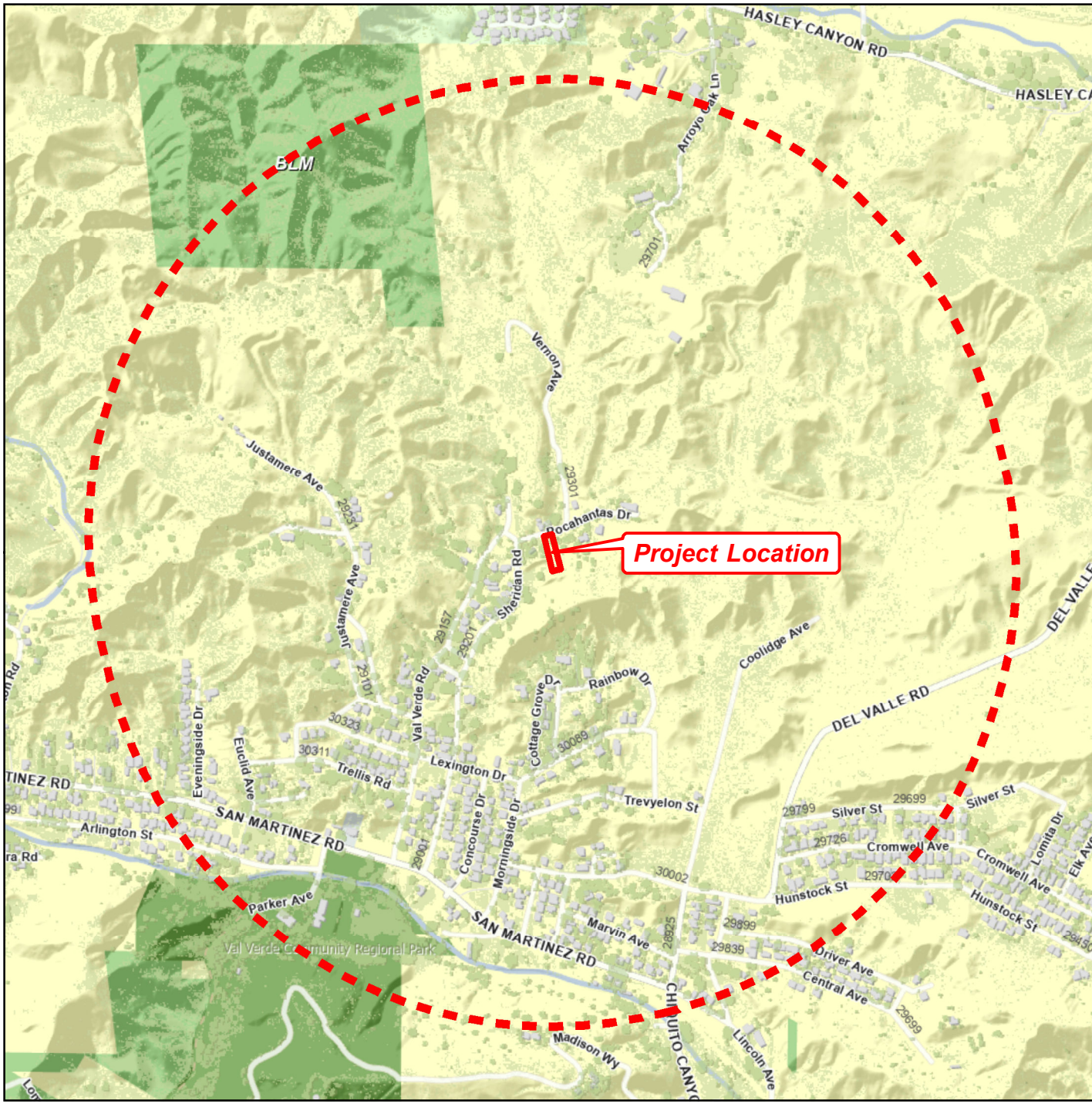
3-MILE RADIUS LOCATOR MAP

PROJECT NO. PRJ2024-000982
OTP RPPL2024003171



**LA COUNTY
PLANNING**

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012



HALF-MILE RADIUS

LOCATOR MAP

PROJECT NO. PRJ2024-000982
OTP RPPL2024003171



0 600 1,200 Feet

LA COUNTY
PLANNING

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
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320 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012



