

TREE PROTECTIONS per SMC Title 23 and SMC 25.11

UNDEVELOPED LOTS

- ALL ZONES: No removal of any tree over DBH 6" (*unless found to be hazardous*).

DEVELOPED LOTS

- LR, MR, COMMERCIAL, SF 5000 and greater, Residential Small Lots 5000sqft or greater: Tree removal is limited (*unless found to be hazardous*)
 - No removal of exceptional trees allowed. (See DR 16-2008 Table 1. Table 1: lists DBH threshold for 74 common Seattle native and nonnative tree species, and describes the method of determining exceptional DBH threshold for tree species not specifically listed).
 - No more than 3 *non*-exceptional trees with DBH greater than 6" in one year.
- SF less than 5000 and Residential Small Lots less than 5000sqft
 - Tree removal is allowed where NO development is proposed.
 - When development is proposed, tree removal is limited per requirements listed in the "During Development" section of this document. (Below)

DURING DEVELOPMENT

- **SINGLE FAMILY and RESIDENTIAL SMALL LOT**
 - ALL development applications REQUIRE:
 - Site plans
 - Must identify ALL existing trees over 6"
 - Location, Size, Species and Common Name
 - Protection of non-exceptional trees over two feet in diameter is optional, but encouraged.
 - Exceptional trees may be removed only if protection during construction would prevent maximum lot coverage.
 - SF lot's allowed coverage is defined as:
 - 35% of the lot area, or
 - For lots less than 5,000sqft, 1,000sqft plus 15% of the lot area.
 - Applicants MUST take advantage of allowed front and/or rear yard departures if this would allow preservation of the tree.
- **LOWRISE**
 - If ANY exceptional trees onsite
 - Project MUST go through streamlined administrative design review (SDR) (SMC 25.11.040, 25.11.080, 23.41.018)
 - This applies even if the project is below the design review threshold for number of units
 - ALL development applications REQUIRE:
 - Site plans
 - Must identify ALL existing trees over 6"
 - Location, Size, Species and Common Name
 - Protection of non-exceptional trees over two feet in diameter is optional, but encouraged.
 - Exceptional trees may be removed only if protection during construction would prevent maximum lot coverage.
 - SF lot's allowed coverage is defined as:
 - 35% of the lot area, *or*
 - For lots less than 5,000sqft, coverage = 1,000sqft plus 15% of the lot area.

- Applicants MUST take advantage of allowed front and/or rear yard departures if this would allow preservation of the tree.

DURING DEVELOPMENT

NOTE: **Streamlined Design Review (SDR)** is REQUIRED for all development in multifamily and commercial zones that propose removal of an exceptional tree. (*Tip 238B*)

- **MR, and COMMERCIAL**

- ALL development applications REQUIRE:
 - Site plans
 - Must identify ALL existing trees over 6”
 - Location, Size, Species and Common Name
- Protection of non-exceptional trees over two feet in diameter is optional, but encouraged.
- Exceptional trees may be removed only if tree protection during construction would prevent maximum lot coverage without extending into tree protection area or front or rear yards.
 - Applicants must take advantage of allowed front and/or rear yard departures if this would allow preservation of the tree.
 - SF lot’s allowed coverage is defined as:
 - 35% of the lot area, or
 - For lots less than 5,000sqft, 1,000sqft plus 15% of the lot area.

- **MOST ZONES** have landscaping requirements that require minimum levels of trees through new and/or retained trees. (See Title 23 requirements document “Tree Requirements per Zone”)

HAZARD TREES

- Qualified professional determines tree has a COMBINATION of structural defects and/or disease to a degree determined to be high probability of failure AND is located near potential targets.
- If a hazard tree is located in an ECA, replanting is REQUIRED (*Tip 242, pg.2*)

STEPS FOR HAZARD TREE REMOVAL

Review of tree removals protected by SMC 25.11 (Tree Protection) or SMC 25.09 (Environmentally Critical Areas). Note: Removal of a protected tree in an ECA requires SDCI *Tree and Vegetation Standard Mitigation Plan Form*.

TWO separate approval processes:

1. For a **DEVELOPMENT** project:
 - a. Tree removals on private property are reviewed as part of an application for a development permit. The initial check for compliance with the Tree Protection Code is a component of the review conducted by the Zoning Reviewers.
 - b. If a hazard tree removal application inadvertently ends up in PRC, then PRC staff sends applicant a notice requesting that the applicant submit the removal request under the active building application, and if the building permit has already been issued, then the applicant must submit a Post Permit Submittal Revision (Construction/Bldg Permit).
 - c. If in ECA with area <1500sqft, then a Restoration/Revegetation permit is required via Master Use Permit process.

2. **Standalone** applications for hazardous tree removal (these are not part of a development project). Applications are submitted in Public Resource Center (PRC) in SMT 20, or via email
- a. Standalone applications REQUIRE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - i. ISA Risk Form, *and*
 - ii. Hazard Tree Removal Application, *and*
 - iii. Arborist Report, *and*
 - iv. Site Photos, *and*
 - v. Site Plan, including revegetation plan

APPLICABLE DIRECTOR'S RULES and TIPS

- DR 16-2008 (Exceptional Trees, Table 1)
- DR 29-2015 (SEPA and Environmentally Critical Areas)
- DR 30-2015 (Landscaping and Green Factor)
- **TIPS: 242, 238, 331, 331A, 331B**

NOTE: SEPA Exemptions do not apply in Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) specified in SMC 25.05.908A including: landslide-prone areas, steep slopes, riparian corridors, wetlands, and fish & wildlife habitat conservation areas. Also, while 'normal and routine maintenance' is allowed in ECA, removal of trees and non-invasive vegetation is not considered normal and routine maintenance (*Tip 331*).