



Tree Committee
AGENDA

Monday, August 25, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

Council Hearing Room, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo

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 Regular Meeting of the Tree Committee to order.

2. OATH OF OFFICE

On August 19, 2025 the City Council will consider appointing Kari Gephart to the Tree Committee for the remainder of the vacated term expiring March 31, 2026. If approved, Deputy City Clerk Sara Armas will administer the Oath of Office to the newly-appointed commissioner.

3. 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.

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 - JULY 28, 2025 TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

5

Recommendation:

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

5. TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

5.a REVIEW A TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION TO REMOVE ONE (1) VELVET ASH STREET TREE LOCATED AT 1524 BALBOA ST (APPLICATION: TREE-0415-2025)

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 September 22, 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-](https://www.slocity.org/government/mayor-and-city-council/agendas-and-minutes)

[minutes](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

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

Council Hearing Room, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo

Tree Committee Members Present: Member Henry Bonifas, Member Charles Gerencser, Member Dan Shinn, Vice Chair Emily Rosten, Chair Ben Parker

Tree Committee Members Absent: Member Daniel Canella

City Staff Present: Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault, Deputy City Clerk Sara Armas

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the San Luis Obispo Tree Committee was called to order on July 28, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room at City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, by Chair Parker.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Public Comment:

Fitzgerald Kelly

--End of Public Comment--

3. CONSENT

3.a CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES - MAY 19, 2025 TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Motion By Member Bonifas

Second By Vice Chair Rosten

To approve the Tree Committee Minutes of May 19, 2025.

Ayes (5): Member Bonifas, Member Gerencser, Member Shinn, Vice Chair Rosten, and Chair Parker

Absent (1): Member Canella

CARRIED (5 to 0)

4. TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION

4.a REVIEW A TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION TO REMOVE ONE (1) CHINESE PISTACHE LOCATED ADJACENT TO THE OSOS ST RAILROAD SAFETY INTERSECTION (APPLICATION: TREE-0432-2025)

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault presented the staff report, provided an overview of the Tree Removal application on behalf of the City, and responded to Committee inquiries.

Chair Parker opened Public Comment

Public Comment:

Fitzgerald Kelly

--End of Public Comment--

Chair Parker closed Public Comment

Motion By Vice Chair Rosten

Second By Member Shinn

Recommend that the Community Development Director approve the tree removal request per Municipal Code Section 12.24.090(G), based on the findings below, and further recommend a 3:1 compensatory replanting rate in addition to mitigating the soil with organic matter and mulch in the proposed replanting location.

Findings:

- 12.24.090.G(3) Species: Tree is non-native
- 12.24.090.G(4) Forestry Best Practice: Tree is close to other trees - removal may encourage broader canopy from the remaining trees
- 12.24.090.G(6) Compensatory Plantings: Landscaping plan exceeds required minimum for replanting (2:1 offsite) with 3:1
- 12.24.090.G(7) Heritage Status: Not a Heritage tree

Ayes (5): Member Bonifas, Member Gerencser, Member Shinn, Vice Chair Rosten, and Chair Parker

Absent (1): Member Canella

CARRIED (5 to 0)

4.b REVIEW A TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION TO REMOVE ONE (1)
AFRICAN FERN PINE LOCATED AT 1421 BROAD ST (APPLICATION:
TREE-0288-2025)

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault presented the staff report and responded to Committee inquiries.

Applicant representative, Ron Combs of Bunyon Bros., provided an overview of the Tree Removal Application and responded to questions raised.

Chair Parker opened Public Comment

Public Comment:

None

--End of Public Comment--

Chair Parker closed Public Comment

Motion By Member Gerencser

Second By Vice Chair Rosten

Recommend that the Community Development Director deny the tree removal request per Municipal Code Section 12.24.090(G), under Section 12.24.090(E)(3), based on the findings below; and further recommend the applicant consider the City Arborist's recommendations for tree maintenance to create a safer environment for the structure and surrounding property impacted by the tree.

