

Thousand Oaks Park Tree Management Plan

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H. T. HARVEY & ASSOCIATES
Ecological Consultants

The Importance of Oaks

Historical Context

Inventory of Existing Conditions

Tree Management Plan

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Priorities for east side park
improvements with remaining
funding



A large, mature oak tree with a thick trunk and sprawling branches, standing in a grassy field with other trees in the background. The tree is the central focus, with its trunk showing deep furrows and its canopy spreading wide. The background features a line of smaller trees and a clear sky.

The Importance of Oaks

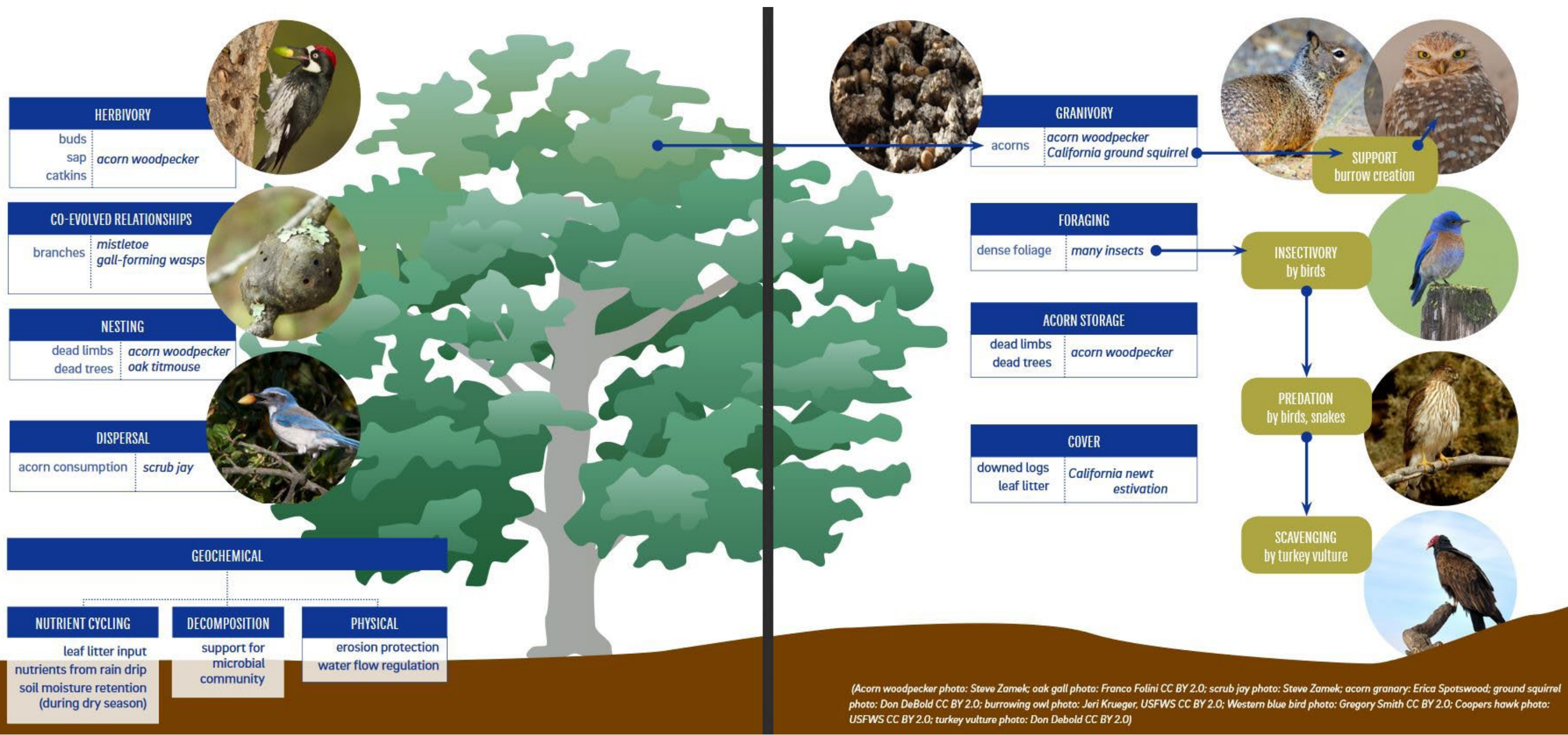


Oak Tree near San Jose,
San Jose, Calif.

“Although but slightly appreciated by Californians no other tree [than the valley oak] is so characteristic of the lower altitudes, none other speaks so much for the fertility of the soil, and none other approaches it in its unexampled park-like effect on the valley floors”

– Willis Jepson

The Ecological Importance of Oaks



“Researchers say there’s growing evidence that nature has a powerful effect on us, improving both our physical and psychological health.”

“Green spaces might deter and lower crime rates...”

“Growing evidence suggests an association between access to urban greenspace and mental health and wellbeing....

