

## MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Michael Klein – City of Calabasas  
**From:** Noah Stamm, Calabasas Contract Arborist  
**Subject:** *Minor Healthy Oak Tree Permit Peer-Review Report for 23548 Calabasas Road, Calabasas, California*  
**Date:** September 2, 2021

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### 1 Introduction

This memorandum provides Dudek’s findings regarding the evaluation of a Minor Healthy Oak Tree Permit request submitted by the property owner (applicant) of 23548 Calabasas Road in August 2021. The applicant has requested approval to prune one large, ‘heritage’ valley oak (*Quercus lobata*) tree located in the center of the Leonis Plaza courtyard at 23548 Calabasas Road. A ‘heritage’ tree according to the City of Calabasas Oak Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines, is a tree that has a trunk larger than 24-inches diameter at standard height (DSH - 4 ½-feet above natural grade). The property owner would like to lightly prune and/or remove several deadwood branches throughout the tree’s crown to reduce the amount of weight in the crown, ultimately to avoid limb failure and extend the life of the tree. Additionally, during the site visit, the arborist along with the applicant and the representative from the tree trimming company, noticed and inspected a 31-inch DSH, coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) tree located on the same property, northwest of the valley oak tree. This tree is not included on the submitted Healthy Oak Tree permit, however, the tree exhibited a significant amount of deadwood and over-extending branches throughout the tree’s crown that should be pruned to improve the health and safety of the tree. It should be noted, this tree was previously added to a Minor Healthy Oak Tree permit submitted by the applicant in October 2018, but it does not appear that the tree was trimmed at that time. To that end, Dudek conducted a site evaluation on August 17, 2021 to evaluate the single valley oak tree, as well as an adjacent coast live oak tree. The applicant and a representative from the tree trimming company were present at the time of the inspection (see *Attachment 1 – Representative Site Photographs*).

The purpose of this arborist peer review is to provide a review of the submitted Minor Healthy Oak Tree Permit application and ensure applicant compliance with the City of Calabasas Oak Tree Ordinance (Chapter 17.32.010.C.3 of the City’s Municipal Code) and the City of Calabasas Oak Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines (April, 1993).

### 2 Discussion

Dudek’s arborist found the submitted Minor Healthy Oak Tree Permit request to be generally accurate to the observed site conditions and was found to be in compliance with the City of Calabasas Oak Tree Ordinance. The mature, single-stem valley oak tree is considered a “heritage” tree. As mentioned above, a “heritage” tree, according to the City of Calabasas Oak Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines, is a tree that has a trunk larger than 24-inches DSH, measured 4 ½-feet above natural grade. The valley oak tree has a trunk diameter of 66 inches DSH,

is approximately 50 feet tall, and has an estimated crown width of 60 to 70 feet at its widest point across. The tree exhibited fair health and has a fair structure, with a well-balanced crown that exhibits normal foliage color and shows signs of a significant amount of deadwood throughout. The tree did not exhibit signs of root or soil problems, nor did it show any signs of disease or pest infestation. The tree is surrounded by an approximately three-foot tall wood fence that is used to minimize human impacts. The fence is about three to six feet away from the trunk of the tree to allow the tree to continue to grow. The tree exhibits several small and large diameter dead branches throughout the crown of the tree. It is evident that the tree has been pruned several times throughout the tree's life, however none of the cuts appear to be recent. During the tree assessment, it was evident that the tree had a cable and bracing system installed to help support large tree branches by limiting the amount of movement of the branches throughout the crown, ultimately reducing the risk of injury to people and damage to property by providing supplemental support to weaker areas of the tree. The tree has been fitted with two triangular cable and bracing systems in the crown, which are used for supporting branches and minimizing the potential for breakage. The tree has multiple large and small diameter dead branches hanging over the property's courtyard, which if pruned will reduce end weight and the likelihood of branch failure. The tree has evidence of past pruning. Representative photographs of the coast live oak tree are shown in *Attachment 1 – Representative Site Photographs*.

