

Tree Protection Code – Omnibus Items and Outreach Materials

Photo by John Skelton



Seattle Department of
Construction & Inspections

Urban Forestry Commission
Christy Carr June 2024

Today's Overview

- Omnibus legislation
- Outreach materials



Omnibus Legislation

- The Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) is responsible for routine maintenance of the Land Use and other codes.
- The proposed amendments generally include “clean-up” amendments that correct inadvertent clerical errors, incorrect cross-references, and clarify existing Code language. Our amendments also include relatively minor policy changes that do not warrant independent legislation.
- The proposed amendments are called “omnibus” amendments because SDCI packages a collection of amendments for efficiency that are relatively small scale.
- The need for these amendments were identified by residents , elected officials, and City staff.
- Project webpage: [Code Corrections - What & Why - SDCI | seattle.gov](https://www.seattle.gov/SDCI/Code-Corrections-What-Why)

Omnibus Legislation

- Environmental review (SEPA) for the code amendments is complete. The comment period closed on May 9, 2024.
- City Council will hold a hearing on the proposed omnibus amendments for adoption in the 3rd quarter of 2024.

Omnibus Legislation

Tree Protection Code (SMC 25.11) Omnibus Items

25.11.020 Exemptions- Changes to section 25.11.020 to clarify the existing tree removal exemption that applies in Environmentally Critical Areas and provide correct code reference to the process for approval in Section 25.09.070.

25.11.030 Emergency actions- Changes to section to 25.11.030 to provide correct reference to the qualifications and industry standard for Tree Risk Assessments consistent with Ordinance 126821.

25.11.040 - Hazardous tree removal – Amendment subsection 25.11.040.B.3 to clarify that normal and routine pruning shall be completed to mitigate hazards. Provides consistency with definitions in subsection 25.11.130, which require consistency with ANSI standards.

Omnibus Legislation

Tree Protection Code (SMC 25.11) Omnibus Items

25.11.050 General provisions for regulated tree categories – Updates to Table A for 25.11.050 are provided to correctly implement tree removal regulations in Neighborhood Residential, Lowrise, Midrise, commercial, and Seattle Mixed Zones, to provide corrected reference notation and provide correct code references. Include clarifying footnote 1 that indicates which zones that table does not apply.

25.11.060 Requirements for trees when development is proposed -- Changes to section 25.11.060 to provide corrected reference to indicate which portion of the Tree Protection Area may be reduced by the Director consistent with the language in Ordinance 126821.

25.11.070 Tree protection on sites undergoing development in Neighborhood Residential, Lowrise, Midrise, commercial, and Seattle Mixed zones:

- Subsection 25.11.070.A.2 to provide clarity around reducing yards and setbacks in order to voluntarily protect Tier 1,2,3 and 4 trees.
- Subsection 25.11.070.A.3 address the calculation of maximum lot coverage and that minimum width of structure that must be able to be achieved in order to determine of a tree may be removed.
- Subsection 25.11.070.B.2.b to clarify that developments identified are for low income housing meeting the definition in Title 23.

Outreach Materials

- **Tips** are designed to provide user-friendly information on the range of City permitting, land use and code compliance policies and procedures you may encounter while conducting business with the City. Tips are updated by staff as needed.
- **Director's Rules (DRs)** are binding rules about land use, construction, housing, and other codes the City administers. The rules are adopted according to the administration section in the Seattle Municipal Code, including at least a 14-day public comment period.



[Resources - SDCI | seattle.gov](https://seattle.gov/sdci/resources)

Forms & Publications

- 
- [Director's Rules](#)
 - [Forms](#)
 - [Publication Pricelist](#) 
 - [Renter's Handbook](#) 
 - [Tips](#)
- 



Resources

Still Need Help?
Ask Us
Call us at (206) 684-8850

Outreach Materials

Tips

- [Regulations for Environmentally Critical Areas \(Ch. 23.09\)](#)
- [Rental Registration and Inspection Ordinance \(Ch. 22.214\)](#)
- [Residential Code \(Ch. 22.150\)](#)
- [SEPA Policies and Procedures \(Ch. 25.05\)](#)
- [Side Sewer Code \(Ch. 21.16\)](#)
- [Stormwater Code \(Ch. 22.800\)](#)
- [Street and Sidewalk Use \(Title 15\)](#)
- [Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance \(Ch. 22.210\)](#)
- [Tree Protection \(Ch. 25.11\)](#)

238C	Master Planned Community Design Review and Public Notice
242A	Tree Requirements Associated with Development
242B	Tree Removal on Private Property
242C	SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry
242D	Tree Public Notice
243	Transportation Mitigation Payments: South Lake Union and Northgate
244	Urban Agriculture
247	Development Site Permitting Guidelines

Director's Rules

Keeping Your Rules Up-to-date

We publish official legal notice for all Director's Rules in Seattle's [Daily Journal of Commerce](#). We also publish notice about land use rules in our Land Use Information Bulletin through the [Seattle Services Portal](#). To receive an email alert when the Land Use Information Bulletin is posted contact our [Public Resource Center](#).

