

Planning, Land Use & Zoning Committee

proposed tree regulation bill: permit types

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SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

Removal of one or more
significant trees would
require a permit.

“Significant tree” means any tree six inches or greater in diameter measured at 54 inches from the ground (DSH).

Tree Canopy Management Unit	Minimum Tree Canopy Cover as Percentage of Lot Area
Single-family Residential: Residential Small Lot and Residential, Single Family zones	33%
Multi-family Residential: Multi-family and Residential-Commercial zones	20%
Commercial/Mixed Use: Commercial and Seattle Mixed zones	15%
Downtown: Downtown zones	12%
Industrial: Industrial zones	10%
Institutional: Major Institution Overlay Districts	20%

Two types of permit:

Minor

&

Major

Minor permit

- Hazardous trees
- Resulting tree canopy cover greater than or equal to required %
- Existing tree canopy cover less than required %, not development

Major permit

- Resulting tree canopy cover less than required %
- Development activity

Mitigation

For major permits, meet tree canopy requirement through:

- On-site planting;
- Off-site planting (not SF); or
- Payment of fee-in-lieu (not SF)

Mitigation

For minor permits, no mitigation except when existing tree canopy is less than requirement and not part of development, then:

- meet requirement or
- double removed

Costs

- Permit fee: scale with type
- Arborist fee
- Any required mitigation

Scenario 1

A property owner wants to remove a significant tree because the tree is hazardous



minor permit

Scenario 2

A single-family property owner wants to remove one or more significant trees not part of development activity and the resulting tree canopy cover would be greater than or equal to 33%
→ **minor permit**

Scenario 3

A developer owner wants to remove one or more significant trees and the resulting tree canopy cover would be less than requirement



major permit

Scenario 4

A person removes one or more
significant trees without a permit
→ **illegal**

Illegal significant tree removal

Civil Penalties

- Tree remains on property: \$1,500 per inch DSH
- Tree not on property: presumption of 30 inches DSH = \$45,000 per tree
- Willful or malicious, penalty may be trebled as punitive damages.

Restoration and replanting

- Restore and repair site conditions
- Trebled amount for tree replacement or payment in-lieu