



## Planning Department

### OAK TREE PERMIT SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

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It is the policy of the City of Agoura Hills to require the preservation of all healthy oak trees unless compelling reasons justify the removal of such trees. This policy applies to the removal, pruning, cutting and/or the encroachment into the protected zone of oak trees.

The Planning Director or the Planning Commission may approve an oak tree permit when one (1) of the following findings can be made, after city inspection of the tree and property. (Ref: Section 9657.5.C.)

1. The condition or location of the protected tree(s) requires cutting or pruning to maintain or remedy its or their health, balance or structure.
2. The condition of the tree(s) with respect to disease, danger of falling, proximity to existing structures, high pedestrian traffic areas such as parking lots, pedestrian walkways or interference with utility services cannot be controlled or remedied through reasonable preservation and/or preventive procedures and practices.
3. It is necessary to remove, relocate, prune, cut or encroach into the protected zone of an oak tree when, after a determination by the Planning Commission or Director, it is found that the continued existence totally prevents the development of subject property. An oak tree permit shall not be granted unless all the following additional findings are made:
  - a. The proposed construction or proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the remaining trees on the subject property;
  - b. The removal or relocation of the oak tree(s) proposed will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated;
  - c. The removal or relocation of the oak tree(s) proposed is necessary because the continued existence at present locations(s) prevents the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that alternative development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive or that the placement of such tree(s) precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized; or that the oak tree(s) 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 removal of the tree(s);

If the applicant has met the above criteria, an oak tree permit may be issued subject to the following limitations:

Oak Tree Permit Submittal Requirements (Cont'd)

1. Not more than ten (10) percent of the total estimated tree canopy or root structure of all trees on the subject property has been requested to be removed.
2. In certain exceptional cases, the removal of up to twenty (20) percent of the total tree's canopy or root system may be removed. However, such approval is predicated upon the recommendation of the City's Oak Tree Consultant stating that the viability of the oak tree will not be adversely affected.
3. In no case shall less than four (4) native oaks be provided for any oak tree removed or relocated.

Conditions may be imposed on the permit at the discretion of the decision maker, including but not limited to, any of the following:

1. A condition requiring the replacement or placement of additional trees on the subject property to offset the impacts associated with the loss of a tree or its limbs or encroachment into the protected zone of an oak tree;
2. The relocation of trees on-site or off-site, or the planting of a new tree off-site, to offset the loss of a tree;
3. A condition requiring an objectively observable maintenance and care program to be initiated to insure the continued health and care of oak tree(s) on the property;
4. Payment of a fee or donation of a potted tree to the City or other public agency to be used elsewhere in the City should a suitable replacement location for a tree not be possible on-site or off-site.

## OAK TREE PERMIT SUBMITTAL/PROCEDURE REQUIREMENTS

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The following are required in order to submit an application for an Oak Tree Permit. Provide hard copies as well as an electronic version of the documents (CD or website link to download). Additional information may be required.

- Completed Oak Tree Permit Application Form with a detailed justification of the request
- Applicable Fees (a formal application will not be accepted unless fees are provided).
- One (1) signed copy of the City Consultant Fee Acknowledgement Statement.

- SITE PLAN (30"x42" maximum in size) [3 copies]  
(See Attachment B)  
Please include the following items on the Site Plan Scale: 1"=20' min.

- **Title Block:**

In one corner of the map, indicate the name of the property owners, applicant, appropriate consultants, (such as surveyor and oak tree specialist) address(es) and phone numbers(s) of those involved in preparing the plans and application.

- **Physical characteristics:**

The body of the map should accurately portray the following existing and proposed features:

- Property lines;
- Streets, access easements and/or public or private driveways and any other paved areas;
- Buildings and structures;
- Setback of all buildings and structures from property lines;
- Parking and other paved areas;
- Land uses on parcel (existing and proposed as applicable);
- Proposed grading and construction; including utilities and subdrains, if available.

- **Oak Tree locations:**

Unless advised differently, the map shall indicate the exact location of an oak tree proposed to be encroached upon, removed and/or relocated, and those oaks within 250 feet of the project or construction area. Surveying the exact location(s) of the tree(s) both horizontally and vertically is very important and must be accomplished by obtaining the services of a professional engineer or a licensed land surveyor whose signature shall be affixed to the site plan and oak tree trunks location map as appropriate.

