



PERMIT SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS TREE REMOVAL CHECKLIST

(LDC: Section 802)

Note: This checklist does NOT apply to new construction projects until a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) has been issued.

Wetlands conditions (if present) always apply, for parcels with a primary structure only

1. Does it need a permit?

- Is the tree on an approved plan? If yes, apply for a permit to remove.
- If not, what is the tree species that is not on a plan? Consult a professional if needed.
- Non-native trees are exempt and don't require a permit. Palms and Pines except Longleaf Pine are also exempt and don't require a permit.
- If the tree is exempt and not listed on a plan, you may remove it at any time no further steps are needed. If a permit is required, the tree species must be included in the permit application.
- If the tree species requires a permit: Is it on a plan and newly planted? If yes, apply for a permit. Native trees except the exemptions above require a permit regardless of status on a plan or not.

If no: New trees planted by individuals, that are not on an approved plan, do not need a permit to remove if below a 5-inch DBH (see below). Developer planted trees need a permit even below 5 inches DBH. All native trees over a 5-inch DBH require a permit; use the below to find DBH:

- Verify if protected tree DBH requires a permit:

Measure the trunk circumference (distance around the trunk) at 54 inches above ground level (about shoulder height and above any tree trunk widening at the base (root flare). Divide this number by 3.14 to get the diameter of the tree. This is the DBH number of the tree. Add together multiple trunks once their DBH is found (they are all one tree); protected trees at 5 inches or greater DBH require a permit to remove (see below). This number is needed on the application.

For trees where the above checklist requires a permit

Requirements to grant a permit for protected trees:

1. Why does the tree need to be removed? This is shown in the “Photos” document requirement and the “reason for removal” portion of the application. Removals of protected trees must meet code section 802 for a permit. Issues that can be resolved through other means will not meet code for a permit and the application will be rejected. Concerns like allergies, leaf drop, or aesthetics are not considered valid reasons for removal. In other words, why can’t the tree be saved? This must be documented in the record at application and labeled “photos,” but may be other documents as needed/required. Multiple photos can be uploaded, and there may be a request for further documentation if the first set is not enough to verify reason for removal in the review.
2. Where is the tree? This is the “site plan” document requirement. The tree must be on the parcel of the cited owner in the application. Trees in a county ROW are also the responsibility of the adjacent property owner (or the party that mows it) and can be applied for as above along with a ROW use permit. This document can be an aerial image from online with the tree location marked, or a drawn (to scale) sketch with the tree location. This is to confirm the tree is on site and any other conditions such as wetlands that may apply. It must be labeled “site plan” in the application.
3. Replant Acknowledgement check box. All tree removal permits start with an automatic replant, and there is a box in the application that must be checked acknowledging this requirement. Not all replants have to be a code defined “shade tree” and some may be exempt depending on the community. This is reviewed and will be shown on the issued permit. If a parcel meets any shade tree requirements after the removal, then replants can be ornamental trees as well as shade trees or palms, but must still meet code size requirements at planting.
4. Permit expiration. The permit has an open window of 30 days to removed and replanted, then upload the photos of the new tree under “replanted tree photos” in the permit record. Extensions have a fee and process for approval. Replant selection and timing should reflect this requirement, so scheduling in advance may be required. All replants must meet the best management practices for tree planting. Once the tree is confirmed as meeting code the permit is closed; if the tree dies it must be replanted per code.

Acronym Key

- LDC: Land Development Code,
- DBH: Diameter at Breast Height
- ROW: Right Of Way
- CO: Certificate of Occupancy
- Site Plan: Aerial image (such as online) or hand drawn to scale
- Approved plan: Any plans or documents that show the tree and site and are approved for a permit by the county. Examples are landscape plans and home permit site plans with required trees shown and approved for the site.