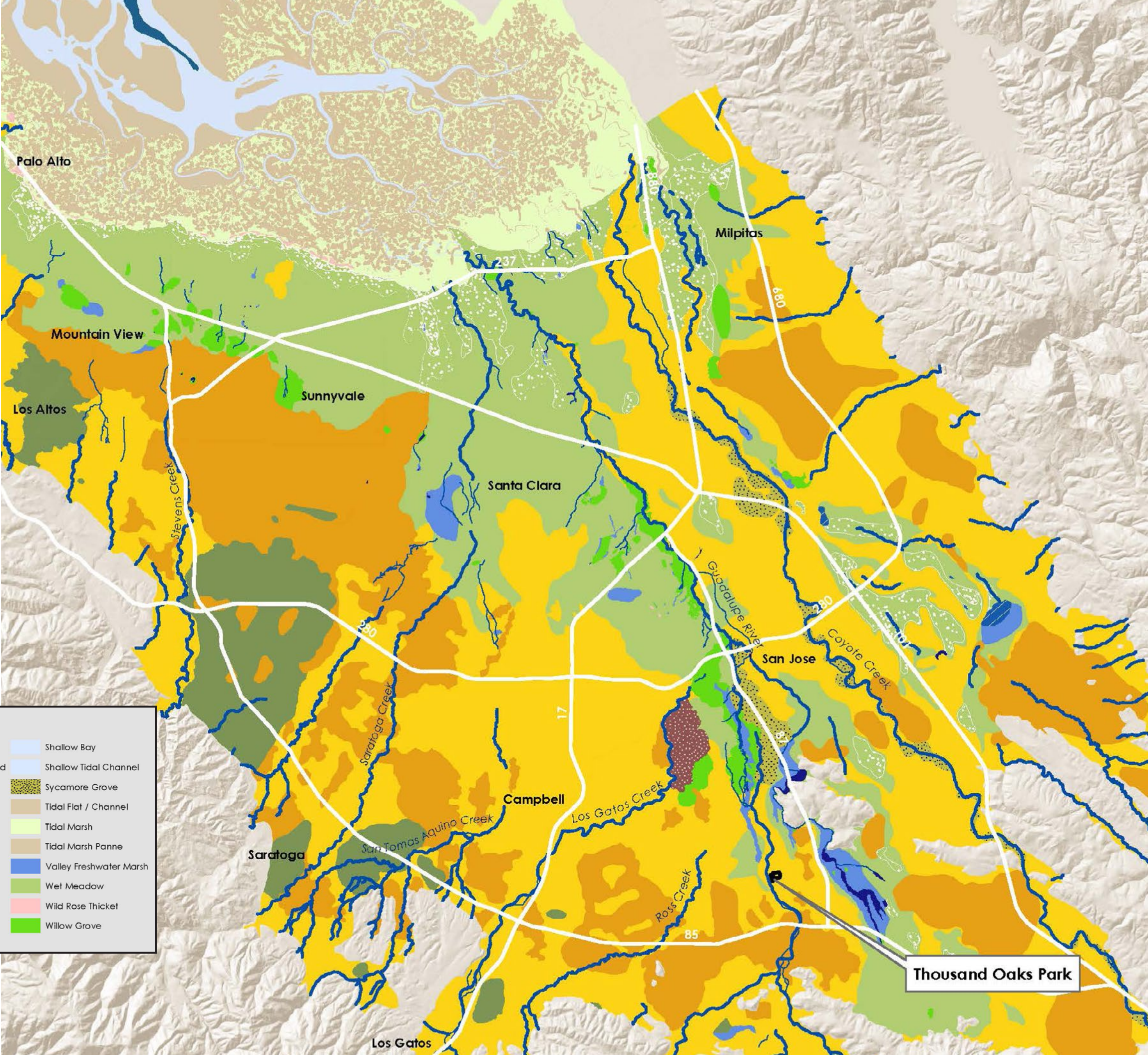


A large, ancient tree with a thick trunk and sprawling branches, set in a grassy field with other trees in the background. The tree is the central focus, with its trunk showing deep grooves and its branches reaching out in all directions. The foliage is dense and green. In the background, there are other trees and a grassy field, suggesting a park or a natural area. The overall tone is serene and majestic.

Historical Context

Historical Vegetation
and Drainage Patterns of
Western Santa Clara Valley.

San Francisco Estuary
Institute, 2010.

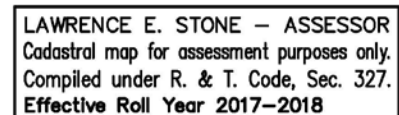


Legend

Thousand Oaks Park Boundary	Coyote Riparian: Bar with Riparian Woodland	Shallow Bay
Historical Channels*	Coyote Riparian: Island with Riparian Woodland	Shallow Tidal Channel
Minor Tidal Channel / Flat	Coyote Riparian: Low Flow Channel	Sycamore Grove
Creek	Deep Bay	Tidal Flat / Channel
Side Channel	Floodplain Slough	Tidal Marsh
Slough	Oak Savanna / Grassland	Tidal Marsh Panne
Historical Habitats*	Oak Woodland	Valley Freshwater Marsh
Alkali Meadow (high concentration)	Perennial Freshwater Pond	Wet Meadow
Alkali Meadow (low concentration)	Salt Flat / Salina	Wild Rose Thicket
Box Elder Grove	Seasonal Lake / Pond	Willow Grove
Chaparral		

*Data Source: San Francisco Estuary Institute 2015

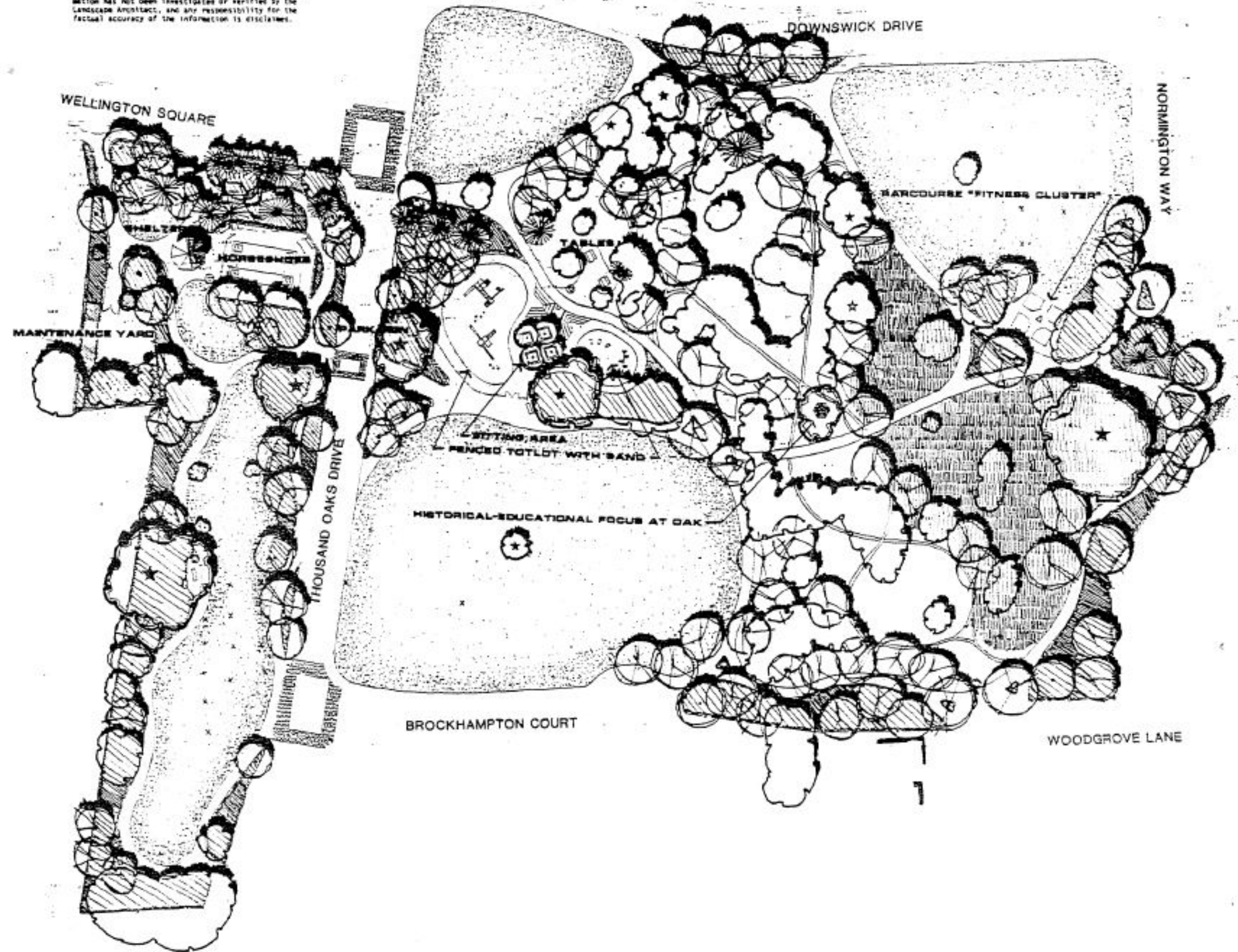






The **1985 Masterplan** identified existing oak woodland as the park's major feature and an invaluable resource. It documented **128 trees** of varying species.