- **Dripline(s) of the tree(s):**

The exact location of the dripline of an oak tree is crucial in order to evaluate any impacts resulting from construction. The dripline must be plotted in the following manner:

- Obtain, record, and plot dripline measurements at eight (8) compass readings:  
N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW.
- Sketch in any variations as observed in the field.

In certain cases, it may be possible to physically stake the surveyed corners of building(s) or related improvements in the field in order to assess the potential impacts upon the trees.

- **Cross-sections:**  
Detailing the nature and extent of significant impacts to oak trees proposed to remain.

OAK TREE REPORT [ 3 copies]  
(See Attachment D)

- A tree evaluation form shall be completed for each affected tree showing the location, spread, trunk diameter (as measured 3.5 feet above ground level at the trunk of the tree and the species name of each oak tree. (See Attachment C)
- The Oak Tree Report shall describe and evaluate the health and condition of the subject oak trees with respect to such factors as the existence of disease and danger of the tree falling. Additionally, the health of each tree shall be rated on a scale of A to F. (See Oak Tree Health Rating System below)
- The report shall contain the following information:
  - Physical Evaluation. The physical evaluation of each tree including but not limited to:
    - ✓ Diameter of trunk at three and a half feet (3.5) above grade;
    - ✓ Height of tree;
    - ✓ Appearance rating on a “A-F” scale based on standard tree of same species (“A” would be a nearly symmetrical, healthy tree, “F” would be a dead tree(s);
    - ✓ Existing tree environment including type of terrain;
    - ✓ Physical structure, excessive horizontal branching unbalanced crown, broken branches, etc.; and any mitigation measures proposed to correct any problems.
    - ✓ The minimum clearance from the present grade to the bottom of the canopy on each of the compass points.
  - Horticultural Evaluation. A horticultural evaluation including but not limited to:
    - ✓ Physical evidence of the disease, exfoliation, leaf scorch, exudations, etc. It is required that each identified disease symptom be accompanied with a statement as to the probable effect of the disease upon the life or structure of the tree.
    - ✓ Identification of pests, twig girdler, borers, termites, pit scale, plant parasites; etc.
    - ✓ Evaluation of trees’ vigor, example of new tip growth, good leaf color, poor leaf color, abnormal bark, deadwood, thinning of crown; and recommended mitigation measures necessary to correct any problems.
- The report shall discuss all grading, required cutting, paving or trenching in and around the trees on the project and shall evaluate to the extent possible, the impact of such activity on the tree as well as any mitigating measures proposed, and the anticipated effectiveness thereof.
- Photographs of each oak tree on the subject property and abutting properties.

Oak Tree Health Rating System. In rating the health of the oak trees, the following system will be used to describe their condition.

“A” = Outstanding: A healthy and vigorous tree, characteristic of its species and reasonably free of any visible signs of disease or pest infestation.

“B” = Above average: A healthy and vigorous tree with minor visible signs of disease and/or pest infestation.

“C” = Average: Although healthy in overall appearance, there is an abnormal amount of stress or disease and/or pest infestation.

“D” = Below average/poor: This tree is characterized by exhibiting a greater degree of disease and/or pest infestation than normal and appears to be in a state of rapid decline. The degree of decline may vary greatly in signs of dieback, disease and pest infestation and appears to be in an advanced state of decline.

“F” = Dead: this tree exhibits no signs of life whatsoever.

#### TAGGING

In the process of preparing oak tree reports each tree is required to be numbered. In order to standardize the system so that anyone can easily locate the tree number the following procedure is hereby established:

- A permanent tag, a minimum of one and a quarter (1.25) inches to two (2) inches is to be used for this purpose. The tag must be made from a non-corrosive, all-weather material and be permanently attached to the tree.
- The tag shall be affixed to the north side of the tree at a height of three and a half (3.5) feet above the natural elevation.
- Except for trees whose number has become obliterated, trees that were previously tagged need not be retagged.
- Trees whose numbers have become obliterated shall be retagged using the new method described above.

It is mandatory that the developer/land owner notify the department of Planning and Community Development in writing within five (5) days of any changes of their oak tree preservation consultant(s) of record.

Oak tree trunk locations, driplines, protected zone and tree number must be shown all the plans including the Landscape Plan, Lighting Plan, Grading Plan/Retaining Walls Plan, and Drainage Plan.

A copy of the Oak Tree Permit, the project's Conditions of Approval, and the Oak Tree Inspection Card must be on-site when permitted work is performed.

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