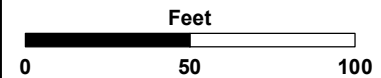
AERIAL IMAGERY

SITE-SPECIFIC MAP

PROJECT NO. PRJ2024-000982

OTP RPPL2024003171

Digital Ortho Aerial Imagery:
Los Angeles Region Imagery
Acquisition Consortium (LARIAC)
2024



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Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012



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FOURTH DISTRICT

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FIFTH DISTRICT

July 24, 2024

Christopher La Farge, Planner
Department of Regional Planning
Zoning Permits Section
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Christopher La Farge:

OAK TREE PERMIT NUMBER RPPL2024003171 30500 POCAHANTAS DRIVE, CASTAIC

We have reviewed the "Request for Oak Tree Permit #RPPL2024003171." The project is located at 30500 Pocahantas Drive in the unincorporated area of Castaic. The Oak Tree Report is accurate and complete as to the location, size, condition and species of the Oak trees on the site. The term "Oak Tree Report" refers to the document on file by James Komen, the consulting arborist, dated September 27, 2022.

We recommend the following as conditions of approval:

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1. This grant shall not be effective until the permittee and the owner of the property involved (if other than the permittee), have filed at the office of the Department of Regional Planning their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all conditions of this grant. Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "permittee" shall include the applicant and any other person, corporation or other entity making use of this grant.
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NON-PERMITTED ACTIONS AND VIOLATIONS:

16. Encroachment within the protected zone of any additional tree of the Oak genus on the project site is prohibited.

17. Should encroachment within the protected zone of any additional tree of the Oak genus on the project site not permitted by this grant result in its injury or death within two (2) years, the permittee shall be required to make a contribution to the Los Angeles County Oak Forest Special Fund in the amount equivalent to the Oak resource damage/loss. Said contribution shall be calculated by the consulting arborist and approved by the County Forester according to the most current edition of the International Society of Arboriculture's "Guide for Plant Appraisal."
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22. Should any future inspection disclose that the subject property is being used in violation of any one of the conditions of this grant, the permittee shall be held financially responsible and shall reimburse the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division for all enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance.

To schedule a County Forester inspection, please contact the Environmental Review Unit at (818) 890-5719.

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (818) 890-5719.

Very truly yours,



KIEN TAN, DEPUTY FORESTER, FORESTRY DIVISION
PREVENTION SERVICES BUREAU

KT:jl

Enclosure

30500 Pocahantas Dr. Arborist Report

Prepared for William Alvarado
14209 Vanowen Street, #208
Van Nuys, CA 91405

Prepared by James Komen
BCMA WE-9909B
RCA #555

Class One Arboriculture Inc.
3763 Ramsdell Ave
Glendale, CA 91214
818-495-5344
classonearboriculture@gmail.com

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Background

I was contacted in September of 2022 by Paciano Diaz on behalf of property owner William Alvarado. Mr. Diaz asked for a proposal for a tree report for a new home construction project on a vacant lot in Val Verde. I visited the site on September 19, 2022 at 1:00pm to collect data for this report.

Project Description

A new single family residence will be built on a vacant hillside lot. There are 7 trees growing on and around the subject property that could potentially be affected by the proposed construction. Of the 7 trees in this report, 3 are protected coast live oaks. One unprotected elderberry tree is proposed for removal. No protected trees are proposed for removal.

The tree protection zones of all three protected oaks will be encroached by some amount of the proposed project. About 30% of the tree protection zone of Tree 1 will be encroached by the footprint of the proposed home. The tree protection zone of Tree 2 will be encroached by less than 10%. Tree OP3 will be encroached by less than 5% of its tree protection zone. Tree 1 may be impacted by the proposed project, but it will be retained in place. Trees 2 and OP3 will not likely be impacted by the proposed project.

A portion of the foundation of the proposed structure will be raised above the soil level within the drip line of Tree 1 to reduce the amount of root disturbance. A trench will be excavated around the perimeter of the proposed structure to build the footing. All excavation will be performed with hand tools under the supervision of the project's Arborist of Record (AOR). If significant roots larger than 1 inch in diameter are encountered, the project's arborist will evaluate whether the roots can be retained or may be severed. Roots crossing the trench will be wrapped in protective foam before the concrete footing is poured.

