

# University South

“The wonder is that we can see these trees and not wonder more.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson  
American poet

## 14. Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)

~ *Heritage Park, in the children's play area*

This mature oak tree was moved to its current location from the 800 block of Ramona Street on August 28, 2003. At the time of the move, the tree was over 35' high and weighed nearly 35 tons, including soil.

## 15a. Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*)

~ *300 Homer Avenue, the Roth Building (circa 1932), in the front courtyard*

The Roth Building architect, Birge Clark, designed this building around the valley oak. Despite the construction near its roots and the location of a sprinkler head near its base, this oak is healthy, balanced and shows no serious signs of decay. Today, protecting roots during construction and locating sprinklers outside the drip-line of the tree are strongly recommended for native oaks.

## 15b. Jacaranda (*Jacaranda mimosifolia*)

~ *300 Homer Avenue, in the Roth Building courtyard behind the Valley Oak and against the left wall*

Jacaranda is a Brazilian tree that is showy when in bloom, even by tropical standards. Its ferny leaves are deciduous and drop in March and April. Lavender blue 2" tubular blooms from June to September are followed by flat roundish seed pods. This tree is exceptionally large for a jacaranda, a species often damaged by frost. While at the back of the courtyard, take a look at the lovely murals around the entrance to this former medical building.

## 16. Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*)

~ *260 Homer Avenue, street trees between Bryant Street and Ramona Streets*

A species of elms resistant to Dutch Elm disease, some varieties of Chinese elm do not lose their leaves in our mild winter. They have a graceful weeping form and bark that sheds pieces, leaving the trunk looking like a jigsaw puzzle missing pieces. Three newly planted Chinese elms near Ramona Street are the cultivar 'Allée', which will be taller and narrower than the older trees on the street and more resistant to the damaging fungus anthracnose.

## 17. Rustyleaf Fig (*Ficus rubiginosa*)

~ *819 Ramona Street, to the right of the historic University AME Zion Church*

Native to Australia and unusual in northern California, this rustyleaf fig has a massively buttressed trunk and surface roots. This is a thirsty tree that is showing signs of stress; it would benefit from deep-watering.

## 18. Holly Oak (*Quercus ilex*)

~ *744 Ramona Street, 2 street trees*

The holly oak is an evergreen oak native to southern Europe and often found in English hedgerows. Its dark green leaves are smooth above and furry below. Ironically, the leaves of the coast live oak look more like holly than the leaves of holly oak. Black spots on the leaves are due to a relatively harmless fungus called sooty mold.

## 19. Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)

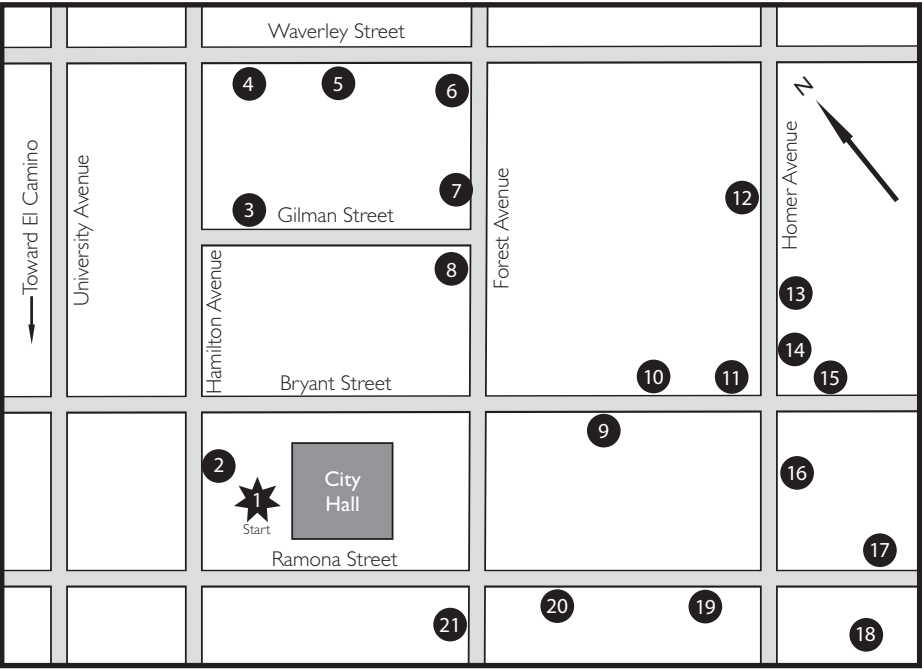
~ *704-726 Ramona Street, 6 street trees*

A very attractive tree with showy flowers throughout summer. The thin bark peels annually, exposing a beautiful, touch-worthy sheen on a graceful trunk and limbs. Notice that one tree has reddish bark rather than gray. It is a different hybrid from the others.

## 20. California Box Elder (*Acer negundo* var. *californicum*)

~ *688 Ramona Street, street tree on Forest Avenue*

Native to stream banks in central and northern California mountains, California box elder is drought-tolerant once established. Here, it sits on the side of another building designed by early Palo Alto architect Birge Clark, the Pacific Art League. The California version of the box elder has fuzzy leaves rather than the shiny leaves of the box elder native to much of the rest of the United States and Canada.



*The University South Tree Walk begins at the Palo Alto Civic Center Plaza, 250 Hamilton Avenue.*

**1. Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*)** ☹ ☹  
~ *Double rows flanking the entrance to the Civic Center*

Located atop one of Palo Alto’s underground parking structures, the rooting area for these trees is approximately 3’ deep. The soil volume, at 800 cubic feet per tree, has become the Palo Alto standard for such sites. These evergreen trees produce showy white flowers in summer and fall. Several of the trees are a cultivar called ‘Samuel Sommer’, which has exceptionally large flowers.

