



CITY OF CAPITOLA

TREE PERMIT INFORMATION

CITY OF CAPITOLA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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Tree Permit Overview

A Tree Permit is required to remove most trees on private property. The purpose of the Tree Permit process is to protect and enhance the City's existing tree cover for the benefit of aesthetics, community character, air quality, and habitat for birds and wildlife. A Tree Permit is a ministerial Permit which is typically issued by the Community Development Director.

Tree Permit Applicability

Capitola Municipal Code section 12.12 establishes the criteria for when a Tree Permit is required. A Tree Permit is required to remove any tree which has a diameter of 6-inches or more at 48-inches above grade. The only exceptions are fruit-bearing trees, which do not require a permit to remove.

Tree Trimming and Pruning

A property owner may trim and prune trees without a permit if it does not remove more than 25% of the tree's height or its volume of foliage and branches.

Tree Permit Findings

In order to issue a permit to remove a tree, the following findings must be made:

1. The tree removal is in the public interest based on one of the following:
 - a. Because of the health or condition of the tree, with respect to disease infestation, or danger of falling;
 - b. Safety considerations; or
2. A tree has caused, or has the potential to cause, unreasonable property damage and/or interference with existing utility services.
3. All possible and feasible alternatives to tree removal have been evaluated, including, but not limited to undergrounding of utilities, selective root cutting, trimming and relocation.

4. Replacement trees in a ratio of 2:1 to ensure a canopy coverage of at least fifteen percent will result, and/or as a last resort, in-lieu fees have been paid. Replacement trees and/or in-lieu fees are not required if post-removal tree canopy coverage on the site or parcel will be 30% or more.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit a Tree Permit Application and submit necessary fees as established in the City's adopted Fee Schedule. An arborist report may also be needed to evaluate the condition of a tree. A security deposit is also required to ensure replacement trees (as applicable) are installed in a timely and proper manner.

Time and Cost

Tree Permits typically require 5-30 days to process. The cost for all Tree Permits can be found on the latest Fee Schedule for Planning Permits.

- Tree Removal (Staff Review)
- Tree Removal (PC Review)
- Tree Removal (3 or more)
- Replacement Deposit - \$500 refundable fee
- Arborist Report – actual cost + 21%

Tree Permit Process

Once a complete Tree Permit application has been submitted, City staff will evaluate the request, inspect the tree to be removed, and post a notice on the property for a minimum of period of 10 working days prior to tree removal. If findings can be made to allow removal, the property owner will be required to submit a fully refundable deposit to ensure replacement trees will be planted. A permit will then be issued over-the-counter. Tree permits do not require a public hearing, unless the tree is located in an environmentally sensitive area and within the coastal zone.