Tree 1 will be pruned to establish vertical clearance over the work area.

If the recommendations in this report are followed, the impact of the proposed project on Tree 1 will be significant, and the impact on Trees 2 and OP3 will be *de minimis*.

Subject Trees



Tree 1

Quercus agrifolia – Coast Live Oak

This tree is protected by ordinance. It will be retained in place through the proposed construction project.

The canopy is showing symptoms of heat and drought stress. Some of the leaves at the tips are smaller and curled inward, indicating the tree has been chronically drought stressed for at least the past year. Some of the lower scaffold branches were pruned with heading cuts in the past; the tree has subsequently resprouted from some of these heading cuts. Deadwood has accumulated in the canopy over the past several years.

There is a large cavity in the main trunk with openings at the root crown and approximately 6 feet up the trunk. Around the perimeter of each cavity opening is a layer of woundwood approximately 2-3 inches thick. The decay organisms in the cavity have significantly degraded the structural integrity of the tree, but the woundwood partially offsets the strength loss. The whole tree has a *possible* likelihood of failure within the next one year time frame.

The footprint of the proposed home will encroach within approximately 30% of the tree protection zone. Because of the tiered design of the building, the soil closest to the trunk will remain undisturbed. Soil disturbance will be limited to the footprint of the garage footing and the rear portion of the house where it meets natural grade. Between these two areas, the floor of the house will be suspended over the soil, thereby minimizing the potential for root disturbance.

As a consequence of encroaching upon the drip line of this tree, approximately 25% of the canopy must be pruned back to make space for the house. Pruning should be performed by a crew directly supervised by a Certified Arborist, and only the minimum amount of living foliage should be removed to achieve the requisite clearance.

Taken alone, the pruning will not be significant enough to kill the tree. The combined effects of the pruning and of the soil disturbance within the root zone of this tree will likely cause a significant impact on its health. Notwithstanding this anticipated impact, the tree will be retained in place.



Tree 2

Quercus agrifolia – Coast Live Oak



This tree is protected by ordinance. It will be retained in place through the proposed construction project.




The southwest side of the trunk of this tree has an area of bark loss approximately 4 feet in length, a symptom of sunburn injury. Callous wood has begun to roll in around the perimeter of the injury.

Like Tree 1, this tree's health has been inhibited by chronic drought stress. Its foliage is small and curled, indicating an ongoing inadequacy of water. I observed sections of dieback in the crown as well. I recommend pruning off the deadwood.

The footprint of the proposed home will encroach within the tree protection zone. Some amount of excavation will occur, but the excavation is unlikely to cause significant detriment to the tree. All excavation within the tree protection zone should be directly supervised by a Certified Arborist. The overall anticipated impact to this tree is minor.

This tree will also be pruned for clearance over the work area. Only prune the minimum amount of live foliage necessary to achieve the necessary clearance.

	<p>Tree OP3 <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> – Coast Live Oak</p> <p>This tree is protected by ordinance. It is growing on the neighboring property to the west. It will be retained in place.</p> <p>This tree is growing on a steeper section of the slope, and its branches have grown down to the ground level almost all the way around the canopy. The canopy is healthy. The tree has a co-dominant trunk form.</p> <p>One of the longer scaffold branches reaches out over the subject property. This branch will be pruned back to the property line. Pruning shall be performed by a crew directly supervised by a Certified Arborist, and only the minimum amount of living foliage will be removed. The overall impact of this pruning on the tree will be <i>de minimis</i>.</p>
	<p>Tree 4 <i>Sambucus mexicana</i> – Mexican Elderberry</p> <p>This tree is not protected by ordinance. It will be removed to abate fire hazard because it is dead.</p>

