City of Ojai

Community Forest Management Plan

Adopted October 13, 2009
Revised October 2022

Acknowledgements

Ojai Tree Advisory Committee
Jan Scow
Garrett Clifford
Michael Inaba
Kathy Nolan*

With Gratitude to the 2009 Ojai Tree Advisory Committee Members
Tom Bostrom, Chair*
Tucker Adams*
Garrett Clifford
Michael Inaba
Kathy Nolan*
Paul Rogers

City Council
Betsy Stix, Mayor
Randy Haney, Mayor Pro Tem
William Weirick
Suza Francina
Ryan Blatz

City of Ojai Staff
James Vega, City Manager

Planning Commission
Steve Quilici, Chair
John Trent
Jamie Bennett
Jeffrey Starkweather
Judy Murphy

Table of Contents

Introduction

Overview

Trees are one of nature's gifts that can be enjoyed by everyone. They fill our environment with life and beauty and protect us from climate extremes. Ojai's Community Forest consists of street trees, public trees in parks and open spaces, and the varied landscapes on private property. The Community Forest is not the entirety of the ecosystem; it is but one part of a larger, more complex ecosystem. That ecosystem includes the community at large, both the built and natural environment, in an overall system which involves the interactions between the forest, groundwater supplies and recharge, air quality, surrounding agriculture and wildland, and our multi-modal movement through our community forest. Understanding this intricate system is essential to maintaining its character and to determining the future needs of the forest.

This Community Forest Management Plan has been updated using the most current information available to provide a framework for public policy decisions regarding the future care of the Community Forest and the interaction between the forest and other important features of the City's complex ecosystem. In keeping with the community's growing awareness of the importance of the city's natural resources, it is to be used as a guide for the selection, planting, maintenance, protection, and replacement of City trees.

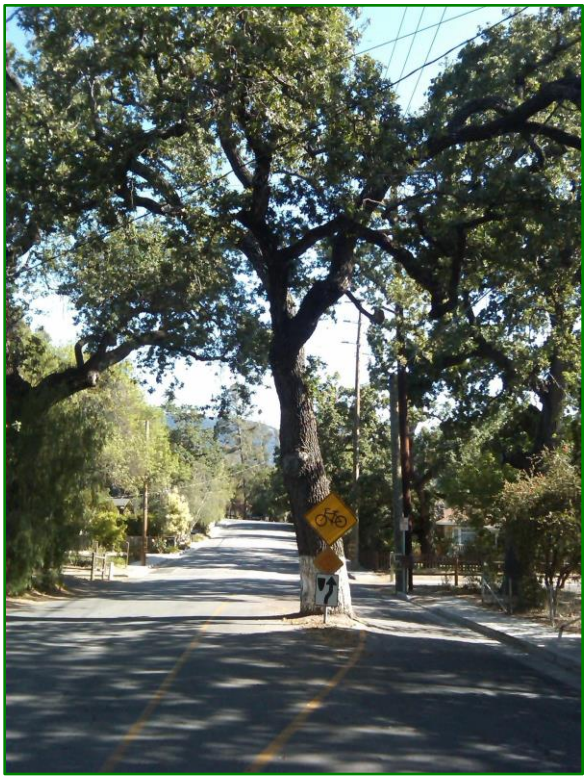
This Community Forest Management Plan is not an end in itself, but rather an instrument that facilitates the community's vision for its trees as they relate to other important functions, activities, and infrastructure within the City's greater ecosystem. This includes addressing such diverse issues as removing invasive exotic trees, planting trees in a manner that does not interfere with bicycle and pedestrian travel, placement and maintenance of trees such that they will not interfere with electric grid or communications grid reliability, and restoring/maintaining riparian habitats. In addition, it is important that guidelines from various entities, including statewide Water Use Classification of Landscape Species (WUCOLS) Ventura County Fire Department (VCFD), Invasive Species Council of California (ISCC), the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) and the City of Ojai be considered when restoring/maintaining corridors for ecological health.

This Plan attempts to bring together in one source document a clear set of priorities and objectives. A critical element of it is the plan for ongoing comprehensive management of the Community Forest.

Relationship to Other Documents

Ojai's natural environment is a critical component of the community's overall character. The General Plan recognizes the City's stewardship role in the management of the natural environment. As noted in the General Plan, one example of the priority that Ojai places on preserving the area's natural environment is the City's policy and practice of tree preservation and integration of the natural environment with man-made structures. Large oak trees, which would be removed as part of road construction or widening projects in most cities, remain within Ojai's streets as ongoing reminders of Ojai's emphasis on development fitting *into* rather than *over* the natural environment. The Community Forest Management Plan supplements the City's General Plan by providing specific policies related to tree preservation and integration of the natural environment with the built environment.

Consistent with the General Plan, this Community Forest Management Plan clearly works to respond to the goals set forth in many of the General Plan Elements. The Land Use and Circulation Elements of the General Plan recognize the importance of both the private realm and public realm in forming the unique character of the community, with landscaping and trees being identified as significant components of the streetscape and the community at large. The Conservation Element of the General Plan also recognizes the importance of protecting the Community Forest and minimizing the loss of its resource value.



A common site in Ojai - streets constructed around the existing native oak trees.

In addition to the General Plan, there are a number of other related planning documents that set forth related tree policies. The East Ojai Avenue Design Guidelines provide policy direction on streetscape design including street trees as it relates to planting requirements such as desired tree types, size and spacing on Ojai Avenue from Montgomery Street east to the City limits.

The Arcade Plaza Design Guidelines sets forth a vision for improving the Arcade Plaza to enhance the pedestrian quality of the area including the selection of appropriate trees and planting. The desire is to expand the city's existing attractive landscaping into the Plaza, with a variety of shade trees and colorful under-planting.

The Libbey Park Master Plan states that the great oaks within the park are natural elements of the park that create a "sacred framework for the places of use and enjoyment located throughout the park." The design intent of the Libbey Park Master Plan is to provide areas for various recreational uses and to enhance and preserve the nature of the park as it exists.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, which maintains a focus on local mobility, offers recommended pedestrian improvements, including tree planting to serve as a way to moderate traffic flows and speed, to create physical buffers between the sidewalk and parking lane, and to enhance the community forest.

Beyond the policy documents discussed above, the Ojai Municipal Code serves as a tool to implement the policies of the General Plan and Master Plans. Specifically related to

the Community Forest, the City of Ojai has adopted an Ordinance that deals with the preservation, pruning, and removal of oak, sycamore, and heritage trees. In addition to this "tree ordinance", the City's Zoning Ordinance requires tree planting in parking lots, on private property and in public parkways (street trees) for all new development. The Zoning Ordinance also requires tree protection provisions and tree fencing plans to be shown on grading plans to protect trees during grading and construction. The regulations pertaining to trees in the Municipal Code require periodic updating as new information becomes available for the care and maintenance of trees.

Finally, other regulatory requirements, including fire safety (Ventura County Fire Dept.), water conservation (State of California: Water Use Classification of Landscape Species), and water quality (State and Federal Clean Water Acts), among others must be considered in all decision making processes.

Background

Historic Perspective

Prior to European exploration and settlement, Ojai was inhabited by the Chumash, who depended on oak acorns as a primary food source. From 1750 to 1850, during the Spanish Mission / Mexican Rancho period, Ojai was a remote inland valley with sparse settlement and some cattle grazing, covered by open oak woodlands and grasslands.

When California became a state in 1850, Ojai remained a single tract of land that was bought and sold several times. In 1879, the Ojai Valley was described as being "a huge white and live oak forest that was interspersed with cottonwood and sycamore trees" (Fry,

46). Around 1887 Ojai had a "real estate boom" (Fry, 121). This wave of new settlement resulted in the creation of many smaller ranches and properties. It was from this period until around 1900 when the greatest numbers of the valley's native oak trees were cut down to clear land for buildings, roads, orchards, grazing, and fuel. It was in this period that the citizens of Ojai started planting trees in the downtown, along Ojai's streets. In 1904, eighty-five citizens convened to discuss the types of trees to plant on Ojai Avenue. At the time, exotic plants were in vogue, and all sorts of trees were considered, such as, gum, palm, umbrella and acacias. However, one person with "wit and eloquence" turned the majority of the voters in favor of the pepper tree (Fry, 149). You will see remnants of the group's tree decisions in front of the Ojai Unified School District property, where the street is graced with 100-year old pepper trees. Current focus on tree plantings includes the prudent use of native trees and non-invasive species. It is interesting to note that nearly all of the 1904 tree recommendations are now listed on the discouraged list (Table 3) and none of the 1904 trees made it to the preferred list of trees to plant (Table 2).

Platanus acerifolia (London Plane Tree) flanks Ojai Avenue downtown.

Ojai's population was approximately 1,000 persons in 1900, growing slowly to about 2,500 in 1950. During that period, more naturally wooded land was cleared, and more orchards planted.

Between 1950 and 2000 Ojai's population increased to approximately 8,000 persons. Many more new homes and roads sprouted up, replacing native woodlands and orchards. Many non-native ornamental tree species were planted as well. The population has remained relatively stable since that time.

Climate

The City of Ojai enjoys a Mediterranean type of climate, associated with the influence of the Pacific Ocean, typified by cool wet winters and hot dry summers. According to the Ventura River Watershed Council, annual rainfall averages 21 inches in Downtown Ojai, falling between November and April, although prolonged droughts may occur more frequently. Average monthly high temperatures vary between 67°F in January to 91°F in August, and average monthly lows vary from 37°F in January to 57°F in August, however record high temperatures were experienced in the summers of 2018 and 2020 which damaged many local trees, including native oaks and sycamores. Hot dry summer and fall periods are prone to wildfires, and the fire season appears to be expanding as climate change becomes the reality. With the provision of supplemental irrigation, Ojai's climate is well suited for growth of many types of trees, but drought and changes in local weather must also be factored in.

Geophysical

Ojai is located in a relatively narrow east-west oriented valley within the Transverse Range, geographic province of California. The Ojai Valley is surrounded by mountains with numerous seismic faults traversing the area. The upper level soils of the area are primarily alluvial, deposited through erosion and benches, terraced, or incised by streams and creeks.

Vegetation

The primary feature of Ojai's natural vegetation is that it has adapted over many thousands of years to the unique stress of a Mediterranean climate – that is, water is least available when plants need it most. Plant adaptations include storing water in deep roots; thick leathery leaves; losing leaves in summer and re-growing in winter (summer deciduous); seeds that germinate in the cool wet winter period; and seeds that can survive years before being triggered to life by wildfire. One of the adaptations of native trees is the dropping of natural leaf litter that forms a moisture retaining and nutrient rich mulch layer.

Natural Tree Distributions

Trees naturally grow in plant communities that are interdependent with other natural systems including biologic life. The dominant natural tree species found in Ojai are *Quercus agrifolia* (Coast Live Oak); *Quercus lobata* (Valley Oak); and *Platanus racemosa* (California Sycamore). These trees are found in distribution patterns that are categorized as Savannah (10-20% canopy coverage); Woodland (20-80% canopy coverage); or Forest (80-100% canopy coverage). These distributions tend to intermingle and can migrate over time as conditions change. The historically dominant tree distributions of Ojai are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Historic Natural Tree Distributions of Ojai		
Name	Dominant Tree	Locations
Coast Live Oak Woodland	*Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak	Along flanks of streams or drainages with deep, rock or shallow soils, and protected (north) slopes.
Coast Live Oak Savannah	*Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak	Open grassland areas with adequate soil moisture.
Valley Oak Woodland	*Quercus lobata* Valley Oak	Riparian areas or bottomlands with deep, moist alluvial soils.
Valley Oak Savannah	*Quercus lobata* Valley Oak	Open grassland / bottomland or terraces.
Riparian Forest	*Platanus racemosa, Quercus agrifolia* or *Quercus lobata*	Stream and creek banks and bottoms.

Native trees of Ojai survive without any supplemental irrigation under conditions approximating unimpaired habitat. Ojai's oak trees also naturally regenerate by dropping acorns that are spread by winter rains or animals. Triggered by favorable conditions of light, temperature and moisture, acorns spring to life and become established as young trees quickly. Given the opportunity, Ojai's oaks are perfectly adapted to regenerate.

Purpose, Goals and Objectives

Purpose

Establishing and maintaining optimum tree cover is the purpose for the City of Ojai's Community Forest Management Plan.

Trees are considered to be a valuable natural resource that contributes significantly to the aesthetic beauty of the environment and economy of the city. In addition to providing greenery and softening people-made conditions, trees also provide numerous environmental benefits, such as shade and cooling temperatures during hot summer months, providing wind breaks, providing wild-life habitat and filtering out carbon dioxide by releasing oxygen. Trees enhance property values, which can attract homebuyers and businesses to settle within the city. An attractive and well-planted shopping district is sometimes the winning factor in gaining and retaining businesses. As a result of this

resource, more tax dollars are likely to be generated by the community, of which a portion will be given to the city. In return, the city will have more funds to better serve its citizens through public services.

The most important action we can take to ensure the future of this important resource is to provide proper care and maintenance for our existing trees, remove invasive species when possible, and replace dead and diseased trees with a new tree. A tree planted today will live and improve the quality of its environment for decades and generations to come. The selection of trees and sites for planting is therefore a matter of great importance. The City of Ojai's Community Forest Management Plan is based on the recognition that what we do today will become tomorrow's heritage.

The purpose for the City of Ojai's Community Forest Management Plan is to ensure that our community enjoys the benefits of trees resulting from proper arboricultural techniques and management practices and integrating trees as green infrastructure into the developing urban landscape. The goal of the plan is to state what is needed to manage our community forest and to describe services and activities required to execute these responsibilities within the greater City ecosystem.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Establish and Maintain an Optimal Level of Canopy Coverage

Objective: 1.1: Establish Policies for Tree Planting Requirements

The community forest serves a wide variety of functions that promote the health, safety, and general welfare of residents. These functions include:

- conserving energy, by providing shade and evaporative cooling through transpiration; and
- reducing local air pollution by removing carbon dioxide and ozone, absorbing particulate matter, and producing oxygen; and
- buffering wind speed and directing air flow; and
- quieting noise pollution; and
- providing habitat for birds, small mammals, and other wildlife; and
- moderating runoff and the potential for soil erosion; and
- increasing real property values; and
- enhancing visual and aesthetic qualities that attract visitors and businesses; and
- serving as a source of community image and pride.

All these benefits increase as canopy cover increases. By establishing and maintaining optimum, canopy cover, the community is able to maximize benefits the community forest can provide. The City's role should be twofold: 1) to bring tree cover on public land to an optimal level, and 2) to promote, and in some cases require, the planting of appropriate trees on private land.

The goal of establishing and maintaining "optimal" tree cover must be balanced with the needs of citizens to preserve view corridors, maintain visibility for businesses, and avoid conflicts with solar collectors as well as bicycle and pedestrian traffic. One of the City's goals is to promote a healthy tree canopy, while allowing flexibility in the accomplishment of the goal so that such concerns can be integrated with other concerns in order to be efficiently addressed without cumbersome prescriptive regulations. The community forest should provide the above benefits without conflicting with the other important elements of the greater City ecosystem.

Policy 1.1.1: Require the planting of a minimum of one tree in the public realm as a condition of all discretionary development projects and new construction projects (See chapter on Implementation Recommendations).

Policy 1.1.2: The City Public Works Department shall plant trees in the public right-of-way or on publicly owned land using monies from the City's Tree Mitigation Fund, Grants, or other funding sources.

Objective 1.2: Establish and Maintain an Optimal Level of Age and Species Diversity

Trees that make up the community forest have finite life spans and must be removed as they die. In addition, living trees are normally removed when their health, appearance, or structural integrity declines substantially, or when they conflict excessively with utilities and structures. The likelihood that a tree will need to be removed for one reason or another increases as the tree grows older and larger. If areas are planted to a single species at one time, a large percentage of the trees will need to be removed over a short time period when they reach the end of their useful life. This results in a rapid reduction in canopy cover, and the loss of many of the benefits provided by the community forest. To avoid this, the goal is to work toward a community forest which is diverse both in species composition and in age class.

Theoretically, species diversity also helps stabilize the community forest by buffering it from pest and disease epidemics. Many insect pests and plant pathogens can only attack one or a few tree species. When large areas are planted to a single susceptible species large outbreaks can arise which have serious consequences for the health, appearance, and longevity of the community forest. Using a diversity of tree species may help to reduce the reproduction and spread of pests and pathogens. Furthermore, even if a severe disease or pest problem does develop on a given species, if there is adequate species diversity, the overall condition of the entire community forest will not be jeopardized.

