



WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT



VIC TRACE
RESERVOIR
REPLACEMENT PROJECT
City of Santa Barbara

VIC TRACE RESERVOIR REPLACEMENT PROJECT

STREET TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE – FEBRUARY 5, 2026

Purpose of Presentation

1. Introduce the Vic Trace Reservoir Replacement Project & Team
2. Present Proposed Project (City) Tree Removals - Updated
Incorporating feedback received from December 4, 2025 STAC Presentation

Project Team:



Kelly Bourque
Acting Supervising
Engineer



Matthew Ward
Water System
Manager



Philip Maldonado
Acting Principal
Engineer

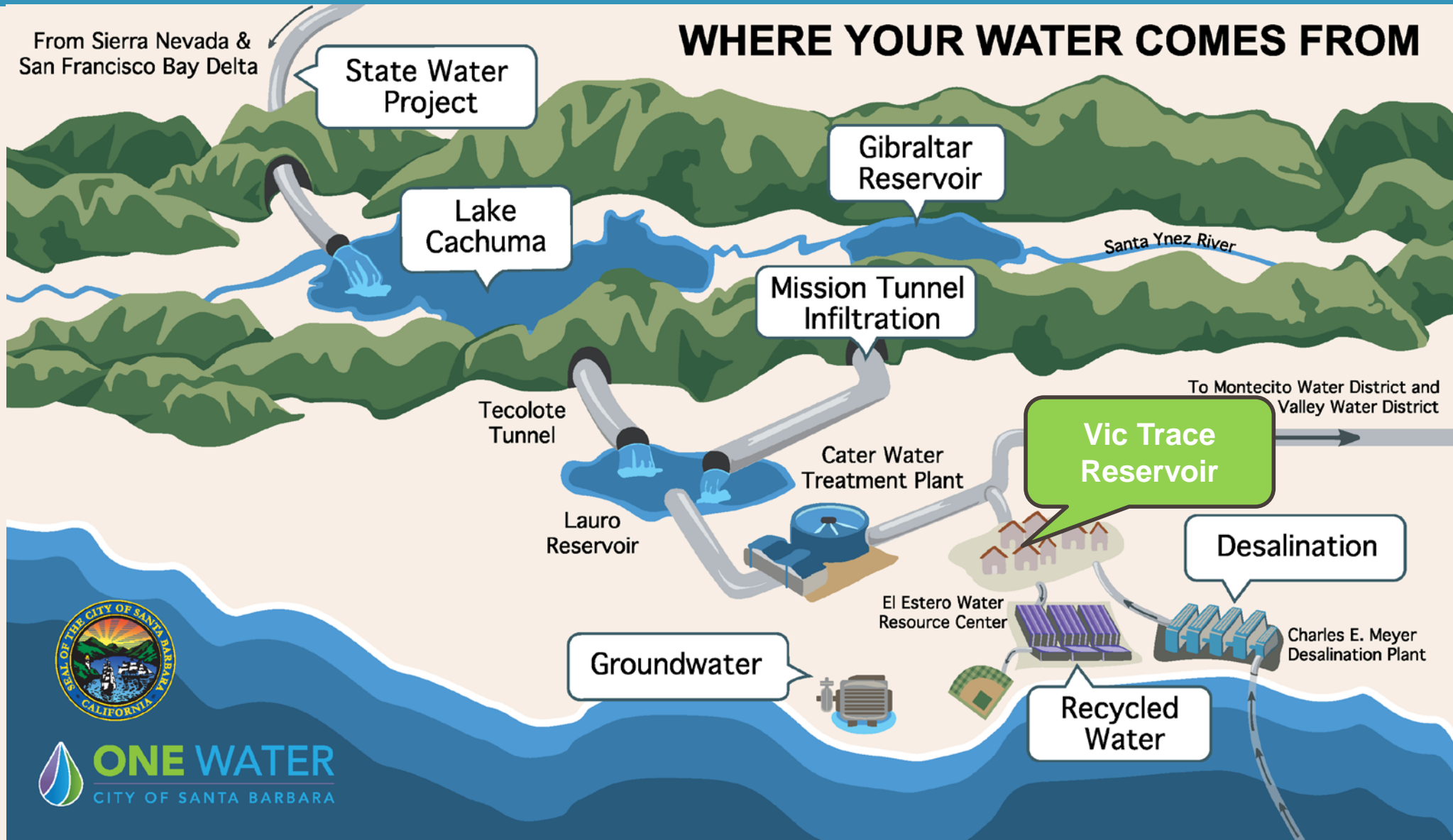


Patsy Price
Case Planner



