



Agenda Item B.2
DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM
Meeting Date: October 15, 2025

TO: Chair and Members of the Public Tree Advisory Committee

FROM: Luz “Nina” Buelna, Public Works Director

CONTACT: George Thomson, Parks and Open Space Manager

SUBJECT: Heritage Tree Nominations

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and recommend to the contract City Arborist that the following trees be further investigated for Heritage Tree designation:

1. Australian willow (*Geijera parviflora*) at the Goleta Community Center (5679 Hollister Ave)
2. Spanish fir (*Abies pinsapo*) at the Rancho La Patera & Stow House (304 N. Los Carneros Road)
3. Brush cherry (*Syzygium australe*) at the Rancho La Patera & Stow House (304 N. Los Carneros Rd)
4. Moreton Bay chestnut (*Castanospermum australe*) at the Rancho La Patera & Stow House (304 N. Los Carneros Rd)
5. Western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) at San Jose Creek at Jonny D. Wallis Park (170 S. Kellogg Ave.)

BACKGROUND:

Heritage Tree Nominations

The City’s Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) was initially adopted on June 7, 2011, amended on January 26, 2017, and amended and approved on February 21, 2017. UFMP section 4.15 addresses “Heritage Trees,” including their significance, objectives, criteria for designation, nomination process, naming conventions, changing of Heritage Tree designation, and removal considerations. Attachment 1 to this report provides a summary of UFMP policies and procedures related to Heritage Trees, which will be reviewed during the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) meeting in advance of the discussion of the nominated trees.

DISCUSSION:

The Heritage Tree nomination process is as follows:

- 1) A Goleta resident or business nominates a tree for Heritage Designation by submitting a completed nomination form, pictures of the tree and its placement in the surrounding location, and a filing fee to the City.
- 2) Public Works submits the nomination to PTAC as an item on their next meeting agenda.
- 3) PTAC evaluates the nomination to determine if it qualifies to be submitted to the City Arborist for further investigation into the satisfaction of Heritage tree criteria.
- 4) The City Arborist provides a “botanical assessment report” to PTAC.
- 5) PTAC makes a final recommendation to approve or deny based on these findings:
 - a. If approved by PTAC, a recommendation is provided to the City Council for the designation of the tree as a Heritage Tree. PTAC will also make a recommendation on the naming of the Heritage Tree per UFMP guidance.
 - b. If denied by PTAC, the nominating party may appeal the denial to the City Council within 10 days of notification that the request has been denied. Written appeals must be submitted to the City Clerk.

The City received five Heritage Tree nominations from Ken Knight. The nomination forms and accompanying photographs are presented in Attachments 2-5. The City Parks and Open Space Manager will present each of the nominations and photographs to the PTAC during the public meeting.

Following PTAC’s action, the contract City Arborist will conduct a “botanical assessment” on any trees recommended by the PTAC for further investigation. Upon completion of the assessment, staff will return to the PTAC for a final recommendation to City Council on Heritage Tree designations.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Heritage Tree Excerpt from Goleta Urban Forest Management Plan (2017)
2. Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Australian willow at Goleta Community Center
3. Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Spanish fir at Stow House
4. Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Brush cherry at Stow House
5. Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Moreton Bay chestnut at Stow House
6. Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Western sycamore at San Jose Creek at Hollister Avenue
7. PowerPoint Presentation Slides

ATTACHMENT 1

Heritage Tree Excerpt from Urban Forest Management Plan (2017)

Performance Standards

Number of view conflicts brought to the attention of the Public Tree Advisory Commission for resolution.

4.15 Heritage Trees

Irreplaceable and significant urban trees in good health and of stable form are substantial components to the history of each urban forest. These trees, known as heritage trees, are considered outstanding because of their size, form, age, color, rarity, genetic constitution and/or shape. They can also be a distinctive landmark to a community; a specimen associated with a historic person, place, event or period; a representative of a crop grown by ancestors and their successors that is at risk of disappearing from cultivation; a specimen recognized by members of a community as deserving heritage recognition. Heritage trees also increase the prestige of the community and they play a vital role in maximizing environmental benefits.

