

TREE PERMITS - COMMERCIAL

(Non-Critical Area or Shoreline)

Permit Type: Tree Permit
Permit Subtype: Commercial Landscaping Modification

City of Tukwila - Permit Center
6300 Southcenter Blvd, Suite 100,
Tukwila, WA 98188
[www.tukwilawa.gov/
departments/permit-center/](http://www.tukwilawa.gov/departments/permit-center/)



This checklist is for tree or landscaping work on commercial, industrial, or multifamily properties, or on properties zoned CR and developed with uses other than single-family or middle housing dwellings.

If the proposed work is on a single-family or middle housing property zoned CR, please refer to the Tree Permits – Residential checklist instead. If the work is within a shoreline jurisdiction or critical area, refer to the Tree Permit – Critical Areas & Shoreline checklist.

Is this a single-family or middle housing property?

If the property is zoned CR and improved with a single-family or middle housing dwelling, use the [Tree Permits – Residential checklist](#) instead. Tree removal allowances, replacement ratios, and submittal requirements differ for residential properties. If you are unsure which checklist applies, contact City Staff.

Is your tree in a shoreline or critical area?

If a tree is located within the Shoreline Jurisdiction or a critical area (wetland, stream, steep slope, etc.) or its buffer, a **Shoreline or Critical Area Tree Permit** is required instead of this permit. Use [Tukwila iMap](#) to check whether your property falls within these areas, then refer to the [Tree Permit – Critical Areas & Shoreline checklist](#).

Applying for a Building or Public Works Permit?

You might not need a separate Tree Permit — tree review can often happen as part of that application. Still follow the requirements here and include all attachments. Additional tree review fees may apply.

If your tree is not in a shoreline or critical area, continue with this checklist.

SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST

A PDF of each document is required at time of submittal, see [Land Use Plan Set Guide](#) for more information. Please label files as listed below:

	File Name	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Affidavit	Completed and notarized Affidavit of Ownership and Hold Harmless Permission to Enter Property .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tree Permit Application Form	Tree Permit Application Form describing location and scope of work.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape Plan	Prepared by a licensed landscape architect per TMC 18.52.110. Show all significant trees (DBH, species, location, canopy), trees to be removed or retained, replacement planting, and photos of trees proposed for removal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site Plan	Drawn to scale. Show property boundaries, existing structures, topography, impervious surfaces, setbacks, parking, access, and proposed landscaping. See Fig 1 – Sample Site Plan on page 3.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arborist Report (if applicable)	Required for removal based on hazard, disease, or defect. Prepared by an ISA-certified arborist (TRAQ for hazard assessments). See pnwisa.org .

TREE PERMIT – COMMERCIAL

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tree Protection Plan (if applicable)	Required when significant trees are being retained. Show Critical Root Zones, fencing locations, and protection measures per TMC 18.52.070. May be incorporated into the landscape plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conceptual Grading & Utilities (if applicable)	Required if project involves grading, drainage changes, or utility work. Confirm with Permit Center.

PROCESS & EXPIRATION

- Type 2 administrative decision under TMC 18.104; no public hearing required.
- Exceptions to standard requirements may be available; see TMC 18.52.120 for modification criteria.
- Permits expire one year from issuance.

REGULATIONS

- All significant trees (6" DBH or greater) in required landscape areas must be retained and protected during construction unless dead, dying, diseased, nuisance species, or a safety hazard (TMC 18.52.060, .070).
- Topping is prohibited. Pruning more than 25% of canopy in any 36-month period is prohibited and subject to replacement (TMC 18.52.060.B).
- Retained significant trees may count toward required landscaping and may reduce required landscape area, subject to Director approval (TMC 18.52.060.C).
- Unauthorized removal of required landscaping trees triggers mandatory replacement per Table C of TMC 18.52.130 and civil penalties up to the marketable value of the tree.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

- **Do I need a permit to remove a dead or dying tree?** Yes, on commercial and multifamily properties. Dead trees in required landscape areas must be replaced in kind; a permit is required even to change species. Contact City staff before removal.
- **When is an arborist report required?** When removal is based on hazard, disease, or structural defect, or when a significant tree is proposed for removal or retention near construction activity. The City may also require an ISA-certified arborist to supervise tree protection during construction per TMC 18.52.060.D. Find certified arborists at pnwisa.org.
- **Can I cluster required landscaping instead of providing a perimeter strip?** Possibly. Clustering or perimeter averaging may be approved as a Type 2 Director decision if the total required square footage is met and the modification does not create a nuisance to adjacent properties. See TMC 18.52.120.D for criteria.
- **Can bioretention count as required landscaping?** Yes, for Type I and Type II landscaping. A bioretention facility with trees, shrubs, and groundcover from the City's Bioretention Plant List may count up to 100% toward required landscaping if designed by a low impact development professional and other criteria in TMC 18.52.120.E are met. Bioretention does not count toward Type III landscaping.
- **What are the penalties for unpermitted tree removal?** Removal or damage of required landscaping trees without City approval is subject to a civil penalty of \$1,000 per tree, or up to the marketable value as determined by an ISA-certified arborist, whichever is greater. Replacement is also required. See TMC 18.52.130 for full enforcement provisions.