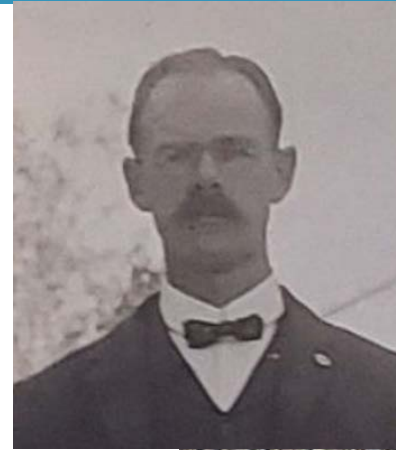
Beth Anna Cornett
PW Senior Planner

WHERE YOUR WATER COMES FROM



Vic Trace Reservoir

- Located on the Mesa
- Built in 1956 – 70 years old
- Named after Victor Trace, Water Superintendent (~1900-1935)
- Critical City emergency facility
- Stores 10 million gallons of treated drinking water
- Serves 60,000 people or 70% of the City: Downtown, Westside, and Mesa neighborhoods





Existing Site Conditions:

- 10 MG concrete reservoir
- Hosts IT and Public Safety Communication critical facilities
- High Fire Coastal Interior Hazard Area
- Landscape:
 - Ice plant / brush
 - Red Ironbark (Eucalyptus)
 - Oak trees
 - Gophers
 - Drainage issues & eroding slopes

