



April 18, 2024

Thomas Brazil and Michael Ferriso

RE: Response to Public Comment on Mitigated Negative Declaration DEV23-0100

Dear Mr. Brazil and Mr. Ferriso,

Thank you for providing comments regarding the proposed Precise Plan application to construct two residences on Vista Road.

The City's Public Works, Fire, and Planning Departments are required to review the plans to ensure that they meet all applicable City and State standards. However, the City requires a Precise Plan Process for any project that requires grading on slopes of over 20%. This Precise Plan process allows for a greater level of review than a typical single-family residence and allows for the identification of mitigation measures to mitigate impacts that exceed or have the potential to exceed identified thresholds and policy guidance. Staff has visited the property to evaluate the site in detail and make recommendations on applicable mitigation measures based on state and local thresholds and guidelines.

Please see responses to your specific concern below:

The old growth, native California Oaks located on said property, are an integral part of what makes west side Atascadero special, and greatly add to their values. These trees are indeed, a defining feature, if not the defining feature of this community neighborhood known as 'Panorama Oaks Estates'.

This proposed project by the SLO_RED group intends to clear not 4 or 5, or even 20 or 30 old growth oak trees to make way for this development, but in excess of 80 trees. It is astounding to us that such a proposition would ever be up for any type of consideration.

Working together to **serve**, build **community** and enhance **quality of life**.

As mentioned in the Biological Resources section of this project's Initial Study, the City's Native Tree Ordinance accounts for tree removals by mandating onsite replanting, in-lieu payment into the City's tree regeneration fund, or the setting-aside of tree conservation easement areas. This Ordinance adopts and implements Policies 7.1 and 7.2 of the Land Use, Open Space, and Conservation Element in the City's General Plan. The impacts of this element and its associated policies were addressed through the General Plan's Environmental Impact Report. The project, as proposed and with mitigation measures incorporated meets all City ordinance and policy guidance requirements.

It is important to note that the majority of removed trees are younger, smaller trees measuring a foot or less in diameter. Additionally, all trees for which protective fencing is a viable strategy are slated to be protected during the construction process. The City is working with the applicant to design the project to reduce the number of tree removals to the greatest extent possible.

Warm Regards,



Sam Mountain
Assistant Planner
City of Atascadero