



1650 Ramada Drive, Suite 180, Paso Robles, CA 93446
(805) 237-9626 • www.althouseandmeade.com

March 4, 2026

Planning and Development Department, City of Paso Robles
c/o Darren Nash, City Planner
City of Paso Robles
1000 Spring Street
Paso Robles CA 93446
(805) 237-3970
DNash@prcity.com

Copy: Danny Brose, Danny Ray Edwards, Valerie Mattos, LynneDee Althouse

Re: Tree 903 Removal Request for Viñedo Phase 2B Mass Grading Plans, City of Paso Robles

Dear Darren:

On May 6, 2025 and February 17, 2026 Certified Arborist Sophie Kroesche (WE-15635A) assessed Tree 903, a valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), and noted site conditions. An Oak Tree Assessment (Attachment 1) and Oak Tree Removal (OTR; Attachment 2) application is included as part of this request. We reviewed Viñedo Phase 3 Mass Grading plans (draft plan received from Rick Engineering March 2, 2026; Attachment 3) that includes Hanson Road improvements and found that it would cause significant impacts to the health of Tree 903. Given the current poor health of the tree, it is unlikely that the tree will survive these impacts over time.

Proposed improvements to Hanson Road are intended to comply with San Luis Obispo County Public Road Standards. Because significant utilities are located on the west side of the road, enhancements and widening will be shifted toward the east side, which is where the tree is situated. The planned road widening involves placing approximately four feet of fill and a retaining wall within approximately one foot of the tree's trunk.

Tree 903 is exhibiting signs of stress since our initial survey on May 6, 2025. A large amount of epicormic sprouting around the trunk and on major branches indicates a stress response (Photo 1). Additionally, root rot was found on two sides of the tree, indicating a reduction in root function capacity and possible structural compromise. Our most recent winter survey on February 18, 2026, found the same indications of stress and rot. Surveys also noted that the trunk has a weak connection where it branches off into two main stems (Photo 2). Additionally, the tree is retaining many of its dead leaves instead of dropping them during winter, which is a sign of pit scale in valley oaks.

Raising the grade of the road and adding four feet of fill soil and a retaining wall within the critical root zone (CRZ) can reduce the oxygen supply to the tree roots and construction within the CRZ can cause soil compaction, leading to increased stress on the roots. Increased stress and reduced

root function, coupled with construction impacts will reduce Tree 903's viability. We believe it is unlikely that the tree will be able to survive long-term after impacts occur. Due to the current poor health of the tree and the significant increase in CRZ impact from road improvement activities, we are recommending the tree for removal.

Tree 903 was considered an impacted tree during our initial tree assessment described in our Oak Tree Protection and Mitigation Plan (October 2020¹), which was identified as CRZ impact of less than 50 percent, and was included in the tree mitigation requirements at a one-to-one (1:1) mitigation ratio. Mitigation for Tree 903 was assessed using a 1:1 replacement ratio and will be revised to reflect the required mitigation upon approval of tree removal. In accordance with mitigation requirements for oak tree removal, replacement oaks must total 25 percent of the diameter at breast height (DBH) of the trees removed. Consequently, the removal of Tree 903, which has a DBH of 41 inches, necessitates the planting of seven (7) 24-inch box oaks, each with a minimum trunk caliper of one and one-half inches (1.5-inches), to satisfy mitigation obligations. Due to the mitigation already accounted for from the one-to-one (1:1) 'partially impacted' mitigation assumed from the original grading plans, the net additional mitigation trees will be six (6) 24-inch box oaks that are 1.5 inches trunk caliper.



Photo 1. Tree 903 in spring with epicormic sprouts at the base, view northeast, May 6, 2025.

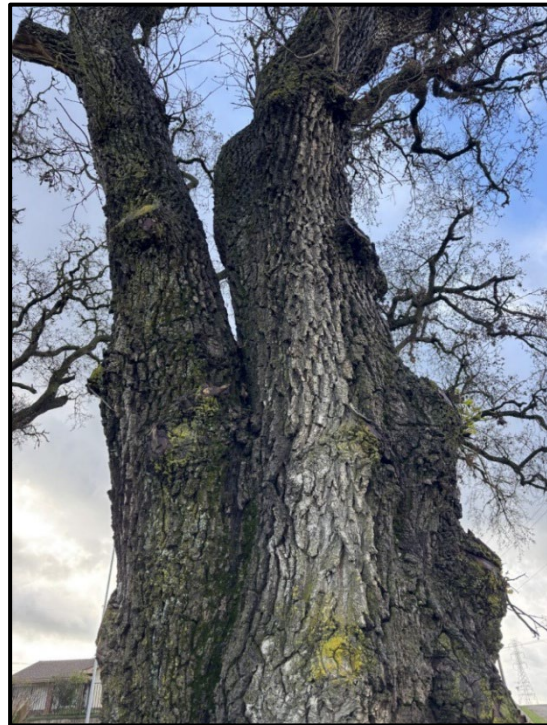



Photo 2. Tree 903, weak codominant stem branch connection and small epicormic resprouting (right), view south, February 18, 2026.