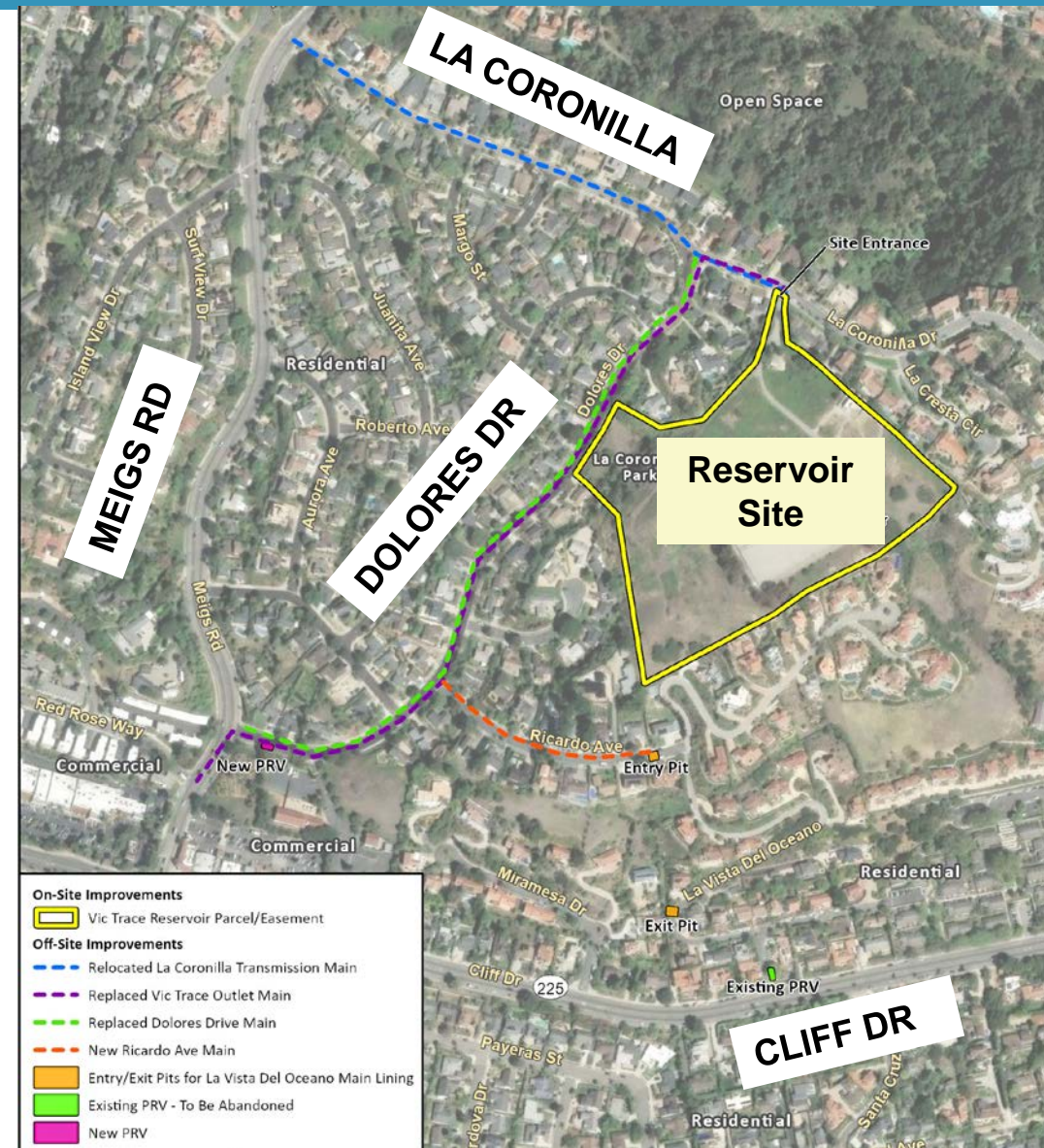
Project Objectives

- Replace aging infrastructure
- Minimize costly repair needs
- Address seismic risk
- Maintain water quality
- Enhance stormwater capture
- Tighten site security
- Increase resiliency



Project Areas

- Onsite Reservoir Replacement
- Pipeline work @
 - La Coronilla Drive
 - Dolores Drive
 - Ricardo Avenue
 - La Vista del Oceano
- Pressure Reducing Valve Vault
@ Dolores Dr & Meigs



