

From: [Zenk, Jessica](#)
To: [Downtown West Project](#)
Subject: FW: Structural soil conversation with Jessica & Florin
Date: Saturday, April 10, 2021 7:13:03 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[DWDSG-Street Planting.pdf](#)

From: Lapustea, Florin <Florin.Lapustea@sanjoseca.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 10:21 AM
To: Hansen, Russell <Russell.Hansen@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Zenk, Jessica <Jessica.Zenk@sanjoseca.gov>; Eddy, Thomas <thomas.eddy@sanjoseca.gov>; Hon, Eric <eric.hon@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Re: Structural soil conversation with Jessica & Florin

Hi Russ,

The only specifics we have for the potential use of structural soil is from the project's design standards and guidelines (see attached for the street planting section):

S6.12.4 Structural soil. Use of structural soils shall be permitted in constrained tree planting locations, in coordination with the Department of Public Works. Constrained locations are open tree planters with surface area less than six feet by six feet.

PW is trying to get the language above revised to "may be permitted" instead of "shall be permitted" because the project has not been able to answer if the proposal of using structured soil also includes the use of silva cells. There is no detailed design yet but Google wants the city to be flexible on whatever they propose in the future. Although the project is proposing to maintain "non-standard" features in the public right of way, the question at hand is if the City has a project or need to perform maintenance (which requires digging out the structured soil / suspended pavement) who is going to install it back in kind? Also, if utility companies need to install or maintain their facilities in the area, they will only replace with regular native soil.

Let me know your thoughts.

Thanks!

Florin Lapustea, P.E.

Senior Engineer - DOT Development Review
City of San Jose ~ City Hall
200 E. Santa Clara St., 8th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
Cell: 408-705-5209

From: Hansen, Russell <Russell.Hansen@sanjoseca.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 9:05 AM
To: Lapustea, Florin <Florin.Lapustea@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Zenk, Jessica <Jessica.Zenk@sanjoseca.gov>; Eddy, Thomas <thomas.eddy@sanjoseca.gov>; Hon, Eric <eric.hon@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: FW: Structural soil conversation with Jessica & Florin

Florin,

Do you happen to have any specifics ready to share regarding the potential use of structural soils for the Google development?

Russell Hansen

City Arborist
Department of Transportation
1404 Mabury Rd
San Jose, CA 95133
Desk: (408)794-1914
Cell: (408)623-2413

From: Hon, Eric <eric.hon@sanjoseca.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2021 1:06 PM
To: Hansen, Russell <Russell.Hansen@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Structural soil conversation with Jessica & Florin

Russ - Just got off a call with Jessica and Florin (this was what I texted you about).

Basically, Nancy Klein has been having conversations with Google about their project and per Jessica, Google wants to plant really large trees, that are being grown in SJ. Google brought up the use of "structural soil," which Jess and I have no idea what that was, but I asked if it was like "suspended pavement?" Florin implied it was?

Sounds like Google is willing to accept maintenance responsibility (I know they'd have it anyways because these are street trees) and essentially want the approval to do this. I told Jess that you and I have to talk but I would believe that we're on board...if there's a developer willing to do put this in and maintain, why would we not want to do that? PW is the one that is a little hesitant and I shared

with Jess that they typically have been reluctant to try new approaches?

Anyway, Florin should be sending us some info, will include you. He indicated that you and Thomas have seen some preliminary designs already? We'll need to review pretty quick and provide feedback, so I'm giving you the heads up...

Eric Hon
Division Manager
Department of Transportation

6.12 Street Planting

The Downtown West street tree palette is drawn from San José’s historical habitats and existing conditions to reinforce the Project’s sense of place, complement riparian enhancements, respond to site conditions, and support biodiversity. The plant selection transitions from riparian species near the creek and the river to mixed oak woodlands. This is consistent with the nature-to-urban gradient framework of the open space vision to provide varied experiences and connection to context. See Figure 6.43 for a graphic representation of the regional planting profile.

The following standards and guidelines relate to street trees and plantings within the public right-of-way. See Section 4.22 for planting palettes and vegetation requirements in open spaces including mid-block passages.

