

APPENDIX J
Tree Report

TREE REPORT

PLAYA MANCHESTER PROJECT

Submitted to:

OWNER/APPLICANT:

Decron Properties Corporation

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Los Angeles, CA 90048

Submitted by:



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Tree Report for Playa Manchester Project

Included with this Report is the following document: one (1) tree location map

Project Description

The project site is within the Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan Area, located at 7270 through 7298 West Manchester Avenue and 8624 Rayford Drive, encompassing the southeast corner of the intersection of West Manchester Avenue and Rayford Drive. The project site area is comprised of approximately 3.03 gross acres (approximately 131,854 square feet), or 2.76 net acres (approximately 120,150 square feet). The project site is bounded by the mixed-use Playa del Oro development on the east, single family residences on the south and multi-family residences and institutional (church) uses to the west and north. The western portion of the site is currently occupied by three one-story structures, which contain eight separate retail uses; the eastern portion of the site (adjacent to the Playa del Oro project) is vacant. The Proposed Project would fully develop the entire site, replacing the vacant lot, existing one-story structures and associated surface parking with a four- to six-story mixed-use project containing a total of 260 dwelling units, including 16 ground floor joint live/work units, all located above three levels of parking, of which one level would be subterranean.

The mixed-use building would be approximately 266,456 square feet and would include approximately 1,400 square feet of multi-purpose room/gym area, as well as a pool and landscaped common areas. The Proposed Project would include a landscaped buffer and pedestrian access along Manchester Avenue and would also require a roadway dedication along its Manchester Avenue frontage.

As currently proposed by the Project Applicant, a landscaped environment would be developed to include an appropriate mix of plant materials suitable to the building and neighboring project area. There would be a total of approximately 58,437 square feet of common open area, including 35,159 square feet of landscape area.

It is anticipated that the Proposed Project would be completed in one phase and occupied no later than 2012.

Tree Survey

The tree survey was conducted on August 4, 2009. The survey was conducted by a California licensed landscape architect. The purpose of this survey was to determine whether any protected species trees as defined under Los Angeles Municipal Ordinance 177,404, i.e., Oaks (*Quercus sp.*) indigenous to California (but excluding the Scrub Oak (*Quercus dumosa*)¹), Southern California Black Walnut (*Juglans californica var. californica*), Western

¹ *It should be noted that the current edition of the Jepson Manual states that the scrub oak is identified as *Quercus berberidifolia* and that the species name *Q. dumosa* is frequently misapplied. Further, the 1996 edition of Shrubs and Trees of the Southern California Coastal Region and Mountains states that the most common scrub oak, *Q.**

Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) and California Bay (*Umbellularia californica*) are present on the subject site and to locate all other (ornamental) trees in the potential impact area with a 12 inch diameter (caliper) or more at four and one half (4.5) feet above natural grade (Diameter at Breast Height – DBH). The tree map presented utilized site plans provided by Van Tilburg, Banvard & Soderbergh, AIA as a base map.

The following are general field observations made during visits to the project site. Vegetation typical of an urbanized setting is present throughout the project site, including ornamental-exotic trees and shrubs, as well as non-native perennial and annual plants. The majority of the existing plant material is in good to fair health and aesthetic condition. Two protected trees, as defined under Los Angeles Municipal Ordinance 177,404 are present on the subject site, two small Coast Live Oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*). These trees are in two separate, small raised planting beds which also contain some non-native, ornamental shrubs and groundcover, located behind the existing retail development. Given their size and location, it seems highly likely that these trees were planted from nursery containers as part of the original landscape development; that is they were not in-situ natives preserved and built around at the time the buildings were originally constructed. Due to the current cultural conditions/practices and recent pruning these trees show signs of extreme stress and are only in ‘Fair’ health condition and are rated ‘Poor’ aesthetically, as opposed to ‘Excellent’ or ‘Good’.