Currently, approximately half of Ojai's trees are natives, predominantly Coast Live Oak and Valley Oak. These two, along with a few other native species, have adapted over thousands of years to Ojai's unique climate, soils and ecosystem. They typically require no supplemental irrigation and reproduce readily if permitted to do so. In spite of their natural vitality and suitability, many of the older specimens of this class are in below average condition due to the cumulative effects of development of the city, a condition for which they have no natural defenses.

Furthermore, the overall favorable growth conditions of pre-development soils and hydrology have been gradually altered through the collective processes of soil compaction, paving, channelization of small drainages, reduced infiltration and aeration, and deteriorating soil quality. This limits the number of tree species that are able to perform satisfactorily.

Even though many older oaks are in decline, their presence and stature is emblematic of Ojai. Their contribution to the city's sense of place and quality of life should not be underestimated. Therefore, the role and proportion of native oaks in the composition of the future community forest must be seriously considered. While the basic concept of species diversity is important, blindly applying a prescription of equal distributions of diverse species would overlook both the cultural importance and ecological significance of the existing proportion of native trees. For example, in a serious drought, native trees have the best chances to survive amongst a group of trees we would consider desirable.

There are other issues related to species selection. One issue involves discouraging or prohibiting tree species that are invasive or that cause other problems. Unfortunately, such trees are sometimes favored due to their rapid growth habits. Another concern is the pitfall of "downsizing" the community forest to smaller trees that are easier to maintain, with the unfortunate consequence of reducing tree benefits and negatively impacting the community's image.

Policy 1.2.1: Trees planted in the public realm and City owned lands and rights-of way should be selected from the Preferred Tree List or appropriate Neighborhood Plan, Corridor Plan or Parks and Civic Place plan.

Policy 1.2.2. Encourage private property owners to voluntarily plant trees that are on the Preferred Tree List.

Policy 1.2.3: For discretionary development projects, the City shall not permit the planting of trees that are listed on the City's Discouraged Tree List.

Objective 1.3: Prioritize the Appropriate Selection and Placement of Trees in the Public Realm

In community planning, the term "public realm" is generally used to describe both the public right of way and those portions of adjacent properties that are accessible by or visually oriented to the public. Within the public realm, trees interact with infrastructure such as utilities and hardscape (pavement, sidewalks, and curbs), and this is frequently a source of problems for both.

Trees in the public realm are often placed in woefully small planting spaces, and damage inevitably results as they grow. Furthermore, tree species are sometimes selected with little regard for root characteristics, despite the fact that roots are the most common source of problems associated with California's community trees. Conflicts with utilities and damage to hardscape arise when tree species are not selected with proper attention to site limitations, or when planting sites are not designed to provide adequate conditions for healthy tree growth.

Oak tree in the public realm.

Trees and overhead utilities are often in conflict in Ojai, and utility arborists routinely employ severe pruning practices that greatly reduce the health and beauty of trees. This is primarily caused by poor species selection and siting. In this case, selecting smaller trees is an acceptable solution, but should be offset by establishment of large trees nearby. Inappropriate tree selection is often the underlying cause for trees that become hazardous, are prone to breakage, or develop recurrent pest or disease problems. Inadequate planting sites are often responsible for poor tree growth and excessive hardscape damage. By identifying and avoiding undesirable tree species, inadequate planting site specifications, and inappropriate tree-site combinations, it is possible to minimize problem situations and reduce the resulting high maintenance costs. The benefits of appropriate selection and placement of trees in the public realm can last a lifetime. Trees that are appropriately planted create a positive experience for all street users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and autos by providing shade, and a humanizing scale to the streetscape.

Policy 1.3.1: Plant trees pursuant to the City of Ojai Tree Planting and Maintenance Standards (Appendix A).

Policy 1.3.2: Develop and/or update Management Plans for each City park, plaza and civic space with sections dedicated on appropriate tree planting specifications unique to each park, plaza and civic space.

Policy 1.3.3: Develop complete streets for Ojai and its neighborhoods that address excess pavement widths, lack of sidewalks and lack of street trees within the public right-of-way.

Goal 2: Protect Existing Tree Resources

Objective 2.1: Promote Conservation of Tree Resources

The benefits derived from the community forest generally increase as tree size and canopy cover increase. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the community to protect existing tree resources from loss or depletion. Although it is not possible to indefinitely preserve individual trees since each tree will eventually die, it is possible to preserve both the community forest and natural woodlands by restricting removal of certain trees under certain conditions in all age classes. This embodies the concept of conservation.

The City of Ojai's Municipal Code Section 4-11.04 (Preservation, Cutting, and Removal of Oak, Sycamore, Heritage and Other Designated Mature Trees) was established to recognize oak, sycamore, heritage and other mature trees as significant historical, aesthetic and ecological resources and to create favorable conditions for the preservation and propagation of this unique irreplaceable plant heritage for the benefit of current and future residents of the City. It is the intent of the chapter to recognize the special value of tree species that are native to the City because they are especially adapted to the local environment, provide important wildlife habitat and contribute to the goals of a sustainable community. An equally important goal of the chapter is to maintain and enhance the public health, safety and welfare through the mitigation of soil erosion and air pollution. In addition, the chapter is designed to preserve and enhance property values by enhancing the distinctive and unique aesthetic character of many areas of the City in which oak, sycamore, heritage and other mature trees live.

Community support is critical to an ordinance's effectiveness, but community support cannot be legislated into existence. It can, however, be awakened by effective communication with the public about how valuable the community forest is, and how we all depend on it in many ways.

The principle of stewardship goes hand in hand with conservation. With stewardship, it is sometimes necessary to remove a tree in order to create space for an improved tree planting. Conservation of tree resources should not be so restrictive as to prevent urban forest management activities which may include selective tree removals in order to accomplish a well-planned and healthy community forest.

Policy 2.1.1: Develop a program to raise awareness about the value of trees among the general public.
Policy 2.1.2: Amend the Tree Protection Ordinance for greater protection of native oaks and sycamores by reducing the diameter of protected trees.
Policy 2.1.3: Develop a list of trees eligible for the designation of "Heritage Tree" by the City Council.

Goal 3: Maintain Trees in a Safe and Healthy Condition

Objective 3.1: Maintain Trees In Healthy Condition Through Good Cultural Practices

The community will not realize the benefits that the community forest can provide if trees are in poor health. Promoting tree health helps communities protect their investment in the community forest. Public health and safety also depend on healthy trees. Improperly maintained and unhealthy trees often have an increased risk of limb or whole tree failure, which can result in personal injury and property damage.

The health of community trees is strongly affected by cultural practices. Proper and timely pruning can promote good tree structure, improved safety, and enhanced health, whereas topping and other improper pruning techniques can lead to decay, poor structure, and increased risk of failure. Irrigation is necessary for tree survival in many situations, but excess or improper irrigation practices can contribute to the decline of established trees, particularly native oaks. By providing for proper tree care and eliminating destructive practices, communities can go a long way toward maintaining their community forests in a healthy and safe condition.

Maintenance of public trees in the city of Ojai has steadily improved over the last decade, but is still in "catch-up" mode on deferred maintenance, and sometimes tasks like irrigation and training are deferred. The city's budget should reflect the true cost of maintaining this resource in healthy condition, at which level it should stabilize. The

City has recently begun to contract with arborists that are well trained in tree care, and employ excellent tree cultural practices, and as such are a good role model for tree maintenance. These practices could be showcased and promoted for the benefit and education of the community.

The city's goal is that trees be maintained in healthy condition through good cultural practices. Furthermore, the city supports efforts to promote proper tree care and to educate and inform the public.

Policy 3.1.1: Encourage maintaining natural leaf litter of native trees that forms a moisture retaining and nutrient rich mulch layer.

Policy 3.1.2: Encourage the use of hydro-zone planting for plants that share similar watering and sunlight needs. For example, mature native oak trees should not have water thirsty plants planted in the root zone.

Policy 3.1.3: Encourage the use of the City of Ojai Tree Planting and Maintenance Standards by distributing the document with applications for Tree Permits and Landscape Plans.

Goal 4: Education and Outreach about the Benefits of Trees

Objective 4.1: Encourage Tree Planting and Stewardship on Privately-Owned Properties.

To achieve community forestry goals, the local government needs the support of citizens and private property owners. In Ojai, the overwhelming majority of the trees which make up the community forest are on private property. For all practical purposes, the care of these trees is up to those private property owners.

A local government cannot control tree stewardship, or the lack of it, on private lands, but it can take steps to promote planting and proper management of privately-owned trees. Educational and incentive programs are positive ways to encourage good tree care and planting within the community.

It is important that private property owners understand the relationship between community forestry goals and the actions taken to achieve them. Programs that educate private property owners about the benefits of trees can help increase public support and interest in the program. Voluntary compliance with the tree ordinance is likely to be improved if private property owners understand and agree with the overall management plan.

There are three distinct classes of private property owners in Ojai that have the greatest impact on the community forest: institutional landowners, commercial property owners, and residential property owners. Each of these groups has subtly differing points of view and priorities, and should be approached with respect to their unique perspectives and invited to participate in the overall effort to maintain a healthy community forest that is sustainable for future generations. If the benefits of trees are properly communicated, there should be no inherent conflict between that vision and their unique priorities as property owners.

Policy 4.1.1: Use a certified arborist as a resource for assistance on tree matters like planting, care and maintenance.

Policy 4.1.2: Establish educational and other outreach programs.

Policy 4.1.3: Create incentive programs, such as those providing for cost-sharing, grants, or loans for tree planting or maintenance.

Objective 4.2: Maintain "Tree City USA" Status for Ojai

Native trees at the entrance to the City announce the importance of trees to the community.

Tree City USA is a national program that recognizes municipalities with community forestry programs. Currently, thousands of cities enjoy the recognition. There are benefits to be gained from such recognition, including publicity and potential preference for grant applications.

The recognition must be earned by a successful application that meets the basic standards set forth by Tree City USA, which are: 1) A tree board or department; 2) A tree care ordinance; 3) A community forestry program with an annual budget of at least $2 per capita; and 4) An Arbor Day observance and proclamation. After decades of not receiving the Tree City USA designation, the current City Council and administration placed an emphasis on re-obtaining the status, and Ojai achieved "Tree City USA" status in 2020, and will strive to maintain that status.

Policy 4.2.1:.The City's Tree Manager should endeavor to maintain Tree City USA status by meeting the specific standards, and ensuring that the City meets the standards and earns the Tree City USA status every year.

Objective 4.3: Foster Community Participation and Support for the Community Forestry Program

A healthy and sustainable community forest is rooted in a broad-based constituency of aware citizens, community groups, volunteers, public-private partnerships, local businesses, schools, utility companies and public agencies. The overall success of the tree program and the ongoing survival of the community forest is dependent on support from local, engaged residents.

There is a change going on now in how ordinary citizens relate to the environment and how they see their responsibilities to it. The timing is perfect to establish a volunteer based tree program that offers close-to-home opportunities for improving the local and global environment by planting and caring for trees. Furthermore, the timing is critical: unless we do so, our local community forest will continue to decline.

There is support in the community for a program that offers opportunities for tree planting, education and training in tree care. Ojai Trees is a grassroots community volunteer organization that works to fill that need in Ojai by engendering stewardship for our community forest on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis.

Policy 4.3.1: Create and implement public outreach programs (See chapter on Implementation Recommendations).

Policy 4.3.2: Support independent local tree groups by coordinating with them on tree planting programs and other incentive programs, such as those providing for cost-sharing, grants, or loans for tree planting or maintenance.

Goal 5: Manage the Community Forest

Objective 5.1: Centralize Tree Management Under One Person with the Necessary Expertise.

Because of the wide variety of situations that can impact trees in the community environment, tree-related issues may arise in different municipal departments. Projects approved by the Planning Division and work performed by the Public Works Department often impact current or future tree resources. Utility companies, tree maintenance contractors, and private citizens are also involved in tree maintenance and removal, and some of these activities are regulated by the City.

To facilitate the coordinated management of community forest resources, it is desirable to have a responsibility clearly defined for all tree-related issues. This responsibility will be assigned by the City manager to a staff person, or consultant/contractor as needed. To be effective, the assignee should serve as a clearinghouse for information on activities that affect trees. The assignee should have authority to approve, deny, or condition any activities in accordance with the jurisdiction's management plan, policies, and ordinances. Clearly, the person in this position should have the technical background appropriate for this complex job.

Policy 5.1.1. Centralize community forest management activities by establishing clear guidelines and incorporating best management practices for City Staff to apply consistent methodologies.

Policy 5.1.2: Establish coordination between municipal departments for operations that affect trees.

Objective 5.2: Promote Comprehensive Management of the Community Forest.

Tree care usually involves less than 1% of the total operating budget of most California cities. However, economic realities dictate that all municipal programs strive for efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

To operate efficiently and ensure that resources are directed toward the most critical activities, a tree program must have a clear set of priorities and a long-range plan. Although short-term savings may be achieved by deferring tree maintenance, long-term costs will be lowest when resources are spent on preventing problems, rather than dealing with them after the fact. Time and money spent up front on high quality trees

and proper site preparation will be less expensive than dealing with all of the problems that arise when poor planting stock and inadequate installation procedures are employed. Likewise, time invested toward properly pruning and irrigating young trees will reduce the need for more expensive pruning, replacement or removal that would be required to correct problems.

Tree management in the City has generally consisted of basic maintenance activities and occasional, but unplanned, planting projects. A proactive approach to managing the community forest that results in a healthy community forest that is sustainable for future generations is desirable.

The City should adopt enlightened management practices for resources such as the community forest. Comprehensive management means integrating all aspects into an efficient, well planned program. It includes long term planning, building the institutional capacity to care for and nurture trees, securing funding, and coordinating community participation and support.

Policy 5.2.1: The Tree Manager's responsibilities shall include short and long range planning for the tree program, building the institutional capacity to care for and nurture trees, securing funding, and coordinating community participation and support.

Ojai's Trees

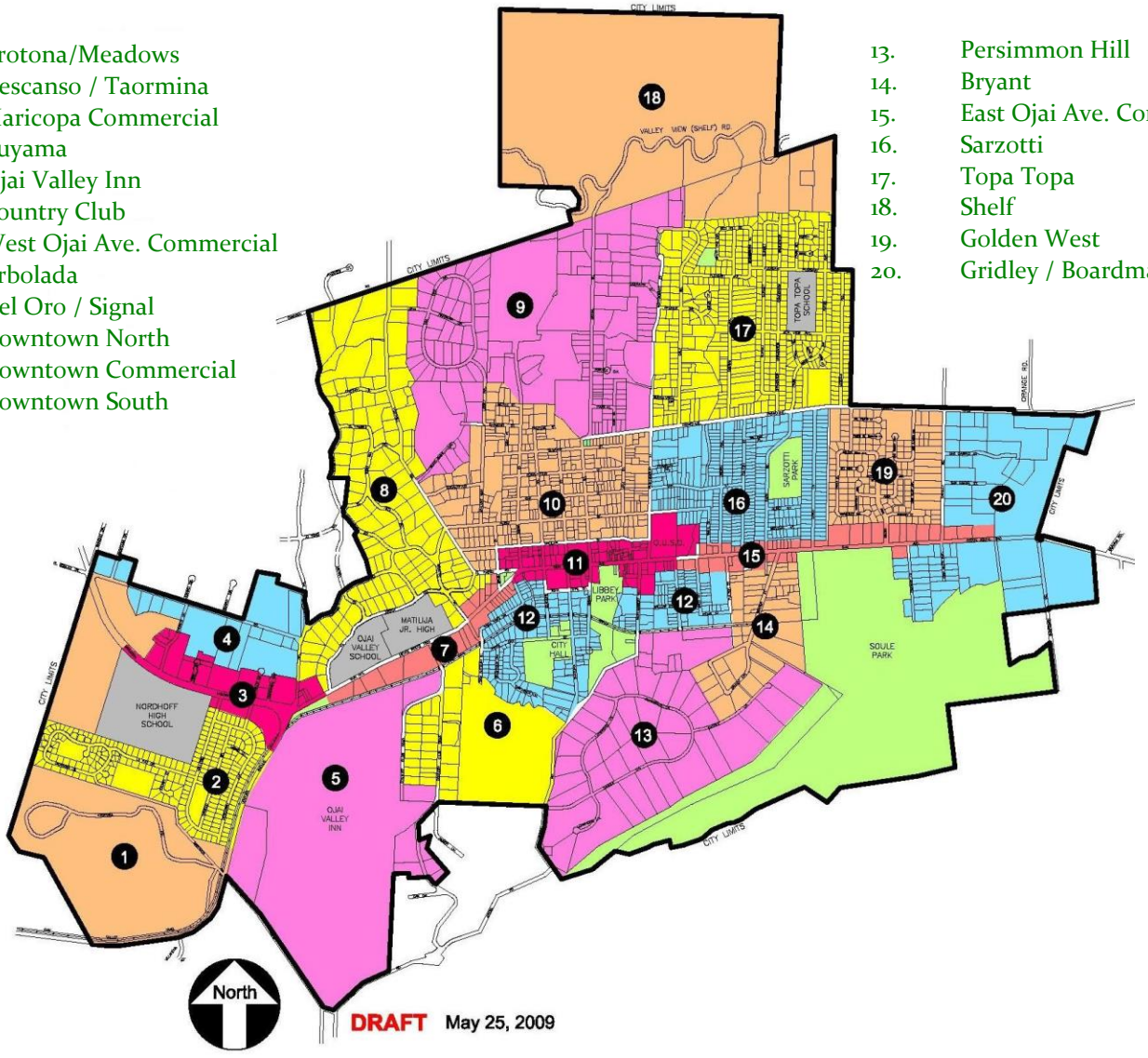
City of Ojai Tree Neighborhoods

The City of Ojai comprises many neighborhoods and points of interest. Factors such as time of development, natural and manmade boundaries, landmarks, and municipal land use policies have contributed to making them unique and identifiable. "Neighborhoods" for the purpose of this plan, refer to small, contiguous sub areas that share certain common features. The Arbolada and the Golden West neighborhoods are two good examples of "neighborhoods". Each has its own characteristics and personality. The Arbolada has an organic feel with narrow, winding streets with no curbs, gutters or sidewalks beyond those created by lining stones for curbs and dirt paths. The Golden West neighborhood conforms to a formalized development pattern with wide streets, concrete curbs, gutters and attached sidewalks. Based upon the neighborhood's traits, the ideal street tree will reflect the culture of the target area. The Tree Neighborhood Map is shown in Figure 1.