	<p>Tree 5 <i>Prunus ilex</i> – Holly Leaf Cherry</p> <p>This tree is not protected by ordinance. Although it has a similar leaf shape to the protected coast live oak, it may be distinguished by its black, fleshy fruits and the lack of hairs on the undersides of the leaves.</p> <p>This tree has symptoms of heat and drought stress. It has been partially suppressed by vines that have colonized its canopy.</p>
	<p>Tree 6 <i>Prunus ilex</i> – Holly Leaf Cherry</p> <p>This tree is not protected by ordinance. Although it has a similar leaf shape to the protected coast live oak, it may be distinguished by its black, fleshy fruits and the lack of hairs on the undersides of the leaves.</p> <p>This tree has symptoms of heat and drought stress.</p>
	<p>Tree 7 <i>Prunus ilex</i> – Holly Leaf Cherry</p> <p>This tree is not protected by ordinance. Although it has a similar leaf shape to the protected coast live oak, it may be distinguished by its black, fleshy fruits and the lack of hairs on the undersides of the leaves.</p> <p>This tree has symptoms of heat and drought stress.</p>

Tree Matrix

Tree	Tag	Species	Common Name	Circ	DBH	#Trunks	Height	Condition	Treat	Rate	Protect	Impact	Natural
1	1848	Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	101"	32"	1	24'	large cavity, heat/drought stress, past heading cuts	prune clearance	C+	Yes	significant: bldg footprint encroach 30% into TPZ	Yes
2	1849	Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	50"	16"	1	24'	deadwood, dieback, bark loss	prune deadwood and clearance	C	Yes	minor: bldg footprint encroach <10% into TPZ	Yes
OP3	no tag	Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	119"	38"	1	31'	healthy, co-dom stems	none	B	Yes	de minimis: bldg footprint encroach <5% into TPZ	Yes
4	no tag	Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry	3x9", 3"	3x3", 1"	4	8'	dead	none	F	No	remove	Yes
5	no tag	Prunus illex	Holly Leaf Cherry	2x9"	2x3"	2	15'	heat/drought, suppressed by vines	none	C	No	none	Yes
6	no tag	Prunus illex	Holly Leaf Cherry	3x8", 3"	3x2.5", 1"	4	9'	heat/drought stress	none	B-	No	none	Yes
7	no tag	Prunus illex	Holly Leaf Cherry	7x9"	7x3"	7	10'	heat/drought stress	none	B-	No	none	Yes

Tree Canopy Matrix

Tree Canopy Matrix				Canopy Spread								Canopy Clearance							
Tree	Species	Lat	Long	N	NE	E	SE	S	SW	W	NW	N	NE	E	SE	S	SW	W	NW
1	Quercus agrifolia	34.452224	-118.660093	20'	18'	18'	18'	13'	15'	18'	16'	5'	10'	5'	8'	3'	6'	8'	8'
2	Quercus agrifolia	34.452157	-118.660097	12'	15'	15'	18'	15'	18'	12'	9'	15'	3'	6'	8'	3'	2'	12'	12'
OP3	Quercus agrifolia	34.452102	-118.660266	22'	23'	24'	20'	22'	24'	24'	30'	0'	0'	0'	0'	0'	0'	8'	12'

Protected Trees to be Removed

No protected trees are planned for removal.

Protected Trees to Remain on Site

Tree	Tag	Species	Common Name	Circ	DBH	#Trunks	Height	Condition	Treat	Rate	Protect	Impact	Natural
1	1848	Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	101"	32"	1	24'	large cavity, heat/drought stress, past heading cuts	prune clearance	C+	Yes	significant: bldg footprint encroach 30% into TPZ	Yes
2	1849	Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	50"	16"	1	24'	deadwood, dieback, bark loss	prune deadwood and clearance	C	Yes	minor: bldg footprint encroach <10% into TPZ	Yes
OP3	no tag	Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	119"	38"	1	31'	healthy, co-dom stems	none	B	Yes	de minimis : bldg footprint encroach <5% into TPZ	Yes

Recommendations and Construction Impact Guidelines

Pre-Construction

These recommendations should be implemented prior to the start of construction:

