

DATE: March 17, 2026

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission and Urban Forestry Board

FROM: Naveen Govind, Senior Project Manager
David O. Printy, Principal Project Manager
Edward Arango, Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer

VIA: Jennifer Ng, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: Public Safety Building, Project 20-49

RECOMMENDATION

Review the proposed Heritage tree mitigation for Public Safety Building, Project 20-49, and forward a recommendation to the City Council to approve the mitigation of forty-two (42) Heritage trees at a 2:1 replacement ratio, with the planting of eighty-four (84) 24" box trees within the project site.

BACKGROUND

The existing Police and Fire Administration facility opened in 1980, and houses fixed Police Department operations, Emergency Dispatch, the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief, support staff, and the Emergency Operations Center. The building was designed prior to the Essential Service Seismic Safety Act of 1986 and does not meet current seismic standards for such structures.

The project would replace the existing facility with a completely new one on the same site. The proposed Public Safety Building Project would be located at 1000 Villa Street at the corner of Villa and Franklin Streets in the Public Facility zoning district (*see Figure 1*). The 4.3-acre site is occupied by the City's current 44,000-square-foot Police/Fire Administration Building and associated site improvements.

The neighboring sites' uses are two to four-story commercial and multifamily buildings along Franklin Street and one to two-story single-family residential structures along Villa and Oak Street. To the north, the project site adjoins West Evelyn Avenue and the Caltrain tracks, and the north-westerly quadrant of the site houses a municipal water pump station, adjoined by the elevated portion of Shoreline Boulevard.

On [December 5, 2023](#), the City Council reviewed an approximately 75,000 square feet Public Safety Building and a 3-story structured parking garage (with a 15-lane shooting range on top) and surface parking in the northwest portion of the site will provide parking for approximately 250 vehicles (see Figure 2). The City Council also reviewed two distinct approaches and styles to the architecture of the building and selected the “Civic – Americana” style for the project.

The City Council approved the project scope and directed staff to proceed to design for the Public Safety Building and return to Council to review and approve the Parking Structure’s conceptual design.

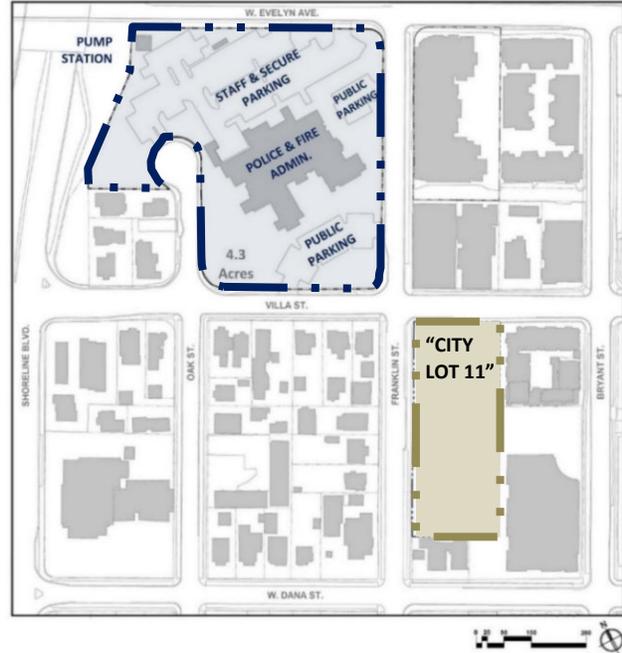


Figure 1: Location Map

On [December 17, 2024](#), the City Council, to address cost concerns, reviewed and approved the current project scope, which reduced the size of the parking garage and shooting range and incorporated a phased approach for the shooting range, including staff conducting value engineering for staging and/or construction logistics for potential additional project cost savings. The Council approved a reduction in the Public Art Budget from \$1 million to \$400,000 and directed staff to return with a funding plan for the project.