Neighborhood Tree Plans

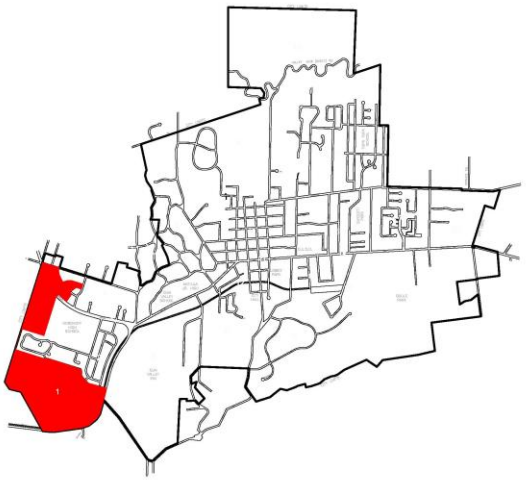
The following pages provide information on each of the 20 tree neighborhoods. Each Neighborhood Tree Plan includes a photograph, an aerial photo, a key map of the neighborhood, a brief history and a description of the neighborhood that lists principal streets, predominant land uses, and land area. Each Neighborhood Tree Plan includes a Tree Characteristics Table that lists pre-development tree patterns, canopy coverage estimate, age diversity, existing tree patterns, comments, recommended trees for the neighborhood, and most importantly, an annual tree planting goal. Each Neighborhood Tree Plan is intended to help property owners, residents, developers and City staffers easily identify appropriate trees that should be planted in each neighborhood, most particularly in the public realm.

1. Krotona/Meadows
2. Descanso / Taormina
3. Maricopa Commercial
4. Cuyama
5. Ojai Valley Inn
6. Country Club
7. West Ojai Ave. Commercial
8. Arbolada
9. Del Oro / Signal
10. Downtown North
11. Downtown Commercial
12. Downtown South



13. Persimmon Hill
14. Bryant
15. East Ojai Ave. Commercial
16. Sarzotti
17. Topa Topa
18. Shelf
19. Golden West
20. Gridley / Boardman

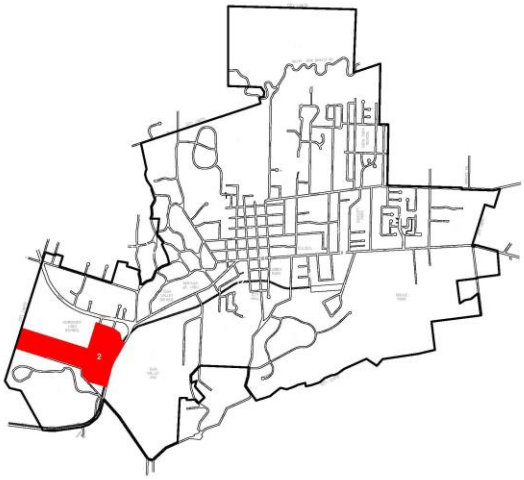
1. Krotona/Meadows



This area is situated at the westerly city limit and is an important open space buffer as the rural edge and entrance to the City of Ojai. It includes Krotona Hill and a portion of the Ojai Meadows Preserve and has remained largely undeveloped. Krotona Road is the principal street in the neighborhood. The area is comprised of Institutional and Open Space land uses. The area encompasses approximately 162 acres.

1. Krotona / Meadows Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Savannah & Woodland
Canopy coverage estimate:	18% Fair
Age diversity:	A mix of young and older trees
Existing tree patterns	• Krotona's oak woodlands are stressed and regeneration is slow. • The Ojai Meadows Preserve includes hundreds of native trees. • No sidewalks or parkways; no street tree plantings.
Comments:	The open space meadow and Oak Woodland on the south flank of Krotona Hill at the west city limit is a key visual and environmental asset to the city, as is the Ojai Meadows Preserve.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	27 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large : *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood (native) *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak *Quercus suber* Cork Oak *Tipuana tipu* Tipu
	Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native) *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel ~~*Magnolia soulangeana* Saucer Magnolia~~

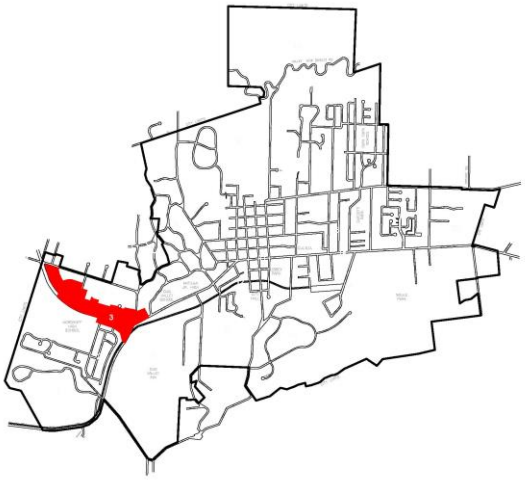
2. Descanso / Taormina



The Descanso/Taormina Neighborhood is comprised of three similar single-family residential areas: Descanso area is a mid-century tract, predominantly single-story homes on small lots; Taormina was developed with small lots in the 1960's as a private community related to Krotona Institute; La Paz area developed in the 1970's with slightly larger lots and homes. Only the Descanso area has sidewalks, parkways and street trees. Principal streets include Descanso Avenue, Vallerio Avenue, Carillo Road, La Paz Drive and Taormina Lane. The area of the neighborhood is 80 acres.

2. Descanso/Taormina Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Savannah and Woodland
Canopy coverage estimate:	9% Poor
Age diversity:	Generally balanced, mostly younger tree population
Existing tree patterns	• Aging trees planted at development: Ash, Chinaberry • The current overall theme is an unplanned mix of non-native trees. • Street trees include 21 Valley Oaks and 15 Crape Myrtle planted in 2003, but numerous vacancies remain. Numerous Purple Leaf Plums have been planted.
Comments:	This area has few large trees and would benefit from more of them. Narrow sidewalks and parkways. Carillo Rd. parkways are very narrow. No parkways on La Paz or in Taormina.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	26 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees***	Street Trees: *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (large) or *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Carpe Myrtle (small) on Descanso Ave. and Vallerio Ave or *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle (small) on Carillo Rd.
	Large : *Ceiba speciosa* Floss Silk Tree *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Robinia 'Purple Robe'* Purple Robe Locust *Handroanthus chrysotricha* Golden Trumpet
	Small: *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Handroanthus heptaphyllus* Pink trumpet *Koelreuteria bipinnata* Chinese Flame Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle *Pistacia chinensis* Chinese Pistache

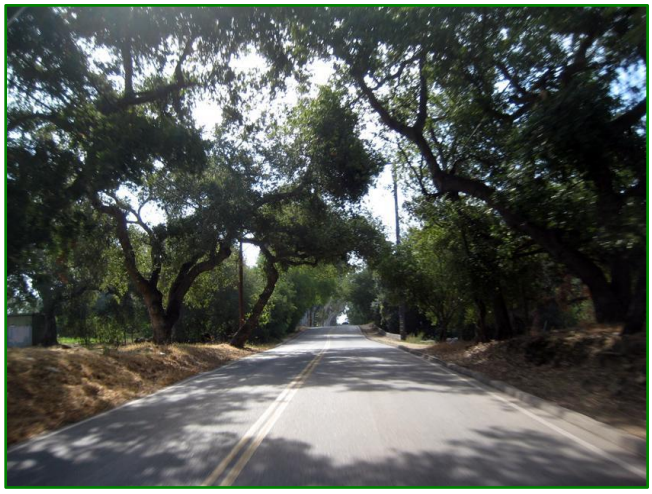
3. Maricopa Commercial

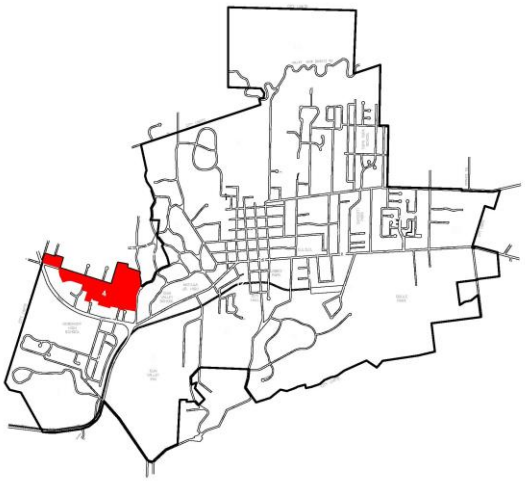


This neighborhood is located at the perceived entrance to the City, at the intersection of Ojai Avenue and Maricopa Highway, known as the "Y". The neighborhood is comprised of commercial and institutional properties along either side of Maricopa Highway. It includes the Maricopa Highway Corridor. Predominant land use categories in the area include Commercial and Institutional. The area is approximately 56 acres.

3. Maricopa Commercial Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Savannah and Woodland
Canopy coverage estimate:	5% Poor
Age diversity:	Mix of older and young trees
Existing tree patterns	• A row of large Eucalyptus along the high school frontage. • An intermittent newer planting of Valley Oaks in the Maricopa Highway median.
Comments:	The Maricopa Commercial District would benefit greatly from an aggressive program of tree planting, particularly in the large parking areas of impervious paving. Retrofitting these areas with current stormwater retention strategies would help both the trees and the watershed. Statistics show that shaded commercial areas do better business, so this area would benefit greatly from regular tree planting.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	14 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Street Trees:*Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (large) (native)
	Other Trees: Select from the City of Ojai Preferred Tree List, or subject to review by the Tree Program Manager with recommendation by the Tree Committee.

4. Cuyama

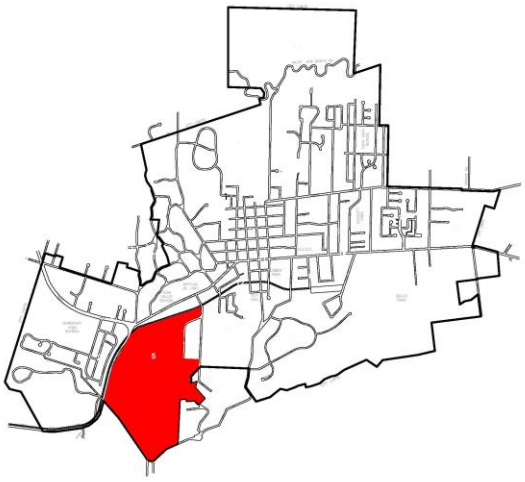




The Cuyama area was cleared early in the twentieth century except for the Hitching Post Estates property which was developed in the 1970's. The principal Streets are Cuyama Road and Church Street. The predominant land uses include multi-family residential condominiums and institutional uses such as the hospital property and several churches. The land area of the neighborhood is approximately 52 acres.

4. Cuyama Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Savannah & Woodland California Sycamore groupings
Canopy coverage estimate:	25% = Good
Age diversity:	Overall aging tree population
Existing tree patterns	Large remnants of mixed oak woodland along Cuyama and Del Norte roads. Numerous mature Sycamores at Creekside Village. Church Street has sidewalks and parkways that were planted with Evergreen Pears and Valley Oaks around 2004. Otherwise no sidewalks or parkways.
Comments:	Overall this area needs young trees planted to improve age diversity.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	6 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees***	Street Trees: *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear on Church St.
	Large : *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Pinus eldarica* Afghan Pine *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Gingko biloba* Maidenhair *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood (native) *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak
	Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native) *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel

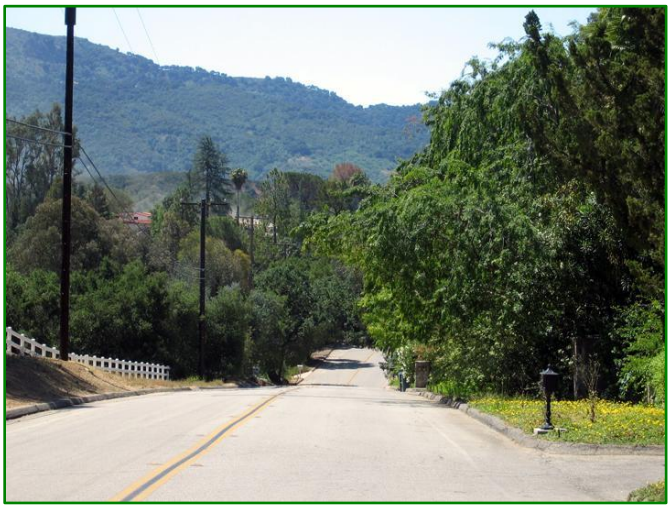
5. Ojai Valley Inn

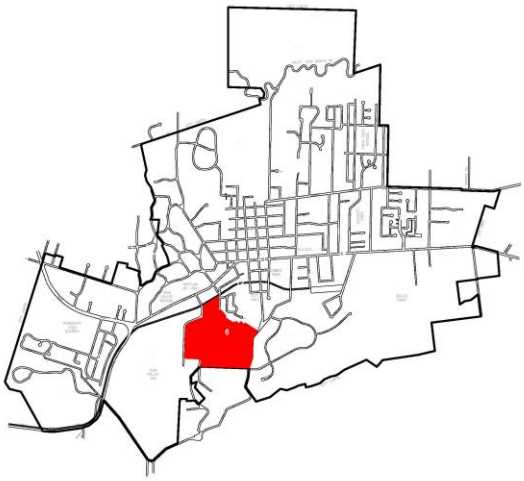


The Ojai Valley Inn and Spa is a neighborhood unto itself. It is comprised of a large scale golf course and resort that was originally developed in the 1920's. This area is partly bordered by the Ojai Avenue Corridor. Country Club Road and Country Club Drive are the two principal streets in the area. The area is approximately 218 acres.