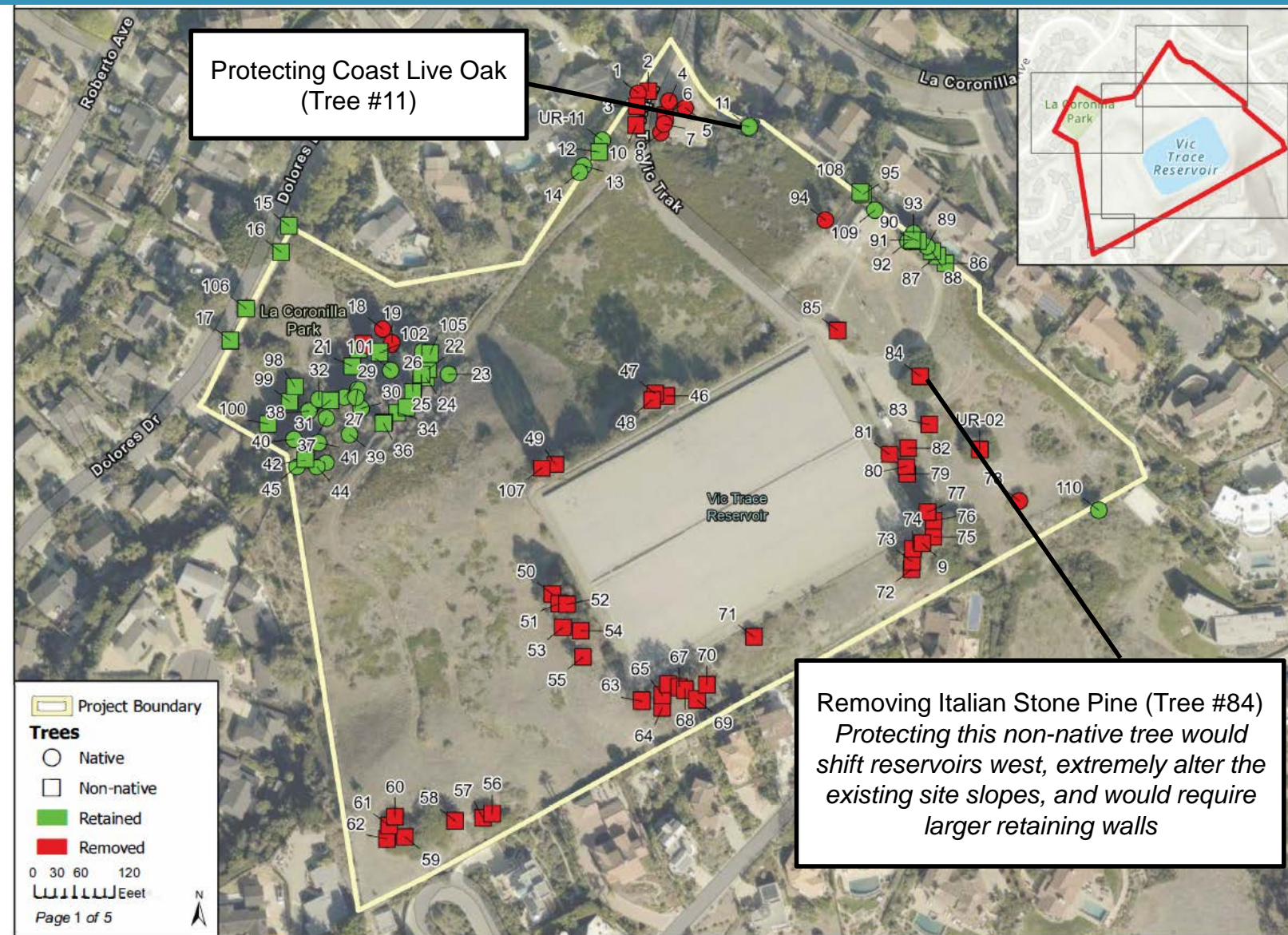
Updated Tree Replacement Plan *(since STAC meeting 12/5/2025)*

1. Removing 55 trees of 108 existing (previously 56 tree removals)
 - Protecting Tree #11 – Coast Live Oak
 - Removing Tree #84 – Italian Stone Pine
2. Proposing an Updated 1:1 Replacement Plan
 - Incorporates raptor habitat feedback
 - Incorporates City Fire feedback

1. Removing 55 Trees of 108

- 108 Total project trees
- 53 Trees retained
- 55 Proposed tree removals
 - 7 Coast Live Oaks + 2 other natives
 - 46 ornamentals