On [November 4, 2025](#), the City Council adopted a resolution certifying the Environmental Impact Report for the Public Safety Building and adopted findings related to Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Alternatives, and adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

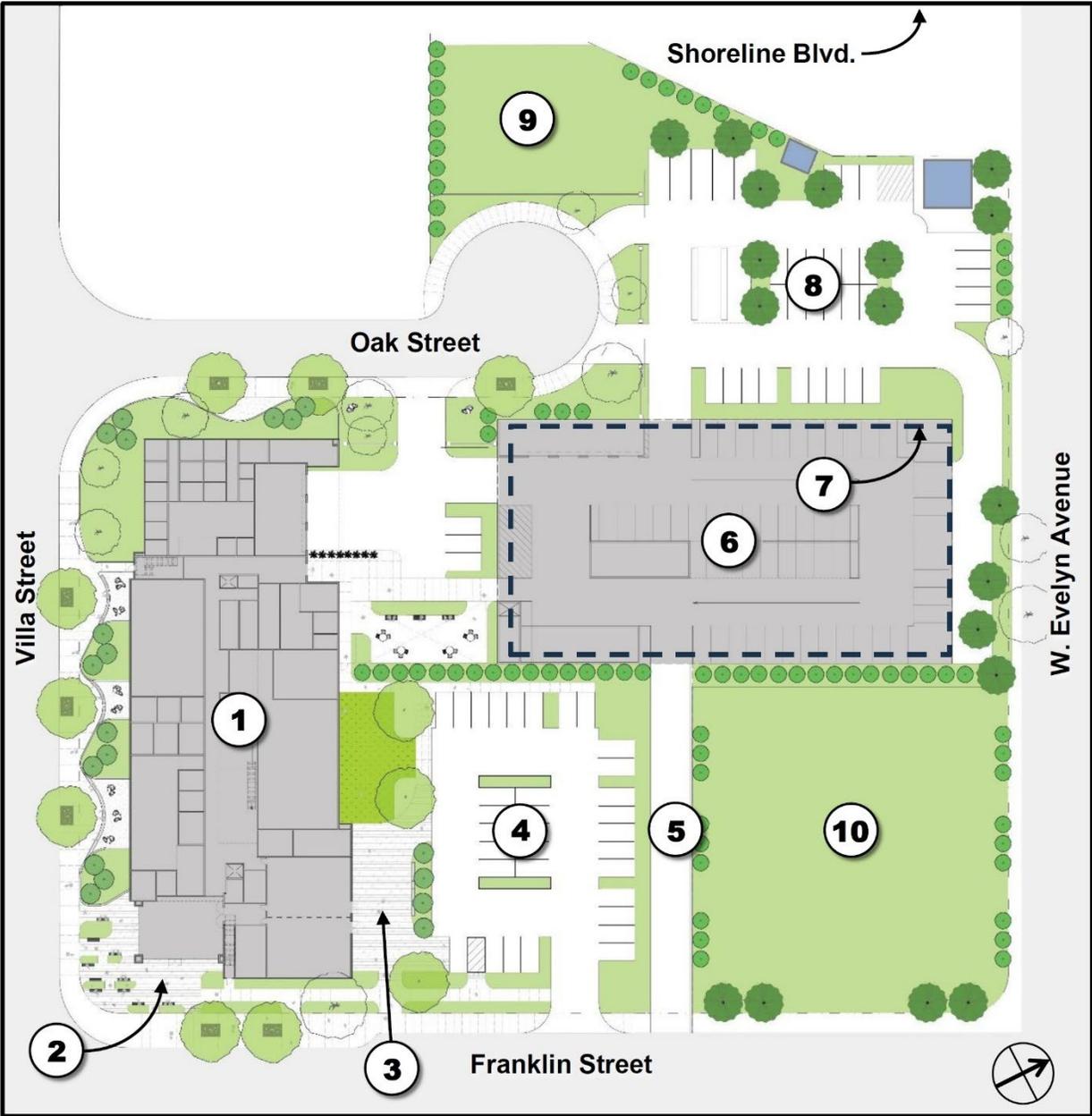


Figure 2: Site Layout

- 1. 75,000 square foot building
- 2. Corner public entry plaza
- 3. Public event plaza
- 4. Public parking
- 5. Second public safety vehicle access
- 6. Secure staff parking structure
- 7. 15-lane shooting range (top level)
- 8. Secure staff surface parking
- 9. K9 Training Area
- 10. Future City use (0.6 acre)