5. Ojai Valley Inn Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland and Savannah
Canopy coverage estimate:	25% Good
Age diversity:	Balanced
Existing tree patterns	Mixed tree populations throughout golf courses and developed areas. Large, old Eucalyptus groves dominate the skyline, especially along Ojai Avenue Corridor at the approach to the Y intersection. No sidewalks or parkways; no street tree plantings
Comments:	Large native trees listed below are recommended for this area to help maintain Ojai's balance of native tree populations.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	7 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees***	Large : *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native) Medium: *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood (native) Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native)

6. Country Club

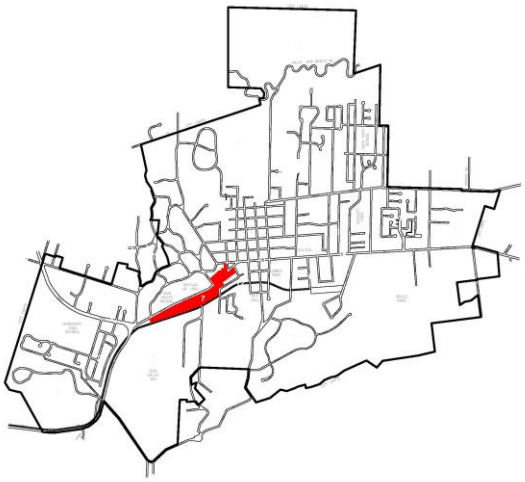




The Country Club Neighborhood is comprised of large scale residences on lot sizes of at least one acre near the Ojai Valley Inn and Spa. The low-density residential neighborhood typically has soft road edges without sidewalks or parkways. This area includes one 50 acre ranch. Principal streets include Country Club Drive and Country Club Road. The neighborhood is approximately 86 acres.

6. Country Club Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland and Savannah
Canopy coverage estimate:	22% Good
Age diversity:	Balanced
Existing tree patterns	• Well distributed oak populations in open areas. • Mixed non-native trees in residential landscapes and yards. • No street tree plantings
Comments:	Large, old Eucalyptus dominate the skyline. Many California Peppers around Ojai Valley Inn and Spa property.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	10 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large : *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Pinus canariensis* Canary Island Pine *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Eucalyptus nicholii* Willowleaf Peppermint *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood (native) *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak
	Small: *Arbutus unedo* Strawberry Tree *Koelreuteria bipinnata* Chinese Flame Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Magnolia 'Little Gem'* Little Gem Magnolia *Olea 'Swan* Hill' Fruitless Olive

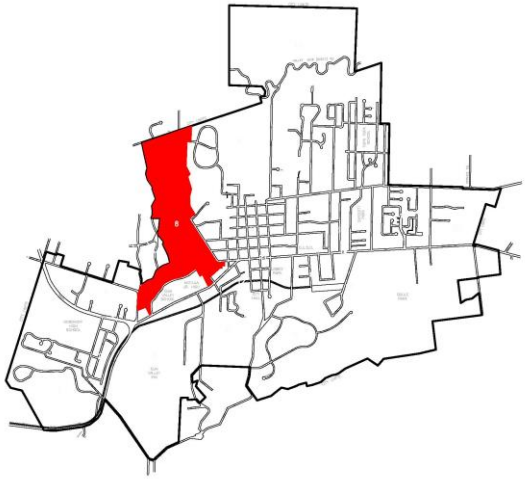
7. West Ojai Avenue Commercial



This area stretches along Ojai Avenue from Rotary Park to Cluff Vista Park and includes the properties on both sides of the street. The Ojai Avenue Corridor (identified in the Street Tree Plan) is within this district. The predominant land use is commercial. The area comprises approximately 24 acres.

7. West Ojai Avenue Commercial Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland
Canopy coverage estimate:	15% Fair
Age diversity:	Aging tree population
Existing tree patterns	The westerly portion of the Ojai Avenue Corridor in this district has regular planting of Coast Live Oak that form an allee. The easterly portion has intermittent older oaks.
Comments:	This is an important district that establishes the tree character as one enters Ojai. Statistics show that shaded commercial areas do better business, so this area would benefit greatly from regular tree planting.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	9 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit.*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Street Trees: Ojai Avenue Corridor: *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (large) (native) *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle (small, for restricted space planters between Bristol Rd. and Cluff Vista Park). Other Trees: Select from the City of Ojai Preferred Tree List, or subject to review by the Tree Program Manager with recommendation by the Tree Committee.

8. Arbolada Neighborhood

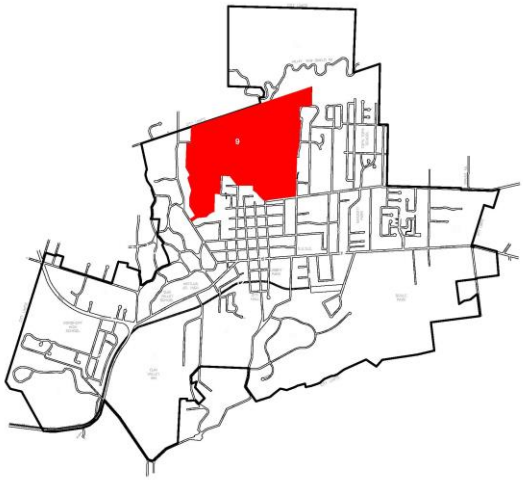


The Arbolada Neighborhood consists of land preserved by Edward D. Libbey in the 1920's for residential estate (one to two-acre parcels) development. It was originally laid out with winding lanes to preserve trees. The streets are relatively narrow, and there are no sidewalks or parkways and no formal street tree plantings. The principal streets in the Arbolada include: Fairview Road to the north, Foothill Road generally to the east, El Paseo Road to the south, and Palomar Road generally to the west. Other principal roads include Cuyama Road, El Toro Road, El Camino Road, Del Norte Road, Sierra Road, and Tico Road. The land area of the Arbolada is approximately 169 acres.

8. Arbolada Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Coast Live Oak Woodland
Canopy coverage estimate:	70% = Excellent, but in steady decline
Age diversity:	Aging oaks predominant – poor age diversity
Existing tree patterns	• Large patches of aging remnants of original Coast Live Oak Woodland with little natural regeneration • Smatterings of non-native ornamental trees • California sycamore well represented
Comments:	Old oaks are failing; likely due to drop in water table and diseases as older trees weaken. This area is Ojai's best canopied area, but is also in steady decline and would benefit from regular planting of new trees.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	15 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large : *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Ginkgo biloba* Maidenhair *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel

9. Del Oro / Signal

The Del Oro / Signal area has variable sized lots with a variety of building types and ages. This area transitions between open space to the north, remnant olive orchards, and the denser neighborhoods to the south. The area is in a fire sensitive zone. There are no sidewalks or street trees. This area is bordered by the Grand

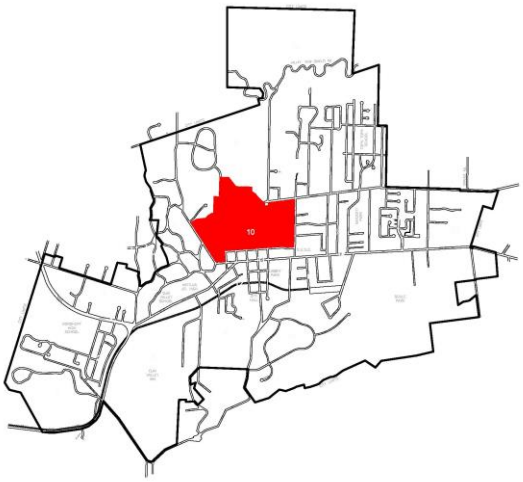


Avenue Corridor. Principal Streets include Del Oro Drive and Vista Hermosa Drive located at the west side of the area, Signal Street in the center of the area, and Montgomery Street located at the east side. The predominant land use is single-family residential, with one institutional retirement facility, Gables of Ojai. The land area is 248 acres.

9. Del Oro / Signal Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland and California Sycamore groupings
Canopy coverage estimate:	25% Good
Age diversity:	Overall aging tree population – poor age diversity
Existing tree patterns	• Scattered pockets and aging individuals of original Coast Live Oak Woodland with little natural regeneration. • Trees planted at development: California Pepper, Liquidambar, Pines, Eucalyptus and Ash
Comments:	Many opportunities to improve the area with trees. Inconsistent plantings, especially in Del Oro. Fire-safe landscaping should be considered in this area.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	8 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large : *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Olea* 'Swan Hill' Fruitless Olive *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak
	Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native) *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear

10. Downtown North Neighborhood

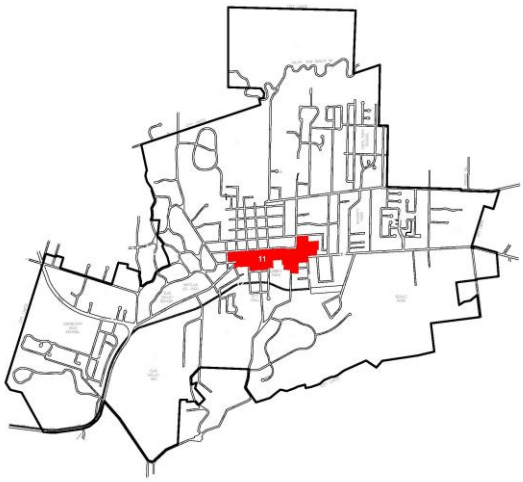
The Downtown North Neighborhood is comprised mostly of a grid pattern of streets laid out in the late nineteenth century. Parcels gradually developed over time, resulting in a diverse mix of building types and ages. The neighborhood is generally bound by Grand Avenue to the north, Matilija Street to the south, Foothill Road to the west and Montgomery Street to the east. Principal streets also include:



Cañada, Blanche, Ventura, Signal, Lion, Aliso, Oak, Eucalyptus and Summer. This area is bordered by three Street Tree Corridors: Matilija Street Tree Corridor, Grand Avenue Street Tree Corridor. and Montgomery Street Tree Corridor. This neighborhood includes many of the City's multi-family residences and single-family bungalows. Although the predominant land use is residential, the southern and eastern edge of the neighborhood includes commercial uses. The neighborhood is approximately 132 acres in size.

10. Downtown North Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Coast Live Oak Woodland
Canopy coverage estimate:	22% = Good, but in steady decline.
Age diversity:	Aging oaks predominate resulting in poor age diversity
Existing tree patterns	❧ Scattered aging individuals of original Coast Live Oak Woodland with little natural regeneration. ❧ Infill of non-native ornamental trees. ❧ Sidewalks and parkways are intermittent. The trees in the right of way are an extension of the original semi-rural neighborhood sporadic planting pattern rather than intentional street tree plantings.
Comments:	Old oaks are failing, probably due to drop in water table, diseases as older trees weaken, and cumulative effects of development. This area is in steady decline and would benefit from regular planting of new trees.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	14 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large : *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Pinus canariensis* Canary Island Pine *Pinus eldarica* Afghan Pine *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Ginkgo biloba* Maidenhair *Lyonothamnus floribunda* Catalina Ironwood *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak
	Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native) *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear

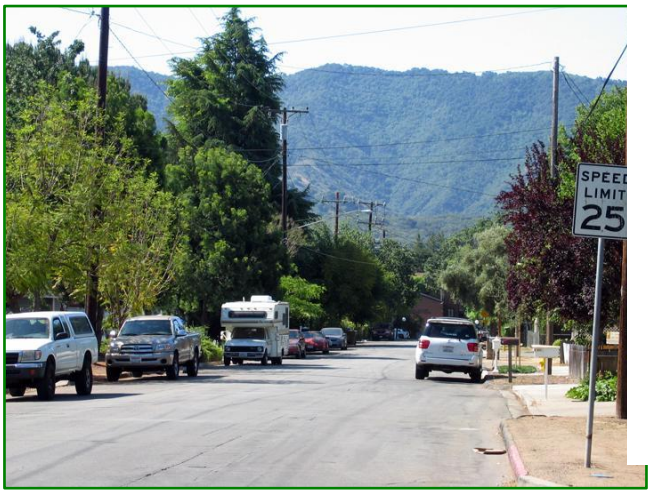
11. Downtown Commercial Neighborhood

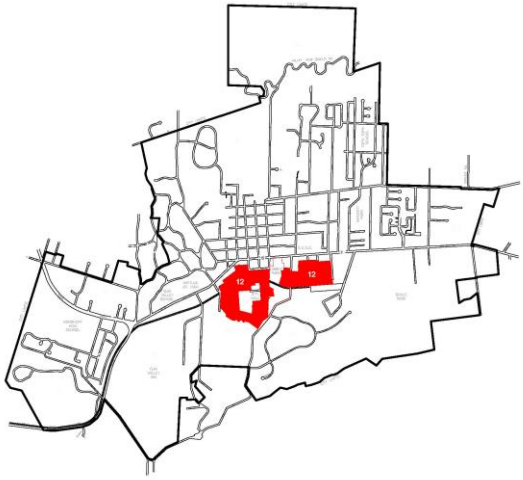


The Downtown Commercial Neighborhood straddles Ojai Avenue from Rincon Street and Topa Topa Drive on the west to Fox Street to the east. This neighborhood is considered the heart of Ojai. It includes the area north to Matilija Street and one to three properties deep to the south. The Ojai Avenue Corridor (identified in the Street Tree Plan) is within this district, as well as the Signal Street and Montgomery Street Corridors where they connect to Ojai Avenue. The Matilija Street Corridor borders the north edge of the district. The predominant land uses include commercial and the school district offices. The land area of this neighborhood is approximately 42 acres.

11. Downtown Commercial Neighborhood Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland with groupings of California Sycamore
Canopy coverage estimate:	7% = Poor
Age diversity:	A mix of young and older trees
Existing tree patterns	• The Ojai Avenue Corridor has a clear but intermittent pattern of *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane trees. • North and South Montgomery Street within the district have a pattern of *Pyrus c. 'Aristocrat'* Aristocrat Pear as a result of the 2003 VCTC tree planting grant to the city.
Comments:	Nearly all of the pre-development trees are gone. The line of Pepper trees along the Ojai Unified School District property at the corner of Ojai Avenue and North Montgomery Street are approximately 100 years old. Statistics show that shaded commercial areas do better business, so this area would benefit greatly from regular tree planting.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	10 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit.*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Ojai Avenue: *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane (both sides) (large)
	North Montgomery Street: *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (large) (native)
	South Montgomery Street: *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (large) (native)
	Matilija Street: *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (large)
	Other Trees: Select from the City of Ojai Preferred Tree List, or subject to review by the Tree Program Manager with recommendation by the Tree Committee.

12. Downtown South



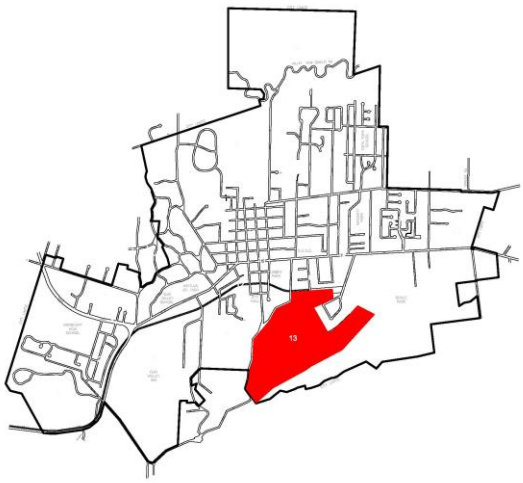


The Downtown South Neighborhood is south of the Downtown Commercial District from San Antonio Street to Fulton Street, and is essentially bisected by Libbey Park and City Hall public lands. It is typified by small lots on short streets, some dead end, with no east/west connector street, so the area is discontinuous. The Crestview development is mid-century semi-custom homes on medium sized lots with sidewalks but no parkways. Downtown South borders the South Montgomery Corridor. It generally has no sidewalks, parkways, or street trees with the exception of London Planes planted at Sycamore Homes on Fulton Street. Principal streets include Fulton, Bald, Fox, South Montgomery, Signal, Topa Topa, Santa Ana, Bristol and Crestview. The land uses in the area are

residential and mixed-use (residential and commercial). The area is approximately 80 acres, not counting Libbey Park, which is 16 acres or City Hall, which is 11 acres.

