



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Parks Division

Procedure for Removal of Protected Trees – Permit Requirements

The City of Concord takes pride in its urban forest and has been continually recognized by the National Arbor Day Foundation with the *Tree City USA and Growth Awards*. Trees offer significant social, economic, environmental benefits to the quality of life in our community by enhancing the aesthetic beauty of our neighborhoods, moderating climate, reducing energy costs and increasing property values. The Public Works Parks Division is responsible for ensuring the commitment to foster a healthy urban forest using the following guidelines for trees located within the City of Concord.

The procedure for reviewing an application to remove a ***Protected Tree*** requires the following steps to be completed and information submitted to the Public Works Parks Division for review and response. **Only protected trees require a permit prior to removal and there is currently no fee associated with a single permit.** Non-protected trees do not require a City of Concord issued permit prior to removal.

Definitions

Non-protected Tree (No Permit required): Eucalyptus, Acacia, Monterey Pine, Palm, Privet, unless such tree has been specifically designated a “Heritage Tree” by action of the Planning Commission.

Protected Trees:

- (a) Any of the following listed native trees with a 12” DBH (diameter at breast height) single trunk, or 12” DBH sum of all stems on multiple trunk tree, measured at 54” above the ground: Valley Oak, Blue Oak, Coast Live Oak, California Bay, California Buckeye, California Sycamore.
- (b) Other trees with at least 24” DBH (single trunk) or a multi-stemmed tree where the sum of all stems are 24” DBH, measured at 54” above the ground.
- (c) Any tree which has been officially designated by action of the Planning Commission as a *Heritage Tree*.
- (d) A tree required to be planted, relocated, or preserved as a condition of approval of a Tree Permit or other discretionary permit, and/or as environmental mitigation for a discretionary permit.
- (e) A tree 6” DBH single or multi-stemmed that is located within the structural setback of creeks or streams (Creek and Riparian Habitat Protection 122-802).

Permit Application

Any person desiring to remove one or more protected trees shall submit an application to the Public Works Parks Division, unless the removal is associated with an application to the Planning Division, and should include the following documentation:

1. A letter of intent from the property owner
 - (a) A plan showing the location of the tree(s) to be removed and the quantity and species of trees to be planted in exchange for the protected tree
 - (b) Statement of specific reasons for the proposed removal
2. Arborist report including the following for each tree:
 - a. A written narrative from an I.S.A. Certified Arborist
 - b. Arborist Name, Certification # and company letterhead
 - c. Species (common and scientific name)

- d. Size (diameter, height, crown spread)
- e. Condition of the tree (foliage, vigor, structural integrity, etc.)
- f. Prognosis
- g. Life expectancy
- h. Location diagram (and photos, if desired)

City Review and Action

Review Procedure

Upon receipt of all required submittal items the case will be reviewed by the City Arborist or appropriate designated City staff person, a written response will be emailed to the applicant. Staff may request additional information from the applicant or arborist, and a site visit may be required. If the prognosis is deemed urgent or is a life/safety emergency, the City Arborist or designated City staff person has the discretion to approve or modify this process as needed.

Action

The City's response to the applicant will include either a written approval (may be with conditions for tree replacement), denial (with reasons cited and/or mitigation recommendations), or request for additional information. A copy of the approval letter must be on site when the tree is being removed.

Frequently, a file will remain open if the approval is conditioned upon required replanting with one or more trees of a predetermined size. To bring closure to the file, it is the applicant's responsibility to insure that conditions are implemented, and to submit proof of all required conditions being met within a reasonable timeframe.

Instructions for submitting documentation including property owner's letter of intent and certified arborist reports may be found online at: www.cityofconcord.org/Trees

Questions regarding the process for obtaining a permit to remove protected trees may be directed to the City Arborist Tyce Dekker at (925) 671-3064. Please allow up to five (5) business days to receive a return response. Thanks for your consideration.

