

# Tree Removal & Replacement: Development

## DEVELOPMENT & USE REVIEW

### TREE PERMIT REQUIREMENT

A Major Tree Removal & Replacement Permit is required for any trees being removed as part of Major Development Activity, such as:

- Subdivisions or short plats.
- Construction or demolition of single family, multi-family, or commercial buildings.
- Alterations, repairs, enlargements, or additions that add 1,000 square feet or more of impervious surface coverage.

A Major Tree Removal & Replacement Permit is also required when any Minor Development activity is proposed within the critical root zone (CRZ) of a significant tree.

### TREE REMOVAL PROHIBITED

Certain trees cannot be removed, even with a permit:

- Viable Exceptional Trees (see definition below) meeting the size threshold listed on Table 1 in LFPMP 16.14.030.
- Viable trees in environmentally critical areas and Tree Conservation Easements that are low-risk or moderate risk, as determined by an ISA-certified arborist with a Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ).

### DETERMINING TREE TYPES

#### Significant Tree

- A tree six inches or greater in diameter at breast height ([DBH](#)) or a required replacement tree of any size – dead trees are not considered significant.

#### Landmark Tree

- A tree that is at least 24 inches in DBH.

#### Exceptional Tree

- A viable tree, which because of its unique combination of size and species, age, location, and/or health, is worthy of long-term retention.
- To be considered exceptional, a tree must have a diameter at breast height (DBH) that is equal to or greater than the threshold diameters listed in Table 1 in LFPMP 16.14.030. The tree shall exhibit healthful vigor for its age and species.

**Table 1: Exceptional Tree Species and Their Threshold Diameters**

Species	Threshold Diameter (DBH)
Bigleaf Maple – <i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	42 inches
Douglas Fir – <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	42 inches
Grand Fir – <i>Abies grandis</i>	33 inches
Madrona – <i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	12 inches
Western Hemlock – <i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>	36 inches
Western Red Cedar – <i>Thuja plicata</i>	42 inches
Western White Pine – <i>Pinus monticola</i>	36 inches

### MEASURING TREES

“DBH” and “DSH” are acronyms for tree diameter at breast/standard height which means the diameter of existing trees measured 4.5 feet above the ground line on the high side of the tree.

- For help converting the circumference of tree trunks to diameter, refer to our [tree circumference converter tool](#), or divide the circumference measurement by pi ( $\pi = 3.14$ ).

### DETERMINING TREE REPLACEMENT

- An arborist assessment of the lot’s total [canopy coverage](#) (see Table 2 on back) will determine if tree removal causes the lot to fall below its canopy coverage goal.
- When the proposed tree removal is associated with major development activity or minor development activity within a protected trees critical root zone (CRZ), the trees may be removed if a tree replacement plan is approved that, at a minimum, brings canopy coverage to the applicable canopy coverage goal.

**Note:** If tree removal associated with a Major Permit causes canopy to fall below the Canopy Coverage Goal, the applicant must record the tree permit conditions with King County (see Table 2 on the back of this sheet).



Table 2: Canopy Coverage Goal

Zoning and Lot Size	Canopy Coverage Goal
Single-family lots greater than 15,000 square feet	58%
Single-family lots 10,000 – 15,000 square feet	39%
Single-family lots less than 10,000 square feet	28%
Multifamily, Commercial, and Southern Gateway Single Family	15%

### APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Tree Permit Application**
- **A site map (to scale)** with a north arrow depicting accurate location of site features including buildings, driveways, environmentally critical areas and buffers, forest groves or open-grown single or clusters of significant trees; the ICRZ and CRZ of the grove, cluster, or individual tree, along with any off-site trees that may be impacted by tree removal, excavation, grading, or other development activity proposed.
- **A tree inventory** prepared by a qualified arborist that includes at a minimum: trees to be removed and protected (including the ICRZ and CRZ), trees in the vicinity of construction or that could be impacted by the proposed development activity, tree protection fence location, timeline for tree protection activities, list of protection measures and conditions to be taken during all development activities to ensure code compliance during development activities.
- **A report** including, at a minimum, information on tree species, diameter at breast height, condition (health), risk level, existing and proposed canopy coverage, and when applicable, design of a land use proposal that prioritizes healthy trees in accord with LFPMC 16.14.070(D)(3).

### Questions?

For more information, please contact the Planning Department  
[aplanner@cityofflp.com](mailto:aplanner@cityofflp.com)

### Access to Information

Electronic versions of all forms, permits, applications, and codes are available on the Lake Forest Park website:  
<http://www.cityofflp.com/>

### POSTING REQUIREMENTS

**Notice of Application** shall be posted on site, in a place where it can be read from the nearest public street. If the property is located on a private street, notices shall be posted on site, in a place where it can be read from the private street and in a place where it can be read from the nearest public street.

- For most major tree permits, the notice of application shall be posted for a minimum of 14 full calendar days prior to permit decision and shall remain posted until a decision is issued.
- When the proposal involves removing five or more trees and constitutes 50 percent or more of the canopy on the subject lot, notice of application and public comment procedures shall comply with LFPMC 16.26.040(D)(1) and (E)(1)

**Notice of Decision** The approved tree permit must be posted on the subject site in the same manner described in LFPMC 16.14.040(D)(1) and on the same day the permit is issued. For major tree permits, removal may commence 15 days after the issuance of the approved tree permit. The tree permit shall remain posted at least one week (seven calendar days) after the approved activity has been completed.

### HELPFUL INFORMATION

- Trenching, construction, or an alteration of grades is never allowed within a tree's ICRZ. These activities will be considered between the five-foot setback from the critical root zone (CRZ) and the interior critical root zone (ICRZ) of a protected tree provided that the tree protection plan demonstrates that the proposed activity will not harm the tree.
- Sidewalks, structures, utilities, and roadways should be set back at least five feet from the CRZ, except where such structure is cantilevered or otherwise raised above the ground's surface so as not to disrupt the tree's roots, and the proposed construction is not likely to result in conflicts between the tree and the sidewalk, driveway, structure, or utility that would necessitate the tree's removal during its normal lifespan.

**DISCLAIMER:** The information contained herein is meant to provide general information about tree removal & replacement. This summary is not a substitute for the actual codes or regulations, and does not include information pertaining to other land use and building permit requirements and procedures. Tree permit requirements can and do sometimes change after action by the City Council. Interested parties should always verify current requirements with the City Planning Department. Updated 5/2023