A collection of co-located trees, forming a grove, may also be considered heritage based on the above description.

No trees were designated as heritage, historical, or significant when the City formed. A list of Goleta Heritage tree sites is identified in Appendix B. This list, and subsequent designations, are subject to recommendation by PTAC and approval by the City Council.

Guidelines

- 4.15.1 Use UFMP adopted procedures for defining and designating the protection of Heritage/landmark trees on city property.
- 4.15.2 The Public Tree Advisory Commission shall consider future policies or ordinances that protect Heritage trees in the public right of way or on public property and make such recommendations to the City Council for approval.

Objectives

- 1. Protection and enhancement of Heritage trees in Goleta.
- 2. Develop and maintain a list of candidate Heritage/landmark trees.

Criteria for Heritage Tree Designation:

Definition: A heritage tree is a tree that, because of its size, age, species, rarity, or historical or horticultural significance, is of special importance to the City.

Horticultural significance

A heritage tree must be of exceptional size and age. Since trees vary in size and lifespan by species, exceptional is relative to the size and age of other individuals of the same species located in the city.

Unless documented, age is difficult to determine without specialized equipment but size can be quantified by measuring the tree's trunk diameter at 4.5 feet above grade, which is also known as the diameter at breast height (DBH).

A tree may be classified as a Heritage tree because it is a defining landmark or it is considered to be rare in the area.

A tree may be considered rare because of its species, unique form, structure, unusual branch patterns, or its outstanding aesthetic contribution to a site or neighborhood.

Historical significance

A tree may qualify as a Heritage tree if it has a documented history that reflects our City's cultural heritage. This would include such things as its association with or contribution to a historic structure, site, or street, or its connection to a person of historical note or some historic event.

Nominating a Heritage Tree

Any Goleta resident or business may nominate a heritage tree. In addition to a filing fee, the nomination form (Appendix F) must include justification for designating the tree as historic consistent with the information contained in this section as well as pictures of the tree and its placement in the surrounding location.

Submit nomination form to the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) for a tree in the public right of way or on public property. Nomination forms will be received by Public Works and submitted to PTAC as an item on their next meeting agenda. The PTAC will evaluate the nomination and determine if it qualifies to be submitted to the City Arborist for further investigation in to the satisfaction of Heritage tree criteria. The City Arborist will provide a botanical assessment report to the PTAC. PTAC would then make a final recommendation to approve or deny based on these findings and if approved, direct staff to present a recommendation to the City Council for designation of the tree as a Heritage Tree.

If PTAC denies the designation, the nominating party may appeal the denial to the City Council within 10 days of notification that the request has been denied. Written appeals must be submitted to the City Clerk.

Naming a Heritage Tree

When considering a heritage tree designation, PTAC will also make a recommendation to the City Council on the naming of the heritage trees.

The name shall be informative:

- a. Location
- b. Common Name
- ie: *the* Stow Grove Park Redwoods
the Ellwood Mesa Eucalyptus Grove
the Old Town Park Sycamore

Changing a Heritage Tree's Designation

PTAC may recommend to the City Council that a Heritage tree's designation be rescinded when or if the Commission finds that it is no longer appropriate.

Removal of a Heritage Tree

A Heritage Tree shall not be removed unless it is dead, dying, or dangerous, subject to prior PTAC notification unless the hazardous condition of the tree is deemed an emergency warranting swift action. An emergency is when the failure of a major limb(s) or the entire tree is imminent and a threat to public safety, homes, or structures. In the event of an emergency, the Public Works Director or his/her designee may order a limb(s) or the entire tree to be removed without scheduling a hearing with the PTAC. However, PTAC commissioners shall be informed as soon as practical.