Public feedback requested protection of Tree #11 and Tree #84



Proposed Tree Removal Table by Species

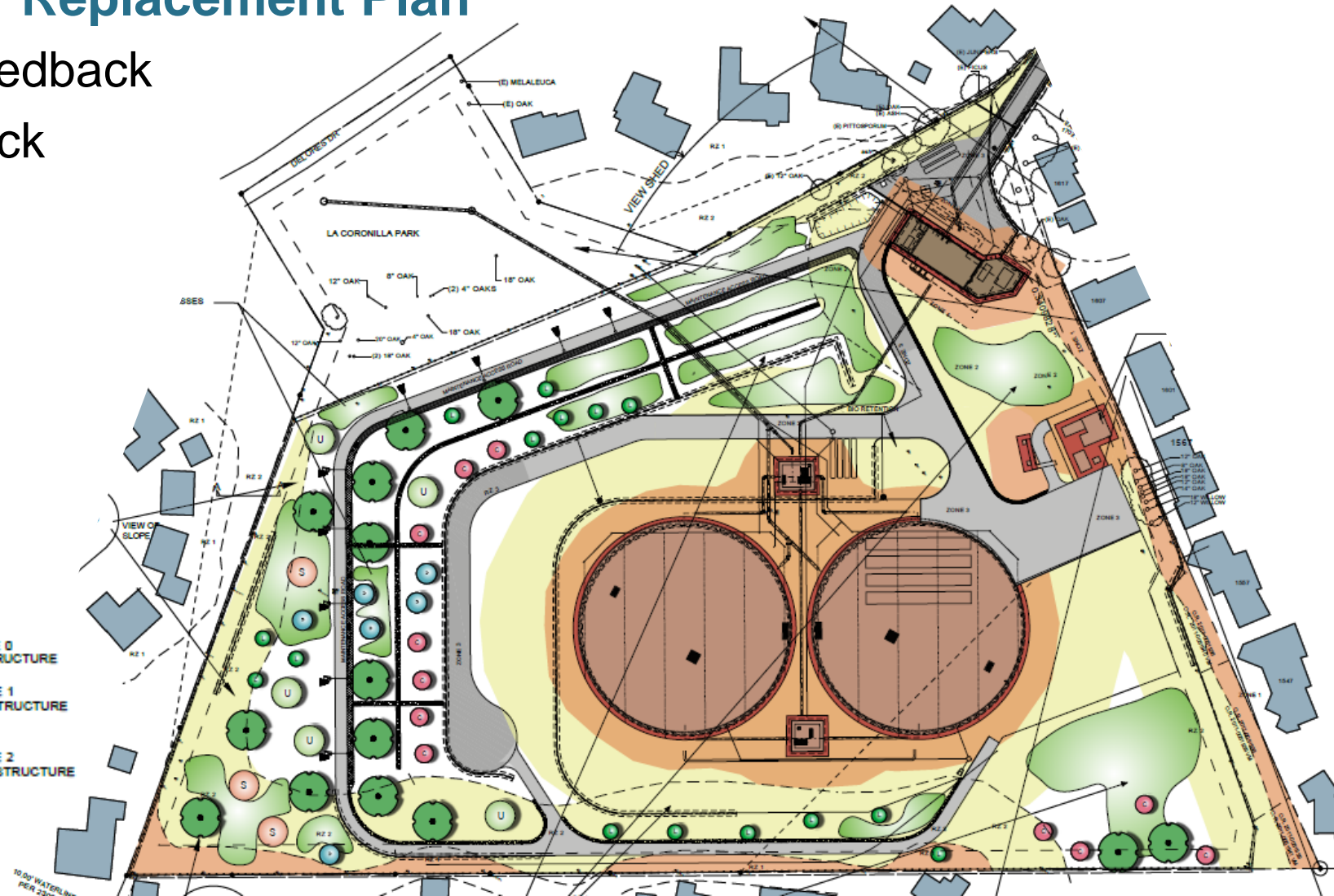
Common Name	Native/Ornamental	Count
Coast Live Oak	Native	7
Shamel ash	Ornamental	2
Victorian box	Ornamental	1
Island Oak	Ornamental	1
Red Ironbark	Ornamental	26
Stone Pine	Ornamental	6
Blue Elderberry	Native	1
Honey Locust	Ornamental	5
Willow Acacia	Ornamental	1
Blackwood Acacia	Ornamental	2
Ngaio	Ornamental	1
Holly Leaf Cherry	Native	1
Canary Island Date Palm	Ornamental	1
	Total:	55

2. Proposing an Updated 1:1 Replacement Plan

- Incorporates raptor habitat feedback
- Incorporates City Fire feedback

	QUERCUS AGRIFOLIA COAST LIVE OAK 15 GALLON SIZE PLANTED	14
	LYONOTHAMNUS FLORIBUNDUS CATALINA IRONWOOD 15 GALLON SIZE PLANTED	15
	CERCIS OCCIDENTALLIS WESTERN REDBUD 15 GALLON SIZE PLANTED	12
	PRUNUS ILICIFOLIA spp. LYONII CATALINA CHERRY 15 GALLON SIZE PLANTED	6
	PLATANUS RACEMOSA CALIFORNIA SYCAMORE 15 GALLON SIZE PLANTED	3
	UMBELLULARIA CALIFORNICA CALIFORNIA BAY 15 GALLON SIZE PLANTED	5
TOTAL PROPOSED TREE COUNT		55