In total, 14 trees which meet the City of Los Angeles trunk diameter criterion were recorded on the project site. As previously stated, the City of Los Angeles Planning Department trunk diameter criterion used was twelve (12) inches or more DBH for ornamental trees and four inches (cumulatively) for protected species trees. Only one other native tree species was found on the project site: nine recently planted² Mexican Fan Palms (*Washingtonia robusta*). As shown in the Table 1, the following species were observed:

berberidifolia, was until recently mistakenly called *Q. dumosa* (Nuttal’s scrub oak), but that this species is actually quite rare and only occurs on sandy soils along the coast.

² All nine of the Mexican fan palms observed on the Proposed Project site were recently planted as evidenced by the fact that as of the date of the site visit their foliage was ‘tied-up’, a common nursery practice to enhance the establishment and survival of transplanted palm trees. Further, it is clear that the trees act as a continuation of the street trees planted to the east of the project site along Manchester Avenue as part of the Playa del Oro development.

Table 1
Detail of Observed Tree Species

Tree Number	Common Name	Scientific Name (Genus species)	Caliper (in inches)
1	Indian Laurel Fig	<i>Ficus microcarpa nitida</i>	36.0
2	Coast Live Oak	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	6.0
3	Coast Live Oak	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	10.5
4	Indian Laurel Fig	<i>Ficus microcarpa nitida</i>	12.0
5	Indian Laurel Fig	<i>Ficus microcarpa nitida</i>	14.0
6	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
7	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
8	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
9	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
10	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
11	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
12	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
13	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
14	Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	12.0
<i>Source: Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, August 2009.</i>			

Table 2
Summary of Observed Tree Species

Common Name	Scientific Name (Genus Species)	Number Observed	% of Total Observed
Indian Laurel Fig	<i>Ficus microcarpa nitida</i>	3	21.4
Coast Live Oak	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	2	14.3
Mexican Fan Palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	9	64.3
Total		14	100.0
<i>Source: Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, August 2009.</i>			

In summary, the following impacts would occur to the project site's 14 trees, including the two Coast Live Oaks, by implementing the proposed project:

Total Number of Trees Retained = 9

Total Number of Trees Removed = 5

Pursuant to the preliminary designs for the proposed project, the five existing trees on the western portion of the site would be removed as part of the site redevelopment, while the nine newly planted Mexican fan palms on the eastern portion of the site would remain. Given the plans for immediate redevelopment of the site following demolition of the existing retail buildings, the removal of these trees would not result in undesirable, irreversible soil erosion through diversion or increased flow of surface waters which cannot be mitigated to the satisfaction of the City. Further, it is necessary to remove the trees (including the two Coast Live Oaks) because their continued existence at said location would prevent the reasonable development of the subject property.

Determination of Minimum Replacement Standards

City of Los Angeles Protected Tree Ordinance No. 177,404 provides that a protected species tree cannot be removed or relocated without first obtaining a permit from the Board of Public Works. Further, the Ordinance requires that for each protected species tree removed, a minimum of two trees of the same species (minimum 15 gallon size) shall be planted and that the size and number of the replacement trees shall approximate the value of the trees to be replaced. In addition, a bond must be posted to guarantee the survival of trees which would be maintained, replaced or relocated to assure the existence of continuously living trees for a minimum of three years from the date the bond was posted or the trees were replaced or relocated.

While the transplanting of mature, naturalized Coast live oaks has been successful in limited instances, relocation of oak trees is generally fraught with problems and low success rates.³ In addition, the Coast Live Oaks at the project site are in a highly stressed, degraded condition and would therefore be even more unlikely to survive the further stress of transplantation. For this reason, it is not believed that the transplantation of these trees is a viable means of mitigating project impacts.

Given the generally lamentable condition of the existing Coast Live Oaks and their current lack of any actual canopy, replacing these trees with four, healthy 24-inch box specimens, which would provide approximately 316 square feet of canopy within a ten year horizon⁴, would be adequate and appropriate mitigation for the removal of these trees.

In addition, the City Planning guidelines require that desirable mature ornamental trees (i.e., those with a DBH of 12" and over) be replaced at a 1:1 ratio.

Proposed Mitigation

The Project Applicant shall replace all mature trees at the project site which are removed for the Proposed Project.

