



Tree Committee
AGENDA

Monday, May 19, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

Council Hearing Room, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

The Tree Committee holds in-person meetings. Zoom participation will not be supported at this time. Attendees of City Council or Advisory Body meetings are eligible to receive one hour of complimentary parking; restrictions apply, visit [Parking for Public Meetings](#) for more details.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public Comment prior to the meeting (must be received 3 hours in advance of the meeting):

Mail - Delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. Address letters to the City Clerk's Office at 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, California, 93401.

Email - Submit Public Comments via email to advisorybodies@slocity.org. In the body of your email, please include the date of the meeting and the item number (if applicable). Emails *will not* be read aloud during the meeting.

Voicemail - Call (805) 781-7164 and leave a voicemail. Please state and spell your name, the agenda item number you are calling about, and leave your comment. Verbal comments must be limited to 3 minutes. Voicemails *will not* be played during the meeting.

**All correspondence will be archived and distributed to members, however, submissions received after the deadline may not be processed until the following day.*

Public Comment during the meeting:

Meetings are held in-person. To provide public comment during the meeting, you must be present at the meeting location.

Electronic Visual Aid Presentation. To conform with the City's Network Access and Use Policy, Chapter 1.3.8 of the [Council Policies & Procedures Manual](#), members of the public who desire to utilize electronic visual aids to supplement their oral presentation must provide display-ready material to the City Clerk by 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Contact the City Clerk's Office at cityclerk@slocity.org or (805) 781-7114.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ben Parker will call the Special Meeting of the Tree Committee to order.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The public is encouraged to submit comments on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Tree Committee that does not appear on this agenda.

Although the Committee will not take action on items presented during the Public Comment Period, the Chair may direct staff to place an item on a future agenda for discussion.

3. PRESENTATION

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault will provide a presentation on the Brown Act and Robert's Rules of Order.

4. CONSENT

Matters appearing on the Consent Calendar are expected to be non-controversial and will be acted upon at one time. A member of the public may request the Tree Committee to pull an item for discussion. The public may comment on any and all items on the Consent Agenda within the three-minute time limit.

4.a CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES - APRIL 28, 2025 TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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Recommendation:

To approve the Tree Committee Minutes of April 28, 2025.

5. TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

5.a REQUEST FOR THE REMOVAL OF 5 PALM TREES LOCATED AT 2777 FLORA ST (APPLICATION NO. TREE-0179-2025)

9

Recommendation:

Review the proposed tree removal application for consistency with the Municipal Code Section 12.24.090(E) and provide a recommendation to the Community Development Director.

6. COMMENT AND DISCUSSION

6.a ARBORIST REPORT

Receive a brief update from Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Meeting of the Tree Committee meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo.

LISTENING ASSISTIVE DEVICES are available -- see the Clerk

The City of San Luis Obispo wishes to make all of its public meetings accessible to the public. Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities. Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting should direct such request to the City Clerk's Office at (805) 781-7114 at least 48 hours before the meeting, if possible. Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (805) 781-7410.

Agenda related writings or documents provided to the Tree Committee are available for public inspection on the City's website:

<https://www.slocity.org/government/mayor-and-city-council/agendas-and-minutes>. Meeting video recordings can be found on the City's website:

<http://opengov.slocity.org/WebLink/Browse.aspx?id=61087&dbid=0&repo=CityClerk>



Tree Committee Minutes

April 28, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

Council Hearing Room, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo

Tree Committee Members Present:	Member Henry Bonifas, Member Dan Shinn, Vice Chair Ben Parker, Chair Elizabeth Lucas
Tree Committee Members Absent:	Member Daniel Canella, Member Charles Gerencser, Member Emily Rosten
City Staff Present:	Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault, Deputy City Clerk Kevin Christian

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the San Luis Obispo Tree Committee was called to order on April 28, 2025 at 5:33 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, by Chair Lucas.