Findings:

- 12.24.090.G(1) Size of Tree: Tree is large and visually prominent in the neighborhood
- 12.24.090.G(2) Location of Tree: Tree is highly visible from public right-of-way
- 12.24.090.G(5) Right-of-Way Impact: Tree is not impacting the Public Right-of-Way either by obstruction or displacement

Ayes (5): Member Bonifas, Member Gerencser, Member Shinn, Vice Chair Rosten, and Chair Parker

Absent (1): Member Canella

CARRIED (5 to 0)

5. COMMENT AND DISCUSSION

5.a ARBORIST REPORT

Urban Forest Program Coordinator / City Arborist Walter Gault provided the following update of upcoming projects and activities in the Tree Division:

- The City's Arbor Day event is taking place the first weekend of November at Santa Rosa Park
- City staff is working with EcoSlo to organize plantings at Islay Park and Santa Rosa Park
- The CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps have been adopted by the City; staff will be working on updating the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code in addition to revising City regulations to align with the State's requirements regarding the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps
- The City is also experimenting with street tree plantings in partnership with local property owners
- Walter Gault participated in a maintenance event at the South Hills Open Space hosted by the Rotary Club

Vice Chair Rosten inquired about a previous Tree Removal application recommended for approval by the Tree Committee at 2675 Johnson Avenue. City Arborist Walter Gault provided a brief update regarding the replanting done after the tree removal.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m. The next Regular Meeting of the Tree Committee is scheduled for August 25, 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 TO REMOVE 1 VELVET ASH STREET TREE LOCATED AT 1524 BALBOA ST (APPLICATION: TREE-0415-2025)

FROM: Walter Gault, Urban Forestry Program Coordinator / City Arborist
Phone Number: (805) 781-7578
Email: wgault@slcity.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



Figure 1 – Site of proposed tree removal

Troy Schwoerer, the applicant, has requested the removal of one (1) *Fraxinus velutina* (Velvet Ash) at 1524 Balboa Street located within the R-1 zone. The applicant has indicated in their application that the tree poses a seasonal nuisance (insect infestation and honeydew droppings) and is problematic for the sidewalk, sewer lateral and their landscaping plan.

The applicant would like to remove the street tree and replace it with one (1) compensatory *Quercus tomentella* (Island Oak) street tree onsite in the parkway at 1524 Balboa and one (1) *Lyonothamnus floribundus subsp. aspleniifolius* (Catalina Ironwood) in the front yard.

2.0 COMMITTEE PURVIEW

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 \(G\)](#).



Figure 2 – View of Ash tree from Balboa (7-14-25)

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 tree proposed for removal is 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 parkway and is 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 tree proposed for removal is 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 exceed the minimum required replanting rate of 1:1 with a 2:1 replanting (1 tree offsite and 1 tree onsite).

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

The tree is not a heritage tree.

4.0 ACTIONS

- 4.1** Recommend findings of consistency with the Tree Regulations. An action recommending approval of the proposed tree removal(s) 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(s).
- 4.2** Recommend findings of inconsistency with the Tree Regulations. An action recommending denial of the proposed tree removal(s) 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 removal(s) should include directions to the applicant and staff on pertinent issues.

5.0 ATTACHMENTS

- A - Tree Removal Application Form
- B - Site and Replanting Plan
- C - Photos



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: Troy Schwoerer		Applicant Name: Troy Schwoerer	
Address: 1524 Balboa Street		Address: 1524 Balboa Street	
City: San Luis Obispo	Zip: 93405	City: San Luis Obispo	Zip: 93405
Phone: 805-538-9511		Phone: 805-538-9511	
Email: tschwoerer3@gmail.com		Email: tschwoerer3@gmail.com	
Address of Tree(s): 1524 Balboa Street San Luis Obispo			
Number of trees applying to remove: 1			
Tree Species: Ash?			
Reason for Removal: This tree is problematic for the sidewalk, our sewer lateral and our landscaping master plan			
Is this removal a City Tree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input 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

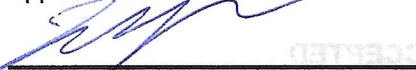
Submittal Instructions

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.

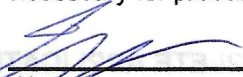
Property Owner Authorization:

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.

 4-26-25
Signed _____ Date _____

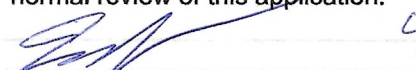
Applicant/ Representative Certification:

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.

 4-26-25
Signed _____ Date _____

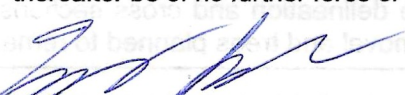
Permission to Access Property:

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.