The adjacent coast live oak tree has a trunk diameter of 31 inches DSH, is approximately 40 feet tall, and has an estimated crown width of 40 feet at its widest point across. The tree exhibited good health and has a fair structure, with a well-balanced crown that exhibits normal foliage color and shows signs of deadwood throughout. Currently, the coast live oak tree is planted next to a brick walkway and inside a half-circle, approximately one-foot wide, tree well. The ground surrounding the trunk of the tree was heavily saturated with water from the adjacent sprinkler system. The sprinkler systems is used to water ground cover and others ornamental plantings located within the subject trees dripline. Water staining was observed on the side of the tree's trunk from the sprinkler system applying water directly to the trunk of the coast live oak tree. Additionally, the root collar appeared to be buried and there were several deadwood branches located throughout the tree's crown, which appears to have been pruned in the past, but otherwise tree crown was observed to be in fair health and condition. The tree did not show any signs of disease or pest infestation that were observed during the Level Two visual examination of the tree from the ground. Representative photographs of the coast live oak tree are shown in *Attachment 1 – Representative Site Photographs*

### 3 Conclusion

Based on the review of the submitted Minor Healthy Oak Tree Permit request and site evaluation, the requested pruning of the valley oak and coast live oak trees are warranted under the guidelines set forth in Chapter 17.32.010 of the Municipal Code. Therefore, it is recommended that the permit be granted to prune the valley oak and coast live oak trees in accordance with the following recommendations:

1. Pruning to both the valley oak and coast live oak trees should be limited to the removal of no more than 10 branches, with a seven-inch DSH or smaller. Limiting the number of pruning cuts, and size of removals, will lower the potential for a pest or pathogen to enter the tree.
2. For the large valley oak tree, it is recommended to remove two (2) approximately 3-inch diameter branches on the west side of the tree's crown, one (1) approximately 7-inch diameter branch on the east side of the tree's crown, three to four (3-4) approximately 4-inch diameter branches on the northeast side (parking lot side) of the tree's crown, and two to three (2-3) approximately 3- to 4-inch diameter

branches located on the southeast and southwest sides of the tree's crown that are hanging low over the courtyard area. The branches are identified in photograph nos. 3 through 10 of *Attachment 1*. Cuts should be made cleanly at branch collars thus avoiding potential small branch sprouting (epicormics) along the cuts and reducing future maintenance and shall be done to the appropriate ISA pruning standard.

3. For the adjacent coast live oak tree, it is recommended to remove one (1) approximately 3-inch diameter branches on the north side of the tree's crown, one (1) approximately 7-inch diameter branch to the main stem on the south side of the tree's crown, and two (2) approximately 4-inch diameter branches on the northeast side (parking lot side) of the tree's crown. The branches are identified in photograph nos. 12 through 20 of *Attachment 1*. Cuts should be made cleanly at branch collars thus avoiding potential small branch sprouting (epicormics) along the cuts and reducing future maintenance and shall be done to the appropriate ISA pruning standard.
4. It is also recommended that a crown cleaning occur throughout both trees, which is the removal of any additional deadwood foliage smaller than one to two inches diameter, located throughout a trees crown. Pruning shall be done to the appropriate ISA pruning standard. Cuts should be made cleanly at branch collars thus avoiding potential small branch sprouting (epicormics) along the cuts and reducing future maintenance.
5. Finally, it is recommended that the property owner continue to monitor the health of the large valley oak tree; while on site, it should be noted that this report provides conclusions and recommendations based only on a Level Two visual examination of the tree and surrounding site and reasonable reliance on the completeness and accuracy of the information provided to the arborist. The examination did not include subterranean or internal examination of the tree.

*Quercus* species do not require regular pruning. Pruning should only be completed to maintain clearance and remove broken, dead, or diseased branches. Pruning should only take place following a recommendation by an ISA Certified Arborist and performed under the supervision of an ISA Certified Arborist. No more than 20 to 25 percent of the crown should be removed at any one time. All pruning shall conform to American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A-300 pruning standards.

This report provides conclusions and recommendations based on an examination of the tree and surrounding site by an ISA Certified Arborist. Arborists are tree specialists who use their education, knowledge, training, and experience to examine trees, recommend measures to enhance the beauty and health of trees, and attempt to reduce the risk of living near trees.

Arborists cannot detect every condition that could possibly lead to the failure of a tree. Trees are living organisms that fail in ways not fully understood. Conditions are often hidden within trees and below ground. Arborists cannot guarantee that a tree will be healthy or safe under all circumstances, or for a specified period of time. There are no guarantees that a tree's condition will not change over a short or long period due to weather or cultural or environmental conditions. Trees can be managed but not controlled. To live near trees is to accept some degree of risk.