4.16 Trees and Economic Development

Merchants may focus on the direct costs of revitalization projects and overlook the long-term benefits of maintaining the trees lining their place of business. Healthy and well-maintained trees within business districts send positive messages to consumers and ultimately increase

ATTACHMENT 2

Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Australian willow at Goleta Community Center

-For official use only -

☐ Received _____
☐ To PTAC _____
☐ Paid fee _____

CITY OF GOLETA

Heritage Tree Nomination Form

A heritage tree is one that, because of its size, age, species, rarity, or historical or horticultural significance, is of special importance to the City. Trees must be located on public property or in the public Right of Way. Anyone may nominate a tree for designation as a heritage tree. This request will be reviewed by the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) and the City Council.

This nomination form must be accompanied by pictures and a processing fee.

Tree Information	
Date:	7/23/23
Tree Species (botanic and / or common name):	Australian Willow Geijera parviflora
Number of trees:	1
Grove:	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
Tree Address:	5679 Hollister Avenue Goleta CA 93117
Where is the tree located:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Between the curb and sidewalk (parkway) or median <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park or other public property Goleta Community Center interior courtyard <input type="checkbox"/> Other (note: private property not eligible for Heritage Tree status)	
Tree size:	
Height (approximate):	49'
Crown (measure branch structure from one edge to opposite edge):	65'
Circumference (distance around trunk at 4.5' from ground):	50/3.14 = 15.9" Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
Approximate age (if known):	65 (planted in 1958) or possibly 96 (planted in 1927)
Condition:	Excellent
Historical facts:	Possibly planted in 1927 when original Goleta Union School built. Also possibly planted in 1958 when many of this species were planted as street trees. See smgrowers.com/1470/geijera.com
Noteworthy features:	<input type="checkbox"/> Beauty <input type="checkbox"/> Shade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Size <input type="checkbox"/> Kind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History
And justification for nomination:	Nominated by Randy Baldwin in 2012, this tree is recognized as the National Champion for its size. see www.californiabigtrees.calpoly.edu

Nominated By	
Print Name:	Ken Knight
Signature:	Ken Knight
Address:	69 Calaveras Ave
City, State, Zip:	Goleta CA 93117
Phone:	805 252-1952
Email:	Kenneth.Knight@cox.net
Date:	7/23/23

Submit nominations to:

Public Works Director, City of Goleta / 130 Cremona Dr. Suite B. / Goleta, California 93117





ATTACHMENT 3

Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Spanish Fir at Stow House

-For official use only -

☐ Received _____
☐ To PTAC _____
☐ Paid fee _____

CITY OF GOLETA

Heritage Tree Nomination Form

A heritage tree is one that, because of its size, age, species, rarity, or historical or horticultural significance, is of special importance to the City. Trees must be located on public property or in the public Right of Way. Anyone may nominate a tree for designation as a heritage tree. This request will be reviewed by the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) and the City Council.

This nomination form must be accompanied by pictures and a processing fee.

Tree Information	
Date:	7/23/23
Tree Species (botanic and / or common name):	Spanish Fir Abies pinsapo
Number of trees:	1 Grove: Y/N
Tree Address:	304 N. Los Carneros Rd. Goleta CA 93117
Where is the tree located:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Between the curb and sidewalk (parkway) or median <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park or other public property Rancho La Patera/Stow House <input type="checkbox"/> Other (note: private property not eligible for Heritage Tree status)	
Tree size:	
Height (approximate): 46'	
Crown (measure branch structure from one edge to opposite edge): 27'	
Circumference (distance around trunk at 4.5' from ground): 63/3.14 = Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)	
Approximate age (if known):	110+ planted around 1910
Condition:	Fair Extensive decay
Historical facts:	Planted by Stow family
Noteworthy features: <input type="checkbox"/> Beauty <input type="checkbox"/> Shade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Size <input type="checkbox"/> Kind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History And justification for nomination: Nominated by George Thomson and Ken Knight In 2021, this tree is recognized as a National Champion for its size. See www.calforwibigtrees.calpoly.edu	

Nominated By	
Print Name:	Ken Knight
Signature:	Ken Knight
Address:	69 Calaveras Ave
City, State, Zip:	Goleta CA 93117
Phone:	805 252-1952
Email:	KennethKnight@cox.net
Date:	7/23/23