2. OATH OF OFFICE

Deputy City Clerk Kevin Christian administered the Oath of Office to Dan Shinn.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

As required by the Tree Committee Bylaws, the committee held an election for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair.

Motion By Member Bonifas

Second By Member Shinn

Motion to elect Ben Parker as Tree Committee Chair.

Ayes (4): Member Bonifas, Member Shinn, Vice Chair Parker, and Chair Lucas

Absent (3): Member Canella, Member Gerencser, and Member Rosten

CARRIED (4 to 0)

Motion By Vice Chair Parker
Second By Chair Lucas

Motion to elect Emily Rostin as Tree Committee Vice Chair.

Ayes (4): Member Bonifas, Member Shinn, Vice Chair Parker, and Chair Lucas

Absent (3): Member Canella, Member Gerencser, and Member Rosten

CARRIED (4 to 0)

4. PRESENTATION

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist, Walter Gault, provided a presentation on the Brown Act and Robert's Rules of Order.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Public Comment:

Fitzgerald Kelly

Lindsey Hiber

--End of Public Comment--

6. CONSENT

6.a CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES - MARCH 24, 2025, TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Motion By Member Shinn

Second By Member Bonifas

To approve the Tree Committee Minutes of March 24, 2025.

Ayes (4): Member Bonifas, Member Shinn, Member Lucas, and Chair Parker

Absent (3): Member Canella, Member Gerencser, and Member Rosten

CARRIED (4 to 0)

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.a 2025 ENGINEERING STANDARDS UPDATE, STREET TREES MAJOR LIST (8020)

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault provided a review of tree related Engineering Standard modifications discussed to date, presented a report on possible additional recommendations, and responded to Committee questions.

Public Comment:

Fitzgerald Kelly
Lindsey Hiber

--End of Public Comment--

Motion By Chair Lucas

Second By Member Shinn

Motion to recommend approval of the updates to the 2025 Engineering Standards, Street Trees Major List (8020) as presented.

Ayes (4): Member Bonifas, Member Shinn, Member Lucas, and Chair Parker

Absent (3): Member Canella, Member Gerencser, and Member Rosten

CARRIED (4 to 0)

8. COMMENT AND DISCUSSION

8.a ARBORIST REPORT

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault provided an update of upcoming projects and activities in the Tree Division and responded to Committee inquiries.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m. The next Special Meeting of the Tree Committee is scheduled for May 19, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo.

APPROVED BY TREE COMMITTEE: XX/XX/202X

TREE COMMITTEE AGENDA REPORT

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR THE REMOVAL OF 5 PALM TREES LOCATED AT 2777 FLORA ST (APPLICATION NO. TREE-0179-2025)

FROM: Walter Gault, City Arborist
Phone Number: (805) 781-7578
Email: wgault@slocity.org

RECOMMENDATION

Review the proposed tree removal application for consistency with the Municipal Code Section 12.24.090(E) and provide a recommendation to the Community Development Director.

1.0 APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Joshua Davis, the applicant, has requested the removal of five (5) *Washingtonia robusta* (Mexican Fan Palm) at 2777 Flora Street located within the R-1 zone. The applicant has indicated in their application that the trunks and roots of the palms are impacting an existing solar thermal system, have outgrown their planter boxes and that the fronds have become dangerous.

The applicant would like to remove the palm trees and replace them with five (5) compensatory trees onsite including one (1) Dogwood in the front yard, two (2) *Jacaranda mimosifolia* (Purple Trumpet) in the parkway along El Paseo Ct, and two (2) non-fruiting Olive trees in the backyard.