	FUEL MOD ZONE 0 5 FEET FROM STRUCTURE
	FUEL MOD ZONE 1 30 FEET FROM STRUCTURE
	FUEL MOD ZONE 2 100 FEET FROM STRUCTURE

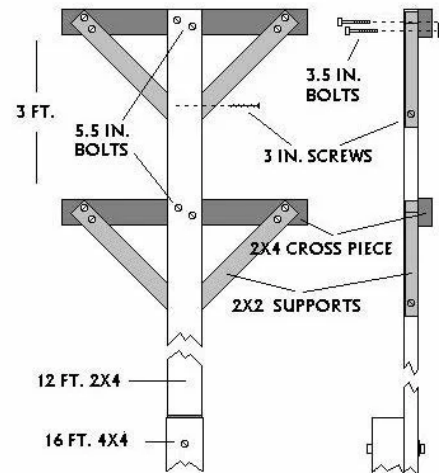
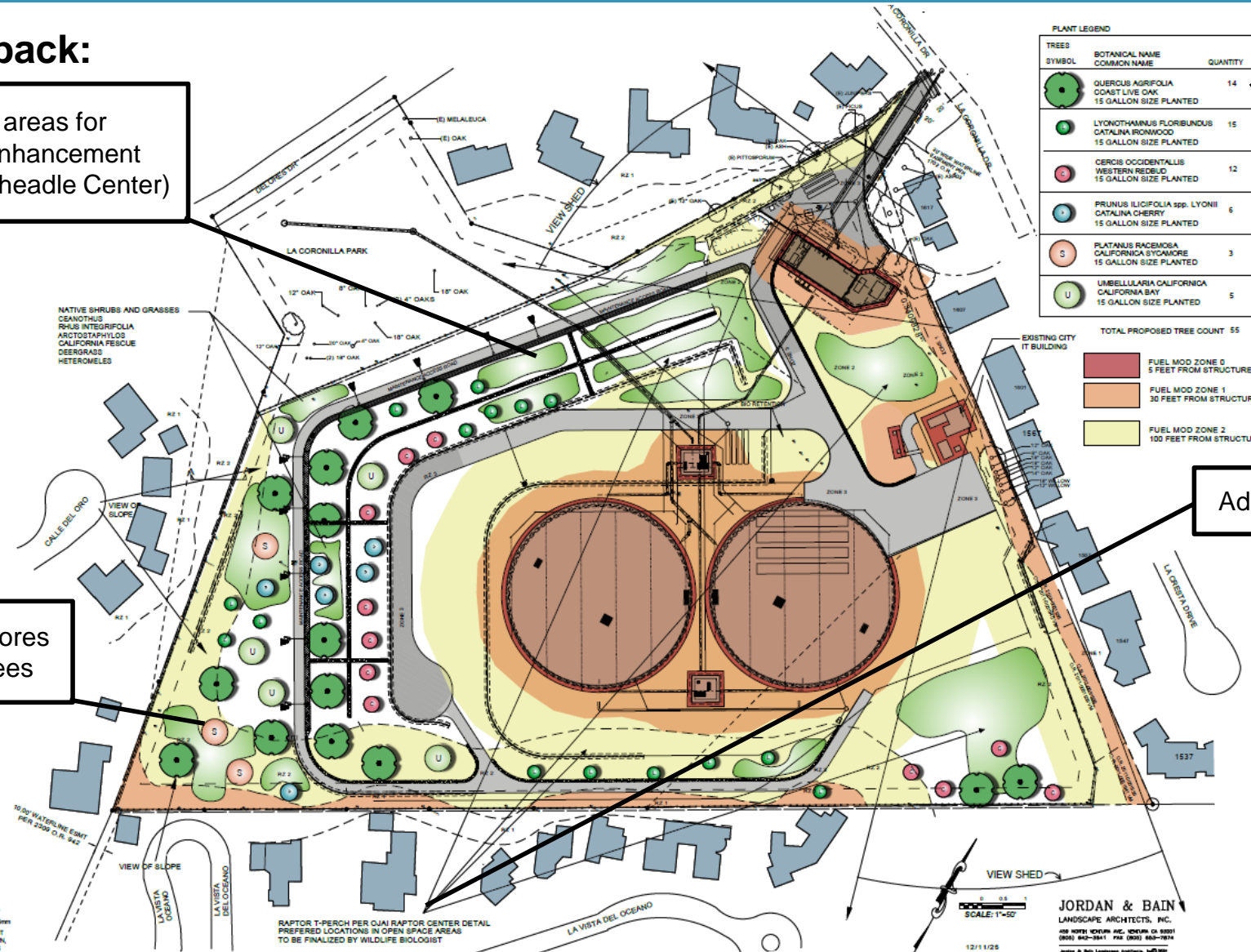