Submit nominations to:

Public Works Director, City of Goleta / 130 Cremona Dr. Suite B. / Goleta, California 93117



ATTACHMENT 4

Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Brush cherry at Stow House

-For official use only -

☐ Received _____
☐ To PTAC _____
☐ Paid fee _____

CITY OF GOLETA

Heritage Tree Nomination Form

A heritage tree is one that, because of its size, age, species, rarity, or historical or horticultural significance, is of special importance to the City. Trees must be located on public property or in the public Right of Way. Anyone may nominate a tree for designation as a heritage tree. This request will be reviewed by the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) and the City Council.

This nomination form must be accompanied by pictures and a processing fee.

Tree Information	
Date:	7/23/23
Tree Species (botanic and / or common name):	Brush Cherry Syzgium australe
Number of trees:	1 Grove: Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
Tree Address:	304 N. Los Carneros Rd Goleta CA 93117
Where is the tree located:	<input type="checkbox"/> Between the curb and sidewalk (parkway) or median <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park or other public property Rancho La Patera/Stow House <input type="checkbox"/> Other (note: private property not eligible for Heritage Tree status)
Tree size:	Height (approximate): 72' Crown (measure branch structure from one edge to opposite edge): 72' Circumference (distance around trunk at 4.5' from ground): 194/3.14 = 61.8" Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
Approximate age (if known):	130+ - around 1890 planted date
Condition:	Good. some foliar insect damage
Historical facts:	Planted by the Stow family.
Noteworthy features:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beauty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Size <input type="checkbox"/> Kind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History And Justification for nomination: Nominated by Ken Knight in 2016, this tree is recognized as the state champion for its size. Normally planted as shrub see www.california big trees. calpoly.edu.

Nominated By	
Print Name:	Ken Knight Signature: Ken Knight
Address:	69 Calaveras Ave
City, State, Zip:	Goleta CA 93117
Phone:	805 252-1952 Email: Kenneth.Knight@cox.net Date: 7/23/23

Submit nominations to:

Public Works Director, City of Goleta / 130 Cremona Dr. Suite B. / Goleta, California 93117





ATTACHMENT 5

Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Moreton Bay chestnut at Stow House

-For official use only -

☐ Received _____
☐ To PTAC _____
☐ Paid fee _____

CITY OF GOLETA

Heritage Tree Nomination Form

A heritage tree is one that, because of its size, age, species, rarity, or historical or horticultural significance, is of special importance to the City. Trees must be located on public property or in the public Right of Way. Anyone may nominate a tree for designation as a heritage tree. This request will be reviewed by the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) and the City Council.

This nomination form must be accompanied by pictures and a processing fee.

Tree Information	7/23/23
Date:	
Tree Species (botanic and / or common name):	Morot Bay Chestnut <i>Castanospermum australe</i>
Number of trees:	1
Grove:	Y / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
Tree Address:	304 N. Los Carneros Rd Goleta CA 93117
Where is the tree located:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Between the curb and sidewalk (parkway) or median <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park or other public property <i>Rancho La Patera / Stow House</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Other (note: private property not eligible for Heritage Tree status)	
Tree size:	
Height (approximate):	45.5'
Crown (measure branch structure from one edge to opposite edge):	40'
Circumference (distance around trunk at 4.5' from ground):	99/3.14 = 31.5
Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)	
Approximate age (if known):	130+ (planted around 1890)
Condition:	Good
Historical facts:	Planted by the Stow family.
Noteworthy features:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beauty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Size <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History
And justification for nomination:	Nominated by George Thomson, and Ken Knight in 2021, this tree is recognized as a national champion for its size. see www.californiabigtrees.calpoly.edu .