¹ Althouse and Meade, Inc. 2020. Oak Tree Protection and Mitigation Plan for Olsen-South Chandler Ranch. October 2020.

Sincerely,



Sophie Kroesche
Certified Arborist #WE-15635A

Attachments

Attachment 1. Oak Tree Assessment for Trees #903 & #906 along Hanson Road

Attachment 2. Oak Tree Removal Application

Attachment 3. Draft Rick Engineering Map - Received 3/2/2026

ATTACHMENT 1. OAK TREE ASSESSMENT FOR TREES #903 & #906 ALONG HANSON ROAD



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Memo

To: Darren Nash, City Planner
Community Development, City of Paso Robles

From: Sophie Kroesche - Certified Arborist

Copy: Danny Ray Edwards, Danny Brose, Michael Naggar

Date: March 4, 2026

**Re: Oak Tree Assessment for Trees #903 & #906 along Hanson Road
Viñedo; Olsen-South Chandler Ranch SPA, City of Paso Robles**

Executive Summary

Tree #903 – To be Removed
DBH: 41 inches
CRZ radius: 41 feet
CRZ area: circular area extending 41 ft from the trunk in all directions

Tree #906 – CRZ Impacted
DBH: 28 inches
CRZ radius: 28 feet
CRZ area: circular area extending 28 ft from the trunk in all directions

Details

On May 6, 2025, and February 17, 2026, Althouse and Meade Certified Arborist Sophie Kroesche (WE-15635A) conducted evaluations of two valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*; Trees #903 and an untagged tree) located south of Linne Road on the east side of Hanson Road—a gravel roadway bordering the eastern edge of the Olsen-South Chandler Specific Plan Area (SPA). For the purposes of this report, as well as in future maps and mitigation plans, the untagged tree is designated as Tree #906. Both Trees #903 and #906 are situated outside the SPA boundary along Hanson Road along the eastern boundary of the City of Paso Robles, California, at approximately 35.6095639°N, 120.6321594°W (see Figure 1).

Improvements to Hanson Road will occur to comply with San Luis Obispo County Public Road Standards. Due to major utilities on the west side of Hanson Road, road widening will be offset to the east, where Trees #903 and #906 are situated. Road widening on the east side will require approximately four feet of fill and a retaining wall within approximately one foot of #903's trunk, which will result in significant impacts to the tree. This tree assessment provides baseline information and recommendations prior to road construction.

The overall condition/health of the trees were visually inspected from the ground. The rating system defined in Table 1 consists of a scale from one to ten based on the structure and health of each tree.

TABLE 1. TREE HEALTH RATING SYSTEM

Rating	Condition
0	Deceased
1	Evidence of massive past failures, extreme disease and is in severe decline
2	May be saved with attention to pruning, insect/pest eradication and future monitoring
3	Some past failures, some pests or structural defects that may be mitigated with pruning
4	May have had minor past failures, excessive deadwood or minor structural defects that can be mitigated with pruning
5	Relatively healthy tree with little visual structural and or pest defects
6	Healthy tree that probably can be left in its natural state
7, 8, 9	Have had proper arboricultural pruning and attention or have no apparent structural defects
10	Specimen tree with perfect shape, structure and foliage in a natural or protected setting

Results

Tree species, height, canopy width, and diameter breast height (DBH) were measured and recorded (Table 2). Any signs of pest, disease or structural weakness were noted. For this report, the critical root zone (CRZ) is defined as the area using a radius of one foot per one-inch DBH.

TABLE 2. TREE ASSESSMENT DATA, 02/17/2026

Tree Tag #	Species	Impact	Health Rating	Trunk DBH (in.)	Tree Height (ft.)	Canopy Spread (ft.)	Notes
903	<i>Q. lobata</i>	Removal	3	41	55	50	Epicormic sprouting and dead branches on lower trunk. Rot in roots and at base of trunk. Weak trunk and branch connections.
906	<i>Q. lobata</i>	>50% CRZ impact	5	28	45	40	Significant lean to south. Some poor pruning.