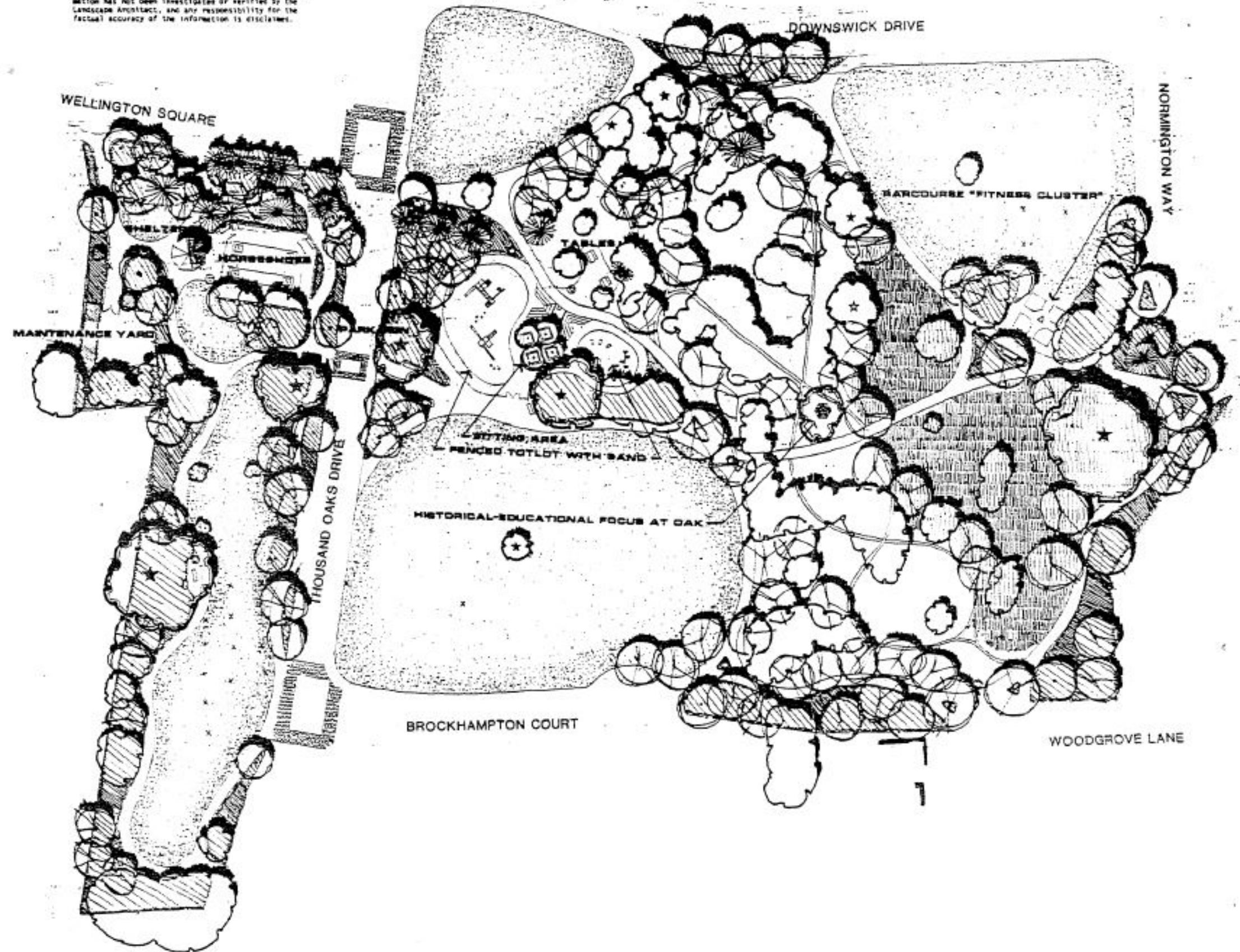
NOTES: 1) This is from a 1975 aerial survey by Aero-Geospatial Aerial Photography, formerly known as Santa Clara Aerial Surveys. All dimensions, scales, elevations, sizes, locations, site conditions, etc., of all natural and constructed objects, grades, improvements, trees, etc., which are shown on this drawing are estimates for illustrative purposes only, and are not to be used for construction purposes. The accuracy of this information has not been investigated or verified by the Landscape Architect, and any responsibility for the factual accuracy of the information is disclaimed.



The 1985 Masterplan also identified **community goals**:

- Preserve the natural character of the site.
- Protect existing trees, particularly the oaks.
- Orient the use of the park to neighborhood residents and pedestrian access, and discourage potential over-use by large groups and people and automobiles.
- Provide low-key and recreational uses.
- Involve the neighborhood in the management as well as use of the park.

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Recently, **the community came together** in support of Thousand Oaks Park, raising awareness and funding to make improvements, including:

- Installation of **trails, benches, and signage**
- Protection of naturally recruiting **oak seedlings**
- Installation of a **meadow area** with ornamental and native plants



A large, mature tree with a thick trunk and dense foliage, standing in a grassy field with other trees in the background. The tree is the central focus, with its branches spreading out in all directions. The background shows a line of trees and a clear sky.

Inventory of Existing Conditions

The City of San Jose hired H. T. Harvey & Associates to **inventory trees** at Thousand Oaks Park and to develop a **Tree Management Plan**.



Tree Inventory

230 trees were recorded in the park

- **Typical oak issues** were observed, including downed limbs, tussock moths, oak moths, and drippy nut disease
- **Natural recruitment** of native coast live oak and valley oak was observed, mostly in the woodland area
- **Non-native and invasive plants** were observed
- Generally, a majority of trees had good health and structure scores, **indicating a healthy woodland**



A large, mature tree with a thick trunk and dense foliage, standing in a grassy field with other trees in the background. The tree has a wide, spreading canopy and a prominent, textured trunk. The background shows a line of trees and a clear sky.

Tree Management Plan

The goal of the Tree Management Plan is to **present management opportunities to protect and enhance natural resources**, particularly the oaks, in the park and the adjacent neighborhood.