Project Phasing

Due to the significant complexity of the project, the project will be conducted in three phases:

Phase 1 - Selective demolition, site preparation, and utility coordination:

The new building will be constructed along the site's Villa Avenue frontage. This requires the selective demolition of a portion of the front of the existing facility. The remainder of the existing facility will maintain full operations during construction. This phase is expected to begin in fall 2026 and be completed in spring 2027.

Phase 2 - Public Safety Building and Site Work:

The main building that will house police and administrative fire personnel will be constructed. The existing facility will maintain full operations during construction, and once the new building is completed, operations will move to the new building. This phase is expected to begin in summer 2027 and be completed in summer 2029.

With the existing building fully vacated, the existing building and secure parking areas will be demolished, and construction of the new public parking area and site improvements within the existing secured parking area will be implemented. This phase is expected to begin in summer 2029 and be completed in fall 2030.

Phase 3 - Parking Garage Construction: (pending funding determination)

While the new site work is being constructed, a separate contract will be awarded for the new structured parking garage and cold-shell of the future firing range on the upper level. Portions of this work involves off-site pre-cast and structural system fabrication, followed by on-site installation and construction once the site is cleared and ready. This phase is expected to begin in spring 2029 and be completed in summer 2031.

Tree Removal

As part of the project, existing trees are required to be removed to accommodate the new Public Safety Building project. Staff requests that the Urban Forestry Board (UFB) provide a recommendation to the City Council for the number, size, and location of replacement trees, which is the focus of the UFB's purview, as defined in the following Municipal Code Section 32.33, City Capital Improvement Projects:

"City capital improvement projects which propose the removal of any heritage tree shall be submitted by the city project staff to the city's arborist for review and recommendation of appropriate mitigation measures. The arborist's recommendations shall be forwarded by city project staff to the urban forestry board for their recommendation on the number, size and location of replacement trees. The recommendation of the urban forestry board shall

be forwarded by city project staff to the city council for their consideration with the approval of the project.”

ANALYSIS

The City engaged a professional arborist, Woodreeve Consulting, to assess the existing trees on-site. A total of 105 trees, representing 17 species, were evaluated. The existing tree locations are shown in Attachment 1.

The Public Safety Building project will require the removal of forty-two (42) Heritage trees and thirty-four (34) non-Heritage trees within the project site. At least twenty (20) Heritage trees and ten (10) non-Heritage trees will be retained and preserved within and immediately adjacent to the project boundaries. Table 1 in Attachment 2 lists the trees on site, their species, size, Heritage tree status, and recommendations for removal. The site plan in Attachment 3 illustrates the locations of the Heritage and non-Heritage trees planned for removal. The majority of the trees to be removed are in direct conflict with planned facilities, and a few trees require removal to facilitate construction activities.

The arborist also evaluated the trees to be removed for potential transplant. Factors considered for transplant included the following:

- Species Suitability: Some trees are intolerant of root loss;
- Size and Health: Smaller and healthier trees transplant more successfully;
- Site Conditions: Site conditions may limit the ability to capture adequate root balls; and
- Characteristics of New Site: Transplant location must be conducive to the tree’s needs.

The City’s Urban Forest Supervisor reviewed the findings and conducted a follow-up site visit. No trees within the project area were found to be optimal candidates for transplanting. Staff recommends replacement over transplant for all trees for the following reasons:

- There are several existing trees in which the general structure of the trees (the way the tree grows over time) is not conducive to transplant;
- Root systems of the trees close in proximity to each other may make it difficult to separate root systems; and
- There is a lower survivability rate for transplanted trees versus new trees.