Draft Director's Rules

[DDR 10-2023, Administration of the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections Tree Service Provider Registry](#)
[View public notice](#)

Outreach Materials

DR 7-2023, **Designation of Tier 2 Trees**

DR 8-2023, **Payment in lieu of tree replacement pursuant to the Tree Protection Code**

DR 10-2023, **Administration of Tree Service Provider Registry**

DR 12-2023, **Tree Replacement Requirements**

DR 17-2018, **Calculating Tree Valuations & Civil penalties for Tree Protection Code Violations**

Outreach Materials

SDCI

Director's Rule 8-2023

Applicant: City of Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections	Page 1 of 2	Supersedes: N/A
	Publication: 7/6/2023	Effective: 7/31/2023
Subject: Payment in lieu of tree replacement pursuant to the Tree Protection Code	Code and Section Reference: SMC 25.11.110 Off-site planting and voluntary payment in lieu	
	Type of Rule: Code Interpretation	
	Ordinance Authority: SMC 3.06.040	
Index: Land Use Code/Technical Standards and Procedural Requirements	Approved	Date
	(Signature on file) Nathan Torgelson, Director, SDCI	7/28/23



Tree Removal on Private Property

Updated April 8, 2024

The purpose of this Tip is to outline when a tree protected by Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance, Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) [25.11](#), may be removed, how to submit a request to Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) to remove a tree, and who is allowed to remove a tree. It also provides information about replacement requirements when trees are removed. This Tip is organized into the following sections:

This Tip applies to trees on privately owned undeveloped lots (vacant) and developed lots and within certain environmentally critical areas (ECA), including peat-settlement prone areas, liquefaction-prone areas, flood-prone areas, and abandoned landfills. If a tree is located within any other ECA, SMC [25.09](#) applies for tree protection and revegetation. Please see Tip 331B, [Environmentally Critical Areas: Tree and Vegetation Overview](#). You can use SDCI's [online map tool](#) to see if your property has any mapped ECAs.

Please note, in most cases even if tree removal is allowed, requirements for tree replacement, using providers from SDCI's [Tree Service Provider Registry](#), and tree public noticing still apply. Please see Tip 242C, [SDCI Tree Service Provider Registry](#), and Tip 242D, [Tree](#)

Outreach Materials

Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) Tips Being Updated

327a	Environmentally Critical Areas Exemptions, Relief from Prohibition on Steep Slope Development, and Modifications to Submittal Requirements — Application Instructions and Submittal Requirements
327b	Environmentally Critical Areas — Small Project Waivers Application Instructions and Submittal Requirements
328	Environmentally Critical Areas Exceptions
329	Environmentally Critical Areas Administrative Conditional Use Permit—Application Instructions and Submittal Requirements
330	Environmentally Critical Areas—Yard & Setback, Steep Slope Erosion Hazard and Wetland Buffer Variances
331	Environmentally Critical Areas—Tree and Vegetation Overview
331A	Environmentally Critical Areas: Vegetation Restoration
331B	Hazard Trees
332	Review of SDCI Decisions by the Construction Codes Advisory Board
333	Requirements for Verifying Contractor Registration
335	Changing the Professional of Record for a Building Permit Application or Active Permit

Outreach Materials

New Tree Tracking Data Map!

[Trees & Codes - SDCI | seattle.gov](https://seattle.gov/SDCI/Codes/Tree-Tracking-Data-Map)

Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections

Seattle Services Portal

[About Us](#) [Permits](#) [Codes](#) [Renting](#) [Inspections](#) [Resources](#)

 > [Home](#) > [Codes](#) > [Codes We Enforce \(A-Z\)](#) ▾

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Trees & Codes

What Do You Want To Do?







[Apply for a Permit](#)

Outreach Materials

New Tree Tracking Data Map!

[Trees & Codes - SDCI | seattle.gov](#)

Other helpful resources include:

- The [Tree Service Provider Directory](#) lists the approved SDCI Tree Service Providers.
- [How To Apply for the Tree Service Provider Registry](#)  describes the application requirements and steps.
- [How To Revise an Existing Tree Service Provider Registration](#)  describes how to revise an existing registration.
- [How To Renew an Existing Tree Service Provider Registration](#)  describes how to renew an existing registration.
- See [Tree Service Provider Registry Requirements](#)  for more information.
- [Seattle Services Portal Public Notices](#) allows you to search for posted tree public notices by date range, address, or notice number.
- [Tree Public Notice Map](#)  is an interactive map that displays Tree Public Notices required for reportable work or tree removal on private property.
- [Tree Tracking Data Map](#)  is an interactive map that displays tree information from SDCI records that required SDCI staff approval of tree removal, tree protection, or tree planting.