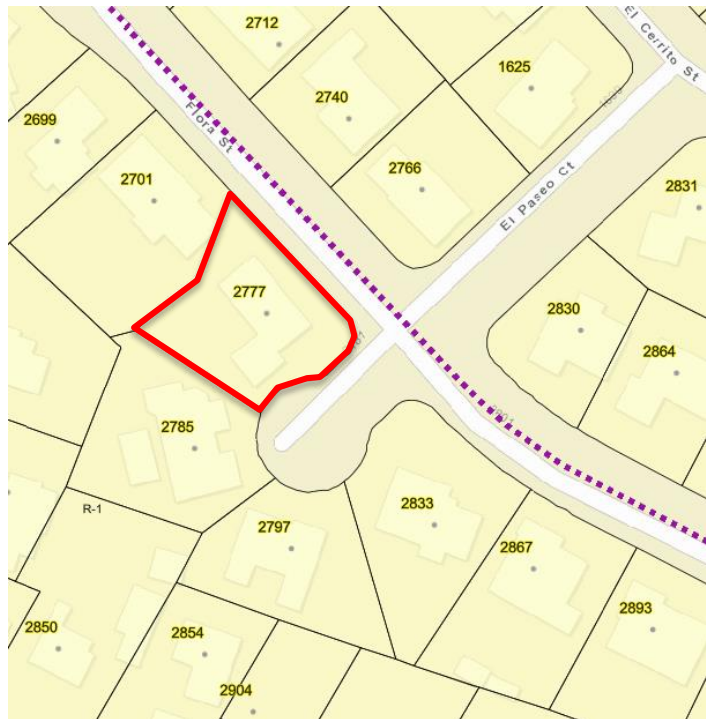


Figure 1 – Site of proposed tree removals

TREE-0179-2025
Tree Committee Report – 5-19-2025

2.0 COMMITTEE PURVIEW

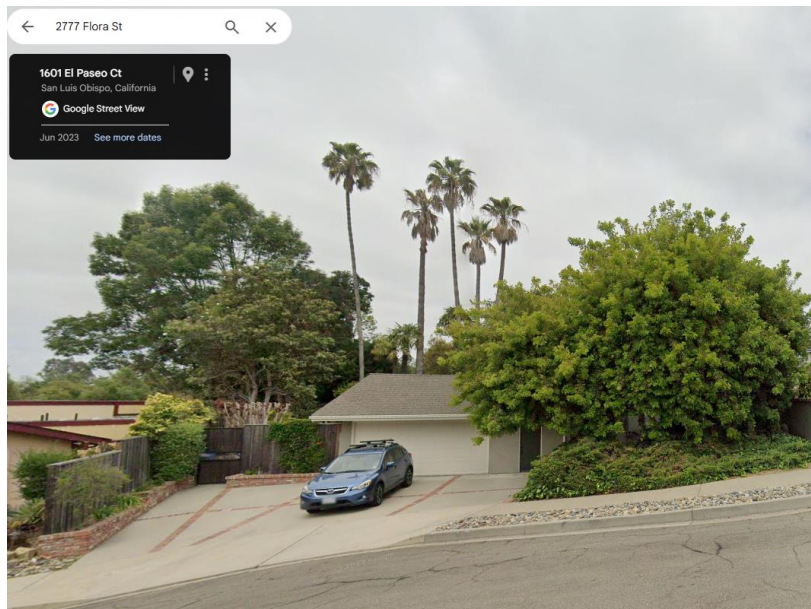


Figure 2 – View of palm trees (on left) from El Paseo Ct.

The Tree Committee's role is to review the removal request in accordance with the process set forth in San Luis Obispo Municipal Code (SLOMC) [Chapter 12.24](#), specifically [Section 12.24.090\(E\)\(3\)](#) - tree removals related to property owner convenience. This code section utilizes the process set forth in [subsection F\(2\)](#), the relevant additional application requirements in [subsection \(D\)\(2\)](#) and the criteria set forth in [subsection \(G\)](#).

3.0 TREE REGULATIONS

The City's Tree Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.24) was adopted with the purpose of establishing a comprehensive program for installing, maintaining, and preserving trees within the City. This ordinance establishes policies, regulations, and specifications necessary to govern installation, maintenance, removal, and preservation of trees to beautify the city; to purify the air; to provide shade and wind protection; to add environmental and economic value; and to preserve trees with historic or unusual value.