Raptor habitat feedback:

Added foraging shrub areas for comprehensive habitat enhancement ("edge conditions" UCSB Cheadle Center)

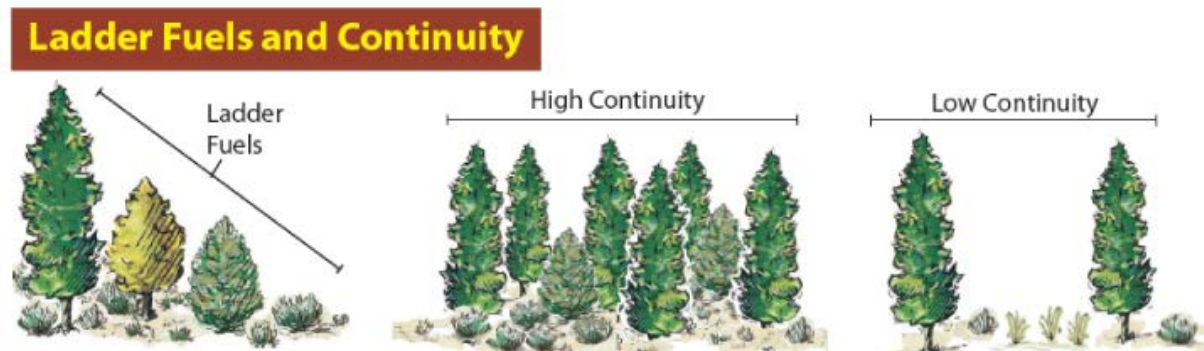
Added 5 Bays and 3 Sycamores
Total of 22 suitable "tall" trees