- Erect tree protection zone (TPZ) fencing as shown in the attached site map:
 - TPZ fencing shall be 4 feet in height, flexible, free standing, and brightly colored.
 - No construction activity, heavy equipment access, or materials storage shall take place within the tree protection zone during construction without the direct supervision and approval of a Certified Arborist.
- Pruning
 - Hire a crew directly supervised by a Certified Arborist on site to ensure the pruning cuts are made to branch unions and do not remove an excessive amount of foliage.
 - Only prune when deemed necessary by the project arborist; as much live foliage as possible should be preserved through the construction process to give the trees the best opportunity to thrive after construction is complete.
 - Prune the dead branches from Trees 1 and 2.
 - Prune Tree 1 for vertical clearance over the footprint of the proposed home. Prune the minimum amount of living foliage necessary to achieve this clearance objective.
 - Prune the branch from Tree OP3 that is resting on the ground and is encroaching into the work area. A heading cut is appropriate in this limited circumstance.
 - Pruning cuts should leave the minimum cross sectional area of exposed woundwood after each final finish cut is made.
 - Retain living branches unless they conflict with the infrastructure or are diseased or defective.
- Supplemental Irrigation
 - Moisten the exposed soil within the drip lines of Trees 1, 2, and 5-7 to a depth of 6-12 inches once per month from July through October, or until the rainy season begins.
 - Use a slow application rate to reduce the amount of runoff down the slope. Irrigation may take up to 8-12 hours at a slow application rate.
 - Make sure that the soil is allowed to completely dry out before applying subsequent irrigation.

During Construction

This is the stage where mechanical injury is the most likely to occur. By following these recommendations, the likelihood of accidental damage will be reduced:

- General Recommendations
 - Inform all construction personnel of the intention to preserve the trees. Many times damage occurs because workers are not aware of the importance of preserving the trees on site. This includes contractors and their respective subcontractors as well.
 - If any changes are made to the plans resulting in any excavation or equipment access within the dripline of a protected tree, the project arborist should be informed. Additional protection measures may need to be discussed.
 - No construction activity should take place within the tree protection zone without direct supervision by the AOR. This includes construction worker access, materials storage, materials disposal, and equipment access. No construction materials should cross the tree protection fencing and lean against any protected tree or be affixed to their trunks.
 - Any excavation within the TPZ shall be supervised by the AOR, and AOR shall be given reasonable advance notice of all planned work to be supervised.
 - If any injury should occur to a tree during construction, the project arborist should be informed within 24 hours so it may be evaluated and treated as soon as possible.
- Demolition and Excavation Phase
 - The AOR should supervise all excavation within the tree protection zones of Trees 1, 2, and OP3. If roots larger than 1 inch are encountered, the arborist will be able to determine whether to preserve or sever them. The arborist should make appropriate severing cuts to root junctions with a sharp cutting tool.
 - Fencing shall be removed only at AOR's direction; work within a TPZ shall be with hand tools; excavations shall be performed with hand tools or an air-spade to preserve roots under the AOR direction, following best management practices:
 - Any excavation within the TPZ shall be performed with hand tools or an air spade to spare any roots of 1-in. diameter and larger.
 - Whenever possible, use the same trench for multiple utilities.

- In cases of needed cutting of large roots (1-in. diameter or larger), an arborist or qualified expert shall supervise the TPZ work for making the cuts correctly.
 - When possible, piping or other installation shall be threaded around or underneath roots of 1-in. or larger.
 - Exposed roots shall be covered with wet cloth or wet burlap during exposure to air.
 - Trenches and holes shall be cleared of small animals that fall in and are trapped at the beginning and end of each working day and before final covering/closing of the trench or hole.
 - Plywood bridges at intervals of 20-ft. shall cover an open trench or hole to provide passage for small animals over the trench between the end of the working day and the start of the next working day. Check for trapped small animals after removal of the plywood bridges at the beginning of each work day.
 - There shall be a check and release of trapped small animals before covering any trench or hole.
- Fencing shall be replaced after work within the TPZ is completed for the day.
- Construction Phase
 - When the footings are laid around the perimeters of the proposed additions, perform excavation using only hand tools within the critical root zones of the adjacent trees. Excavation should be directly supervised by the project arborist. If roots are encountered, the project arborist may make the determination of whether they may be severed or whether they should be encased in foam and preserved.
 - If during any part of the construction phase there is a significant amount of particulates in the air (from cutting materials or any other activity), a shop vacuum or equivalent should be used during the cutting or other activity to reduce the amount of particulates that are deposited on the foliage. If despite a good faith effort to reduce particulates, a layer is still deposited on the foliage, wash it off with a jet of water at the end of each construction day where particulates are deposited.
 - During the painting phase, if spray-application of paint is used within proximity of a protected tree, cover the windward side of the trunk and scaffold branches of the tree with plastic at the beginning of each painting day to avoid paint drifting onto the tree. Remove the plastic at the end of each day to allow for air circulation.