Ecological Enhancement Opportunities

Managing for Oak Woodland

Revegetation

Riparian Corridor Connectivity

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

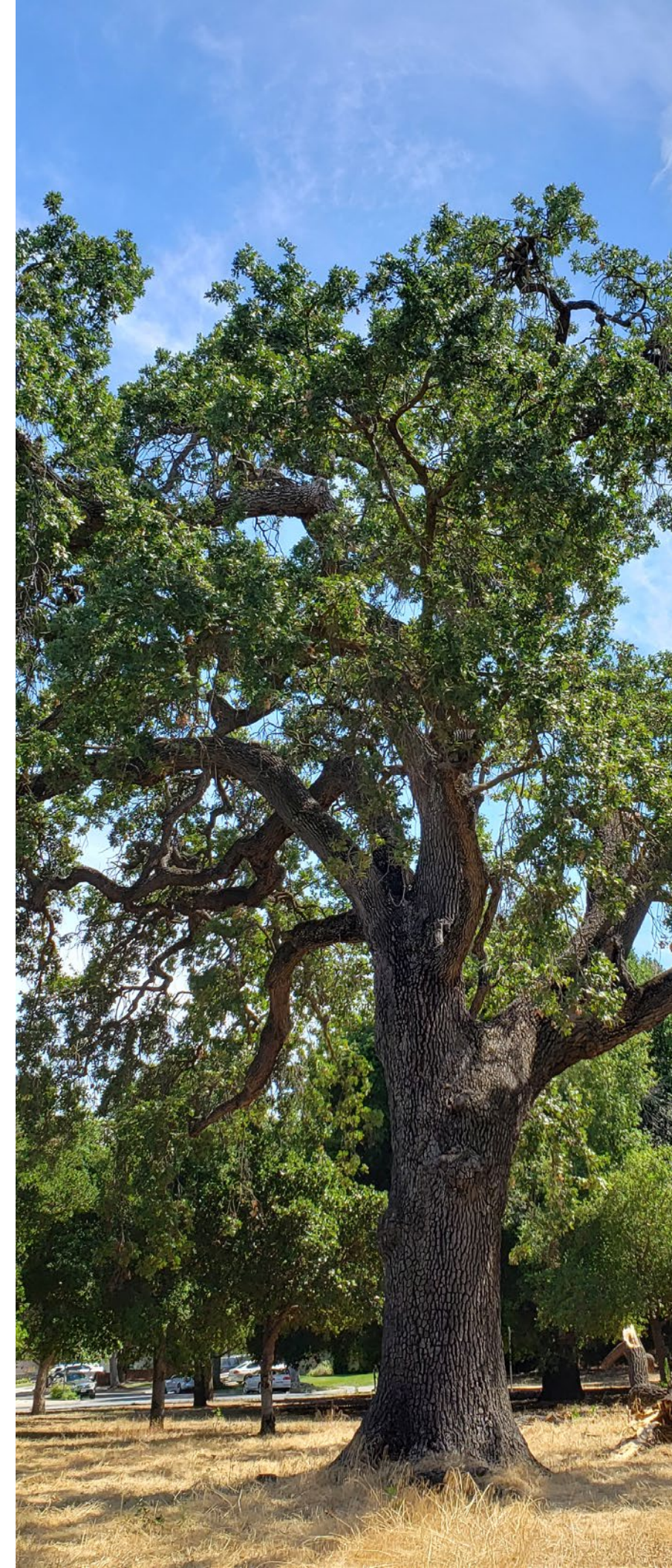
Neighborhood and Community

Educational Opportunities

Flow and Circulation

What You Can Do in Your Yard

Additional Funding Opportunities



Ecological Enhancement Opportunities: **Managing for Oak Woodland**

Limit summer irrigation to existing mature native oaks

Leave organic matter in place, including leaf litter and downed branches

Prune only for specific and clearly identified reasons, avoid routine pruning

Remove hardscape beneath existing trees

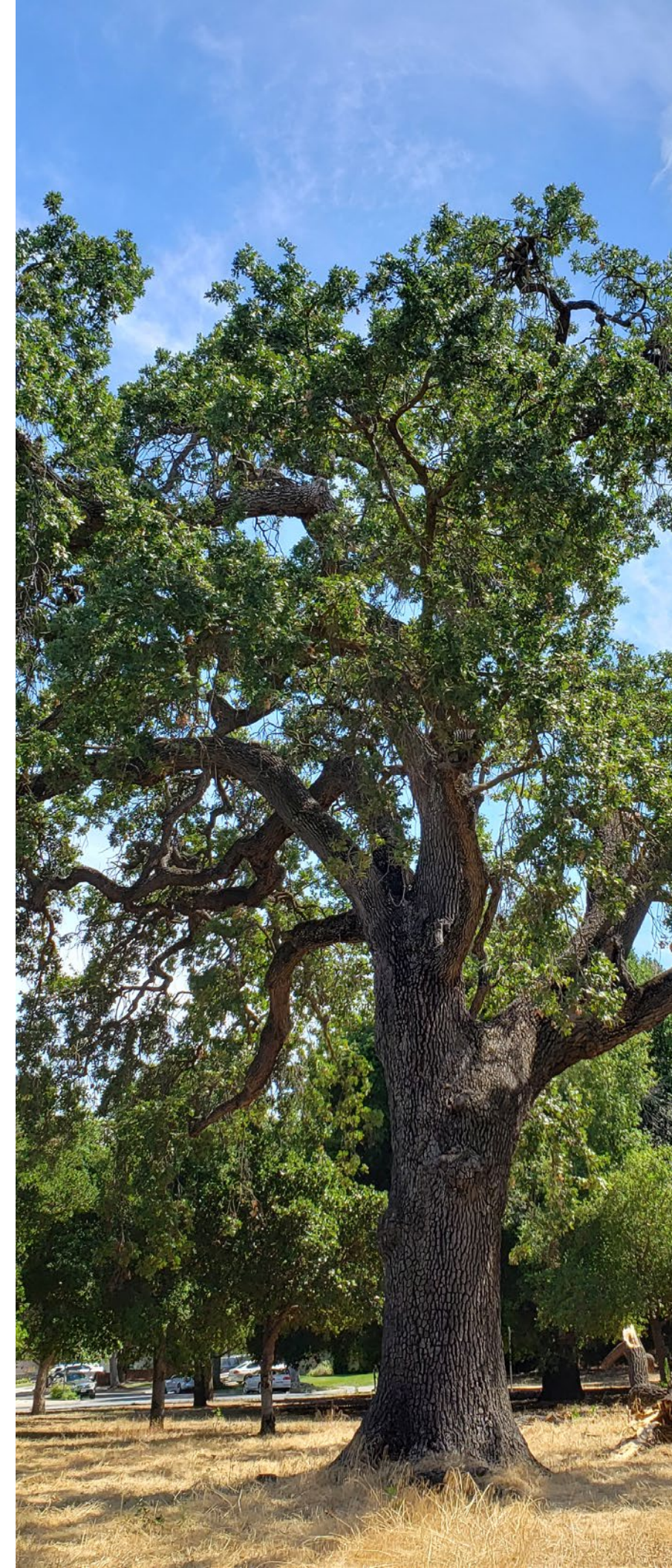
Remove turf beneath existing trees

Consider targeted removal of non-native and invasive plant species

Implement best management practices for pathogen prevention

- Carefully select nursery stock that is grown to minimize pathogens

Minimize the use of pesticides by utilizing integrated pest management



Ecological Enhancement Opportunities: **Revegetation**

Protect naturally recruiting seedlings

Selectively thin seedlings

Designate revegetation areas in which to:

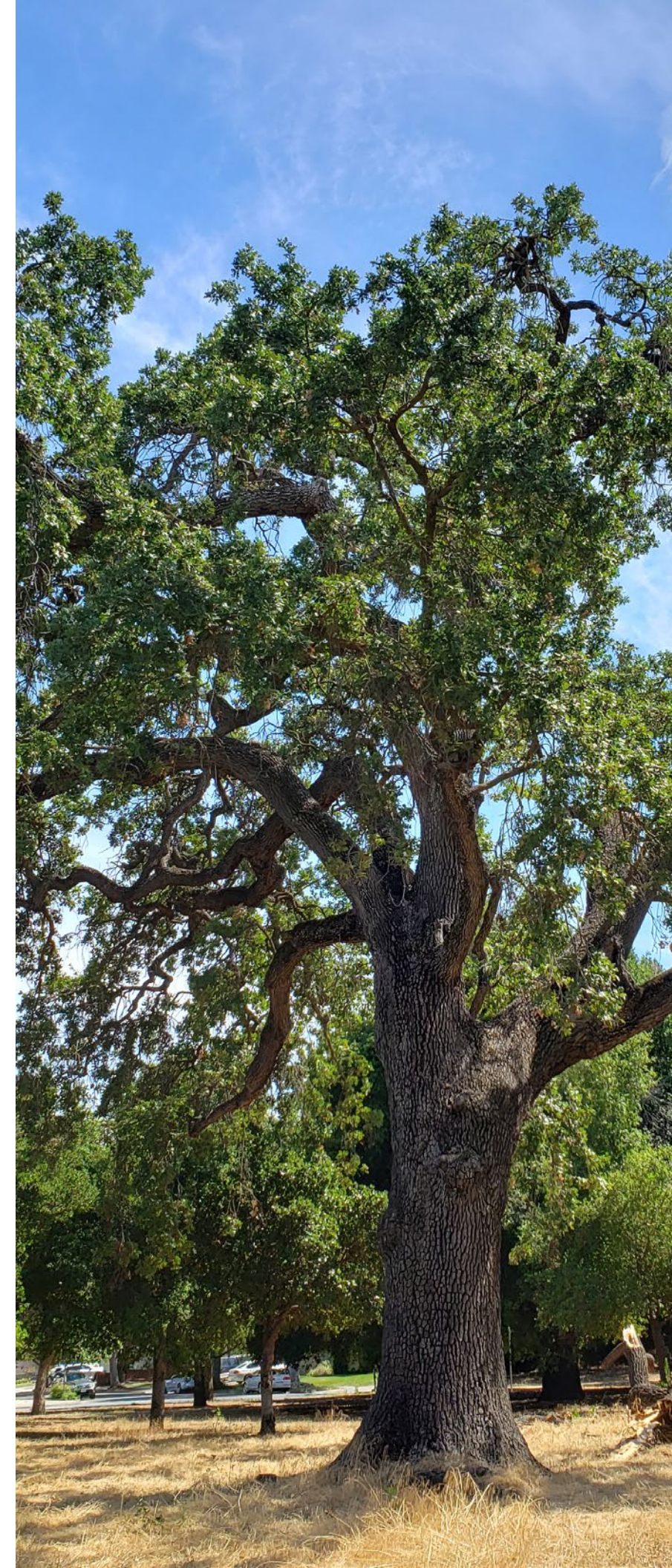
- Plant native acorns in targeted locations

- Plant native oak woodland understory species

- Plant native meadow species

- Plant milkweed for monarch butterflies

Maintain seedlings and new plantings during a plant establishment period



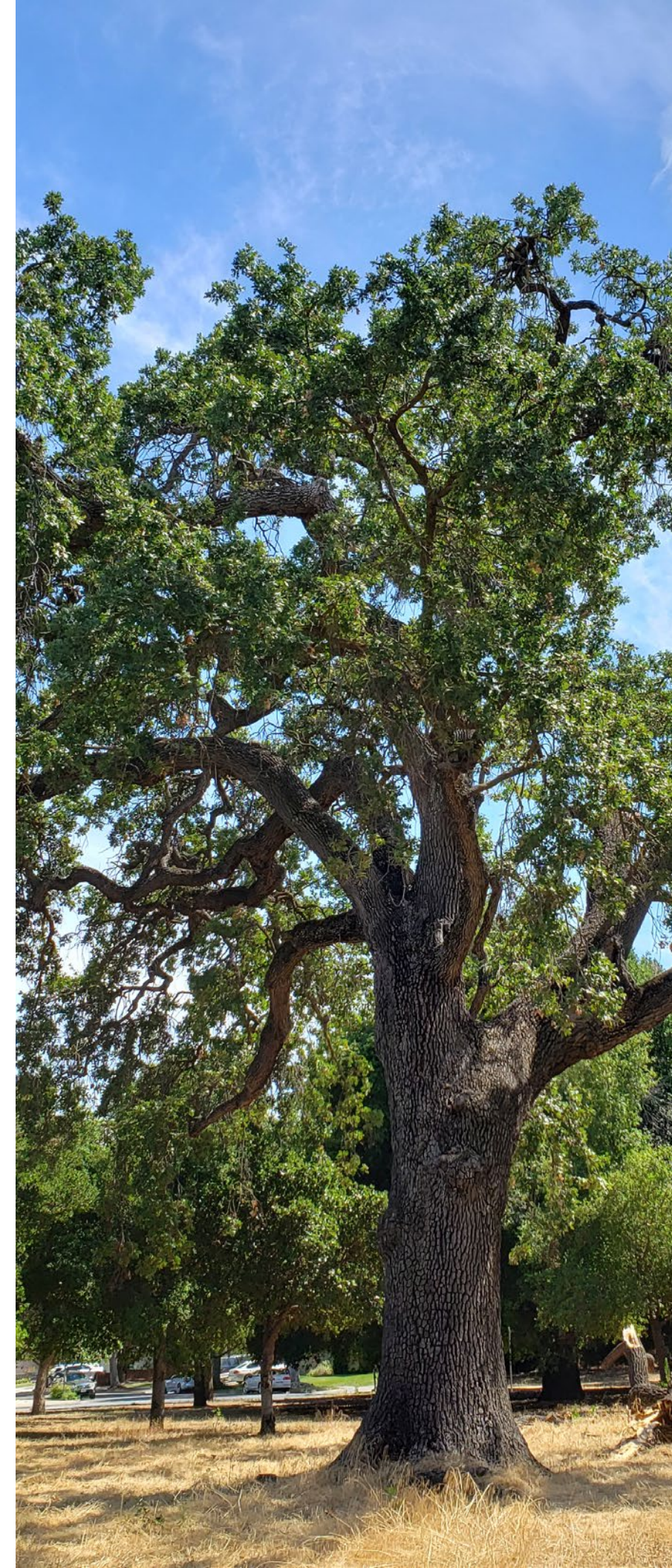
Ecological Enhancement Opportunities: **Riparian Corridor Connectivity**