Because of these reasons, planting new trees as a mitigation measure is recommended over transplanting trees.

As mitigation for the removal of up to forty-two (42) Heritage trees, staff recommends replacement at a 2:1 ratio with 24" box trees and replacing the 34 non-Heritage trees at a 1:1 ratio with 24" box trees. This results in 118 new trees, as shown in Attachment 4, and the plant schedule in Table 2.

In coordination with the City's arborist, this project incorporates a selection of semi-native tree species in lieu of strictly native varieties. Semi-native trees are species that are not originally from our specific local area, but originate from a nearby region or a similar climate zone. This approach supports the desired aesthetic and low-water-use goals, while also addressing long-term considerations commonly associated with native species, such as mature height, root system impacts, and potential pest issues. Of the 118 mitigation trees, nine are California native tree species, and 109 are semi-native tree species.

Tree plantings and new irrigation lines will be included as part of construction.

Table 2: Tree Planting Schedule

SYM.	BOTONICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE	COUNT	WATER USE	NATIVE/ SEMI NATIVE
	Acer X Freemanii	Freeman Maple	24" box	4	Moderate	Semi Native
	Arbutus 'Marina'	Marina Arbutus	24" box	5	Low	Semi Native
	Cercis Occidentalis	Western Redbud	24" box	9	Low	Native
	Laurus Nobilis	Sweet Bay	24" box	17	Low	Semi Native
	Laurus 'Saratoga'	Saratoga Laurel	24" box	15	Low	Semi Native
	Prunus Caroliniana 'Compacta'	Carolina Laurel Cherry	24" box	38	Moderate	Semi Native
	Quercus X Regal Prince	Regal Prince Oak	24" box	30	Low	Semi Native

To provide opportunities for other uses of the trees that will be removed, the project will salvage select redwood trees and repurpose the reclaimed wood for constructing new benches in the public plaza and along Villa Street, and potentially for use in select interior and exterior furnishings on this project.

FISCAL IMPACT

Public Safety Building. Project 20-49 is funded with \$2 million from the Construction Tax Fund, and \$7.5 million from the Public Safety Building Reserve, and \$6.8 million from the General Fund Contingency Reserve, for a total allocation of \$16.3 million.

Currently, the project is not fully funded for construction; however, with the passage of Measure G and the City's intention to issue debt to fund a majority of the project, a comprehensive funding plan is being developed and will be brought to Council for consideration in spring 2026. Once funded, the mitigation for the on-site trees will be funded from the project budget.

CONCLUSION

The project team has made every effort to preserve existing Heritage trees where feasible. However, due to the constraints of constructing a new Public Safety Building on the same site as the existing facility, while maintaining ongoing operations, the design balances tree preservation with essential site and building requirements. Design flexibility was further limited by the need to accommodate construction phasing, contractor access, elevation and grading changes, and the City's utility easement along the Evelyn Drive frontage, which restricts the planting of new trees. The Urban Forestry Board's recommendation for tree mitigation will be forwarded to the City Council in spring 2026, along with the approval of the project plans, specifications, and estimates for the first phase of construction of this project.

The project is estimated to begin the public bid process for the first phase of construction in the summer of 2026, following authorization by Council. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2026, and the last phase is anticipated to be completed in 2031.

PUBLIC NOTICING

In addition to the standard agenda posting, staff posted notices on the trees identifying them for removal provided information for attending this Urban Forestry Board meeting. Notices were mailed to occupants and property owners within 1,000 feet of the project site.

Attachments: 1. Existing Conditions
 2. Tree Assessment List

3. Tree Removal Plan

4. Tree Planting Plan

cc: PWD, APWD—Arango, PPM—Printy, SPM—Govind, F/c (20-49)