- Clean-Up and Landscaping Phase
 - Retain the tree protection zone fencing until construction activity has been completed or until the landscape installation phase begins. Even when landscapers are permitted near the trees, make sure they are aware of the intention to preserve the trees and the roots if any digging is performed for irrigation lines or plant installation.
 - All irrigation line trenches within the dripline of any protected tree should be hand-dug. If significant roots measuring one inch in diameter or larger are encountered, the project arborist should be consulted. If practical, tunnel underneath the roots to preserve them.
 - Automatic irrigation sprinklers should not apply any moisture within five feet of the trunk of any protected oak tree.

Post-Construction Care

The most stressful time of year for the subject trees will be the summer immediately following construction. The following management practices are recommended:

- Retain the leaf drop around the root zone of the subject trees where practical. The best ground cover for a tree is its own leaf mulch. Leaf mulch will continue to reduce soil evaporation and mitigate soil temperature changes. If leaf drop is not practical for use, apply a layer of coarse mulch 2-4 inches thick around the bases of the trees.
- The subject trees should be monitored annually by a Certified Arborist for development of disease, decay, or other symptoms of stress due to construction activity. Deadwood may be removed as it appears, and as much live wood as possible should be retained on the trees, provided that it doesn't come into conflict with the infrastructure.

Construction Monitoring and Mitigation Trees

- The AOR shall visit the property at least once per calendar quarter during construction and then annually for seven years after construction to inspect the condition of the subject oak trees. A short summary report shall be prepared summarizing the arborist's findings.
- Reports shall have a map of all oak trees, including any planted mitigation trees, on a map to scale with a scale bar and north arrow, showing trunk location, actual canopy, and TPZ.
- Mitigation reports shall also have a table of encroached and mitigation trees, tabulating tree characteristics and conditions for all years, adding a column for the new year and report, adding a row and unique number for any replacement tree.
- In addition the mitigation plan shall provide:
 - o condition recommendations for care of oak trees during the project construction,
 - o condition recommendations for care of oak trees following construction and in perpetuity, and
 - o improvement of conditions that will support the oak woodland of the project in perpetuity.
- Reports shall go to the Los Angeles County Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP) and the applicant.
- Replacement of each encroached tree that dies requires 2 trees, monitored for 7 years following the year of planting.
- Replacement of each replacement tree that dies requires 1 tree, monitored for the term of 7 years.
- If the AOR or DRP determines that death is due to neglect, then any replacement tree will be monitored for a full 7 years after planting.

Limitations

My observations are based on a strictly visual inspection of the property, and some hidden or buried symptoms and signs may not have been observed. I did not conduct excavation, coring, or climbing inspection to make observations. I relied upon the information provided to me by the client regarding the history of the site. If any part of this information is found to be incorrect, the conclusions in this report may be invalidated.

My analysis is only based on the observations I gathered at the time of inspection. I do not guarantee the safety of the subject trees. There is no warranty or guarantee, expressed or implied, that problems or deficiencies may not arise in the future.

Arborists are tree specialists who use their knowledge, education, training, and experience to examine trees, recommend measures to enhance the beauty and health of trees, and attempt to reduce the risk of living trees. Clients may choose to accept or disregard the recommendations of the arborist, or to seek additional advice.

Arborists cannot detect every condition that could possibly lead to structural failure of a tree. Trees are living organisms that fail in ways not fully understood. Conditions are often hidden within trees and below ground. Arborists cannot guarantee that a tree will be healthy or safe under all circumstances, or for a specified period of time. Likewise, remedial treatments, like any medicine, cannot be guaranteed.

Treatment, pruning, and removal of trees may involve considerations beyond the scope of the arborist's services such as property boundaries, property ownership, locations of surveyed landmarks, disputes between neighbors, and other issues. Arborists cannot take such considerations into account unless complete and accurate information is disclosed to the arborist. An arborist should then be expected to reasonably rely upon the completeness and accuracy of the information provided.

Trees can be managed, but they cannot be controlled. To live near trees is to accept some degree of risk. The only way to eliminate all risk associated with trees is to eliminate all trees.

Site Photos



Figure 1: Tree 1



Figure 2: There is a large cavity in the trunk of Tree 1.