Install interpretive signage highlighting interactions between riparian corridors and woodland habitats

Screen the chain link fence with native vegetation

Explore possible realignment of the chain link fence to allow for wildlife passage

Foster a dialogue with the owner of the parcel between the park and the Guadalupe River with the potential goal of acquiring the parcel to expand the park



Ecological Enhancement Opportunities: **Wildlife Habitat Enhancement**

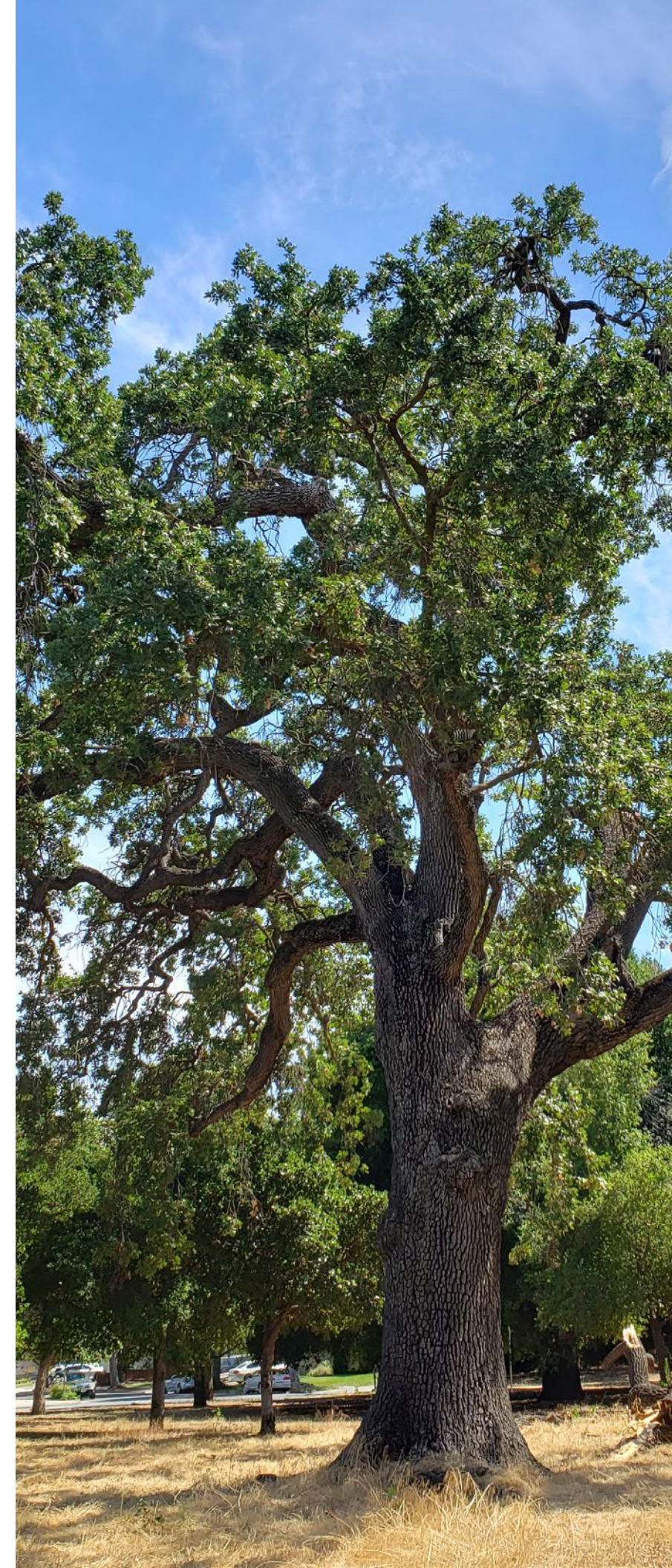
Promote vegetation that flowers in different seasons to maximize access to floral resources for pollinators

Limit maintenance activities that may disturb nesting birds during the nesting bird season

Install covers over trash and recycling receptacles to prevent wildlife from access food waste and garbage in the park

Consider maintaining mud puddles and other water sources for birds and butterflies, particularly during the dry season.

Encourage the use of nest boxes designed for specific bird species desired at the park.



“Our live oak trees are native groves. The conditions are in no essential particulars different from those of other groves elsewhere in the state, where old trees are always at some time dying and are being replaced by younger ones. There should be systematic planting of a few seedlings in order to ensure a perpetual stand. The live oaks are trees of slow growth but that is no valid objection to them; quite the contrary. We are planning not merely for today or tomorrow, but for the future.”