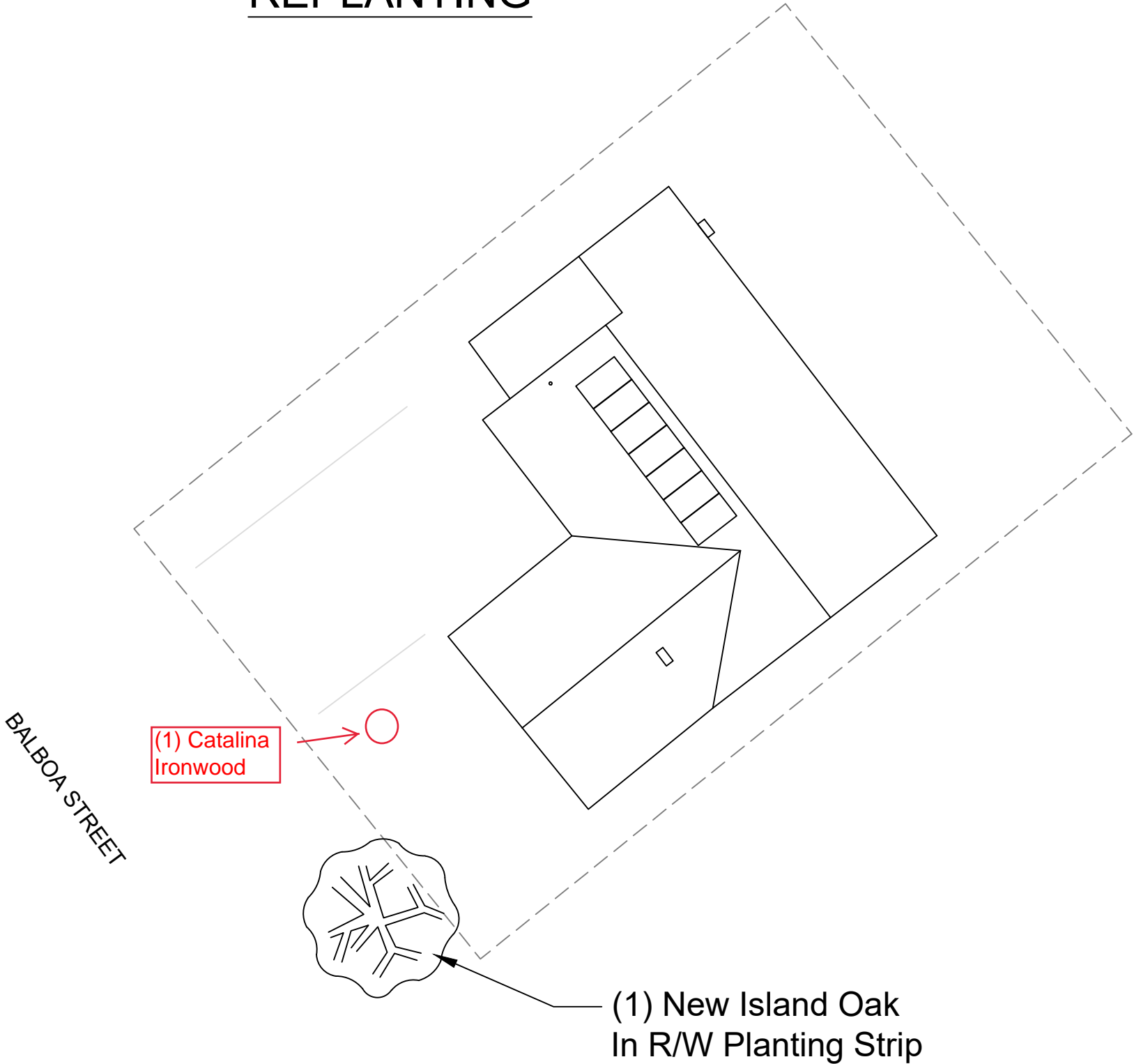
 4-26-25
Signed _____ Date _____

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.

 4-26-25
Signed _____ Date _____

REPLANTING



Ellen & Troy Schwoerer

PROJECT ADDRESS:
1524 Balboa Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

APN: 004-442-012

CUSTOMER CONTACT:
(805)538-9511

SCALE:1/16"=1'

DATE
6/29/2025
REV



