

TREE PERMIT CHECKLIST

This checklist applies to:

- Single Family Tree Permit
- Commercial Landscaping Modification

Includes Shoreline Tree and Environmentally Critical Area Tree reviews



These applications may be applied for under the TREE PERMIT Application Type in the Online Permitting Portal.

The materials listed below must be submitted at the time of your application. **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS MAY BE REQUIRED.** A pre-application meeting is encouraged prior to submitting an application.

Please ensure files are **saved as PDF** and conform to **City of Tukwila electronic submittal standards** prior to upload.

******ADDITIONAL PERMITS MAY BE REQUIRED******

ATTACHMENTS REQUIRED		ATTACHMENT FILE NAME
DOCUMENTS		
1.	Tree Permit Application Form	Tree Permit Application
2.	Supplementary site plan, if necessary	Site Plan
3.	Photographs of site and trees	Tree Photo
SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS, IF NECESSARY		
4.	Arborist reports for the following situations: • In the Shoreline Jurisdiction. • In an environmentally critical area. • Defective/hazardous tree claim. If the hazard is not obvious, a report is more likely to be required.	Arborist Report
5.	Notarized affidavit of ownership and hold harmless agreement, if requested.	Hold Harmless Affidavit
6.	Tree maintenance and monitoring plan	Tree Maintenance Plan

Tree Permitting Background

Tukwila regulates tree removal in part to implement adopted Comprehensive Plan goals: to maintain and increase tree canopy throughout the City, and to provide requirements for tree maintenance, retention, and protection. Trees improve air quality, promote public health, reduce human-related stress, and increase property values along with many other benefits, which is why the City regulates their removal.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Do I need a Tree Permit?

Generally, tree removal of any kind will require a permit. However, some actions are exempt from requiring a permit, see the Frequently Asked Questions section of this document for more information.

See instructions below for how to identify which permit you may need.

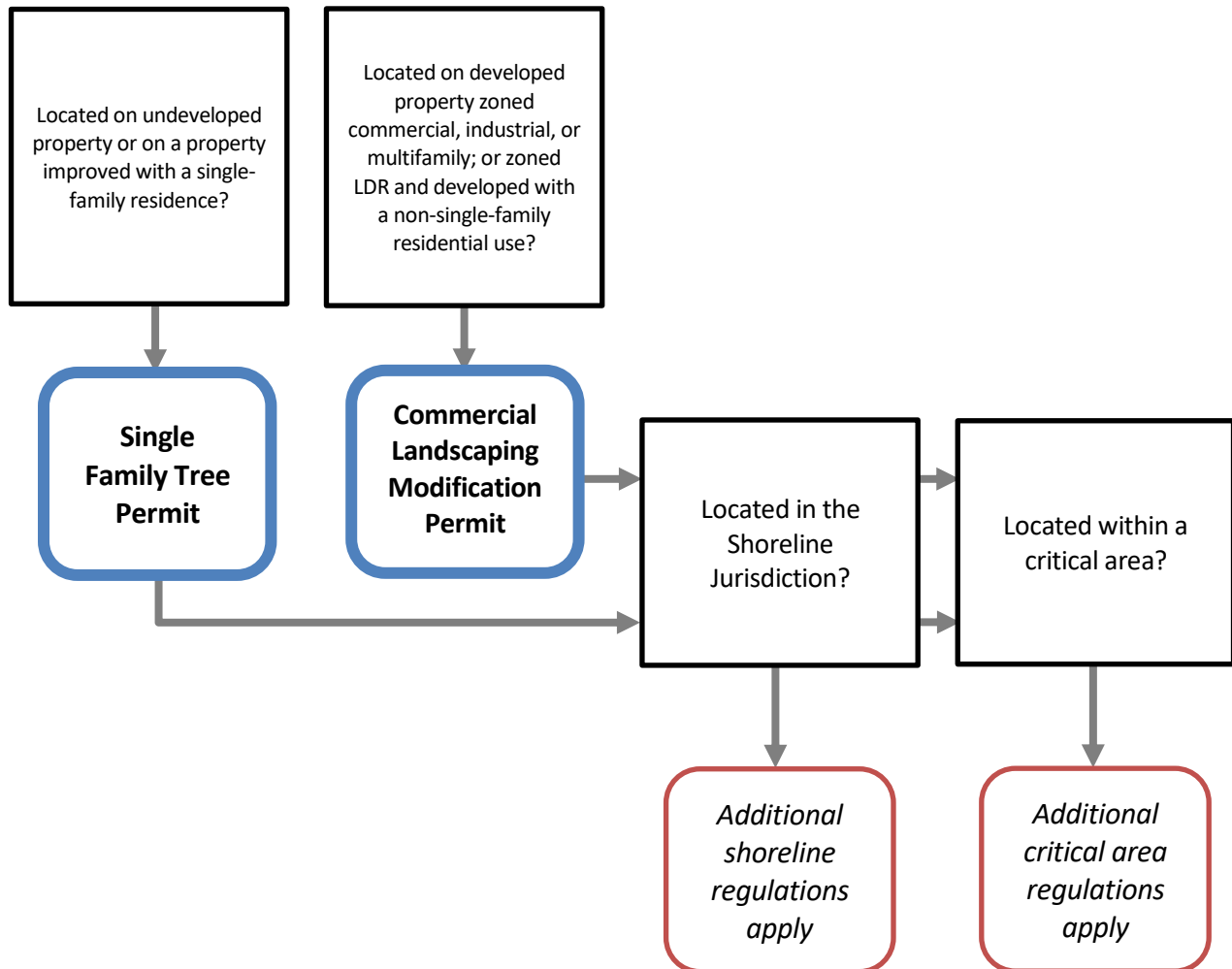
1. First, identify whether your tree removal would require a Single Family Tree Permit or a Commercial Landscaping Modification permit.
 - **Single Family Tree Permits**
Required for undeveloped residentially zoned properties or on a property improved with a single-family residence.
 - **Commercial Landscaping Modification Permits**
Required for developed properties zoned commercial, industrial, or multifamily; or zoned Low Density Residential (LDR) and developed with a non-single-family residential use.
2. Second, determine if your property is within Tukwila's Shoreline Jurisdiction or an environmentally critical area (ECA) or its buffer, see below for resources to identify these extents.