12. Downtown South Neighborhood Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland and Forest
Canopy coverage estimate:	15% Fair
Age diversity:	A mix of young and older trees
Existing tree patterns	• Libbey Park and immediate adjacent streets dominate downtown with aging Coast Live Oak canopy, a few large eucalyptus and California Sycamore. • Mixed non-native trees in other areas. • Sycamores planted at Sycamore Homes in 2000.
Comments:	Fulton Street, Bald Street and Fox Street have few trees and are poorly maintained. Crestview Drive has a few large, old oaks but is mostly mixed non-native, smaller scale trees.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	20 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit.*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large: *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Pinus canariensis* Canary Island Pine *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak
	Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Ginkgo biloba* Maidenhair *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak
	Small: *Cassia leptophylla* Gold Medallion *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native) *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Lagerstroemia indica* Crepe Myrtle *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Pistacia chinensis* Chinese Pistache *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear

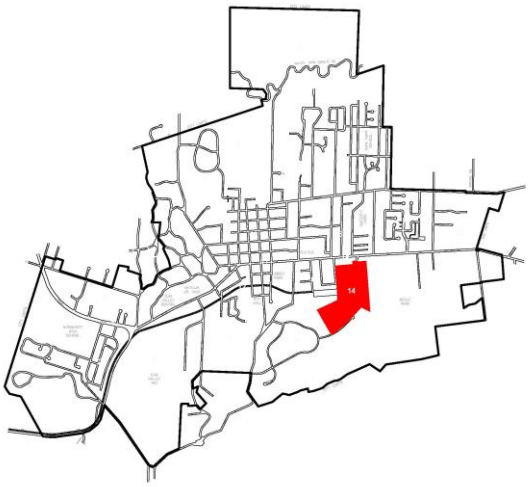
13. Persimmon Hill



Persimmon Hill was once a large dairy farm. In the late 1980's the land was cleared and subdivided as a private equestrian community with 2 to 10 acre parcels. This area transitions between open, rural areas and the denser neighborhoods to the north. The community contains no sidewalks or street trees. The principal streets in the neighborhood include Longhorn Lane, Buckboard Lane and Saddle Lane. The Persimmon Hill Neighborhood is approximately 168 acres.

13. Persimmon Hill Neighborhood Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Valley Oak Savannah & Woodland California Sycamore groupings
Canopy coverage estimate:	8% Poor
Age diversity:	Remnant older, predominantly young population
Existing tree patterns	Overall existing pattern: Mixed non-native Other than dense Riparian Forest along Fox Canyon Barranca, a few pockets of aging pre-development trees survive.
Comments:	Although it is mostly open due to large equestrian pastures, there are many opportunities to improve the area with trees.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	22 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large: *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native) *Pinus eldarica* Afghan Pine
	Medium: *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak *Robinia 'Purple Robe'* Purple Robe Locust *Tipuana tipu* Tipu
	Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native) *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Olea Swan* Hill' Fruitless Olive

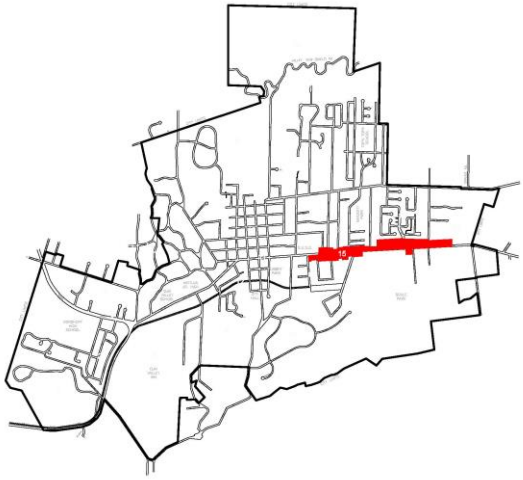
14. Bryant



The Bryant Area developed with multiple packing houses for the fruit industry in the early twentieth century. In the 1970's, the area was developed with utilitarian, tilt-up industrial buildings. This area includes the Bryant Street Tree Corridor. The main street in the area is Bryant Street, which leads to Bryant Circle. It is anticipated that the Fulton Street extension will be constructed by the year 2011, which will provide an alternative access point to the area. The predominant land uses in the area are industrial, commercial, and office. The Bryant Area is approximately 53 acres.

14. Bryant Neighborhood Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Savannah
Canopy coverage estimate:	5% Poor
Age diversity:	Younger tree population
Existing tree patterns	➢ Alder trees were planted at development but are in decline. ➢ Numerous Sycamores have been planted with newer developments. ➢ Coast Live Oaks have been planted along the Ojai Valley Trail axis. ➢ There are no sidewalks or parkways except for Bryant Circle interior and no street tree plantings.
Comments:	The area is in dire need of more trees planted.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	11 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit.*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Street Trees: *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (large) (native) Large : *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native) *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) Medium: *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood (native) Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native)

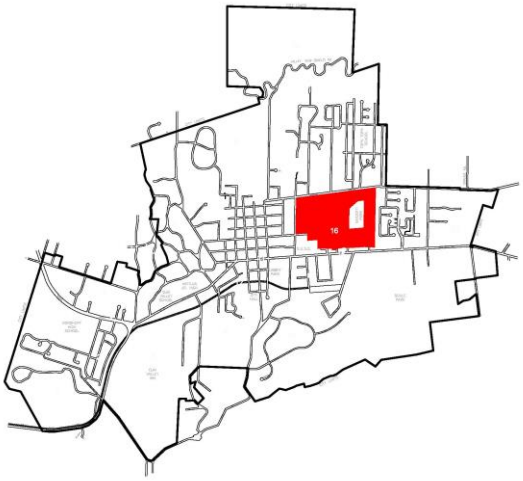
15. East Ojai Avenue Commercial



This neighborhood stretches along Ojai Avenue from Fox Street to the easterly city limit and includes the properties on either side of the street. The Ojai Avenue Corridor (identified in the Street Tree Plan) is within this district, as well as the Signal Street and Montgomery Street Corridors where they connect to Ojai Avenue. The area is also subject to the policies and guidelines outlined in the East Ojai Avenue Design Guidelines. The predominant land use is commercial. The neighborhood is approximately 36 acres.

15. East Ojai Avenue Commercial Neighborhood Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland with groupings of California Sycamore
Canopy coverage estimate:	5% Poor
Age diversity:	A mix of young and older trees
Existing tree patterns	The Ojai Avenue Corridor in this area between Fox Street and Bryant Street has an intermittent pattern of Valley Oak trees. From Bryant Street to Golden West Avenue, Sycamore species predominate. From Golden West Avenue to the easterly city limit the tree pattern is predominantly Coast Live Oak. The Bryant Street Corridor with Coast Live Oaks terminates within this district.
Comments:	Nearly all of the pre-development trees are gone, with the notable exception of two stately Valley Oaks just east of Shady Lane. This area would greatly benefit from a regular planting of street trees. Statistics show that shaded commercial areas do better business, so this area would benefit greatly from regular tree planting.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	8 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit.*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Street Trees: Ojai Avenue between Fox and Bryant: *Quercus lobate* Valley Oak (large) (native) or *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle (small, for restricted space planters) Ojai Avenue between Bryant and Golden West: *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane (large), or *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (large) (native), or *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle (small, for restricted space planters) Ojai Avenue between Golden West and city limit: *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (large) (native)
	Other Trees: Select from the City of Ojai Preferred Tree List, or subject to review by the Tree Program Manager with recommendation by the Tree Committee.

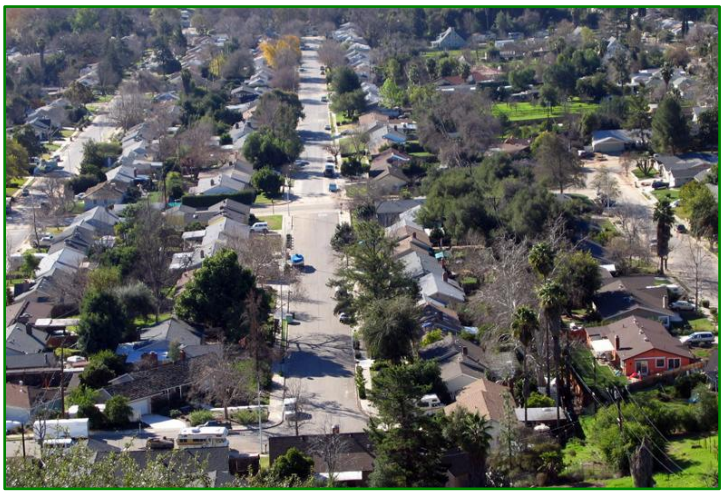
16. Sarzotti

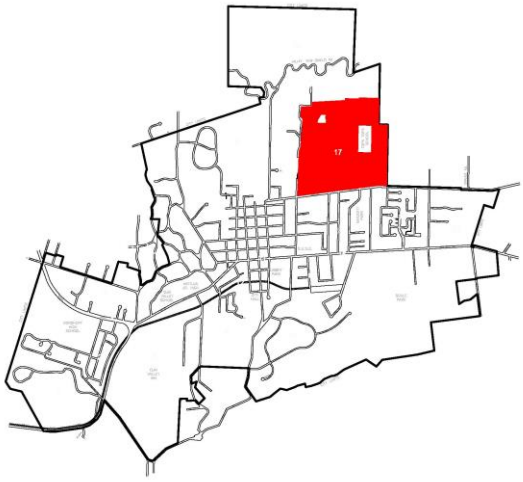


The Sarzotti Neighborhood was originally subdivided between 1920-1950, which has resulted in a diverse mix of pre-and post-war building types. Today, the properties on Shady Lane, Fulton Street and Drown Avenue are comprised of small residential lots (one quarter acre or less). The westerly portion around Oak Street has a mix of small lots and multi-family residential uses. With a few exceptions, there are no sidewalks or parkways, and no street trees. This area is bordered by the Grand Avenue Street Tree Corridor. The land area is approximately 96 acres, which does not include Sarzotti Park (9.5 acres).

16. Sarzotti Neighborhood Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Savannah & Woodland California Sycamore groupings
Canopy coverage estimate:	15% Fair
Age diversity:	Well balanced – a good mix of all ages
Existing tree patterns	Several scattered individual aging pre-development trees survive, dwarfing the smaller houses near them. An irregular pattern of Ash trees planted in the mid-twentieth century are now aging. The current overall theme is an unplanned mix of non-native trees.
Comments:	Several properties have unsightly topped trees.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	20 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large: *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native) Medium: *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak *Robinia 'Purple Robe'* Purple Robe Locust Small: *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Koelreuteria bipinnata* Chinese Flame Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle *Pistacia chinensis* Chinese Pistache *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear

17. Topa Topa Neighborhood

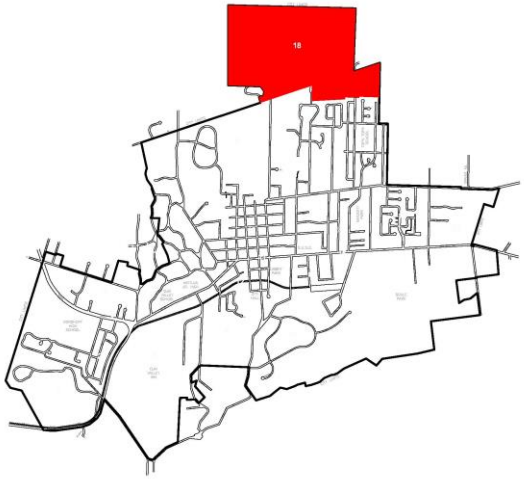




The Topa Topa Neighborhood was originally cleared of native oak woodlands to accommodate orchards. In the mid-twentieth century, the land was cleared again for tract style housing. Sidewalks and parkways are found on some, but not all streets. The neighborhood is bound by Montgomery Street to the west, Grand Avenue to the south, and the City boundary to the east. The northern boundary is just north of the parcels on the north side of Red Hill Road and just north of the northern terminal ends of Grandview, Park Road, Ayers Avenue and Mercer Avenue. Other principal streets in the neighborhood include Daly Road, Drown Avenue, Sunset Place, Mountain View Avenue, and Pleasant Avenue. The area is bordered by the Grand Avenue Corridor. The predominant land use of the neighborhood is medium density single-family residential. The neighborhood is approximately 185 acres, not including Topa Topa School that is 9 acres.

17. Topa Topa Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	• Valley Oak Savannah and Woodland • California Sycamore groupings
Canopy coverage estimate:	15% Fair
Age diversity:	Well balanced
Existing tree patterns	• A few pockets of aging pre-development trees survive. • An irregular pattern of Ash and Maple trees that were planted in mid-twentieth century are now aging. • The current overall theme is an unplanned mix of non-native trees. • Some streets have parkways, although most are narrow. A total of 27 Evergreen Pears and 17 Valley Oaks were planted as street trees in 2003, but numerous vacancies remain.
Comments:	Several properties have topped trees, which are unsightly.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	33 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Street Trees: *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (large) (native) *Pyrus kawakami* Evergreen Pear (medium) *Prunus cerasifera* Purple Leaf Plum (small for restricted planters)
	Large : *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Eucalyptus nicholii* Willowleaf Peppermint *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak *Robinea 'Purple Robe'* Purple Robe Locust *Handroanthus chrysotricha* Golden Trumpet
	Small: *Cassia leptophylla* Gold Medallion *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Geijera parviflora* Australian Willow *Handroanthus heptaphyllus* Pink trumpet *Koelreuteria bipinnata* Chinese Flame Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle *Pistacia chinensis* Chinese Pistache *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear

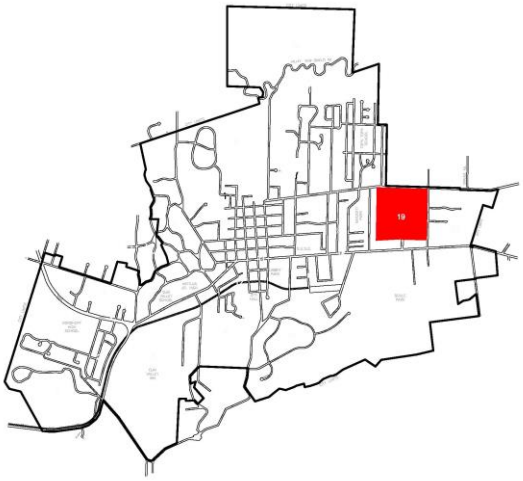
18. Shelf



Shelf Road neighborhood is the steep sloping foothills just north of the city. There are a few ranches at the bottom of the slopes, otherwise it is uninhabited. The principal street is Shelf Road, an unimproved, dirt fire road, which is used heavily for hiking and dog-walking. The land use of the area includes open space and orchards. The land area is 296 acres.

18. Shelf Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Coastal sage scrub and chaparral.
Canopy coverage estimate:	1% Poor
Age diversity:	Too few to classify
Existing tree patterns	There are a few Coast Live Oaks and a few Sycamores in the drainages. The area includes a few Citrus and Avocado groves.
Comments:	This area is essentially wild and is in a fire sensitive zone, therefore tree plantings are only recommended to supplement natural attrition of native trees. Because Shelf Road is heavily used by hikers, the shade of new trees would be beneficial along the road.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	5 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Plant native trees only.***	*Large:* *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native)

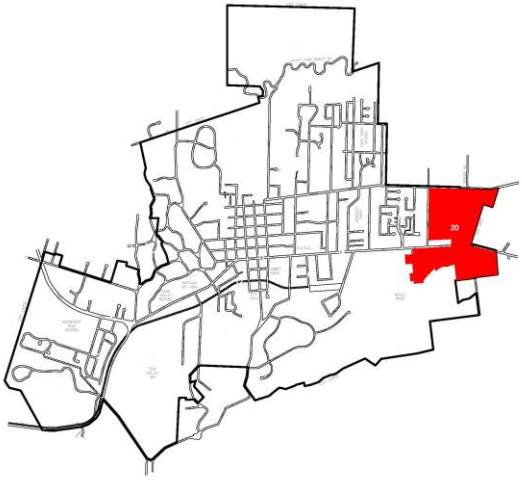
19. Golden West



This tract was subdivided in the 1970's with an average lot size of one quarter acre. The westerly section features mid-size single-family tract homes and the smaller southeast section has smaller residential duplexes. The neighborhood includes wide streets and sidewalks, but no parkways and no street trees. This area is bordered by the Grand Avenue Street Tree Corridor. Principal Streets include: Oriole Street, Golden West Avenue, Lark Ellen Avenue, Anita Avenue and Los Alamos Drive. The neighborhood is 66 acres.

