

Documents reviewed:

Date of Review: July 2003

- Open Space Element
- Conservation Element
- Land Use Element
- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance

- Grading and Erosion Ordinance
- Roads/Sidewalk Tree Ordinance
- Tree Removal Ordinance
- Voluntary Guidelines
- Other County Codes:

Summary of Oak Protection Policies:

Conservation Element, 1993	<p>TREE PROTECTION: Protect and preserve native oak trees 6” dbh in urban and rural areas, excluding parcels zoned exclusively for agriculture (CO-130). Oaks must be replaced (CO-131). If the project site is not capable of supporting all replacement trees, the replacement cost must be paid to the Tree Preservation Fund (CO-132). Protection of native and landmark oaks is to be accomplished through every effort. Mature, native, and landmark trees should be identified for protection by the County through inventories.</p> <p>CANOPY RETENTION: For discretionary projects involving native oaks, no net loss of canopy area may occur. Native oak mitigation area must be a continuous area on-site equal to the size of canopy area lost and adjacent to existing oak canopy to ensure opportunities for regeneration. If on-site mitigation area is not available the developer shall provide off-site mitigation (CO-133). Trees lost to road expansion and development should be mitigated (CO-134). The oak canopy must be 50% for valley oak and 30% for blue oak and other native oaks in 15 years (CO-135). Off-site mitigation must be equal or greater in area to the total area that is included within a radius of 30 feet of the dripline of all trees to be removed, adjacent to protected stream corridor or other preserved natural areas, support a significant number of native broadleaf trees, and offer good potential for continued regeneration. Protected woodland habitat may be used as a suitable site for replacement tree plantings (CO-136).</p> <p>AGRICULTURE: The Tree Preservation Ordinance should be amended to include current agricultural standards and practices to protect roots and root zones, pruning techniques, grading, soil compaction, and vegetation control. CEQA project review procedures should be amended to require exhibits identifying all tree species, tree locations, and tree diameters for all projects. Building permit requirements should be amended to require identification of trees on plans and review plans to ensure protection of trees. Development plans should identify existing native oak canopy, oak canopy to be preserved, and on-site mitigation area to replace lost canopy to ensure oak regeneration opportunities.</p> <p>OAK REGENERATION: This Element promotes tree management practices to achieve a 10% increase in oak regeneration in designated oak woodlands by the year 2000. Firewood harvesting of oak woodlands should be allowed only on a sustained yield basis (CO-128). Oak woodlands should be protected from adverse effects of grazing (CO-129). The County should determine the extent of oak woodland resources and establish an oak revegetation program to enhance oak tree</p>
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	<p>propagation by identifying optimum areas for oak regeneration, planting seedlings, and temporarily protecting them to enhance survival. The County should provide educational materials and workshops for landowners in cooperation with DANR, to develop grazing management plans with appropriate controls to ensure oak tree propagation on public lands. The County should amend the Zoning Ordinance to require a use permit for commercial harvesting of oaks subject to an approved revegetation plan that achieves oak propagation objectives.</p> <p>RIPARIAN AREAS: Riparian areas of special significance should be designated as natural preserves with no net loss of riparian woodland acreage, values or functions allowed (CO-60). These should provide a buffer zone between 50 to 150' on each side of the stream based on quality and quantity of existing habitat (CO-117). No grading, clearing, or tree cutting shall be allowed in Urban Stream Corridors except for normal channel maintenance (CO-125). Streams should be maintained to allow natural vegetation (CO-126). Parcels should not be created that compromise riparian habitat (CO- 67). Channel maintenance procedures should be reviewed for sensitivity to natural areas protection.</p>
<p>Tree Preservation Ordinance, 1981 Chapter 19.12</p>	<p>This ordinance preserves and protects native oak trees with at least one trunk of 6" or more dbh or multi-trunked native oaks with aggregate diameter of 10" or more. It does not apply to single-family lots in major subdivisions in designated urban areas with an area of 10,000 square feet or less.</p> <p>TREE REMOVAL: No person may trench, grade or fill within the dripline of any tree or remove any tree in the designated urban area on public or private property without a tree permit. Applications must include a tree survey with the accurate location, number, species, size and approximate age of trees, and reason for removal. The County must determine the condition of the tree, age and lifespan, affect on the area, soil stability, solar inputs, and capacity of the land to support trees, and whether the preservation of the tree would unreasonably compromise development.</p> <p>TREE PROTECTION: Oak protection during land development may be required, including limiting grading, filling, trenching, paving irrigation, and landscaping within the driplines of oak trees. Landscaping under oaks is restricted to drought tolerant plants. Grading within the driplines of oak trees will not be permitted unless specifically authorized. Major roots 2" or greater encountered within the tree's dripline during excavation may not be cut and must be kept moist and covered with earth as soon as possible. Severed roots 1 to 2" in diameter must be trimmed, treated with pruning compound, and covered as soon as possible. Support roots inside the dripline must be protected. Hand-digging must be done in the vicinity of major trees to prevent root cutting and mangling by heavy equipment. A security may be required to guarantee compliance with conditions of approval and ordinance provisions. Penalties for violation may include a requirement to replace in-kind any oak tree(s) removed without a permit by specimen trees (no less than 15-gallon size) with a total combined diameter equal to the total combined diameter of the illegally removed tree(s). If the project site is not capable of supporting replacement trees, the violator must pay the retail cost of the trees to the Tree Preservation Fund. Violation is a misdemeanor and punishable by imprisonment for up to 6 months or a fine of \$500 or both.</p>

Heritage Tree Regulations, 19.04	The County shall plant, maintain, protect, preserve and regulate public trees and landscaping and provide for the special protection of heritage and landmark trees within the unincorporated area of the County. A "Heritage tree" is a California oak with dbh 60" or greater. A "Landmark tree" is an especially prominent or stately tree on any land in Sacramento County. Both must be considered when zoning variance applications are made. Whenever feasible, the County will modify street standards and alignment to avoid removal or damage of heritage and landmark trees.
Roadside Trees, 19.04	The public works director will prepare a master tree plan for the planting, preserving and maintaining of trees on streets and planting easements. The plan should include a list of species of trees and standards for planting in streets and planting easements and may specify the species. A liberal number of indigenous California oak trees should be planted at various locations throughout the County. The location and spacing of trees should not unreasonably interfere with the use of streets, street facilities, utilities, public safety, or property. The plan should include a program for the planting, maintaining and replacing of trees and acquisition of planting easements. Developers of new subdivisions must convey planting easements along all County streets at least 5' deep across the width of the lot except on single family residential lots greater than 1 acre. All trees and shrubs within the planting easements are conveyed to the County and become public trees. Planting, caring and removing public trees is under the supervision and control of the County. A permit is required to plant, transplant, or trim any public tree located on a planting easement, or street whether the tree is alive or dead. The County may require that one or more trees planted in place of the one removed, in the same location or vicinity; and a bond, cash deposit or security. Permits may not be issued only for better visibility.
Improvement Standards, 22.125	A vesting map must include a tree preservation plan that identifies all existing trees as to species, trunk size and dripline. Trees proposed for removal must be marked. Any provisions for tree preservation, transplanting, or new plantings must be identified.

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County Contacts:

- No contacts
- Policies provided by county staff
- Policies discussed with county staff
- Policy inventory reviewed by county staff