Criteria for Convenience Tree Removal Applications.

SLOMC §12.24.090 subsection (E)(3) requires review by the Tree Committee using the criteria set for in SLOMC §12.24.090(G). Applicable criteria are provided in italics below and followed by a description of the proposed tree removals as it relates to that criterion.

- *(G)(1). Size of Tree. The scale of the tree shall be considered, as well as the size of the tree's canopy. Larger, more visually prominent trees may have a higher preservation priority than smaller, less visually prominent trees.*

The trees proposed for removal are large and visually prominent in the neighborhood.

- *(G)(2). Location of Tree on Private Property. The location of the tree on private property shall be considered. Trees located in a private rear yard, which are not highly visible from the public right-of-way, may have a lower preservation priority than trees with a high visual impact to the neighborhood.*

The tree proposed for removal is located in the backyard but it is also highly visible from the public right of way.

- (G)(3). *Species of Tree*. Native trees shall have a higher preservation priority than non-native trees.

The trees proposed for removal are non-native.

- (G)(4). *Forestry Best Practice*. The number of healthy trees that a given parcel of land will support shall be considered, and whether removal would enhance the health or survival of remaining trees. Applications that increase biodiversity of native trees and tree age distribution within a given area are preferred.

The removal and replanting would increase the biodiversity of the urban forest and tree age distribution.

- (G)(6). *Compliance with Subsection J of This Section Regarding Compensatory Plantings*. The approving authority may consider an application proposal to provide compensatory plantings in excess of required minimums in evaluating this criterion.

The applicant is proposing to meet the minimum required replanting rate of 1:1.

- (G)(7). *Heritage Trees*. Heritage trees have the highest preservation priority.

The trees are not heritage trees.

4.0 ACTIONS

- 4.1 Recommend findings of consistency with the Tree Regulations. An action recommending approval of the proposed tree removals based on consistency will be forwarded to the Community Development Director for final action. This action may include recommendations regarding the compensatory replanting plan with size and species of tree.
- 4.2 Recommend findings of inconsistency with the Tree Regulations. An action recommending denial of the proposed tree removals should include findings that cite the basis for denial and should reference inconsistency with the General Plan, Tree Regulations, or other policy documents.
- 4.3 Continue the project to a hearing date certain, or uncertain. An action continuing the review of the proposed tree removals should include direction to the applicant and staff on pertinent issues.

TREE-0179-2025
Tree Committee Report – 5-19-2025

5.0 ATTACHMENTS

- A - Tree Removal Application Form
- B - Site Plan
- C - Photo Catalogue & Replanting Plan
- D - Arborist Report



Community Development

919 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-3218
805.781.7170
slocity.org

TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

For all Non-Construction and Construction related tree removals

Owner Name: Joshua Davis		Applicant Name: Joshua Davis	
Address: 2777 Flora Street		Address: 2777 Flora Street	
City: San Luis Obispo	Zip: 93401	City: San Luis Obispo	Zip: 93401
Phone: (503) 329-9580		Phone: (503) 329-9580	
Email: joshua.ac.davis@gmail.com		Email: joshua.ac.davis@gmail.com	
Address of Tree(s): 2777 Flora Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401			
Number of trees applying to remove: five			
Tree Species: Washingtonia Robustas			
Reason for Removal: The tree trunks and roots are blocking the pipes to the existing solar thermal system which needs to be replaced. The trees have outgrown the planter boxes and the fronds (dead and alive) have become hazardous.			
Is this removal a City Tree? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW Dog in yard? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO			
Is this associated with a Building Permit or Development Plan? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO If YES, please provide appropriate reference numbers:			
Is this property governed by a Homeowners Association (HOA)? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO If YES, please provide HOA Board Approved Meeting minutes authorizing tree removal(s) with your tree removal application.			