19. Golden West Neighborhood Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Mixed Oak Woodland and Savannah
Canopy coverage estimate:	10% Poor
Age diversity:	Poor diversity, mostly young population
Existing tree patterns	➢ The only remnant of the original trees are several scattered individual large Valley Oaks. Mixed non-native ornamental trees predominate. ➢ Aging Liquidambar trees planted at development.
Comments:	This area would benefit tremendously from the introduction of street trees, however it would be necessary to alter the streets with devices such as curb extensions, chicanes or traffic circles
Annual Tree Planting Goal	18 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Larger trees shall be used for street trees unless conditions prohibit*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Street Trees: *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (large) (native) *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle (small, for restricted space planters)
	Large : *Cinnamomum camphora* Camphor *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Eucalyptus nicholii* Willowleaf Peppermint *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak *Robinea 'Purple Robe'* Purple Robe Locust *Handroanthus chrysotricha* Golden Trumpet
	Small: *Cassia leptophylla* Gold Medallion *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Geijera parviflora* Australian Willow *Handroanthus heptaphyllus* Pink trumpet *Koelreuteria bipinnata* Chinese Flame Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Lagerstroemia 'Natchez'* Natchez Crape Myrtle *Pistacia chinensis* Chinese Pistache *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear

20. Gridley / Boardman



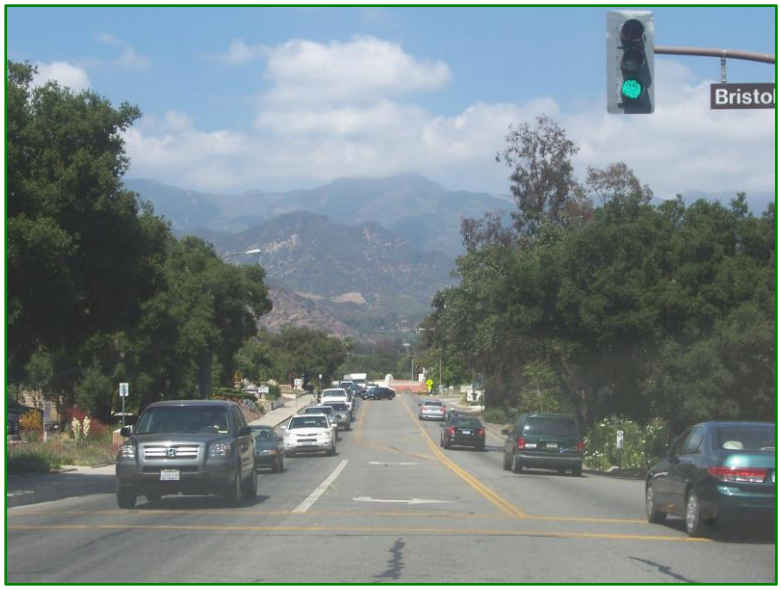
Originally cleared for agriculture, this area transitions between open, rural areas and the denser neighborhoods to the west. The area has been subdivided into 1 to 5 acre lots, which are developed with a mixture of custom estates, ranchettes, and smaller homes. Many properties have orchards and equestrian facilities. There are no sidewalks or street trees. This area is bordered by the Grand Avenue and Ojai Avenue Street Tree Corridors. Principal streets include: Gridley Road, Boardman Road, San Gabriel Street, San Rafael Street, Oak Glen Avenue, and Fairway Lane. The area is approximately 133 acres.

20. Gridley / Boardman Tree Characteristics	
Pre-development tree patterns:	Valley Oak Savannah & Woodland California Sycamore groupings
Canopy coverage estimate:	25% Good
Age diversity:	Well balanced
Existing tree patterns	Well distributed population of mixed oak woodland, interspersed with non-native trees such as Deodar Cedar, Magnolia, Sequoia, and fruit trees.
Comments:	Frontages along streets are generally well treed, predominantly with oaks.
Annual Tree Planting Goal	4 trees until optimal canopy cover is reached.
Recommended Trees: ***Note:*** ***Preference should be given to selecting California native trees.***	Large : *Cedrus deodara* Deodar Cedar *Magnolia grandiflora* Southern Magnolia *Platanus acerifolia* London Plane *Platanus racemosa* California Sycamore (native) *Quercus agrifolia* Coast Live Oak (native) *Quercus lobata* Valley Oak (native)
	Medium: *Arbutus 'Marina'* Marina Arbutus *Lyonothamnus floribundus* Catalina Ironwood *Quercus ilex* Holly Oak
	Small: *Cercis occidentalis* Western Redbud (native) *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese Fringe Tree *Laurus nobilis* Bay Laurel *Pyrus kawakamii* Evergreen Pear

Street Trees for Corridors and Nodes

Street trees must accentuate or complement the characteristics of the neighborhoods through the use of historically significant species or by complementing the theme of existing structures and plantings. Neighborhoods without a definite point of interest, or that blend into other neighborhoods have the opportunity to make a definite unique identity through street tree planting.

"Corridors" are the linear equivalent to neighborhoods, and refer to major vehicular thoroughfares. Corridors often provide linkages to and from opposite sides of the city and beyond. The major corridors within the City include Ojai Avenue, Maricopa Highway, Grand Avenue, and Montgomery Street.



The Ojai Avenue Corridor creates a Coast Live Oak frame for the Topa Topa Mountain view, creating a beautiful entry to downtown Ojai.

"Nodes" represent significant and important points within the City. Nodes are generally located at each entrance to the City, where major commercial roads meet the City's geographical boundaries. Nodes include the "Y" intersection, El Roblar at Cuyama Road, Boardman Road, Cañada Street, Bryant Street and Golden West Avenue where they meet Ojai Avenue, and at Signal Street and Grand Avenue.

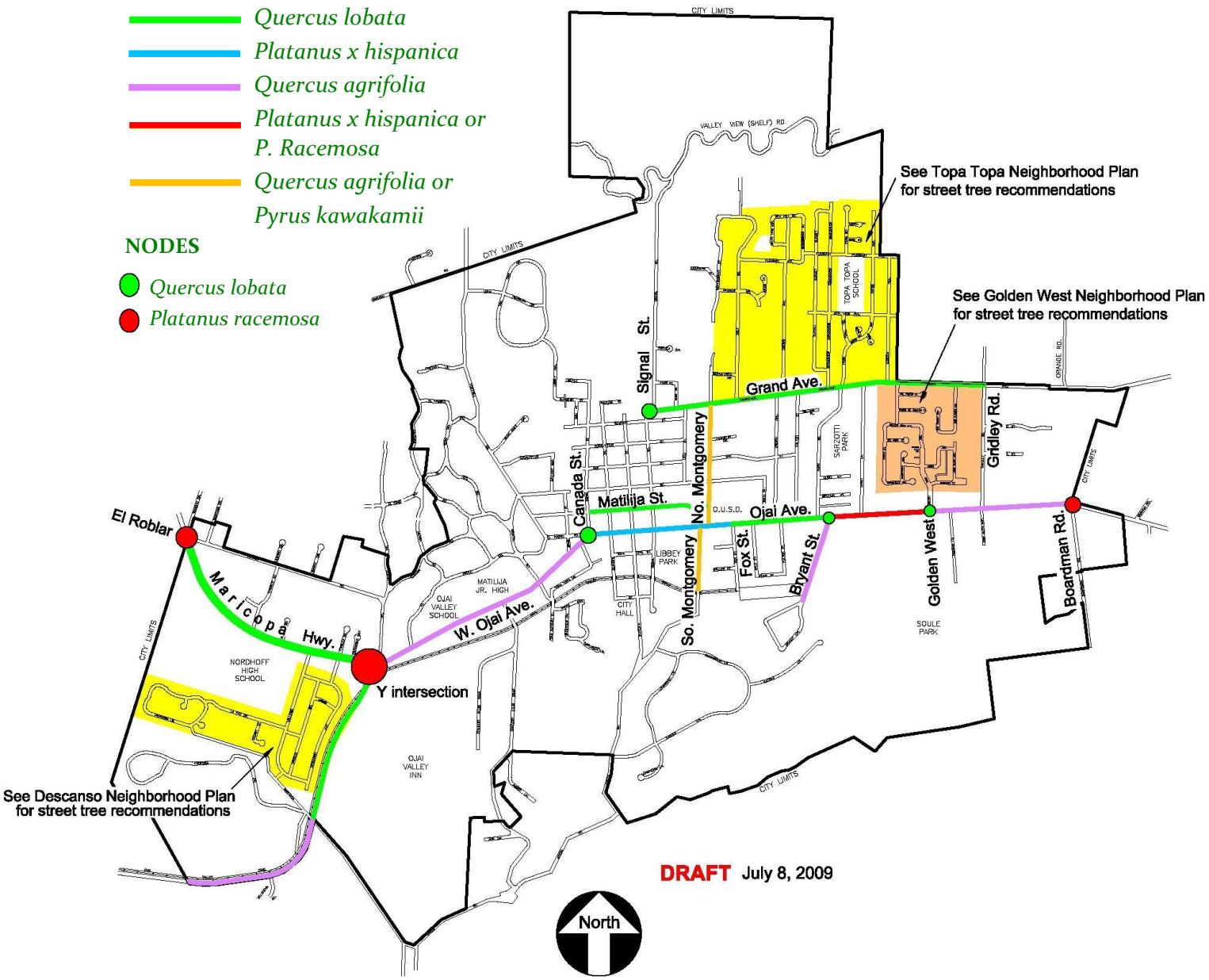
Ojai's street tree plan for corridors and nodes is presented as Figure 2.

CORRIDORS & IMPORTANT STREETS

Majestic oak tree at the entrance to the City at Ojai Rotary Community Park

Figure 2: Street Trees for Corridors, Important Streets, and Nodes

Parks and Civic Spaces

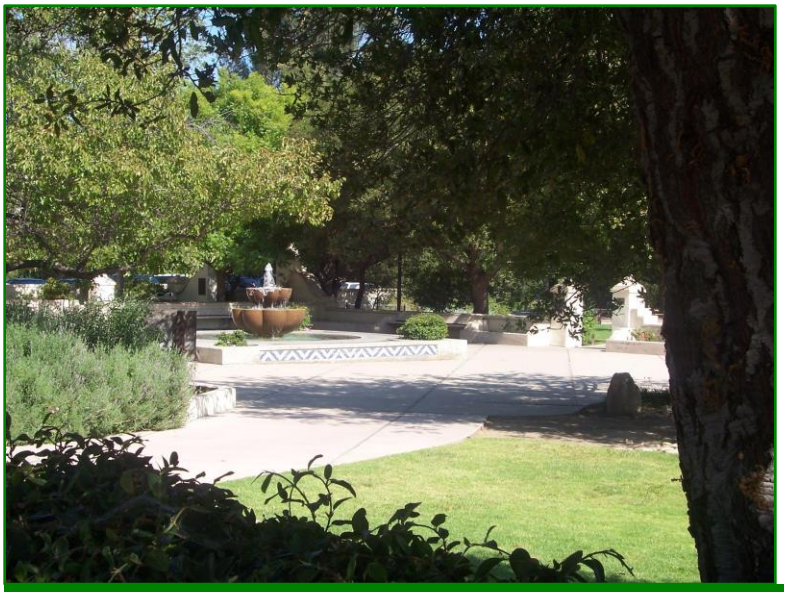


The City of Ojai's parks and civic spaces are individually unique, each with its own personality. City of Ojai parks include Libbey Park, Sarzotti Park, Cluff Vista Park, Ojai Rotary Community Park, and Daly Park. Arcade Plaza serves as a major civic space, as well as City Hall, which includes the Demonstration Garden and the Help of Ojai campus.

The mix of different parks in the City allow for a variety of uses from a highly active park with ball fields and play structures (Sarzotti Park), to a passive park with a fountain and

seating areas (Cluff Vista Park). Rotary Community Park serves as a beautiful entry feature to the City, and a welcome place of rest for those walking or hiking the Ojai Valley Trail. Libbey Park, the most significant park in the City, includes the Libbey Bowl, which is home to internationally known events such as the Music Festival and the Storytelling Festival. Libbey Park's tennis courts are graced annually with the top collegiate tennis players from across the nation for "The Ojai" Tennis Tournament. Libbey Park is also home to festivals such as Art in the Park, Mexican Fiesta, Ojai Day and summer concerts.

Each of these spaces benefit from the shade and beauty of trees. When a plan is developed and/or updated for each of the parks and civic spaces, it is prudent to include appropriate tree planting specifications unique to each park within the plan.



Libbey Park in the heart of downtown Ojai is known for its canopy of Oaks.

Tree Lists

Preferred Trees

The Preferred Tree List is to be used as a guide for the planting of replacement trees. This list includes trees that are native and those that are well suited to the local Ojai environment. In general, "the Ojai Big Three" – *Quercus agrifolia, Quercus lobata* and *Platanus racemosa,* the predominant native trees of the area, are a top preference, however they are large trees and cannot be accommodated in some situations. The Preferred Tree List is also a guide for Landscape Architects and Landscape Designers in the development of landscape plans for discretionary development such as commercial, industrial and multi-family developments. The Neighborhood Tree Plans and Street Tree Plan are still applicable to discretionary projects as it pertains to the public realm. However, when a property is large enough to accommodate many trees, the Preferred Tree List provides a variety of types and sizes of trees that are appropriate for planting in Ojai.

It should be noted that although fruit trees are not on the Preferred Tree List, the planting of trees as a source of local food and beauty is encouraged.

Table 2: City of Ojai Preferred Trees SEE REVISED LIST (Excel spreadsheet)

See Excel spreadsheet
*__Bold typeface__ indicates native trees.

Discouraged Trees

Table 3: City of Ojai Discouraged Trees SEE REVISED LIST (Excel spreadsheet)

See Excel Spreadsheet

Community Forest Management

Tree Committee

The City's Tree Committee is a volunteer advisory group that meets upon the request of the Public Works Director. The Tree Committee advises City staff on all matters pertaining to tree planting, care and management of the community's trees. The Tree Committee has five members appointed by the City Council. The Tree Committee has four-year terms which are staggered and serving at the Council's pleasure. Ideally the Tree Committee should include at least one Arborist, one Landscape Architect and at least two members who are not tree-related professionals.

Tree Program Managers

As charged by the Tree Ordinance (OMC Title 4, Chapter 11), the City maintains two Tree Program Managers for the City, the Public Works Director and Community Development Director. The Public Works Director oversees the care and management for all trees in the public rights-of-way and publicly owned lands. The Community Development Director administers the Tree Ordinance for all applicable trees on privately owned lands. Both Directors rely on the expertise of the Tree Committee in decisions regarding various tree needs.

Both Directors shall have access to a knowledgeable tree professional/contractor who can give technical advice for planting, removal, care and maintenance of the community forest.

Administrative Procedures and Inter-Departmental Process

The Tree Program Managers are responsible for interpretation and implementing all aspects of the Community Forest Management Plan. Every three years, the Tree Program Managers, with the assistance of the Tree Committee, shall review and recommend updates to Council of the Community Forest Management Plan. The Tree Committee may also recommend trees or amendments to the plan as needed, however such amendments will require Council approval. The three year review shall be submitted to the Council through staff and the Planning Commission with recommendations, ensuring public hearings as part of the review. All amendments to the Plan are subject to Council approval. The Tree Committee is advisory only and cannot amend the Plan without Council approval.

Under the direction of the Tree Program Managers, an annual reporting of tree plantings and removals will be made to Council. The Community Development Director is charged with updating the inventory of newly planted trees based upon discretionary development projects, and updating reported tree removals on private property within the City. The Public Works Director will annually update the street tree inventory and trees on public lands.

The Tree Program Managers are responsible for accepting appeals in case an individual disapproves of the street tree recommendation or other provisions of this document. An appellant who is aggrieved by the determination of a Tree Program Manager may appeal the Tree Program Manager's decision to the Planning Commission.

Annual Tree Planting Goal

For each Tree Neighborhood, an analysis of overall canopy coverage was initially performed by reviewing aerial photos and field reconnaissance. After deleting the results of the neighborhoods with the high and the low percentage of canopy results, it was determined that the City of Ojai maintains a weighted average of 17.5% overall canopy coverage, not including parklands and schools. American Forests, an organization that advocates that every city set a tree canopy goal for their community, suggests that a good target for areas in the Southwest and dry West is 25% average tree cover.

Based upon Ojai's geographic and climate conditions and land use categories, it was determined that 25% overall tree cover would be a good target to reach by the year 2050. By analyzing the amount of canopied acres, deficit acres (where there is no canopy), and the percentage canopy goal for the neighborhood, including accounting for attrition trees per year, a target number of trees to be planted was developed for each neighborhood, for an annual total tree planting goal of 283 trees citywide on both public and private lands. See Appendix B for the Tree Planting Goal analysis. Each neighborhood plan includes a tree planting goal for the neighborhood. In addition, it is a policy for the City to plant at least 25 trees annually in the public right-of-way or on public lands, to the extent practical and/or until "optimal canopy cover" has been attained on public right-of-way and public lands.