Added perches to supplement habitat

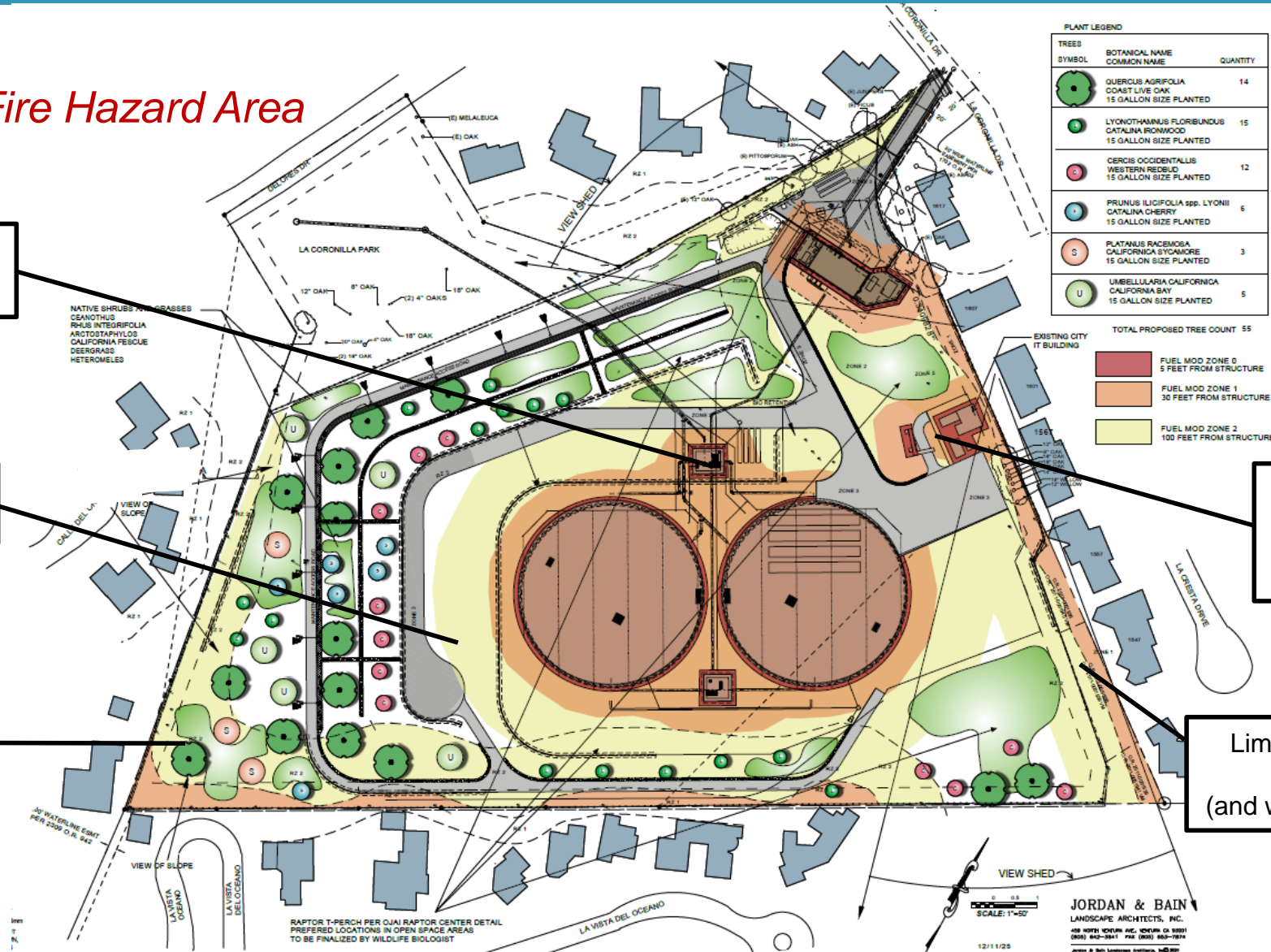


City Fire feedback:

- Alignment with Community Wildfire Protection Plan
 - *Coastal Interior High Fire Hazard Area (ex. Loma Alta Fire) fuel management policies*
 - *Spacing to avoid threat of fuel ladders*
- Fire resilient now and into future. Examples of similar work:
 - *Parma Park Restoration Plan*
 - *Douglas Family Preserve*
- City Fire responsibility to protect critical facilities (i.e., major water supply sources)
 - *Updated plans to show reservoirs, vaults and towers as fire-protected structures*



Limited trees in near home
structures
(and within existing viewsheds)



Proposed Tree Removals – Summary

- 108 Total Project Trees
- 52 Trees retained
- 55 Proposed tree removals
 - 7 Coast Live Oaks + 2 other natives
 - 46 ornamentals
- 55 Proposed replacement trees
 - 14 Coast Live Oaks + 8 trees + raptor perches + foraging habitat
 - 33 other natives

Project Community Outreach

- May 2025 Community Engagement Workshops
- SB Mesa Neighborhood Association Presentation
- October 1, 2025 Neighborhood Meet & Greet
- December 3 & 4, 2025 CEQA Scoping Workshops



Summary of Request:

- Remove 55 trees (9 native, 46 ornamental)
- Replace with 55 trees (55 native)

Thank you & Questions

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Vic Trace Project Manager

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Subscribe for updates at:
www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/VicTrace