The specific implementation program is as follows:

1. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the Project Applicant shall provide a Mitigation Planting Plan to compensate for the loss of two Coast Live Oaks, and three mature ornamental trees. The Mitigation Planting Plan shall include a 2:1 replacement of Coast Live Oaks with a minimum 24-inch box size (i.e. a minimum of four new 24-inch box Coast Live Oaks), and a 1:1 replacement of mature non-protected species with a minimum 24-inch box size (i.e. a minimum of three new 24-inch box ornamental trees). The plantings may occur at project entry points, common areas, or along the Manchester Avenue right-of-way.

It is understood that this Mitigation Planting Plan would be only a part of the overall project landscape plans, which should also include additional trees and understory plantings of climate-adapted plant material.

All planting plans shall be to the satisfaction of the City of Los Angeles Urban Forestry Division of the Bureau of Street Services, the Department of Planning and the Advisory Agency. All trees in the public right-of-way shall be provided per the current Urban Forestry Division standards.

³ Dagit, Rosi and Jim Downer. 1998. "Transplanted Coast Live Oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) in Southern California." *Western Arborist*. Vol. 24, No. 4. Pages 36-41.

⁴ Based on the estimates of the growth of Coast Live Oak container stock in Southern California provided by Tom Larson, a Registered Consulting Arborist with over 30 years experience in the Southern California tree industry.

2. When planted in or adjacent to vehicular use areas the genus or genera of the tree(s) shall provide a minimum crown of 30'-50'. Please refer to City of Los Angeles Landscape Ordinance (Ord. No. 170,978), Guidelines K - Vehicular Use Areas.
3. Removal of all trees in the public right-of-way shall require the approval of the Board of Public Works.
4. The project applicant shall post a cash bond or other assurances acceptable to the Bureau of Engineering in consultation with the Urban Forestry Division and the Advisory Agency guaranteeing the survival of trees required to be maintained, replaced or relocated in such a fashion as to assure the existence of continuously living trees for a minimum of three (3) years from the date that the bond is posted or from the date such trees are replaced or relocated, whichever is longer. Any change of ownership shall require that the new owner post a new tree bond to the satisfaction of the Bureau of Engineering. Subsequently the original owner's bond may be exonerated.
5. The City Engineer shall use the provisions of Section 17.08 as its procedural guide in satisfaction of said bond requirements and processing. Any bond required shall be in a sum estimated by the City Engineer to be equal to the dollar value of the replacement tree or of the tree which is to be relocated. In determining value for these purposes, the City Engineer shall consult with the Advisory Agency and shall also consult the evaluation of trees guidelines approved and adopted for professional plantmen by the International Society of Arboriculture, the American Society of Consulting Arborists, the National Arborists Association and the American Association of Nurserymen, and other available, local information, or guidelines.
6. Prior to the exoneration of the bond, the owner of the project site shall provide evidence satisfactory to the City Engineer and Urban Forestry Division that the trees were properly replaced, the date of the replacement and the survival of the replacement trees for a period of three years.