ALL ITEMS BELOW MUST BE INCLUDED TO PROCESS TREE REMOVAL APPLICATIONS

- ☐ Tree(s) banded with ribbon or duct tape for identification
- ☐ Site plan drawing or photo of tree site with Tree ID (Tree#1, Tree #2, etc.)
- ☐ Supporting documentation (repair, receipts, etc.)
- ☐ Photo log showing damage or reasons for removal¹
- ☐ Replanting plan²
- ☐ Arborist Report³

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
FAILURE TO KEEP TREES BANDED MAY RESULT IN A REJECTED APPLICATION.



1. Include a photo log that clearly shows the trees requested for removal. All tree(s) must be uniquely identified by a number and a ribbon, or an identifier wrapped around the trunk in the photo and prior to inspection.



2. Include a replanting plan in accordance with Section 12.24.090(J) of the City's Municipal Code. A minimum 1:1 replanting rate is required for plantings onsite, and a minimum 2:1 replanting rate is required for plantings offsite or within the public right-of-way.



3. An application for tree removal on a site where a discretionary or ministerial development permit is requested shall include an arborist report and a site plan that includes accurate drip line delineation and cross sections of construction work impacting both trees proposed for removal and trees planned to remain.

Tree Removal Decisions as outlined in Section 12.24.090 of the City's Municipal Code

SELECT TYPE OF TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION BEING SUBMITTED		DECISION MAKER
<input type="checkbox"/>	Imminent Hazard to Life or Property SLOMC <u>12.24.090(E)(1)(a)</u>	City Arborist
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tree Health and Hazard Mitigation SLOMC <u>12.24.090(E)</u>	City Arborist
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Convenience Removal SLOMC <u>12.24.090(E)(3)</u> <i>Tree Committee makes recommendation to Community Development Director</i>	Community Development Director
<input type="checkbox"/>	Minor Ministerial Development Permit SLOMC <u>12.24.090(F)(1)</u> <i>Removal for residential or accessory construction on an R-1 or R-2 lot</i>	City Arborist
<input type="checkbox"/>	Discretionary Permits Construction Tree Removal SLOMC <u>12.24.090(F)(3)</u>	Community Development Director
<input type="checkbox"/>	Major Development / Tentative Tract Map/ Conditional Use Permit SLOMC <u>12.24.090(F)(4)</u>	Planning Commission

Submittal Instructions

Submit Tree Removal applications to the City of San Luis Obispo, Community Development Department at the following address: 919 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 or by email to trees@slocity.org.

Payment of the "Tree Removal Permit" fee shall be submitted along with this application. Refer to the City's current Comprehensive Fee Schedule for the current fee.

Property Owner Authorization:

By signing this application, I certify that I have reviewed this completed application and the attached material and consent to its filing. I agree to allow the Community Development Department to duplicate and distribute submitted materials to interested persons as it determines is necessary for the processing of the application.

application.

John A. C. Davis 3/9/2025

Signed Date

Applicant/ Representative Certification:

By signing this application, I certify that the information provided is accurate. I understand the City might not approve what I'm applying for or might set conditions of approval. I agree to allow the Community Development Department to duplicate and distribute submitted materials to interested persons as it determines is necessary for processing of the application.

necessary for processing of the application.

Joshua A. C. Doni 3/9/2025

Signed Date

Permission to Access Property:

This section is to be completed by the property owner and/or occupant who controls access to the property. To adequately evaluate the submitted proposal, Community Development Department Staff, Commissioners and City Council Members will have to gain access to the exterior of the real property in order to adequately review and report on the proposed request. Your signature below certifies that you agree to give the City permission to access the project site from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, as part of the normal review of this application.

Signed Joshua A. C. Qui Date 3/9/2025

Indemnification Agreement:

The Owner/Applicant shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City or its agents or officers and employees from any claim, action or proceeding against the City or its agents, officers or employees, to attack, set aside, void, or annul, in whole or in part, the City's approval of this project. In the event that the City fails to promptly notify the Owner / Applicant of any such claim, action or proceeding, or that the City fails to cooperate fully in the defense of said claim, this condition shall thereafter be of no further force or effect.