Figure 3: Tree 2



Figure 4: There is evidence of bark loss on the trunk of Tree 2.



Figure 5: Tree OP3



Figure 6: Tree 4

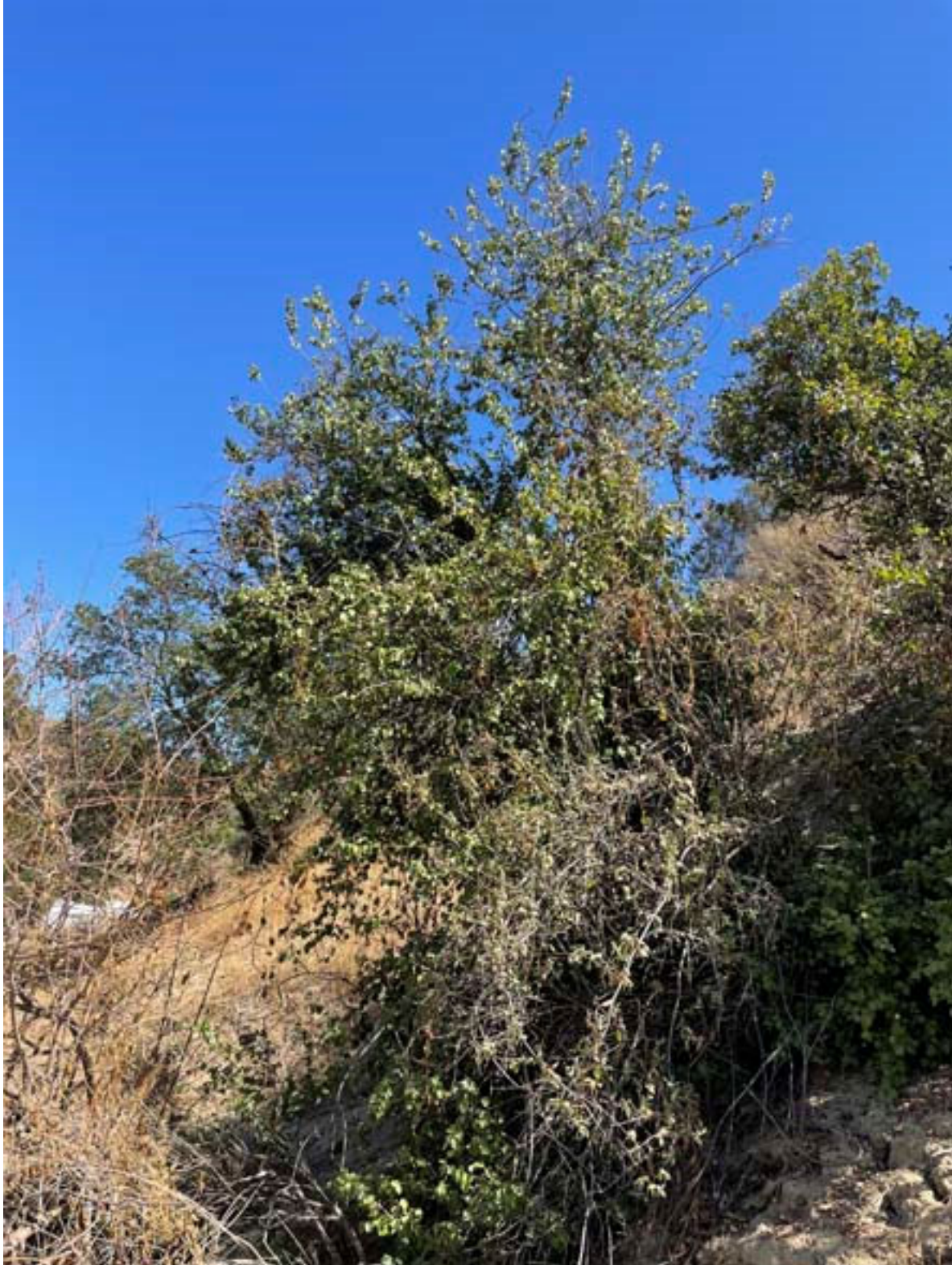


Figure 7: Tree 5



Figure 8: Tree 6



Figure 9: Tree 7