Formal identification of the extents of the Shoreline Jurisdiction or ECAs often requires a ground-assessment by a qualified professional but many known critical areas can be estimated by utilizing Tukwila iMap at <https://www.tukwilawa.gov/departments/community-development/property-research/>.

Once in iMap, you may search for the property using the address or parcel number and turn on the ECAs layer to see the approximate areas of the Shoreline Jurisdiction and known ECAs.

- **Shoreline Jurisdiction (TMC 18.44)**
The Shoreline Jurisdiction is the area running from the Duwamish/Green River's Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) to 200' landward from the OHWM. The City contains four Shoreline Environments with unique regulations, buffer extents, etc. Please see Tukwila Municipal Code Chapter 18.44: *Shoreline Overlay* for more information.
- **Environmentally Critical Areas (TMC 18.45)**
Property owners are required to declare both the presence of the environmentally critical areas on their property, as well as the accurate categorization of that critical area. Environmentally critical areas include wetlands, wetland buffers, streams, stream buffers, and steep slopes.

Tree Permit Requirement Workflow



*Tree removal on undeveloped properties without an associated land use or development permit is not permitted.

How many trees can I remove?

1. Single Family Tree (outside of an environmentally critical area)

- The number of trees that may be removed from a property in a 36-month period is based on the Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) of the trees:

Single Family Tree Removal without Replacement Limits

Trees (DBH)	# of Trees in 36 month period that can be removed without replacement ⁽¹⁾
>6-8"	4
>8-18"	2
>18"	1 and no other trees

⁽¹⁾ A combination of trees of different sizes may be removed without replacement so long as the total number of trees removed does not exceed the number allowed for the largest tree removed in a 36-month period. See Tree Permit Application for additional details.

- Properties zoned LDR that are improved with a single-family home outside of an environmentally critical area may remove 1 tree with a DBH of 18" or more, or 2 trees with a DBH between 8" and 18", or 4 trees with a DBH between 6" and 8" in a 36-month period without replacement; anything over this allotment will require replacement trees to be installed.
 - Tree removal that does not require replacement still requires a tree permit for tracking purposes.
2. Commercial/Multifamily Landscape Areas
- No trees should be removed from landscape areas unless they are dead or are an imminent hazard to the public or structures; a tree permit and potential replacement is still required.
3. Trees in the Shoreline Jurisdiction and in Environmentally Critical Areas
- No trees may be removed unless they pose an imminent hazard to the public or structures. Any proposed removal may require an arborist report and will likely require tree replacement onsite.

How many trees do I have to replant? Can I pay into the Tree Fund instead?

The Tree Fund is a last-resort to fulfill planting requirements where the site does not allow for proper placement. Every reasonable effort must first be made to replace the tree on-site, and it must be demonstrated that replanting on-site is not feasible.

1. Trees on Property Improved with a Single-Family Home and Undeveloped Property (outside of an environmentally critical area) (TMC 18.54.080 B)

- The number of replacement trees required is based on the DBH of the tree(s) that was removed.