Tree #903

Tree #903 is a 41-inch DBH valley oak (Photo 1) with a height of 55 feet and a canopy width of 50 feet. It is a single trunk tree with a health rating of 3. It is in moderate to poor health, with significant rot at the base of the trunk and roots, as well as signs of stress in the canopy. Approximately 8 feet up the tree, the trunk becomes two co-dominant stems with a weak attachment and included bark, which can increase the chance of the stems splitting and leading to partial tree failure (Photo 2).

During the May 6, 2025 survey, significant epicormic sprouting on the lower trunk was noted (Photo 3). By the February 17, 2026 survey, all epicormic growth had been pruned. However, the tree is still producing sprouts on the trunk where the branches were cut (Photo 4). Epicormic

sprouting from the trunk can indicate stress in the tree, as the tree attempts to rapidly grow above-ground biomass to compensate for injury or environmental stress (Bellingham and Sparrow, 2000¹). Tree #903 shows signs of root and trunk decay, weak attachments, dieback in the canopy, and significant epicormic sprouting on the trunk and major branches. The tree has retained a large amount of dead leaves and twigs through winter, which is an indication of possible pit scale infestation. While it will not directly cause mortality, pit scale can increase stress on the tree (Geisel et al, 2013²). The proposed road widening and improvements for Hanson Road will cause significant impacts to Tree #903.

Tree #906 (untagged)

Tree #906 is an untagged valley oak (Photo 5) with a 28-inch DBH, height of 45 feet, and canopy width of 40 feet. It is a single trunk tree with a health rating of 5. It is a moderately healthy tree with some structural weakness in canopy branches and signs of stress. Tree 906 has also retained dead leaves and twigs through winter, indicating pit scale infestation (Photo 6). The tree was not included in the original Olsen-Chandler Arborist Report (A&M, 2018) survey, so it was added into our oak tree database/tracking during the May 6, 2025 survey as Tree #906. The tree is on private property adjacent to Hanson Road. Proposed road widening will impact more than 50 percent of the CRZ and may impact the trunk (Figure 1).



Photo 1. Tree #903, view south, February 17, 2026.



Photo 2. Tree #903, co-dominant trunks and included bark, view southeast, February 17, 2026.

¹ Bellingham, P. J., & Sparrow, A. D. (2000). Resprouting as a life history strategy in woody plant communities. *Oikos*, 89(2), 409–416.

² Giesel, P. M. and Perry, E. J. (2013). Oak Pit Scales. UCANR Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program. Pest Notes, Publication 7470.



Photo 3. Tree #903, mature epicormic sprouts at base, view north, May 6, 2025.



Photo 4. Tree #903, new epicormic sprouting on trunk, view north, February 17, 2026.