Nominated By	
Print Name:	Ken Knight
Signature:	<i>Ken Knight</i>
Address:	69 Calaveras Ave
City, State, Zip:	Goleta CA 93117
Phone:	805 252-1952
Email:	Kenneth.Knight@cox.net
Date:	7/23/23

Submit nominations to:

Public Works Director, City of Goleta / 130 Cremona Dr. Suite B. / Goleta, California 93117







ATTACHMENT 6

Heritage Tree Nomination Form and photograph(s): Western sycamore at
San Jose Creek at Hollister Avenue

-For official use only -

☐ Received _____

☐ To PTAC _____

☐ Paid fee _____

CITY OF GOLETA

Heritage Tree Nomination Form

A heritage tree is one that, because of its size, age, species, rarity, or historical or horticultural significance, is of special importance to the City. Trees must be located on public property or in the public Right of Way. Anyone may nominate a tree for designation as a heritage tree. This request will be reviewed by the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) and the City Council.

This nomination form must be accompanied by pictures and a processing fee.

Tree Information	
Date:	7/23/23
Tree Species (botanic and / or common name):	Western Sycamore Platanus racemosa
Number of trees:	1 Grove: Y / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
Tree Address: Where is the tree located:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Between the curb and sidewalk (parkway) or median <input type="checkbox"/> Park or other public property <input type="checkbox"/> Other (note: private property not eligible for Heritage Tree status)	
Tree size:	
Height (approximate):	
Crown (measure branch structure from one edge to opposite edge):	
Circumference (distance around trunk at 4.5' from ground): /3.14 = Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)	
Approximate age (if known):	300 +/- Pre european colonization - 1725?
Condition:	Good Topped
Historical facts:	
Noteworthy features: <input type="checkbox"/> Beauty <input type="checkbox"/> Shade <input type="checkbox"/> Size <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kind <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History	
And Justification for nomination:	

Nominated By	
Print Name:	Ken Knight Signature: Ken Knight
Address:	69 Calaveras Ave
City, State, Zip:	Goleta CA 93117
Phone:	805 252-1952 Email: Kenneth.Knight@cox.net Date: 7/23/23

Submit nominations to:

Public Works Director, City of Goleta / 130 Cremona Dr. Suite B. / Goleta, California 93117





ATTACHMENT 7

Powerpoint Presentation Slides

Heritage Tree Nominations

Public Tree Advisory Commission

October 15, 2025

George Thomson, Parks and Open Space Manager



What is a Heritage Tree?

► Urban Forest Management Plan Definition:

A tree* that, because of its size, age, species, rarity, or historical or horticultural significance, is of special importance to the City

*tree must be in public right of way or on public property

Some examples of other “heritage trees” around the world...



Sycamore Gap tree (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)
Northumberland National Park, England



giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)
Sequoia National Park, California



Árbol del Tule, Oaxaca, Mexico
Montezuma cypress (*Taxodium mucronatum*)

Heritage Tree Definition: Horticultural significance

Qualifying Reasons for Designation

- Size & Age - must be exceptional relative to same species in the City
- Rare – species, unique form, structure, unusual branch patterns, outstanding aesthetic
- Defining Landmark

Heritage Tree Definition: Historical Significance

- Documented history reflecting City's cultural heritage
 - Tree's association with or contribution to a historic structure, site, or street, or its connection to a person of historical note or some historic event

Nominating a Heritage Tree

- Any Goleta resident or business may nominate a tree in the public right of way or on public property
- Submit Nomination Form
 - Justification
 - Pictures of Tree & Surrounds
- Pay Fee (Not currently established on adopted fee schedule)

Heritage Trees: PTAC's Role and Next Steps

1. PTAC determines if tree qualifies as Heritage status
2. If yes, City Arborist provides for further investigation into the satisfaction of Heritage Tree criteria.
3. The City Arborist will provide a "botanical assessment report" to the PTAC
4. PTAC would then make a final recommendation to approve or deny based on these findings and if approved, direct staff to present a recommendation to the City Council for designation of the tree as a Heritage Tree.
5. If PTAC denies the designation, the nominating party may appeal the denial to the City Council within 10 days of notification that the request has been denied. Written appeals must be submitted to the City Clerk.

Naming a Heritage Tree

- PTAC recommends name to City Council for adoption
 - The name shall be informative:
 - a. Location
 - b. Tree's Common Name