Implementation Recommendations

Implementation and Timing

The City will implement this plan through the planting and maintaining of trees with funds budgeted from the City's appropriate funds, including but not limited to, application fees such as the Tree Removal Permit, funds deposited into the Tree Mitigation Fund, grants, and via exactions from new development projects. Working with the Public Works Department, the Community Development Department will be responsible for ensuring that the recommendations in this document be incorporated in project conditions of approval and for environmental compliance. The Community Development Director shall ensure that trees and tree protection measures are shown properly on the submitted plans for Building Permits. In addition, the Community Development Inspector and/or Public Works Inspector shall perform site visits to ensure that proper procedures are being followed to protect designated trees during construction and to ensure that promised plantings are done correctly.

Discretionary Development, New Construction and Trees

While the City has taken the initiative to prepare and adopt this Community Forest Management Plan, its implementation will be greatly accelerated by the assistance and participation of private developers and the citizens of Ojai. The Community Forest Management Plan provides a guideline for private developers whose projects will help to shape the future image of the city. For example, the current ordinance requires that when an applicant submits a landscape plan for city review, one of the conditions of approval by the City is a requirement to provide at least one street tree and a generous amount of landscaping at the street-front.

In addition, Ordinance No. 870 was adopted on February 14, 2017 related to tree matters should be amended to better reflect the ideas in this CFMP. For example, the current ordinance already requires new street trees for all discretionary development and for all new construction, including additions to existing buildings. However, the ordinance does not refer to the tree type that should be planted. The ordinance should be amended to require planting that is consistent with the Neighborhood Tree Plans and Street Tree Plan in the *public realm* of the property. Spacing of trees should be addressed in the ordinance, which is typically 35 feet to 60 feet on center. However, the ordinance should be amended to allow some flexibility for the Tree Program Manager to determine the appropriate number of trees to be planted during project review, depending on the individual site and tree species.

The tree related ordinances should also be amended to reflect the discussion set forth below:

For single-family residences that are not part of a subdivision, the requirement should be to plant trees that are 5 or 15-gallon size. All other properties should be required to plant a tree that is in a-15 gallon container or a 24-inch-box. The first preference of planting location is in the public right-of-way, either in a parkway, behind the sidewalk, or near the street edge. If a tree cannot be accommodated in the public right-of-way, upon approval of the Tree Program Manager, alternately a tree may be planted in the front setback area of the private property. If for some reason a tree cannot be accommodated in the front setback, as approved by the Tree Program Manager, then an in-lieu payment should be required to be made to the City's Tree Mitigation Fund in the amount specified in the City's Master Fee Schedule to help facilitate the planting of trees elsewhere in the City. If the appropriate number and type of trees as specified in the Neighborhood Tree Plan already exists in the public realm, then the requirement has been satisfied, and no additional planting or in-lieu fee is required. A condition of approval for discretionary development may require the removal of existing trees on the property that are listed on

the Discouraged Trees List. This is already a practice of the Planning Commission during its discretionary review of projects. For example, three property owners that had projects on Ojai Avenue were required by the Planning Commission to remove existing palm trees, and to plant London Plane trees or oak trees on Ojai Avenue to be consistent with the existing planting theme for their particular stretches of Ojai Avenue.

Multi-family projects and commercial properties are currently required to submit landscape and tree planting plans as part of any discretionary development. The tree ordinances should be amended to require that tree selections should be required to follow the Neighborhood Tree Plans and Street Tree and Corridor Plans. Trees for Landscape Plans on private property should be required to select from the Recommended Tree List. Alternatively, if an applicant wants to plant trees other than those on the Recommended Tree List, the request can be made to the Tree Program Manager, who may request advice from the Tree Committee. Either the Tree Program Manager or the Planning Commission will make the final determination, as appropriate. As an example, a developer who wants to pay homage to Ojai's agricultural past may want to plant citrus trees as part of the landscape plan. Although not on the Recommended Tree List, citrus trees play an important part of Ojai's heritage and way of life. With conditions of approval concerning maintenance and care, this type of request is appropriate and welcome.

Education and Outreach

As discussed earlier in this Plan, trees have many benefits to a community, including monetary and health benefits. Educating the community of these facts would help instill the idea that trees are a wise investment for individual properties and the community at-large. The following efforts should be made by the City to educate and outreach to the community:

- Post Public Service Announcements on the local public access television station regarding tree matters, and
- Partake in an annual Arbor Day Celebration, and
- Develop a pamphlet for property owners regarding tree guidelines and rules, and
- Write articles in the local newspaper about the benefits of tree planting, and
- Announce tree planting efforts in an annual report at the Planning Commission and City Council, and
- Work with local tree planting groups to coordinate special events and tree plantings when feasible, and
- Provide Fact Sheets at the public counters at City Hall and the Public Works Department regarding the Benefits of the Urban Forest.

Tracking Results

A Street Tree Inventory was prepared by West Coast Arborists in September 2006. Since that time, the Public Works Department has been tracking the planting and removal of street trees. The annual report of public trees removed and planted will be analyzed per neighborhood to ensure that the City is working toward planting the target number of trees per year.

The Community Development Department tracks Tree Permits for tree removals of those applicants who come into City Hall for a Tree Removal Permit. The Department should start tracking newly planted trees of discretionary development projects and new construction project. Like the Public Works Department, the Community Development Department will track the trees per neighborhood as it relates to the target tree plantings per year. The actual plantings versus the target number of plantings will be reported to the Planning Commission and City Council annually.

Glossary

Canopy Coverage:	The percent of a fixed area covered by the crown of an individual plant species or delimited by the vertical projection of its outermost perimeter; small openings in the crown are included. A Forest has 80%-100% canopy coverage. A Woodland has 20% to 80% canopy coverage. A Savannah, 0-20% canopy coverage.
Community Forest	Trees and other vegetation within the built environment where we live, work and play, influenced by people, vehicles, pavement, utility lines, buildings, wildlife, underground pipes, and other plants.
Diameter at Breast Height (DBH):	Measurement standard for trees taken four and a half feet from finish grade.
Declining Tree:	A tree that is in a poor state of health due to any combination of reasons such as old age, poor growing conditions, insect infestation decay, root rot, vandalism, drought or poor cultural practices.
Dormant:	A condition of non-active growth. Deciduous trees are considered to be dormant from the time the leaves fall until new foliage begins to appear.
Girdling Roots:	Located above or below ground level, whose circular growth around the base of the trunk or over the individual roots applies pressure to the bark area, thereby choking or restricting the flow of sap.
Hardscape:	Paved area surrounding a tree or adjacent to a tree; such as a sidewalk, street, curb, gutter, driveway, plant wall, retaining wall, walkway, patio, etc.

Risk Assessment:	Identifying the risks associated with tree failures.
Risk Assessment Report:	A report describing the level risk found during a risk assessment.
Hazardous Tree:	A tree that has a high potential for failure and hitting a nearby target.
Heritage Tree:	Any tree of any genus, whether a species or hydro zone of any size, which is designated as such by a resolution of the City Council based on its historical, cultural or other value as determined by the City Council. A portion of the landscaped area having plants with similar water needs that are served by one irrigation valve
Nuisance Tree:	A tree with characteristics that include but are not limited to: a. Capability of damaging surrounding hardscapes to the point that the costs associated with maintaining the tree exceeds its value. b. Produces excessive litter and creates an annoyance to pedestrian traffic. c. Reproduces itself excessively thus becoming weed like.

Parkways:	That portion of a public street right-of-way or private street easement area lying between the curb and sidewalk.
Property Owner:	The legal owner of real property.
Pruning Standards:	Pruning Standards (ANSI A300 Part 1) which have been adopted by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)
Public Realm:	The area within the public right-of-way and front setbacks of private property that is seen from the street.
Replacement (Preferred) Trees	A list of trees adopted by the City Council that are native and/or well suited to the local environment that have been approved as replacement plantings to mitigate the impacts caused by the removal, relocation or destruction of trees protected by the Ojai Tree Ordinance
Specimen Tree:	A tree placed so people can gain the greatest enjoyment for the color, texture, scent, or other pleasures it provides.
Street Trees:	Trees planted or to be planted in the various parkways and rights-of-way along City streets, roads, and alleys and trees planted within access easements of private roads.

Resources

Other Municipal Agency's Plans

City of San Gabriel. Street Tree Master Plan, Adopted January 2004

City of Santa Monica. Community Forest Management Plan, Adopted November 9, 1999.

On the web:

American Forests - American Forests advocates that every city set a tree canopy goal for their community as an important step in ensuring that their valuable green infrastructure is maintained at minimum thresholds, even as the community continues to develop.

American Forests offers some general goal guidelines based on geographic and climate conditions and land use categories. https://www.americanforests.org/our-work/urban-forestry/

Arbor Day Foundation - The Tree City USA® program provides direction, assistance, attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of towns and cities, www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/index.cfm

Cal Flora - Information on wild California plants for conservation, education, and appreciation. CalFlora, 1700 Shattuck Ave. #198, Berkeley, CA 94709 • 510 528-5426, www.calflora.org

California Invasive Plant Council – The mission is to protect California wildlands from invasive plants through restoration, research and education. Cal-IPC works closely with agencies, industry and other nonprofit organizations to support research, restoration work, and public education, cal-ipc.org

California Native Plant Society - Since its beginnings, the California Native Plant Society has been a leading voice in plant science and native plant appreciation, making it one of the foremost native plant organizations in the world. www. cnps.org

CalPhotos - University of California, Berkeley hosts this site which allows access to **112,844** images of plants. A variety of organizations and individuals have contributed photographs to CalPhotos, http://calphotos.berkeley.edu//flora/

Center for Urban Forest Research – Mission is to demonstrate new ways that trees add value to communities, converting results into financial terms to stimulate more investment in trees, http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/topics/urban_forestry/

PLANTS Data Base - United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services The PLANTS Database provides standardized information about the vascular plants, mosses, liverworts, hornworts, and lichens of the U.S. and its territories, http://plants.usda.gov/

SelecTree – California Polytechnic State University and Urban Forest Ecosystems Institute. SelecTree is a tree selection guide, http://selectree.calpoly.edu/

Books, Publications and Magazines

American National Standards Institute, ANSI A300 (part 1)- 2017 Pruning, 2017

Bossard, Carla C., J. Randall, M. C. Hoshovsky, ed. Invasive Plants of California Wildlands, University of California Press, 2000

International Soc. of Arboriculture, Best Management Practices, Pruning, 3rd ed., 2019.]

Fry, Patricia L. The Ojai Valley – an illustrated history, 3rd ed., Ojai Valley Museum, 2017.

Perry, Robert. Landscape Plants for California Gardens, Land Design Pub.,2010

Schwab, James C. Branching Out. Planning, March 2009, pg. 10-15.

Sunset Western Garden Book, 9th ed., Time Home Entertainment Inc., 2012.

Appendix A - City of Ojai Tree Planting and Maintenance Standards

The following standards should be used by City staff, private property owners, and contractors in the maintenance and care for the trees within the City. These standards shall be used in conjunction with the requirements of Title 10, Article 12 of the Ojai Municipal Code (Landscape Standards). Where there is a conflict between the following provisions and the Ojai Municipal Code, the Ojai Municipal Code shall apply.

It is acknowledged that all provisions of this document have associated personnel and budget considerations, and that, among other things, the "maintenance capacity" of City staff and crews may be a limiting factor.

Species Selection

Selection of tree species which are most appropriate for the community forest and the City's greater ecosystem is a critical part of maintaining and enhancing the community forest. Before choosing a tree species to plant in the City, the following attributes will be considered:

- Native vs. non-native - While there is a strong desire to use native trees, it is preferable to use a mix of 1) those native species which occur naturally in Ojai, 2) other species native to the broader geographic region, and 3) appropriate non-native species. This approach will help to ensure adequate species diversity.
- Invasive species - Prior to selecting a tree species for planting (or to be added to the "recommended species" list), the California Invasive Plant Council's website will be searched to ensure the species has not been determined to be invasive.
- Drought tolerance - The water requirements of any tree species considered for planting (or to be added to the "recommended species" list) should be evaluated. Species which require frequent irrigation should be avoided except under special circumstances.

Removal of Invasive Species

In recent decades it has become apparent that some non-native species are invasive and as such threaten to encroach upon and greatly alter California's native ecosystems. Among these invasive species are various tree species. While it has been commonly held that invasive species are not such a serious threat to native ecosystems when they are growing within the "built" environment away from undisturbed native lands that is not always valid. Invasive species may spread from seeds which can be widely dispersed by wind and in urban stormwater runoff. There are individual trees in the City, some well established and even revered, that have the ability to spread via seed and other

propagules into the waterways that course though the City. Tree Program Managers will establish a program to evaluate and address the potential removal of individual trees which are considered to be invasive and which have the capability to spread into the surrounding native ecosystems, especially via stormwater runoff. Examples of such species include Peruvian (aka California) pepper, Chinese elm, Mexican fan palm, and shamel ash.

Pruning Standards

It is recognized that trees are individually unique in form and structure and that their pruning needs may not always fit a strict application. Therefore, the information, adopted by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), shall be used as a guideline for pruning trees. [For additional detail refer to ANSI A300 (part 1)- 2017 Pruning] and Best Management Practices, Pruning, third ed., ISA, 2019.]

Pre-pruning Inspection

Prior to beginning any pruning operation, an arborist or qualified professional should visually inspect the trees to be pruned and understand the following:

- the specific reason that the tree is being pruned (see pruning objectives below),
- general condition, structure, and health,
- location and type of branches to be removed or pruned,
- amount of branches to removed or pruned,
- type of pruning cuts to be made (branch removal, reduction cuts, etc),
- signs of wildlife nesting,
- worker safety concerns, and
- pruning system to be applied.

Pruning Systems

There are several pruning systems (natural, pollard, espalier, pleach, fruit production, bonsai, etc.) The preferred system to be used in most cases in the City will be the "natural pruning system". The natural pruning system is an informal style used to retain and promote the characteristic form of the species in its location.

Pruning Objectives

No tree shall be pruned without a clearly defined objective. Establishment of objectives must consider the pruning system, tree health, growth habit, size, available space, safety issues, clearance issues, etc. It is important to understand that pruning is not inherently good for trees and should be done only when a clear need exists. The following are typical pruning objectives:

improving structure (especially important in young trees as they grow),
risk mitigation (enhancing tree safety),
providing clearance,
improving health (under certain limited conditions),
improving aesthetics,
restoration (correcting previous poor pruning or breakage, and
size management.

Pruning Techniques

Proper pruning technique is very important but is beyond the scope of this Plan. For additional information refer to Best Management Practices, Pruning, third ed., ISA, 2019.

Pruning Cycles

The Community Forest is maintained to the highest standard obtainable within the City's available resources by establishing routine pruning cycles for City trees that are consistent with their growth habit. Trees are ordinarily placed in one of six maintenance categories. Where possible, pruning activities will be timed to avoid impacting the nesting patterns of birds.

Annual Trim

Trees in the commercial zones should be pruned annually to maintain adequate sign clearance as well as an attractive storefront for business owners. Large trees in residential zones or areas with high levels of use by the public should be pruned every year to reduce the potential for limb drop or trunk failure.

High Maintenance

Residential street trees should be pruned every other year.

Routine Trim

Trees with moderate growth habits should be pruned every 3-5 years. Pruning involves the removal of 30% of the live foliage, as well as dead, dying, diseased or crossed limbs which occur during the natural course of the tree's growth.

Low Maintenance

Trees with slow growth habits should be pruned every 6-8 years. Pruning involves the same methods as what is performed during a routine trim, however less foliage might be removed to accommodate the growth pattern of a particular species of tree.

Training Trim (Structural Pruning)

Pruning of new trees should be scheduled annually as needed under ideal circumstances, but no more than 3-5 years after new trees have been planted. The purpose of this activity is to cultivate a sound branching structure with good canopy form. Proper structural pruning in a tree's early years can prevent the need for expensive corrective pruning later.

Service Requests

Special circumstances may require a designated tree to be pruned or removed on an "as needed" basis. Trees which are removed should be replaced as soon as possible. Specific examples where requests are authorized are:

• Pruning or removing trees which may present a potential hazardous condition
• Removing limbs which interfere with utility lines. This work will usually be performed by utility line clearance contract personnel.
• Pruning trees which interfere with buildings or removing limbs which interfere with street light illumination or which block visibility at intersections, etc.
• Removal of competing plant material such as Ivy growing up the trunk and posing a threat of the health of the tree.