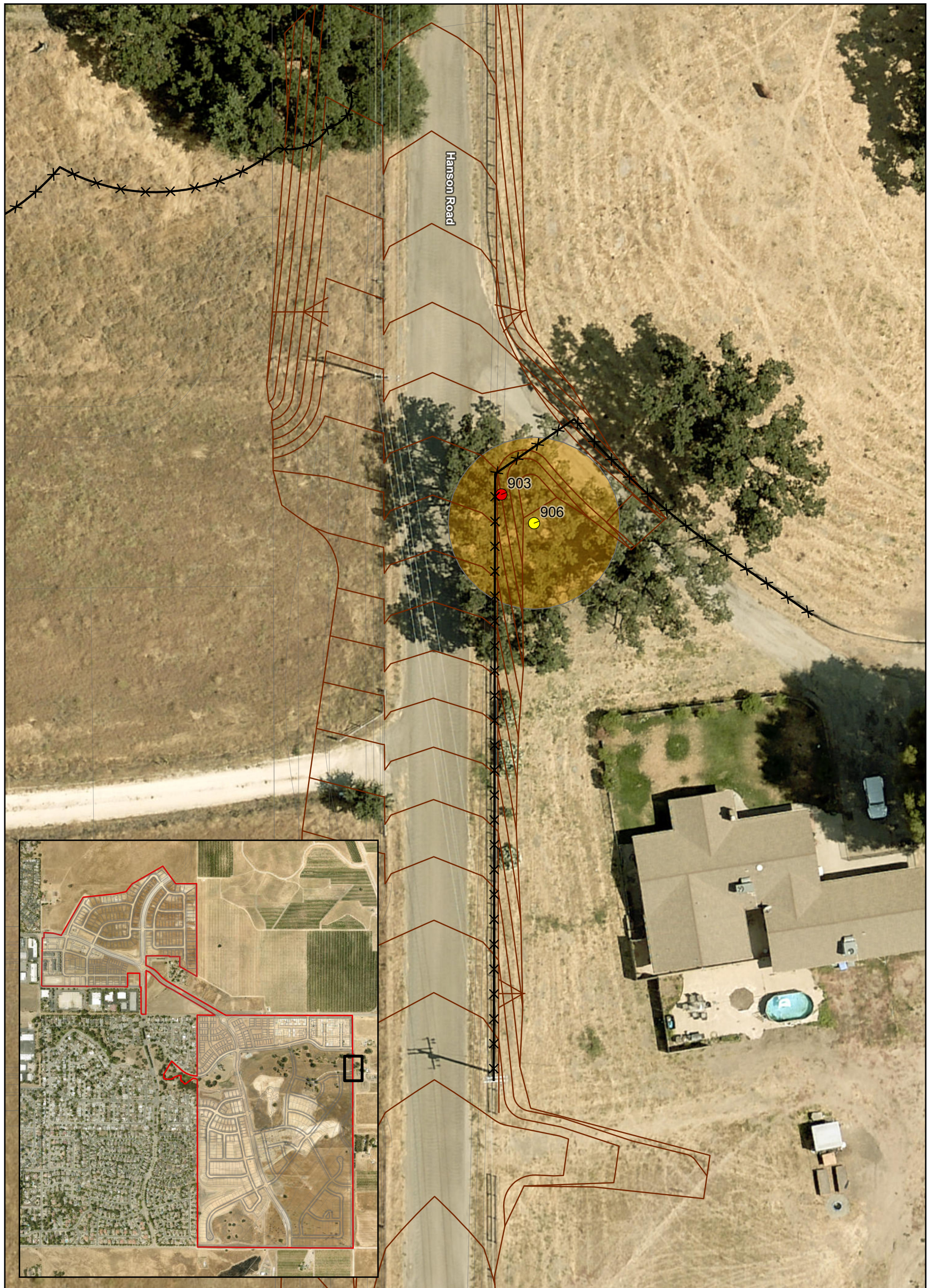


Photo 5. Tree #906, view south, February 17, 2026.



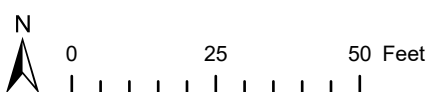
Photo 6. Tree #906, close-up of retained dead twigs and leaves, view north, February 17, 2026.

Figure 1. Trees #903 and #906 Impact Status



Legend

- | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|
| Olsen-South Chandler Ranch Development | Tree Status* | Potential CRZ Impact Percentage |
| Grading Limits | Impacted | >50% |
| Fencing | To Be Removed | |



*Estimated by A&M arborist, tree points are not survey grade

Olsen-South Chandler Ranch
 Map Center: 120.63215°W 35.60945°N
 Paso Robles, San Luis Obispo County

Basemap Source: World Imagery, 07/11/2024

Impacts and Mitigation

The Oak Tree Protection and Mitigation Plan (OTPMP; A&M 2020³) provides guidelines for the mitigation of trees that require removal or impacts to their CRZs. Root systems of oak trees can extend well beyond the canopy dripline, and any disturbance inside this area can cause damage and impact tree health, thus mitigation is necessary. As shown on the draft grading plan from Rick Engineering for Hanson Road (Rick Engineering 3/2/2026), Tree #903 will be significantly impacted by grading and construction. This impact is likely to increase stress on a tree that is already showing signs of decay and poor health. Removal and compensatory mitigation are recommended.

The City of Paso Robles Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 10.01) provides policies, regulations, and specifications necessary to govern preservation of oak trees within the City and to control their pruning and/or removal. Any oak tree slated for removal requires an oak tree removal (OTR) permit and mitigation, where the total caliper diameter of replacement trees shall be equivalent to 25 percent of the total DBH of trees removed. In accordance with the City’s Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance (Section 10.01.050), removal of **Tree #903**, which has a DBH of 41 inches, results in a mitigation requirement of 10.25 inches (25 percent of 41 inches). This requirement can be met through the planting of seven (7) 1.5-inch caliper oak trees. Caliper is measured as the tree trunk diameter taken six inches above ground level for field-grown stock, or at the soil line for container-grown stock. Impacts to **Tree #906** require mitigation at a 2:1 replacement ratio in accordance with the OTPMP.