- Willis Jepson



Neighborhood and Community: **Educational Opportunities**

Develop a cohesive interpretive program with signage and interactive exhibits

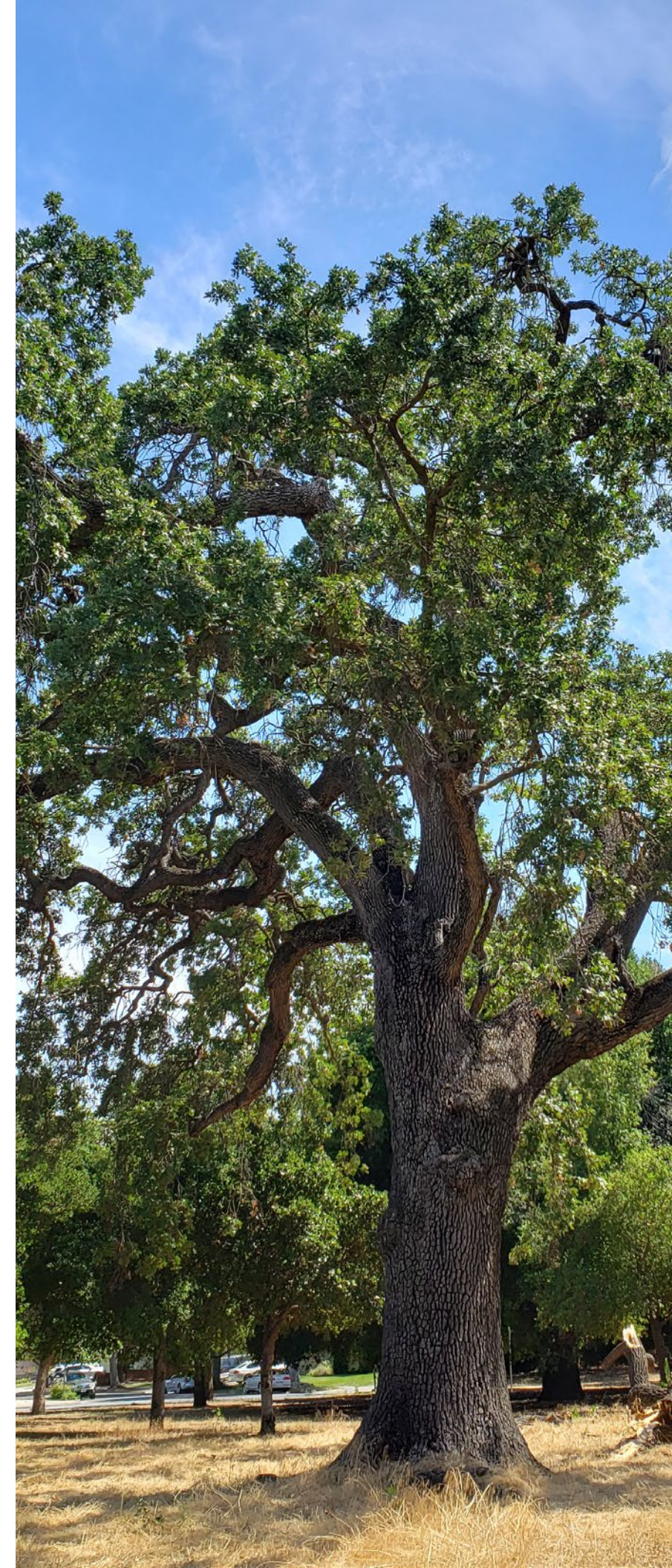
Host ranger-led walks and volunteer naturalist programs

Engage with volunteers to implement management activities

Use emerging citizen science resources like iNaturalist and eBird

- Host a BioBlitz event

- Create dedicated places inside the park to track observations of plants, wildlife, and fungi



Neighborhood and Community: **Flow and Circulation**

Improve circulation by installing an informal path to connect the southeast corner of the park to Woodgrove and Lynfield Lanes

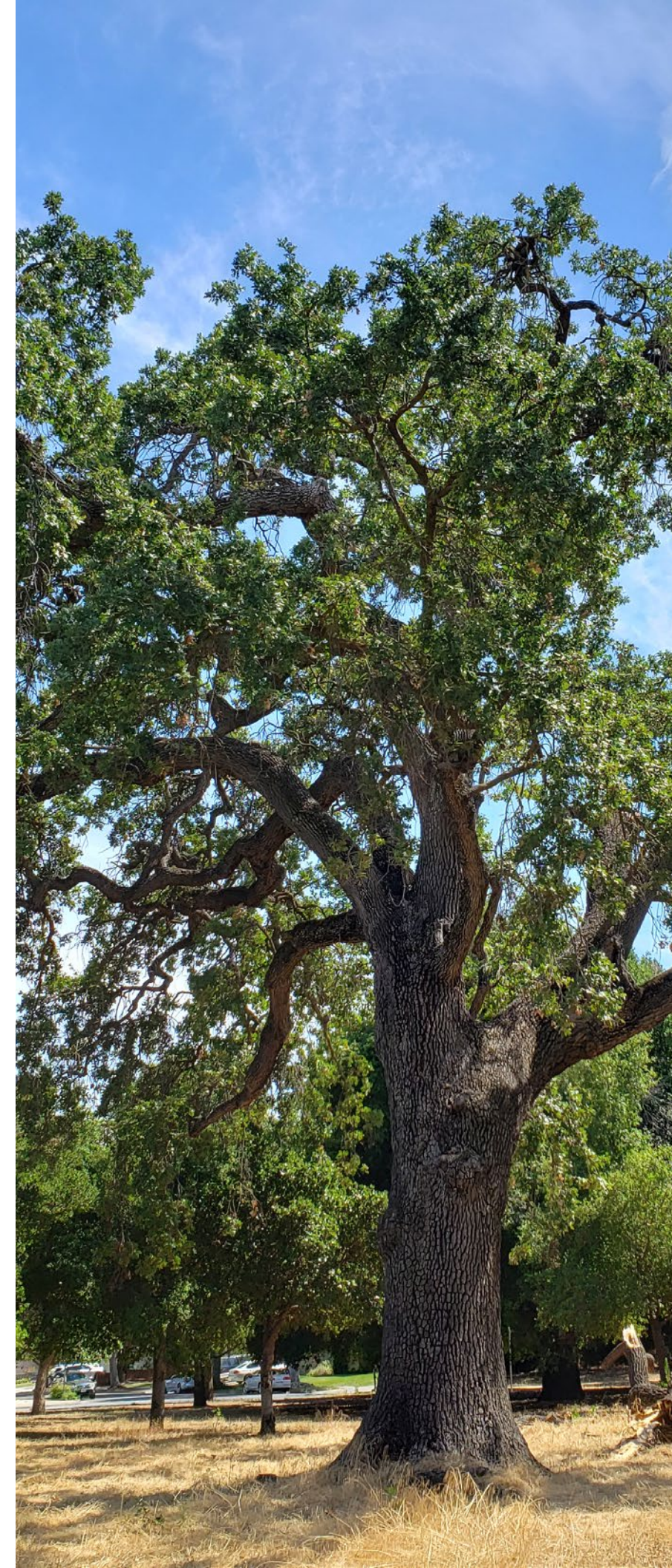
- Route paths and trails outside the dripline of mature trees

Explore traffic calming measures along Thousand Oaks Drive to facilitate connectivity between the park's two parcels