*Memorandum*

*Subject: Minor Healthy Oak Tree Permit Peer-Review Report for 23548 Calabasas Road, Calabasas, California*

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If you have any questions or require any additional information, please call me at 760.642.8379

Sincerely,



Noah Stamm, Calabasas Contract Arborist  
ISA-Certified Arborist WE - 11995A

*Att: Attachment 1, Representative Site Photographs*

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



1. Overview of large, 'heritage' Valley Oak Tree located in the courtyard of Leonis Plaza at 23548 Calabasas Road. Photograph taken facing north side of the tree.



2. Base of large, 'heritage' Valley Oak Tree. Photograph taken facing southeastern side of the tree's trunk.

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



3. Photograph of the lower portion of the western side of the tree's trunk.



4. Photograph of the lower portion of the eastern side of the tree's trunk.

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



5. Photograph of large branch hanging over property's courtyard (red arrow). Cut should be made back to crotch of main trunk (yellow line). Photograph taken facing up into the eastern portion of the tree's crown.



6. Photograph of several branches hanging over property's courtyard (red arrow). Cuts should be made back to crotch of main trunk (yellow line). Photograph taken facing up into the northern portion of the tree's crown. Deadwood throughout the tree's crown can be removed as well.

*Photographs were taken on August 17, 2021*

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



7. Photograph of several branches hanging over the western portion of the property's courtyard. Photograph taken facing up into the western portion of the tree's crown. Deadwood throughout the tree's crown can be removed.



8. Photograph of several branches hanging over the western portion of the property's courtyard (red arrows). Cuts should be made back to crotch of main trunk (yellow line). Photograph taken facing up into the western portion of the tree's crown. Deadwood throughout the tree's crown can be removed.

*Photographs were taken on August 17, 2021*



## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



9. Photograph of large branch hanging over property's courtyard (red arrow). Cut should be made back to crotch of main trunk (yellow line). Photograph taken facing up into the eastern portion of the tree's crown.



10. Photograph of several branches hanging over property's courtyard (red arrow). Cuts should be made back to crotch of main trunk (yellow line). Photograph taken facing up into the northern portion of the tree's crown. Deadwood throughout the tree's crown can be removed as well.

*Photographs were taken on August 17, 2021*

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



11. Overview of coast live oak tree located in northwestern portion of the Leonis Plaza courtyard. Photograph taken facing southwest.



12. Photograph shows deadwood foliage located throughout the crown of the coast live oak tree. Photograph taken facing northwest.

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



13. Photograph shows the groundcover and plant materials located under the tree's crown and inside the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ). These plants appear to be watered a lot, which is not recommended for coast live oak trees. Photograph taken facing northeast.



14. Overview of the base of the coast live oak tree. Note the water staining on the southern side of the tree's trunk and the wet ground surrounding the base of the tree. Also note the close proximity of the tree well to the trunk of the tree. Photograph taken facing east.

*Photographs were taken on August 17, 2021*

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



15. Photograph shows deadwood foliage located throughout the crown of the coast live oak tree. Photograph taken facing north.



16. Photograph shows deadwood foliage located throughout the southern portion of the crown of the coast live oak tree. Photograph taken facing west.

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



17. Photograph of several branches hanging over property's courtyard (red arrow). Cuts should be made back to crotch of main trunk (yellow line). Photograph taken facing up into the northern portion of the tree's crown. Deadwood throughout the tree's crown can be removed as well.



18. Photograph of several branches hanging over property's courtyard (red arrow). Cuts should be made back to crotch of main trunk (yellow line). Photograph taken facing up into the western portion of the tree's crown. Deadwood throughout the tree's crown can be removed as well.

*Photographs were taken on August 17, 2021*

## Attachment 1 – Site Plan Review Oak Tree Report for 23548 Calabasas Road Representative Site Photographs



19. Photograph shows deadwood foliage located throughout the crown of the coast live oak tree. Photograph taken facing northwest.



20. Photograph shows deadwood foliage located throughout the crown of the coast live oak tree. Photograph taken facing east.