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Arborist letter regarding Oak tree
removals and mitigation

Silverado Resort & Spa Project
Minor Modification to Non-Winery Use Permit
P24-00141-MM
Planning Commission Hearing – November 5, 2025

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October 23, 2025

Via E-mail only to: michael.parker@countyofnapa.org

Napa County Planning Commission
Attn: Michael Parker
Planning Manager
Napa County Planning Division
1195 Third Street, Suite 210
Napa, CA 94559

Re: P24-00141 – Silverado Resort & Spa Project - Use Permit Minor Modification
1600 Atlas Peak Road, Napa, 94558; APN 060-010-001

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We submit this letter on behalf of our client, Silverado Resort & Spa, in regards to its pending Use Permit Minor Modification (the Project). As you know, at the October 15, 2025 Planning Commission hearing, there were discussions of possible retention of additional oak trees as part of the Project. Following the hearing, the Project team discussed the feasibility of retaining additional trees. After consulting with our architectural team and arborist, for the reasons articulated below, the removal of eight trees will result in (1) larger total canopy cover; and (2) overall greater long-term tree health. So, the proposed tree removal plan is advantageous and the Project will proceed with the tree removal plan as currently proposed.

The Project applicant has already agreed to reduce the total number of trees removed. The initial proposal was to remove ten trees and a replant ratio of 3:1. After discussions with the County, applicant updated the Project to remove only eight trees and replant at a 4:1 ratio (see Tree Replanting Exhibit dated August 27, 2025). So, the Project already goes beyond County mitigation requirements. And, with the replant of 32 healthy trees, the Project will, in turn, only enhance the long-term viability of oak trees on the property.

As you can see from the attached arborist report, the trees proposed for removal are not healthy to begin with. These eight trees are primarily “smaller to medium, suppressed valley oaks” which are “shaded by adjacent, larger, dominant trees.” These trees also exhibit limited lateral branching due to the shading from surrounding trees. The removal of these eight trees will therefore allow for improved access to light, soil moisture, and rooting space for surrounding trees. The tree removal as part of the Project will therefore increase the long term health and quality of the tree canopy in the Project area.

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In addition, due to the interconnected root systems, if the trees proposed to be removed were instead retained, the root systems would experience damage from construction. Such impacts would, in turn, eventually require removal of these same trees.

For these reasons, the removal of eight trees as proposed is beneficial and meets both the objectives of the Project and County requirements. The Project preserves oak trees to the greatest extent possible, while working to increase the overall health and population of oak trees at Silverado. Simply stated, the Project is a “win-win” for Valley oak trees.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Coblentz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" being more prominent than the last name "Coblentz".

SDG:emn

Cc: Trevor Hawkes, Supervising Planner

Attachment: Arborist Report from Signature Tree Solutions, October 22, 2025

Arborist Report

Subject: Rationale for Proposed Oak Removals and Mitigation

Silverado Resort
1600 Atlas Peak Rd
Napa, CA 94558

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Following a second site review of the trees shown for removal on the Habitat Map and the Site Improvement Plan for the Silverado Resort—The Grove project, here are my findings and recommendations.

Findings

- **Which trees are marked for removal:** Primarily **smaller to medium, suppressed valley oaks** (*Quercus lobata*) that occupy the lower **crown class** and are shaded by adjacent, larger, dominant trees.
- **Growth form:** These trees exhibit **vertical, “shade-grown” form** (limited lateral branching) because of **suppression** from surrounding canopies.
- **Feasibility during construction:** Given planned buildings and utilities, preserving these particular trees would require excessive disturbance to their **Critical Root Zone/Tree Protection Zone (CRZ/TPZ)** and significant **crown reduction**—impacts that are **not consistent with ANSI A300 and ISA BMPs** for long-term tree health.

Professional opinion

- Removing the **less dominant, suppressed individuals** will **release** the adjacent **mature, dominant valley oaks**, improving their access to light, soil moisture, and rooting space. This will **increase long-term stand vigor and canopy quality**.
- Retaining these smaller, suppressed trees in place would likely result in **ongoing decline or structural compromise** due to unavoidable **root severance** and **branch clearance** requirements during construction.

Mitigation and canopy outlook

- The proposed **4:1 replacement ratio** is **more than adequate** mitigation for the removals.
- If replacements are **properly sited and spaced** (allowing for the species’ mature **canopy spread of ~60–100 ft**), the project will achieve **greater total canopy cover over time** than if the suppressed trees were left in place.
- Replacement trees should be planted per **ISA/ANSI standards**, with irrigation establishment plans and **structural pruning** in years 2–5 to ensure strong form.



Arborist Report

Subject: Rationale for Proposed Oak Removals and Mitigation

Recommendations

1. **Proceed with removal** of the specified suppressed valley oaks as shown on current Habitat and Site Improvement plans.
2. **Implement strict TPZ fencing** before any grading per plan (minimum TPZ = 1.5 ft of radius per inch DBH, or more where feasible).
3. **On-site arborist monitoring** during trenching near retained trees; use **air-spade** exploration where conflicts are tight, and shift alignments if major roots (≥ 2 in.) are encountered.
4. **Replacement planting plan** to include:
 - Spacing that anticipates **60–100 ft mature spread** and avoids future conflicts with structures and utilities.
 - **Species selection** favoring valley oak and other site-appropriate natives.
 - **Mulch, no turf in TPZ**, and a 2–3 year **establishment watering** schedule.
5. **Post-construction assessment** at 12 and 24 months to verify tree health and canopy establishment, with corrective pruning as needed under **ANSI A300**.

Glossary

- **Suppressed:** A smaller tree shaded and outcompeted by larger neighbors.
- **Crown class:** A way to describe a tree's status in the canopy (dominant vs. suppressed).
- **TPZ/CRZ:** The protected root/soil area a tree needs to stay healthy during construction.
- **Release:** Improving conditions for better trees by removing weaker competitors.

Respectfully,



Curtis Fosnaugh CEO
ISA Certified Arborist WE-10218A
ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified
TCIA Certified Treecare Safety Professional # 02949