SINGLE FAMILY TREE REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Trees (DBH)	Replacement ratio for trees that are subject to replacement
6-8"	1:1
>8-18"	1:2
>18"	1:3

2. Commercial/Multifamily Landscape Area - Tree Replacement (TMC 18.52.120)
 - Trees that are part of an approved landscaping plan must be replaced at a ratio of 1:1 and the trees must be of a similar or larger size.
3. Shoreline Jurisdiction - Tree Replacement (TMC 18.44.060.D.4)
 - All tree removal within the shoreline jurisdiction requires replacement, typically with native species.
 - The number of replacement trees required is based on the DBH of the tree(s) that was removed:

SHORELINE TREE REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Diameter* of Tree Removed (*measured at height of 4.5 feet from the ground)	Number of Replacement Trees Required
4 - 6 inches (single trunk); 2 inches (any trunk of a multi-trunk tree)	3
Over 6 - 8 inches	4
Over 8 - 20 inches	6
Over 20 inches	8

4. Trees in Environmentally Critical Area - Tree Replacement (TMC 18.45.158.C.4)
 - All tree removal within environmentally critical areas and their buffers require replacement, typically with native species.
 - The number of replacement trees required is based on the DBH of the tree(s) removed:

CRITICAL AREA TREE REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Diameter* of Tree Removed (*measured at height of 4.5 feet from the ground)	Number of Replacement Trees Required
4 - 6 inches (single trunk); 2 inches (any trunk of a multi-trunk tree)	3
Over 6 - 8 inches	4
Over 8 - 20 inches	6
Over 20 inches	8

What if my tree is hazardous, can I remove it without a permit?

A hazardous tree is a tree that meets all of the following criteria:

- A tree with a combination of structural defects and/or disease that makes it subject to a high probability of failure; and
- A tree in proximity to moderate to high frequency targets (persons or property that can be damaged by tree failure); and
- The hazard condition of the tree cannot be lessened with a reasonable and proper arboricultural practice nor can the target be removed.

Emergencies

Alterations in response to an emergency that poses an immediate threat to public health, safety or welfare, or that poses an immediate risk of damage to private property may be excepted, please contact the City for more information.

Any alteration undertaken as an emergency shall be reported within one business day to the Community Development Department. The Director shall confirm that an emergency exists and determine what, if any, mitigation and conditions to repair any damage to the critical area and its required buffers shall be required to protect health, safety, welfare and the environment. Emergency work must be approved by the City.

If the Director determines that the action taken, or any part thereof, was beyond the scope of an allowed emergency action, then the enforcement provisions of TMC Section 18.45.195 shall apply. A tree permit is still required, and removals may be subject to replacement. Non-emergency tree removals without a permit may be subject to code enforcement actions.

What if my tree is dead or dying?

1. Dead Trees on Properties Improved with a Single-Family Home (not within shoreline or critical area)
 - These trees may be removed without obtaining a permit, however please confirm with the City ahead of removal.
2. Dead Trees in Commercial/Multifamily Landscape Areas (not within shoreline or critical area)
 - These trees in landscape areas should be removed and replaced with a tree of the same species.
 - If a different species is proposed, a permit is required.
3. Dead/Dying Trees in the Shoreline Jurisdiction and in Environmentally Critical Areas
 - These should be left in place unless they present a hazard to structures, facilities, or the public.
 - A permit is required for any removal and are subject to replacement. If the hazard is non-obvious, an arborist report will be required.

Do I need an arborist report?

Single-Family properties may electively take down trees per the three-year allowable limit regardless of hazard status. If the tree you would like to remove is in an environmentally critical area it may not be removed unless it is hazardous or in poor health.

- If the hazard/health is not obvious, City staff will likely require an arborist report along with your application. The assessment must be conducted by an International Society of Arborist's (ISA) certified arborist with a Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ). See the ISA website at <https://pnwisa.org/page/choosing-a-qualified-arborist> for local referrals.

What if my neighbor's tree is causing a problem on my property?

This would be considered a civil matter that would need to be handled between the property owners, the City does not get involved in civil matters.

What if the tree is on the property line?

If a survey has established that a tree is jointly owned by virtue of growing on two properties, both owners must consent to tree impacts, removal, etc.

What about trees in the right-of-way (ROW)?

Trees and vegetation in the ROW are owned by the City or State. Routine maintenance for the health of tree(s) is to be conducted by the neighboring property owner. No removal or negative impacts to tree health may be executed without approval from the tree's owner.

How do I make a site map of my trees?

If a property owner lacks a site survey, it can be permissible to use a legible, publicly-available satellite image (e.g., Tukwila iMap, Google Maps, etc.) of the property, annotated with labels of the trees. Identify property lines, environmentally critical areas and/or shoreline buffers. Note pertinent information and include photos of the trees.

Show the locations of above and below ground utilities when documenting re-planting locations, *call 811 for utilities location assistance before digging.*

SITE MAP AND PHOTOGRAPHS EXAMPLE

Trees to be removed: A = 9" DBH tree (Rocky Mountain maple) B = 11" DBH (tree, species unknown)	 An aerial satellite image of a residential property with a red line indicating the right-of-way. Two trees are circled in yellow and labeled 'A' and 'B'. To the right of the map are two photographs: the first shows a weeping tree with yellow leaves, labeled 'A' in yellow; the second shows a large green tree, labeled 'B' in yellow.
Replacement trees, proposed: 1-3: Quaking Aspen 4, 5: Western Red Cedar	 An aerial satellite image of the same property, showing five trees circled in blue and numbered 1 through 5. The red right-of-way line is also visible.