TABLE 3. MITIGATION FOR TREES #903 AND #906

Tag #	Species	Status	Total DBH (in)	25% of DBH Sum (in)	Mitigation Trees	
					2:1 mitigation trees	1.5-inch caliper trees
903	Valley Oak (<i>Quercus lobata</i>)	Remove ⁴	41	10.25	No	7 ⁵
903	Valley Oak (<i>Quercus lobata</i>)	>50% CRZ ⁶	n/a	n/a	Yes	2

Mitigation trees should be planted in the Turtle Creek restoration and mitigation area within the Olsen-South Chandler Ranch SPA, or as landscape trees within ‘the Vines’ park (also part of SPA). Trees will be monitored for a minimum of 80 percent survival by Year 7, per the Oak Tree Protection and Mitigation Plan.

³ [A&M] Althouse and Meade, Inc. 2020. Oak Tree Protection and Mitigation Plan for Olsen-South Chandler Ranch. October. 2020.

⁴ See OTPMP and **BIO-4(a)b** of Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) from the Rincon Final EIR.

⁵ Note that mitigation for this tree was previously accounted for as a CRZ <50% impacted tree at a 1:1 ratio, resulting in a net of 6 trees needed to account for tree removal.

⁶ See OTPMP and **BIO-4(a)a** of Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) from the Rincon Final EIR.

ATTACHMENT 2. OAK TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION



CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES

"The Pass of the Oaks"

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
OAK TREE REMOVAL PERMIT**

PERMIT NUMBER: _____ DATE ISSUED: _____

NAME OF APPLICANT: _____ PHONE NO: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF OAK TREE(S): _____

Pursuant to Section 10.01 (Oak Tree Preservation) of Title 10 of the Paso Robles Municipal Code, the property-owner is hereby requesting one of the following:

- A. _____ Removal of _____ Oak Tree(s) where no Development Application is pending
- B. _____ Removal of _____ Oak Tree(s) clearly dead or diseased beyond correction
- C. _____ Removal of _____ Oak Tree(s) as part of a Development Application
- D. _____ Emergency Removal of _____ Oak Tree (s)

As recommended and identified in the Arborist Report prepared for this Request for Removal by _____ (ISA Certified Arborist) dated _____

By: _____
Community Development Director or authorized representative

Council Action: _____ Date: _____ Resolution No.: _____

Exhibit B

OAK TREE REPLACEMENT AGREEMENT

I hereby agree to plant replacement Oak trees of the same species as those removed at the replacement ratio of 25% of the combined diameter of the removed trees. Each replacement tree shall be a minimum 24-inch box specimen with a 1½ inch minimum trunk diameter per Section 10.01.050 F of Ordinance No 835 N.S.

Total Diameter of Oak Trees Authorized for Removal: _____ inches per resolution # _____

Oak Trees to be Planted:

_____ (number) _____ species _____ size(s)
_____ (number) _____ species _____ size(s)
_____ (number) _____ species _____ size(s)
_____ (number) _____ species _____ size(s)

I hereby agree that the Oak Trees will be planted per City Standard Detail and Specification L-4 (except that deep root barriers shall not be required if the trees are not adjacent to sidewalk areas):

- In conjunction with authorized building permit and prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy.
- In conjunction with a subdivision and prior to acceptance of the final improvements by the City Council for the tract or parcel.
- In compliance with the attached Oak Tree replacement plan containing recommendations of the project arborist for tree placement, and within ninety (90) days from the date of issuance of this permit. A letter providing verification of compliance with tree placement recommendations from the project arborist will be submitted to City staff within fourteen (14) days of planting.
- I hereby acknowledge that I need to post a tree preservation security with the City in order to ensure that the replacement trees are properly established, per the conditions of my approval for removal.

I hereby:

- Intend to plant the replacements trees on my property located at: _____.
- Request to arrange for the replacement trees to be located on public property. I will provide a paid receipt from a local nursery for the value of the required sizes and species of trees to City staff within ninety (90) days from the date of issuance of this permit.

Danny Brose
Applicant's Signature

Date: 2/24/26

ATTACHMENT 3. DRAFT RICK ENGINEERING MAP – RECEIVED 3/2/2026