**2. Aristocrat Pear (*Pyrus calleryana* ‘Aristocrat’)**  
~ *Civic Center Plaza along Hamilton Avenue*  
These Aristocrat pears are beautiful in spring when covered with white blossoms. It is a flowering pear whose branching structure is better than that of other cultivars like the ‘Bradford.’ Correct pruning when young greatly reduces potential for limb dropping and benefits this tree’s overall health. Like the magnolias, these trees have only 3’ of soil, which has caused crowded roots to appear above ground.

**3. Liquidambar (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)** ☹ ☹  
~ *A Civic Center Plaza along Bryant Street*  
Repeated cutting to maintain the sidewalk has caused these roots to adapt by growing above ground in this pattern. These trees are common in Palo Alto, but are seldom planted now. Their round seedpods create messy tripping hazards, they grow large surface roots, and they frequently drop limbs.

**4. Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* ‘Atropunicea’)** ☹  
~ *Downtown Post Office, 380 Hamilton Avenue, mid-building on the Gilman Street side*  
This large handsome tree is often planted in parks in the United States. It is native to Europe, where it is used for lumber. Each leaf has little hairs around the edge and a silky underside. Beeches require lots of water and don’t do well in clay soils.

**5. Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)**  
~ *Downtown Post Office, 380 Hamilton Avenue, mid-building on the Waverley Street side*  
A deciduous redwood, this species was thought to have been extinct for 20 million years. A forestry expedition traveling through China’s Sichuan province in 1941 discovered living examples. Seeds brought out of China in 1944 were cultivated and the

trees planted worldwide. This tree was planted March 7, 1949.

**6. Autumn Gold Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba* ‘Autumn Gold’)**  
~ *628-650 Waverley Street, 4 street trees*  
This cultivar was developed by the Saratoga Horticultural Foundation. To guarantee that all trees are male (no malodorous, messy fruit), all trees are grafted rather than grown from seed (see the grafting at the base of the tree). They have a symmetrical shape, rather than the asymmetric, highly variable shape of the species, and vibrant yellow fall color.

**7. Cockspur Coral (*Erythrina crista-galli*)**  
~ *690 Waverley Street, corner of Forest Avenue*  
Also known as lipstick tree, this tree is known for its brilliant red and coral flowers. Flower buds look like coral lipstick in red tubes and are most spectacular in June. Originally from Brazil, it suffers below 30 degrees. Although severely damaged, this tree was able to survive the 1990 freeze, with lows of 19 degrees.

**8. Raywood Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia oxycarpa* ‘Raywood’)** ☹ ☹  
~ *375 Forest Avenue, 2 street trees*  
A medium-sized, fast-growing tree with purple-red fall color. Commonly planted as a street tree in much of California, it is no longer recommended for planting because it is highly susceptible to disease and to limb die-back.

**9. Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*)** ☑  
~ *345 Forest Avenue, 2 trees in front of The Laning Chateau*  
These two magnificent specimens have flourished for more than three-quarters of a century. They were planted by designer William Staller in 1927. The limbs of these trees do not taper; proper pruning is required to reduce the weight at their end to prevent limbs from breaking off.

**10. Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)** ⚔ ☹  
~ *724 and 730 Bryant Street, street tree between the houses*  
The base of this giant has grown to destroy the sidewalk and pavement that surrounds it, and it continues to grow on top of the pavement. This tree is at least 100 years old – perhaps it was planted by the first owners of the historic 1902 home at 730 Bryant Street.

**11. Sterling Linden (*Tilia tomentosa* ‘Sterling’)** ☑  
~ *737 Bryant Street, 2 street trees*  
The leaves of Sterling linden are green above and silvery below; they turn and ripple in the slightest breeze. Leaf-like bracts have a special purpose: they are attached to the seeds as they fall and act as a parachute, which enables the seeds to travel further on the wind. Sterling linden is more drought-tolerant than other lindens.

**12a. Chitalpa ‘Morning Cloud’ (*x Chitalpa tashkentensis* ‘Morning Cloud’)**  
~ *315 Homer Avenue, 3 trees between the building and the sidewalk on the Bryant Street side*  
This cross between two U.S. natives, *Catalpa bignonioides* and *Chilopsis linearis*, was created in Russia in 1964 and brought to New York in 1997. It is a deciduous tree with leaves that are about 1¼” wide by 5” long. Its white flowers are almost identical to the flowers of the catalpas, but chitalpas lack the characteristic catalpa seed pods.

**12b. Western Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*)**  
~ *315 Homer Avenue, 5 trees between the sidewalk and the building on Homer Avenue*  
The very large leaves of this southern U.S. native are heart-shaped. White flowers with purple dots and orange spots appear in June. Foot-long pods of seeds like giant string beans develop from the flowers and last through winter.

**13a. Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)** ⚔ ☹  
~ *351 Homer Avenue, Museum of American Heritage, trees in the center of the front yard and 1 tree on the left*  
After completion of their home in 1907, Dr. Thomas Williams and his wife Dora moved this cluster of three coast redwoods from their ranch on Skyline Boulevard to this location. The single coast redwood on the left was added by their daughters in the 1950s as a replacement for a pond that was deemed a danger to children.

**13b. English Yew (*Taxus baccata*)** ☑  
~ *351 Homer Avenue, right side of the front yard*  
This large yew was undoubtedly planted by the Williams family as well. Yews are believed to be the longest living plants in Europe and were often used as hedges in formal gardens there. Its seeds and leaves are poisonous to animals.