The Project aims to avoid the use of non-native species, plants of low ecological value, cultivars, and species incompatible with existing and projected site conditions. Native species that are appropriate for the current and projected

microclimates and site conditions can improve local and regional native biodiversity, facilitate wildlife movement, enhance placemaking, and reduce or eliminate the need for irrigation after the plant establishment period (three to five years). Figure 6.44 represents the Project’s street tree species distribution concept.

Street trees within the Project should be selected for their quality of form (shape, size, and branching habits) and foliage (color, density, ecological value, and climate regulating capacity). Additional consideration of durability and maintenance should be given to the size of planting area and selection of plantings in public right-of-ways. Trunk flare should be considered when determining tree well dimensions for larger trees. The San José Tree Policy Manual provides recommendations and best practices on species and planting conditions.

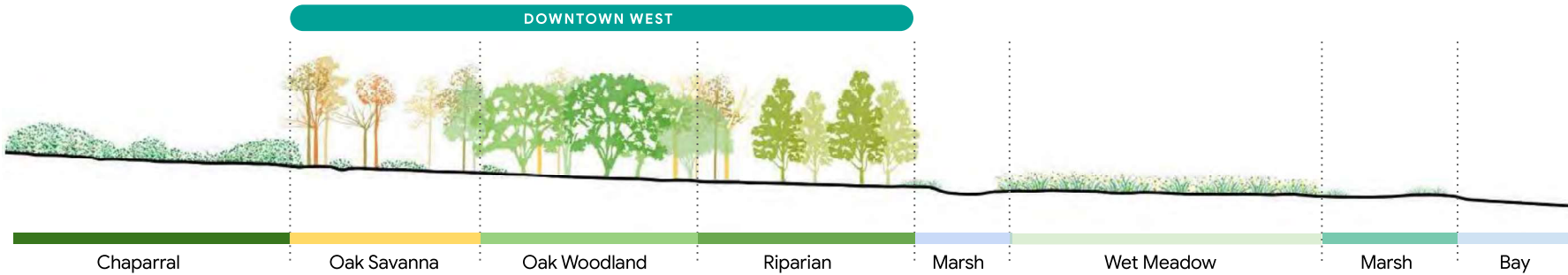


FIGURE 6.43: Regional planting profile

Standards

S6.12.1 Planting within the active streetscape.

Plantings shall be located in a sidewalk furnishing zone, a protected bikeway buffer, or where a furnishing zone is combined with a protected bikeway buffer to provide additional space for plantings (see Section 6.4). In some instances, plantings may be located in a dynamic lane when it is not needed to support transit and event traffic, as shown in Figure 6.41.

S6.12.2 Street tree spacing. Where implementing improvements to the sidewalk on public streets, all Project frontage shall be required to plant street trees at intervals of 20 to 50 linear feet apart. Street trees shall be planted no closer than one-half the mature tree canopy width apart. Exemptions to street tree spacing include:

- Within 20 linear feet from street lights, stop signs, or other traffic devices
- Within 10 linear feet from overhead high voltage lines
- Along frontage where there are existing retaining walls, as is the case along West Santa Clara Street west of Cahill Street and West Julian Street

- Along one of the Project frontages on Park Avenue, West Julian Street, or West San Fernando Street
- Along the length of a designated ADA accessible pick-up and drop-off zone, transit stop, or shuttle stop

S6.12.3 Planting strips with street trees. Tree basins within planting strips shall be a minimum of four feet by five feet.

S6.12.4 Structural soil. Use of structural soils shall be permitted in constrained tree planting locations, in coordination with the Department of Public Works. Constrained locations are open tree planters with surface area less than six feet by six feet.

S6.12.5 Contiguous tree wells. Tree wells shall be contiguous (connected) along the length of the block, curb, and / or contiguous under bike lanes where they do not interfere with street utilities or other subgrade components, geometric street design, or dynamic lanes.

S6.12.6 Compatible native tree species. At minimum, 90 percent of street trees shall be selected from the native species identified in Figure 6.45, unless deemed reasonably infeasible. To ensure species diversity, no more than 20 percent of the new street tree species planted in the Project area shall be a single species. Consultation

with the Office of the City Arborist and a letter of professional determination from a biologist shall be required to select alternative species that provide ecological benefit.