Tree Inspections

Tree inspections should be conducted by an ISA certified arborist or by a tree-professional as directed by one of the Tree Program Managers in the public rights-of-way. The purpose of this activity is to determine a change in the tree's health and/or diagnose a condition before a problem develops or becomes too serious. Typically, inspections should be conducted annually depending on the history, age and species of tree or stand of trees, to evaluate their health, condition and vitality. As a standard practice, the following criteria are used when inspecting trees.

Tree Inspection Criteria

1. **Existing Problems:**
4. **Tree Species:**

- Evidence of decay
- Saprophytes on trunk or limbs
- Cankers
- Insect infestation
- Symptoms of disease
- Mechanical damage

2. Tree Structure:

- Lean of the tree
- Branching structure, cracks
- Condition of surface roots
- Wounds to trunk or limbs
- Trunk decay
  - Trunk, limbs excessively bowed
  - Codominance

3. Canopy:

- Vigor of shoot growth
- Color of foliage
- Twig and leaf growth
- Crown dieback
- Appropriate for its location
- Desirable species
- Value as a species

5. Grow space

- Width of parkway or cutout
- Utilities
- Hardscape condition
- Building clearance
- Vehicle clearance

6. Tree Care History:

- Level of existing maintenance
- Available moisture
- Pruning history

Root System Management

Prevention

In order to prevent the necessity of damaging root pruning in the future, careful consideration to species selection is important when planting new trees. Trees in confined spaces shall be selected based on their ultimate size and space requirements to limit future hardscape and building conflicts.

The following procedures should be implemented to address trees whose roots are causing damage to the surrounding hardscape. Inspections should involve the following factors in determining the proper course of action.

Safety

Root pruning may jeopardize a tree's safety and this should be the first consideration. The trunk size and tree height should be evaluated in relation to the amount of structural

roots that would remain if any root pruning were to occur. The size of roots being cut and their distance from the trunk is also an important consideration.

Species of Tree

The species of tree is important to consider when evaluating a tree for possible root pruning. Some tree species tolerate root damage well, have a history of surviving such damage, and of being less likely to fail as a result of significant root removal. Other species may be less likely to survive and/or more likely to fail as a result of significant root loss. The species desirability and future appropriateness in the location should also be considered.

Condition of Tree

An evaluation of the tree's condition shall be made prior to root pruning. Cavities in the trunk, the presence of saprophytes at the trunk flare, crown dieback or tree instability are factors which shall be considered as part of the tree's viability when evaluating a tree for root pruning. Consideration shall be given to the tree's "survivability" following root pruning.

Adequate Space

The tree's ability to survive in its current location shall be evaluated. The species' potential growth (ultimate size) and longevity shall be considered. As an alternative to root pruning or tree removal, consideration shall be given to the possibility of providing additional space where possible by expanding the cutout around the tree. Trees which impact overhead power lines, water meters, signs and buildings and are also disrupting surrounding hardscapes shall be evaluated for removal and replacement prior to undertaking root pruning.

Once an inspection has been completed and root pruning is identified as the optimum solution, the following guidelines shall be considered and tailored as necessary to each situation.

Scheduling

Root pruning should be done at least one year after the tree canopy has been pruned. The optimum time of year for root pruning shall be after the winter storm season.

Selective Root Pruning

This process involves the selective removal of only those roots that are causing hardscape damage. The roots which are targeted for removal should be excavated by hand only. Mechanical excavation should not be used because this method has the potential to cause excessive damage to the surrounding roots, the trunk or trunk flare. Once the targeted roots are exposed they can be cut with a pruning saw. In cases where the trunk flare is more than 24 inches away from the point of root pruning and it is determined that future damage to the hardscape may occur if the tree remains, root barriers shall be installed.

Preventative Root Pruning

This process involves pruning the roots at the edge of a hardscaped area on a regular basis to prevent hardscape damage and displacement in the future. Scheduling for root pruning the city trees should be coordinated with the city's annual pruning program.

Straight Line Root Pruning

This process involves making a straight cut with a root pruner positioned at the edge of the park strip or tree well nearest the tree. In this process all roots within a defined area are severed using the root pruner. The cut shall be no deeper than 14 inches below the finish grade for sidewalk repairs and 26 inches for curb repairs.

Root Barriers

Commercially available root barriers are made of plastic and are usually placed at the edge of the sidewalk, curb or driveway apron nearest the tree. They are used in an effort to deflect root growth and prevent hardscape damage. In new tree plantings, proper selection of tree species within the available space will often eliminate the need for root barriers. This should be the first consideration.

The following guidelines shall be considered by the City as administered by the Tree Program Manager in determining when root barriers should be used.

- When roots on existing trees have been cut to stop ongoing damage to hardscape and the use of root barriers is considered the best option to prevent future damage.

- When new trees are to be planted in a space significantly smaller than recommended in the "preferred cutout size" listed in the "Preferred Tree List" root barriers may be the best option.

Root Barrier Selection

Linear root barriers should be used whenever possible since they provide a greater area for root growth while deterring hardscape disruption. The length of the root barrier depends on the selected tree species, however a minimum of 10 feet in either direction from the trunk is recommended on large trees. Circular root barriers should be avoided.

Installation of Root Barriers

Root barriers shall be placed against the hardscape with the top of the barrier kept no less than 1/4-inch above the finished grade. Note that if soil covers the top edge of the root barrier it will become ineffective, as roots tend to grow above the top edge in those cases. Adjacent to sidewalks, a barrier with a depth of 18 inches is optimum. However barriers that are 12 inches deep are sufficient in cases where slow growing trees are planted or in cases where the tree is known not to have an aggressive root system. Adjacent to curbs, 24- inch barriers should be used.

Placement of New Trees

The following guidelines should be considered for placing new trees.

Tree Spacing

- 35 feet on center, except for large trees, which may need more room
- 30 feet from the corner property line
- 10 feet from driveway approaches
- 10 feet from light poles
- 5 feet from utility meter boxes

Siting of New Street Trees

Prior to siting new trees, an assessment of underground utilities is required.

When choosing planting locations, consideration should be given to whether the tree species and site location are such that root barriers are indicated.

Typically, street trees are planted where there is a break in the established street tree pattern or within an existing tree well that should be filled. However, in some cases, as a result of the following conditions, planting a new or replacement tree may be inappropriate:

- The tree would interfere with the growth of other trees in the area.
- The vacant tree well site is overshadowed by other trees in the vicinity creating an unsuitable growing condition for the proposed new tree.
- The tree would interfere with overhead or buried utilities, utility meters, or other infrastructure
- The tree could block view of oncoming traffic.

Planting Procedures

Best Time to Plant

The best time to plant trees is in the fall. By planting in the fall, trees and shrubs will develop a strong root system during the fall, winter, and early spring months

Selecting Trees at the Nursery

Selection of trees in the nursery is the first and perhaps the most important step in the long term success of new tree plantings. The following guidelines apply:

- Trees are generally purchased in containers. In general, smaller is better, and a smaller container size tree will generally catch up with the next larger size within the first year. A 15-gallon (now called a #15) tree is generally a better choice than a 24" box tree. Life in the nursery is not ideal, and the larger the container, the longer the tree has been in the nursery.
- A large overgrown tree in a small container is generally not desirable and is likely to be root bound. Avoid trees that appear unusually large for their container size.
- Select trees that appear healthy, have no damage to the trunk or limbs, and no evidence of insects or disease.
- Trees that have been topped in the nursery are often going to have significant structural issues and should be avoided if possible. Topping is a common practice in the nursery trade for various reasons.
- The root crown of the tree, where roots appear, should be visible at or just below the surface of the potting soil. If that area is deeply buried it may indicate a tree that has been in the nursery too long and could become a disease issue later.
- Once a tree is selected it is suggested that the tree be gently pulled from its pot to

examine the roots. Ask the nursery to do this. If there is an abundance of roots at the outer surface of the exposed root ball that appear to be circling around the inside of the container the tree should be rejected.

- When moving a tree always carry the tree by its container or root ball, never by the trunk.

Proper Planting Procedures

Proper planting is the next important step. The following guidelines apply:

- Prior to digging, all underground utilities must be identified and located.
- If there is any likelihood that adequate drainage might be an issue, a drainage test should be performed. Unless a site is known to have adequate drainage, it should be tested. lack of proper damage results from highly compacted soil among other things and is a leading cause of failure in new plantings. See below for drainage testing details.
- The hole should be dug no deeper than the size of the root ball. If the initial hole is dug too deep, backfill and compact the fill soil before planting. If the hole is dug too deep, even if backfilled to the correct depth, the tree will settle and sink to a greater depth. Ultimately this leads to a buried root crown and disease issues.
- Before placing the tree in the planting hole, examine the root ball for circling roots. Circling roots should be cut cleanly with a sharp pruning tool. Also remove any broken or damaged roots. Inspect the canopy for broken or damaged limbs and remove carefully.
- The ideal planting depth is so that the root ball is just slightly higher than the surrounding soil.
- Backfill using only the soil excavated. No soil amendments or fertilizer should be used in the planting hole.
- Eliminate all air pockets while backfilling the planting pit by watering the soil as it's put into the hole. Do not compact the backfill by tamping it down.
- Trees that are planted in parkways should have a 6-inch high water retention basin built around the tree. Immediately after planting the tree, water it thoroughly by filling the water retention basin twice.
- Add 3-4 inches of mulch, composed of shredded tree trimmings, to fill the basin or tree well. It is best if mulch is kept away from the base of the trunk, but in reality this is impractical. Every time the basin is filled with water, the mulch will float freely and settle evenly across the area.
- Keep the soil around the new tree moist but not saturated by watering at least once a week during the cooler winter months and twice a week during the hot summer months

Testing Drainage

A simple method of testing soil drainage is by using a "percolation test". Soil should not be excessively dry or saturated when testing for drainage. The following steps are adapted from Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories:

- With a shovel or post hole digger, dig a hole 18-24" deep. Width is not important.
- "Pre-wet" the soil around the hole by filling the hole with water to the top and letting it sit for several hours. Ideally it should be allowed to sit overnight.
- Refill the hole to within two inches of the top.
- To aid in measurement, place a stick across the top of the hole and use a second stick or tape measure to record the periodic drops in water level.
- Measure the drop in water level from the starting height after 30 minutes and after one hour. If possible measure the drop in water level the next day as well.
- Determine the average drop in water level per hour and refer to the table below.

If water level drops:	The planting locations is:
Less than ½ inch per hour	Poorly drained
½ to 1 inch per hour	Moderately well drained
More than 1 inch per hour	Well drained

Proper Tree Staking Procedures

While it seems like young trees need extra support, most trees don't need to be staked.

Staking trees that don't need it can cause the tree to grow fewer roots and develop a weak tree base. Tree staking may be necessary in situations where the tree cannot adequately support itself once the nursery stake is removed, or in locations where heavy traffic or potential vandalism may be an issue. When staking is deemed necessary, the following applies:

- The nursery stake must always be removed from newly planted trees.
- Any tree requiring staking must be staked with a minimum of two wooden lodge poles and two ties per pole.
- Poles should be driven into the ground outside the root ball of the tree. Drive the stake into the ground approximately 24 – 30 inches below grade.
- Tree ties should be made of material that cannot damage the tree, preferably rubber, but never wire or rope. Any material that could girdle the tree if left

unattended should be avoided.

- Place the top ties only as high on the trunk as is necessary to support the tree. Ties should be loose enough to allow the tree to move in the wind. Movement is critical to proper root development.
- Remove all stakes as early as possible, usually within one year of planting. Stakes left in place are damaging to trees and can reduce stability.

Benefits of Mulch

Adding mulch around a tree trunk helps reduce stress on the tree by contributing essential microorganisms to the root zone and maintaining a consistent moisture level in the surrounding soil. Mulching can also prevent mechanical damage by keeping mowers and line trimmers away from the tree trunk base. It also reduces competition from plants such as turf or groundcovers that surround the tree.

Maintenance of Street Trees During Construction

Tree Protection Zone

Trees must be protected during construction through the establishment of a Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) prior to the commencement of any construction activities. Some intrusion into TPZ is expected but intrusion shall be limited. A TPZ should encompass the area directly under the tree canopy, as defined by the tree's "dripline", and may be extended beyond the dripline in some circumstances.

Trenching

The minimum distance between a trench and a protected tree shall be 6 – 12 inches for every inch of trunk diameter measured at 4.5 feet above grade. Trenches located within a TPZ shall be hand dug. Interfering roots that are less than 2 inches in diameter can be cut cleanly using a sharp pruning tool however roots larger than 2 inches in diameter should not be cut unless there is no other feasible alternative. It is often possible to go beneath or above an interfering root.

Grading

When 25% or more of the TPZ is likely to be impacted by grading, alternative construction techniques must be considered.

Mulching

The TPZ should be mulched with a 4-6 inch layer of chip mulch over the soil surface both during and after construction. This will improve the growing environment for the roots by reducing soil compaction, improving aeration, enhancing moisture, and reducing temperature extremes.

Appendix B – Annual Planting Target Analysis

No.	Neighborhood Name	Area (acres)	2009 Canopy Coverage %	Canopied acres		
1	Krotona / Meadows	177	18%	31.86		**City of Ojai**
2	Descanso / Taormina	80	9%	7.2		**Community Forest Master Plan**
3	Maricopa Commercial	56	5%	2.8		**2009**
4	Cuyama	54	25%	13.5		
5	Ojai Valley Inn	218	25%	54.5		**Analysis of Overall Canopy Coverage**
6	Country Club	86	22%	18.92		**and Goal for Year 2050**
7	West Ojai Ave. Commercial	24	15%	3.6		
8	Arbolada	169	70%	118.3	high	Does not include Parkland and Schools
9	Del Oro / Signal	248	25%	62		
10	Downtown North	132	22%	29.04		
11	Downtown Commercial	42	7%	2.94		
12	Downtown South	80	15%	12		
13	Persimmon Hill	168	8%	13.44		
14	Bryant	53	5%	2.65		
15	East Ojai Ave. Commercial	36	5%	1.8		
16	Sarzotti	96	15%	14.4		
17	Topa Topa	185	15%	27.75		
18	Shelf	296	1%	2.96	low	
19	Golden West	66	10%	6.6		
20	Gridley / Boardman	133	25%	33.25		
	total acres	2399		459.51	canopied acres	
	w/o high and low	1934		338.25	**17.49%**	**Overall canopy coverage**
						(weighted average)

No.	Neighborhood Name	Area (acres)	2009 Canopy Coverage %	Canopied acres	2050 Canopy Goal	Deficit acres	Deficit trees per year	Attrition trees per year	Target trees per year
1	Krotona / Meadows	177	18%	31.86	25%	12	22	5	27
2	Descanso / Taormina	80	9%	7.2	25%	13	22	4	26
3	Maricopa Commercial	56	5%	2.8	15%	6	10	4	14
4	Cuyama	54	25%	13.5	25%	0	0	6	6
5	Ojai Valley Inn	218	25%	54.5	25%	0	0	7	7
6	Country Club	86	22%	18.92	25%	3	4	6	10
7	West Ojai Ave. Commercial	24	15%	3.6	15%	0	0	4	4
8	Arbolada	169	70%	118.3	70%	0	0	15	15
9	Del Oro / Signal	248	25%	62	25%	0	0	8	8
10	Downtown North	132	22%	29.04	25%	4	7	7	14
11	Downtown Commercial	42	7%	2.94	15%	3	6	4	10
12	Downtown South	80	15%	12	25%	8	14	6	20
13	Persimmon Hill	168	8%	13.44	15%	12	20	2	22
14	Bryant	53	5%	2.65	15%	5	9	2	11
15	East Ojai Ave. Commercial	36	5%	1.8	15%	4	6	2	8
16	Sarzotti	96	15%	14.4	25%	10	17	3	20
17	Topa Topa	185	15%	27.75	25%	19	32	1	33
18	Shelf	296	1%	2.96	2%	3	5	0	5
19	Golden West	66	10%	6.6	25%	10	17	1	18
20	Gridley / Boardman	133	25%	33.25	25%	0	0	4	4
	2050 Goals:						**Total tree planting goal per year :**		**283**
	25% in residential areas								
	15% in commercial areas	**Deficit trees = 625 sq. ft.**							
	Adjusted in special areas								

Appendix C – City of Ojai Street Tree Inventory

Appendix D - Resolution 09-44 - City Council Adoption of Community Forest Management Plan and Minutes of Adopted Revision of Community Forest Management Plan from October 25, 2022 City Council Meeting