Signed John A. C. Jones Date 3/9/2025

FLORA ST

El

Paseo
Ct.

Neighbor
#2701

House

2777 Flora St

Garage

Trees
1-3

Tree 4

Tree 5

Pool

Photo Log for 2777 Flora St
Tree Removal Application for Five Palm Trees in Backyard

1. Picture of all five Washingtonia Robustas palm trees. Palm trees are marked by pink ribbons. Trees 1-3 are in a cluster on the right-hand side and are marked by one ribbon on each trunk. Tree 4 is in the middle and is marked by 2 pink ribbons on the trunk. Tree 5 is on the left-hand side and marked by three pink ribbons on the trunk.



2. Trees 1-3 cluster. Each tree has a single ribbon around the trunks. First picture is the base. Second picture is looking at the trees from the other side.





3. Tree 4. The tree has two ribbons around the trunk. First picture is the base. Second picture is full height. The third picture shows the solar thermal pipes that transports the pool water up to the roof of the house to heat. The pipes are at the base of the fence and go behind the tree trunks.







4. Tree 5. The tree has three ribbons around the trunk. First picture is the base. Second picture is full height.





Replanting Plan for 2777 Flora St in accordance with 12.24.090(J)

Notes:

- Application is for removal of five trees
- Intent is to compensate each tree removal with one new tree, if needed

Compensatory plantings:

- a dogwood tree in the front yard adjacent to existing dogwood
- two jacaranda trees on street frontage to match neighbor's street frontage plantings
- two non-fruiting olive trees along back fence by pool to match neighbor's olive trees in their yard

Memorandum

To: Joshua Davis
2777 Flora Street
San Luis Obispo CA 93401
503.329.9580
joshua.ac.davis@gmail.com

From: Sam Oakley
Master Arborist WE-9474B
Consulting Arborist #556
415.407.6995
sam@oakleygroup.org

Subject: Tree Assessment at 2777 Flora Street, San Luis Obispo

Date: February 17, 2025

Introduction

We were asked to prepare an arborist report for five (5) *Washingtonia robusta* (Mexican Fan Palm) tree at 2777 Flora Street in San Luis Obispo, California.

Observations

The five subject trees are *Washingtonia robusta*, 17-, 26-inches DSH, and a 21, 22, and 36-inch DSH cluster (Fig. 1).

They are growing in a narrow, raised planter bordering the northwest property line in the backyard of the 2777 Flora Street property (Fig. 2).

The palms are in fair health with front tip necrosis and frond dieback typical of the species.

They are 60- to 70-feet in height.

The palms share their planter with a native oak, pittosporum shrubs, and several smaller palm trees (Fig. 3).



Figure 1: image of the subject palms in their planter.