[CSDSG Guideline 111 — superseded]

S6.12.7 Compatible native understory species. Native plant species shall be selected for, at minimum, 90 percent of new understory planting, unless deemed reasonably infeasible. To ensure species diversity, no more than 20 percent of the new understory species planted in the Project area shall be a single species. Consultation with the Office of the City Arborist and a letter of professional determination from a biologist shall be required to select alternative species that provide ecological benefit.

[CSDSG Guideline 111 — superseded]

S6.12.8 Understory planting. Understory or perennial planting shall be allowed on all streets. Planting strips with low plantings shall be a minimum width of three feet.

S6.12.9 Temporary planters. Temporary planters shall be permitted within the active streetscape, in addition to street trees.

S6.12.10 Invasive species. Invasive tree and understory planting species shall not be permitted.

Guidelines

- G6.12.1 Preferred tree planting location.** Tree planting zones should be located as far as feasible from the building facade. In locations where there is both a furnishing zone and a bicycle buffer large enough for minimal tree planting dimensions, the bicycle buffer is the preferred location for planting to increase the scale of mature tree canopy.
- G6.12.2 Continuous tree canopy.** Continuous tree canopy cover should be prioritized to create shaded active mobility zones and improve ecological connectivity.
- G6.12.3 Character-defining corridors.** Structural soils are encouraged to enable tree health, longevity, and canopy growth along Barack Obama Boulevard, Cahill Street north of West Santa Clara Street, and North Montgomery Street south of Cinnabar Street.

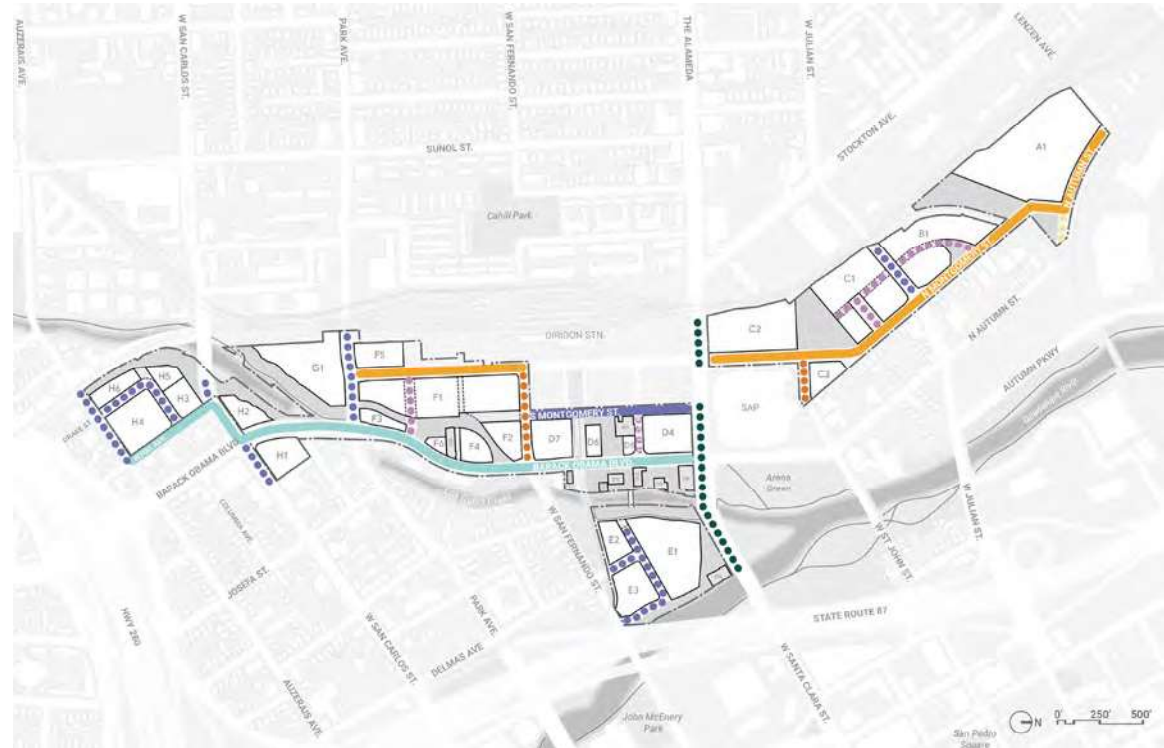


FIGURE 6.44: Street tree species distribution concept

- Oak Mix
- White Alder Mix
- Cottonwood Mix
- Valley Oak
- Coast Live Oak
- California Sycamore
- Cottonwood
- California Buckeye or Western Redbud