- Traffic signage

- Crosswalks

Consider signage and crosswalks at and across Downswick Drive and Normington Way



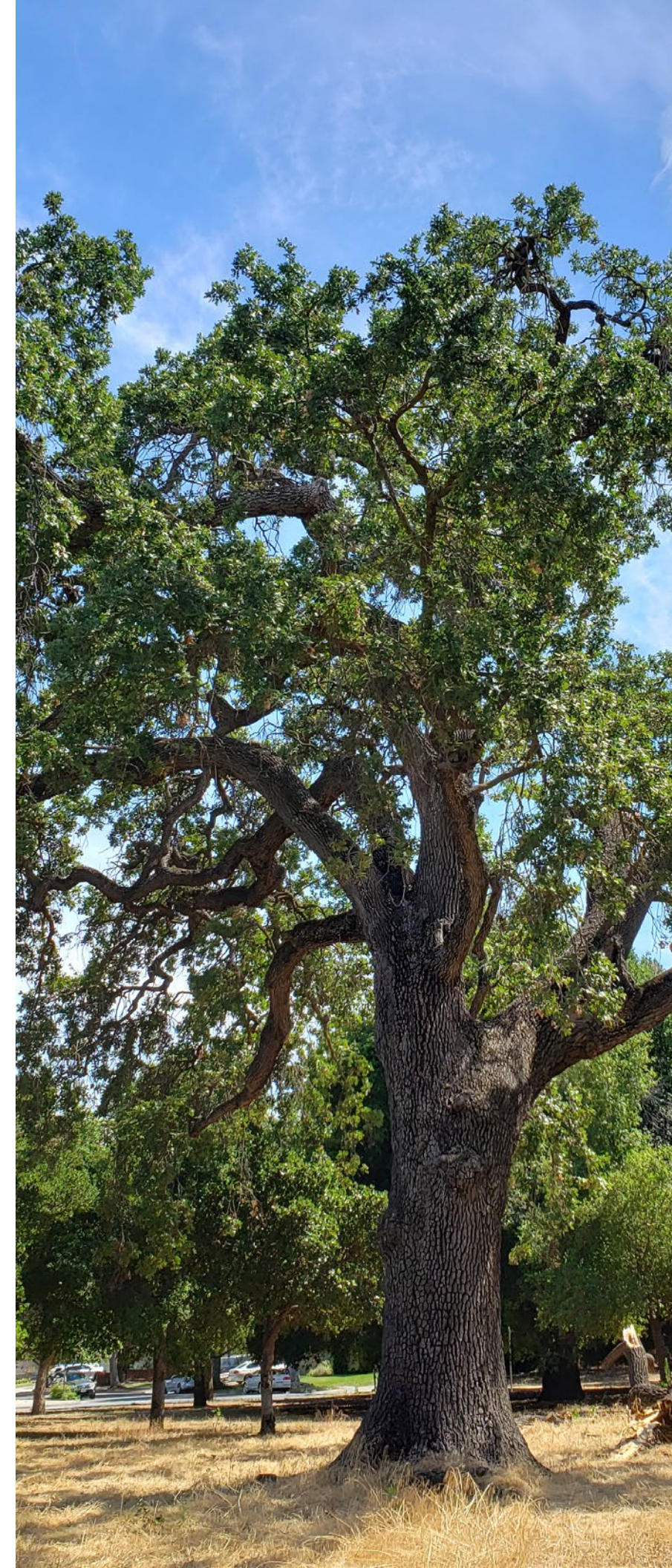
Neighborhood and Community: **What You Can Do in Your Yard**

Plant native oaks to create a network of trees that supports local biodiversity and native wildlife, including a suite of native oak-associate birds

Plant narrow leaf milkweed to support monarch butterflies that depend on this plant

Incorporate bird-friendly window designs to reduce bird collisions

Learn about how keeping domestic cats indoors can protect birds and other wildlife



Neighborhood and Community: **Additional Funding Opportunities**

Beautify SJ Grant

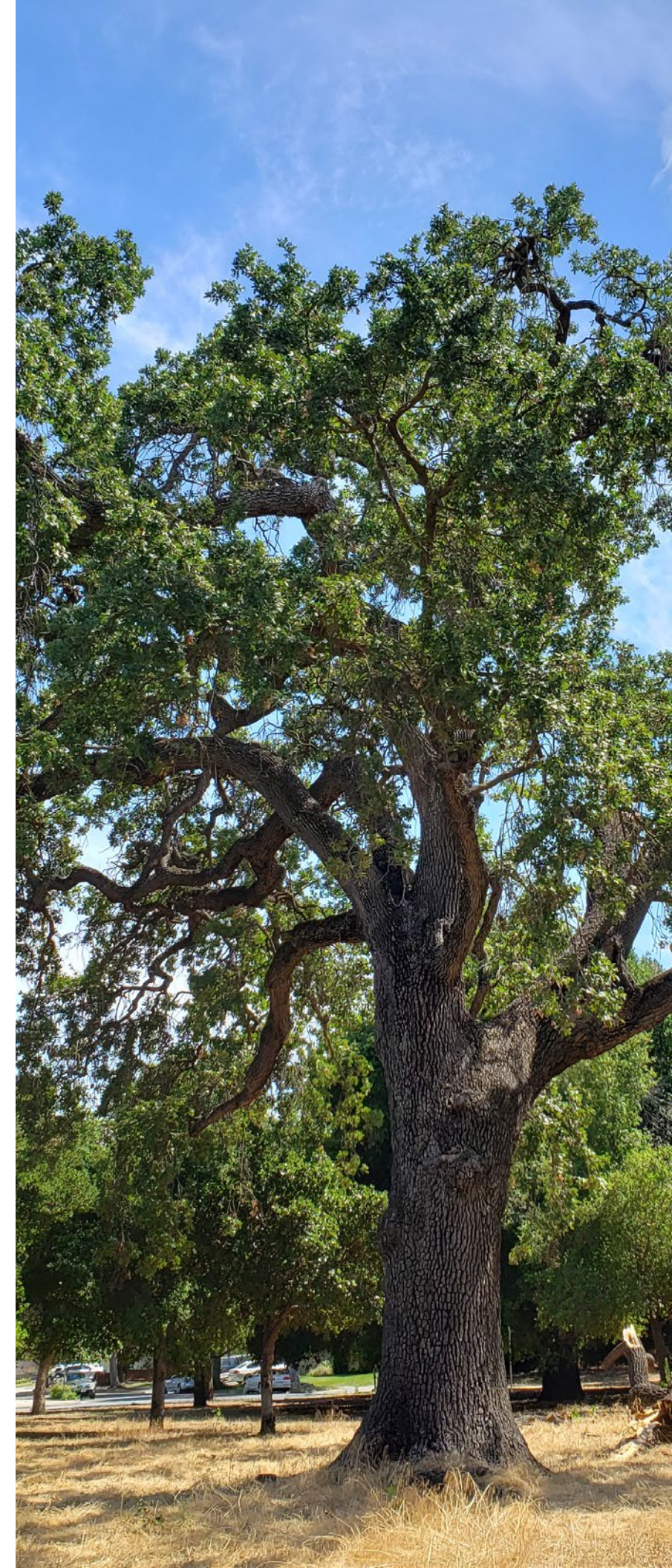
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

Measure Q Open Space Grant

Santa Clara Valley Water District:

D3 Grants and Partnerships to Restore Wildlife Habitat

D3 Grants and Partnerships to Access Trails and Open Space



A large, ancient tree with a thick trunk and sprawling branches, set in a grassy field with other trees in the background. The tree is the central focus, with its trunk extending from the bottom center towards the middle of the frame. Its branches spread out in all directions, some reaching towards the top of the frame. The leaves are dense and green. In the background, there are other trees and a grassy field. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Questions and Discussion