



Tree Requirements for Development Projects

All existing trees on private property that are 6 inches in diameter and greater may not be removed unless permitted through Title 20.770 (land use review, development permit) or through a written permit issued from the Planning Official. All trees located in a critical area or shoreline district are to be protected and preserved. Existing street trees and Heritage Trees are to be protected and preserved. A written permit from the Urban Forester is required to remove, destroy, cut, break, or injure, any street tree.

Title 20.770 requires a minimum tree density of 30 tree units per acre to be planted on private property. Title 20.925.060 requires street trees to be planted in new development projects fronting on a public street, private street or private driveway. Deciduous trees required for projects are to be at least 2" caliper in size and conifers are to be at least 6' tall or based on Table 20.770-3.

Street trees may be required in an existing planting strip that is at least 2.5 feet in width, in tree wells, or in some cases, behind the sidewalk. Vancouver Department of Transportation regulates sidewalk and tree well requirements. Locate new utility lines away from existing and required trees.

The following are tree location guidelines. All trees are to be shown on the site or landscape plans at the time a permit is applied for during site plan review or plat approval. Maximize the benefits of trees within the right of way by utilizing large, long-lived site appropriate trees. The City of Vancouver can provide additional information on trees appropriate for different size planter strips. Trees with height of more than 25' at maturity shall not be planted under, or adjacent to overhead utility lines. Lower tree branches should be shortened or removed to provide physical and visual clearance.

Trees shall not be planted closer than:

- 25 feet from the curb line of an intersection
- 5 feet from alley margins and driveways
- 5 feet from fire hydrants, underground utilities, water meters, and utility boxes or poles
- 10 feet from directional traffic signs
- 2 feet from property lines
- 20 feet from stop or yield signs
- 20 feet from street lights if a columnar variety is selected, the distance can be reduced but species selection is determined by the Planning Official or Urban Forester
- 25 feet from adjacent trees depending on species.
- 3 feet behind curb or sidewalk if no planter strip exists (attached sidewalks or just curb).
- 10 feet from building foundations.