Outreach Materials



Seattle

Private Property (SDCI) Tree Public Notices & Permit Tree Tracking Database

Tree Public Notice

Permit Tree Tracking Database



Permit Tree Tracking Database

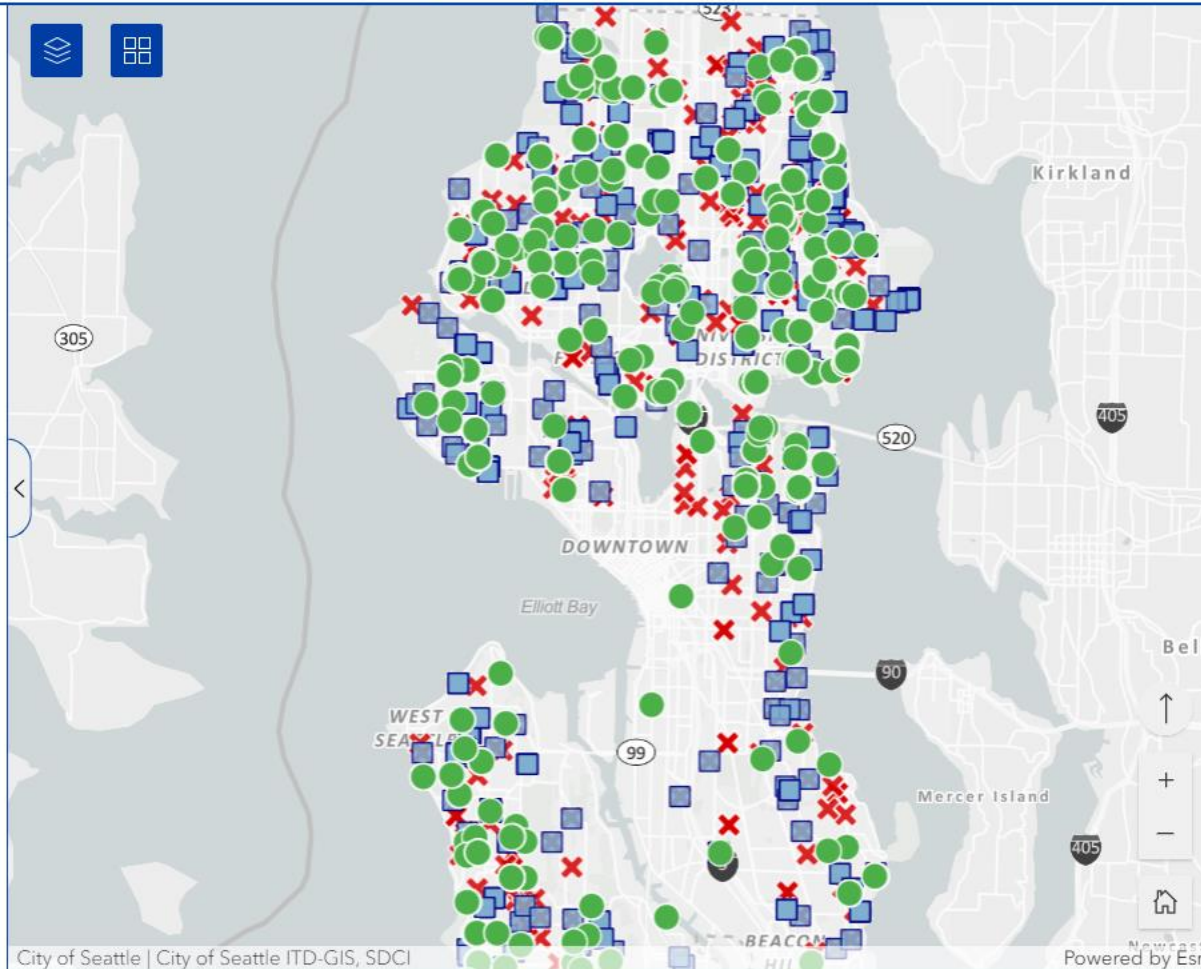
About the Map

This interactive map displays tree information from SDCI records that required SDCI staff approval of tree removal, tree protection, or tree planting. Not all tree activity requires prior SDCI approval, including pruning, maintenance, or certain removals in accordance with the code.

For more information on code authorized exemptions and allowances, please see [Tip 242B, Tree Removal on Private Property](#).

You can search this map by address or SDCI record number to learn more about tree activity in your neighborhood. The data on this map represents approvals compliant with the Tree Protection Ordinance that went into effect on July 30, 2023 ([SMC 25.11](#)). Trees may be planted to comply with replacement requirements of removed trees or as part of the development standards of the zone in which the property is located.