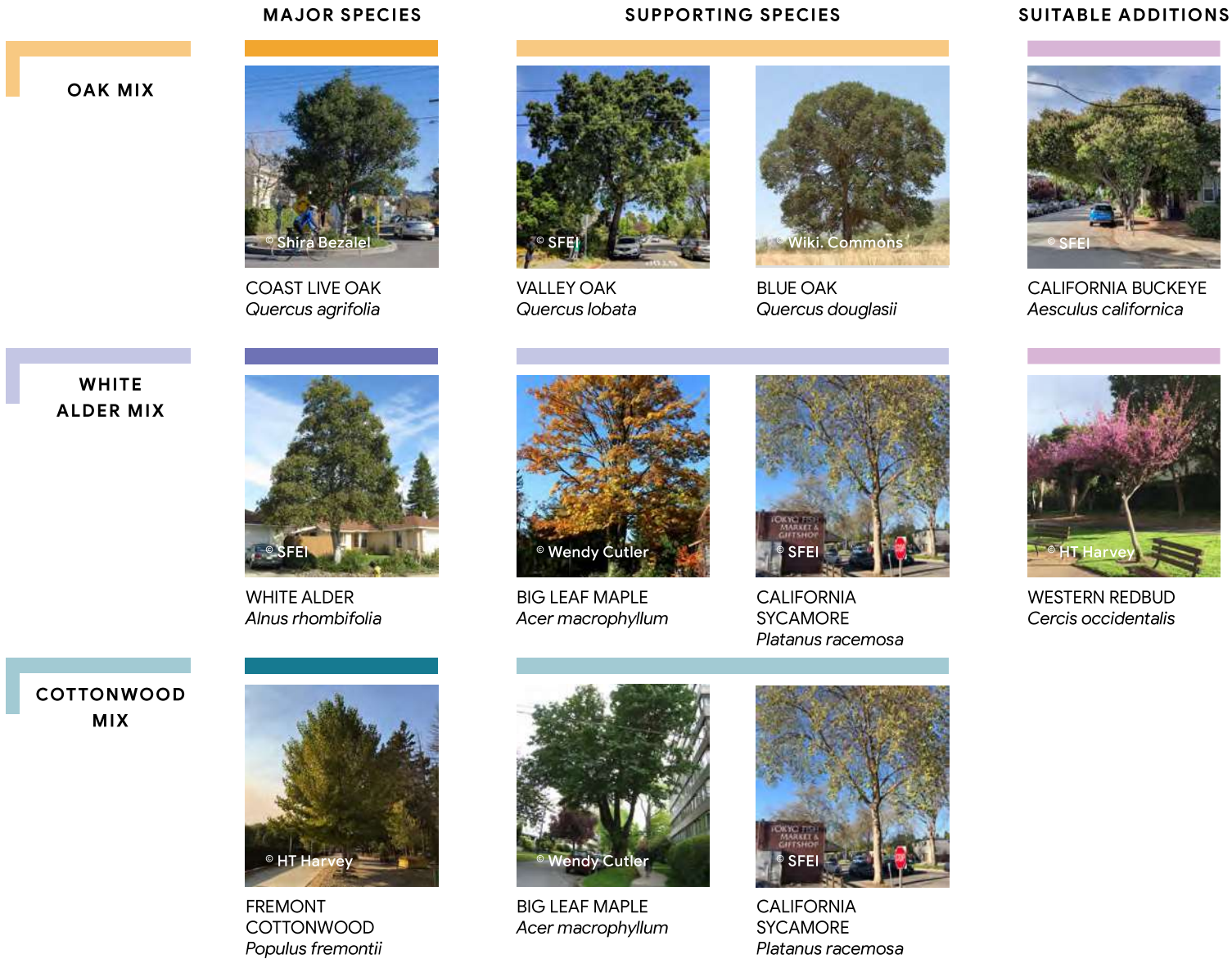


FIGURE 6.45: Representative images of compatible street tree species