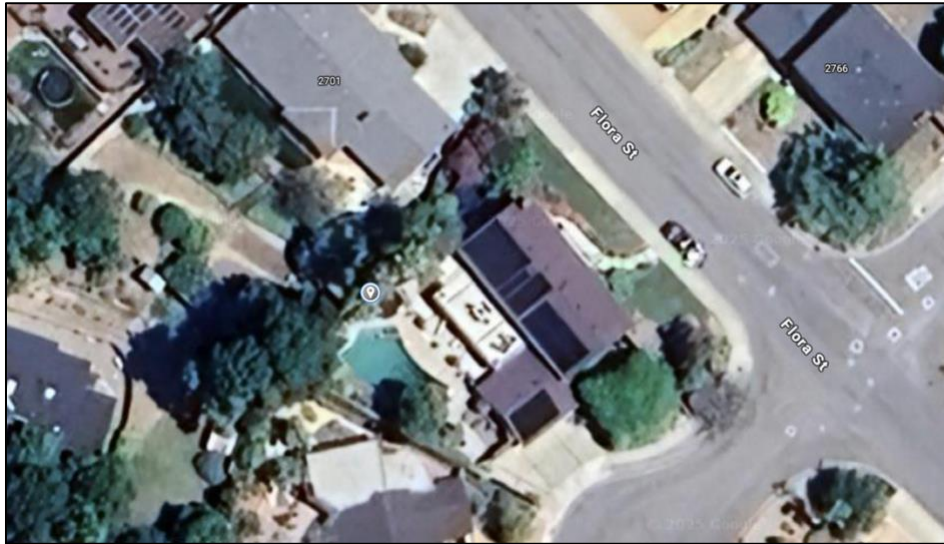


Figure 2: subject palms location at 2777 Flora Street (grey marker).



Figure 3: the narrow planter the palms are growing in (red arrow showing the heat pipe that need replacement).

Discussion

The palms are considered regulated pursuant to Chapter 12.24.090 of the SLOMC.

The primary concern regarding these palms is that the palms have outgrown their planter, and you would like them removed. I agree that the planter is inadequate for their future growth and they should be removed.

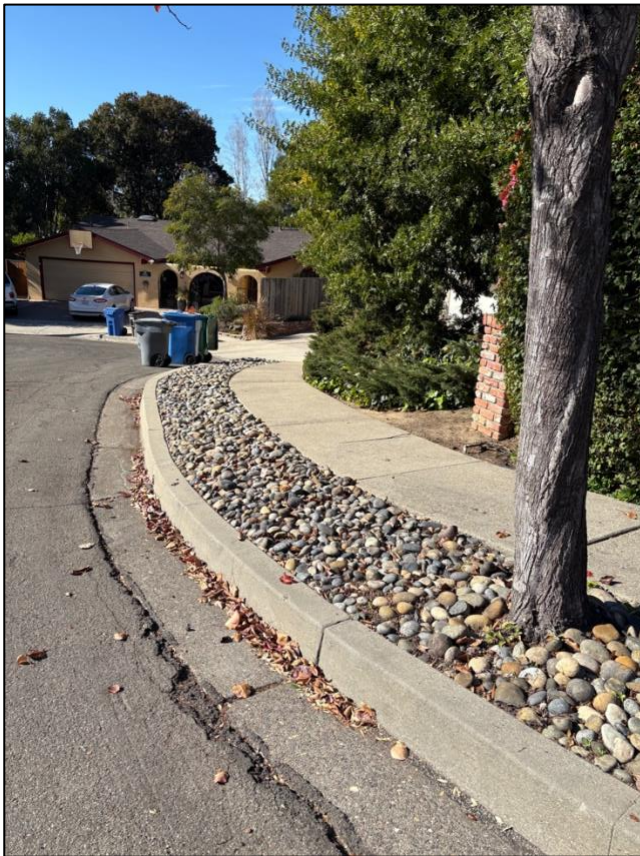


Figure 4: potential replanting locations along El Paseo Court.

Secondly, you have had several near-misses of fronds that have fallen and struck the ground at terminal velocity, and you are concerned that eventually a falling frond will injure someone. Annual pruning can mitigate the potential for fronds to build up in the crown and fall.

Lastly, you expressed that the pool's solar water heater piping needs repairing and cannot be done without the palms removed. I have confirmed that the palm trunks are growing directly into the pipe. Removing and repairing/replacing the pipe would cause irreparable damage to the trunks of several palms.

Removal of these palms would likely require replacement. We have determined that at least three (3) replacement trees could be located along the street frontage of El Paseo Court (Fig. 4). Other trees can be located within the front yard landscaping.

Recommendations

I recommend that you consider removing the palms to repair the water heater piping. I recommend that you:

- An application for removal be prepared and submitted. If removal is granted, remove the palms and perform repairs to the infrastructure as soon as possible. Replace as required.