Information on each tree allowed to be removed, or required to be protected or planted, is shown by different colored shapes on the map.



Search by Address or Record Number

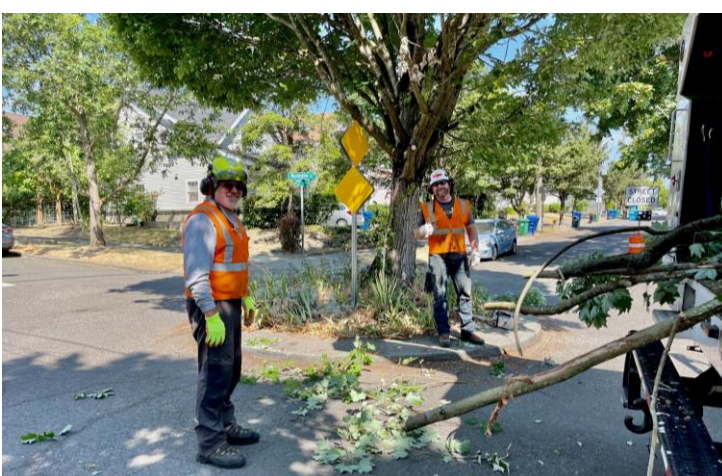
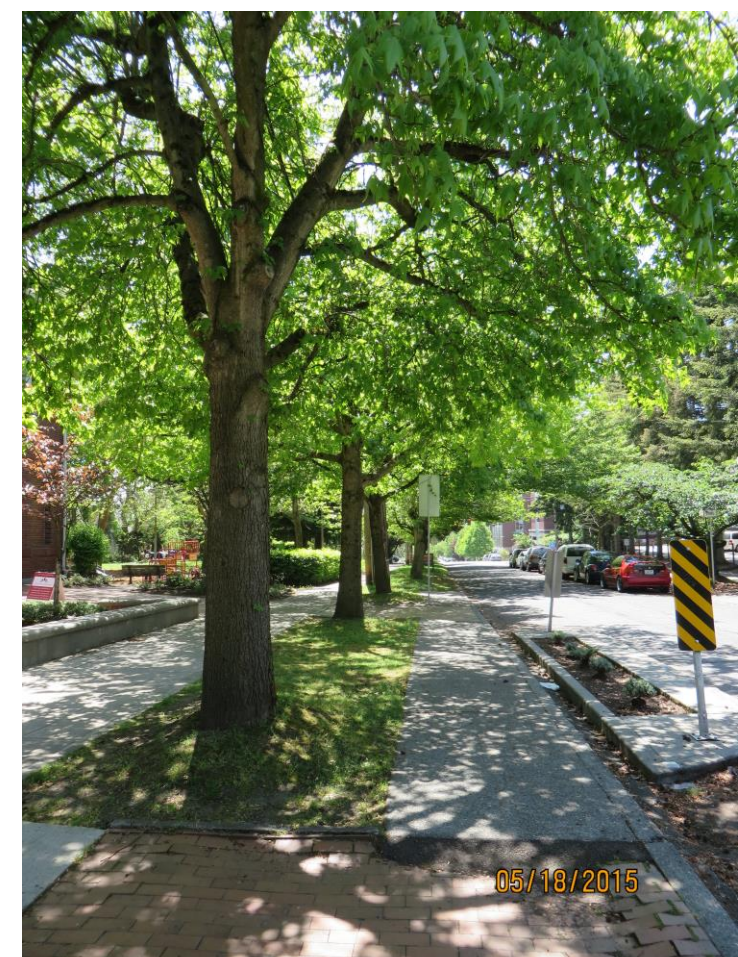
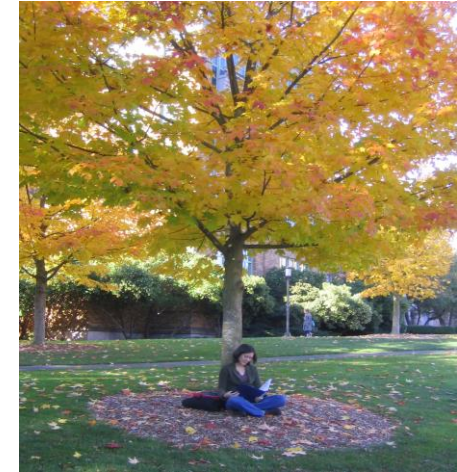
Enter an address or SDCI record number in the search bar to navigate the map.

Search...

Tree Tracking Database Map Layers

Click the checkboxes to turn map layers on and off. Close the layer's legend by clicking the three lines to the right.

- Protected Trees
- Planted Trees
- Removed Trees
- Relocated Trees



Questions

05/18/2015