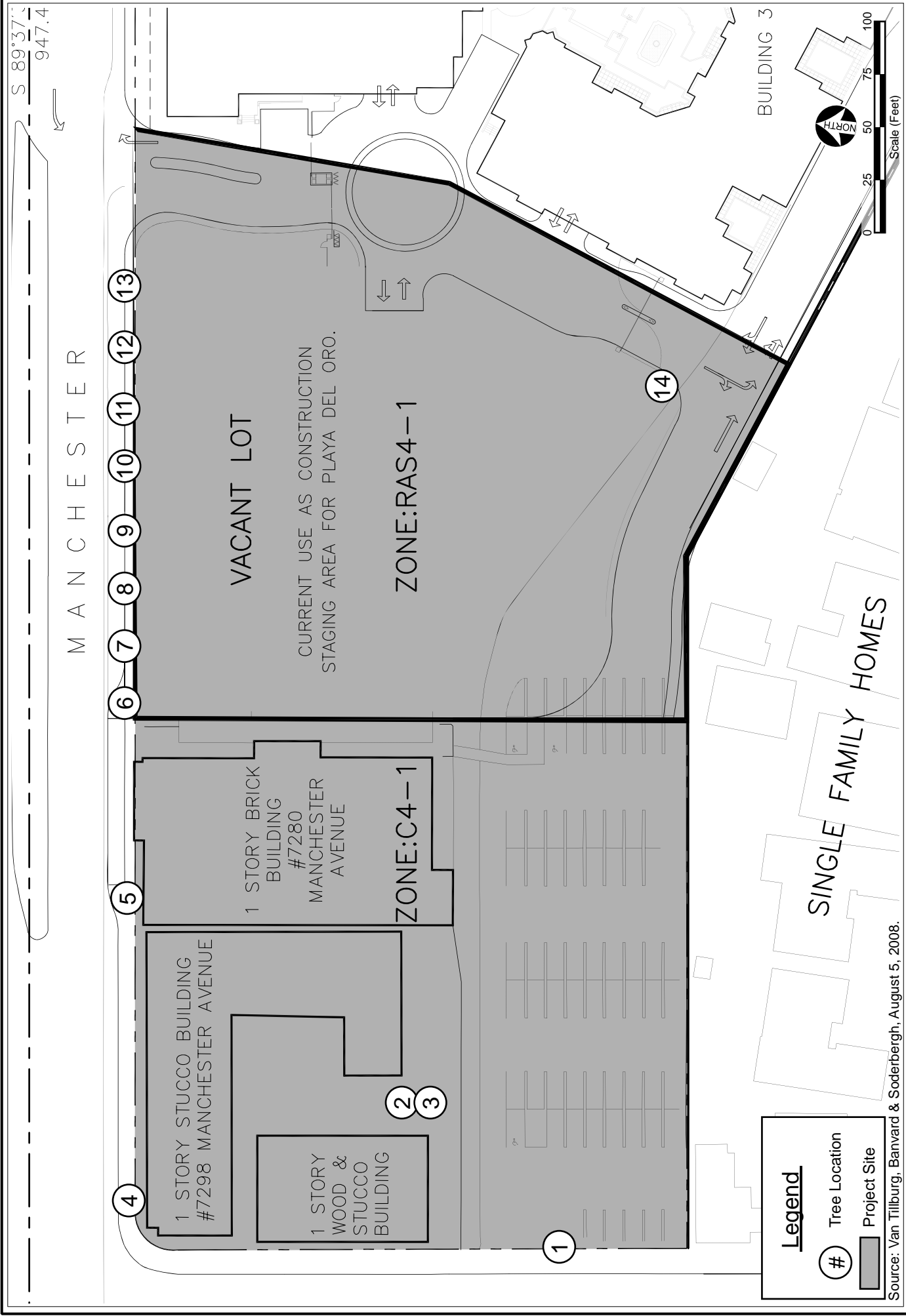
Respectfully submitted

for

Christopher A. Joseph & Associates

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August 5, 2009

NOTICE OF DISCLAIMER: *Opinions given in this report are those of Christopher A. Joseph & Associates and are derived from current professional standards based on visual observations at the time the field surveys were conducted. The trees discussed herein were generally reviewed for physical and biological function and aesthetic conditions. This examination was conducted in accordance with presently accepted industry procedures, which are ground plane macro-visual observation only. This visual record does not include aerial or subterranean inspections, microbiological or soil-root excavations, upper crown examinations or internal tree investigation (i.e. core sampling), and therefore may not reveal existing hidden conditions or hazards. Records are only represented as accurate as of the dates of the surveys due to variable environmental factors, including but not limited to the reasonably foreseeable deterioration and/or growth of existing plant material. No warranty is made, expressed or implied, that problems or deficiencies of the trees or the property will not occur in the future, from any cause. CAJA shall not be responsible for damages or injuries caused by any tree defects, and assumes no responsibility for the correction of defects or tree related problems. It is assumed that statements of fact regarding property ownership, property boundaries, exact structure and proposed utility locations are “as represented” by the client, in all verbal, written or drawn communications. CAJA assumes no responsibility for verification of ownership or locations of property or utility lines, or for results of any actions or recommendations based on inaccurate information. The Advisory Agency or City to whom this report is submitted has the final word regarding any recommendation(s).*



Legend

- # Tree Location
- Project Site

Source: Van Tilburg, Banvard & Soderbergh, August 5, 2008.

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Tree Map