



Oregon City Municipal Code

Chapter 12.08 Public and Street Trees

12.08.010 - Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to:

- A. Develop tree-lined streets to protect the living quality and beautify the city;
- B. Establish physical separation between pedestrians and vehicular traffic;
- C. Create opportunities for solar shading;
- D. Improve air and water quality; and
- E. Increase the community tree canopy and resource.

12.08.015 - Street tree selection, planting and maintenance requirements.

All development shall provide street trees adjacent to all street frontages. Species and locations of trees shall be selected based upon vision clearance requirements, but shall in all cases be selected from the Oregon City Street Tree List, an approved street tree list for a jurisdiction in the metropolitan region, or be approved by a certified arborist unless otherwise approved pursuant to this section. If a setback sidewalk has already been constructed or the Public Works Department determines that the forthcoming street design shall include a setback sidewalk, then all street trees shall be installed with a planting strip or within tree wells. If existing street design includes a curb-tight sidewalk, then all street trees shall be placed according to OCMC 12.08.035.C.

- A. One street tree shall be planted for every thirty-five feet of property frontage. The tree spacing shall be evenly distributed throughout the total development frontage to meet the clearance distances required in subsection (B) below. The Community Development Director may approve an alternative street tree plan, or accept fee-in-lieu of planting pursuant to OCMC 12.08.035, if site or other constraints prevent meeting the required total number of tree plantings.
- B. The following clearance distances shall be maintained when planting trees:
 - 1. Fifteen feet from streetlights;
 - 2. Five feet from fire hydrants;
 - 3. Twenty feet from intersections;
 - 4. Five feet from all public utilities (i.e. sewer, storm and water lines, utility meters, etc.);
- C. All street trees planted in conjunction with development shall be a minimum of two inches in caliper at six inches above the root crown and installed to city specifications. Larger caliper size trees may be approved if recommended by a certified arborist or registered landscape architect.
- D. All established trees shall be pruned tight to the trunk to a height that provides adequate clearance for street cleaning equipment and ensures ADA complaint clearance for pedestrians.
- E. All trees planted within the right-of-way shall be planted with root barriers at least eighteen inches in depth adjacent to the sidewalk and curb to ensure proper root growth and reduce potential damage to sidewalks, curbs and gutters.

- F. All trees planted beneath powerlines shall be selected based on what is appropriate for the location. In addition, the tree species shall be approved by the associated franchise powerline utility company.
- G. Tree species, spacing and selection for stormwater facilities in the public right-of-way and in storm water facilities shall conform to requirements of OCMC 13.12 and the adopted Stormwater and Grading Design Standards and be approved by the City Engineer.
- H. Any public or street trees planted within the Natural Resource Overlay District shall conform to the applicable requirements of OCMC 17.49 - Natural Resources Overlay District (NROD).

12.08.025 - General tree maintenance.

Abutting property owners shall be responsible for the maintenance and replacement of street trees and planting strips. Topping of trees is prohibited, unless under recommendation of a certified arborist, or other qualified professional. Trees shall be trimmed appropriately. Maintenance shall include watering during dry periods, trimming of established trees to remove dead branches and dangerous limbs and to maintain a minimum seven-foot clearance above all sidewalks, eight-foot clearance in clear vision areas pursuant to OCMC 10.32, and ten-foot clearance above the street. Planter strips shall be kept clear of weeds, obstructing vegetation and trash.

12.08.030 - Public property tree maintenance.

The City shall have the right to plant, prune, maintain and remove trees, plants and shrubs in all public rights-of-way and public grounds, as may be necessary to ensure public safety or to preserve and enhance the symmetry or other desirable characteristics of such public areas. The Public Works Department and Parks and Recreation Department may recommend to the Community Development Director the removal of any tree or part thereof which is in an unsafe condition or may be injurious to above or below-ground public utilities, structures or other public improvements. Removed trees shall be replaced in accordance with this chapter or the mitigation requirements of the OCMC 17.49 - Natural Resources Overlay District (NROD), if the tree to be removed is within the NROD.

12.08.035 - Tree removal and replacement.

Existing street trees, trees in the right-of-way, and trees on public property shall be retained and protected during development unless removal is specified as part of a land use approval or in conjunction with a public capital improvement project, in accordance with OCMC 17.41. Tree removal shall be mitigated by the following:

- A. A diseased or hazardous street tree, as determined by a registered arborist and approved by the City, may be removed, if replaced with one new tree for each diseased or hazardous tree. Hazardous trees which have raised the adjacent sidewalk in a manner which does not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act may be removed and replaced without approval of an arborist.
- B. A non-diseased, non-hazardous street tree that is removed shall be replaced in accordance with the Table 12.08.035. All replaced street trees shall have a minimum 1.5-inch caliper trunk measured six inches above the root crown.

Table 12.08.035

Replacement Schedule for Trees Determined to be Dead, Diseased or Hazardous by a Certified Arborist		Replacement Schedule for Trees Not Determined to be Dead, Diseased or Hazardous by a Certified Arborist	
Diameter of tree to be	Number of	Diameter of tree to be	Number of

Removed (Inches of diameter at 4-ft height)	Replacement Trees to be Planted	Removed (Inches of diameter at 4-ft height)	Replacement Trees to be Planted
Any Diameter	1 Tree	Less than 6"	1 Tree
		6" to 12"	2 Trees
		13" to 18"	3 Trees
		19" to 24"	4 Trees
		25" to 30"	5 Trees
		31" and over	8 Trees

- C. For the purposes of this chapter, removed trees shall be replaced by trees within the right-of-way abutting the frontage subject to the clearance distances required under OCMC 12.08.015(B). If a sufficient location to replant tree(s) is not available, the Community Development Director may allow:
1. Off-site installation of replacement trees within the right-of-way or on public property;
 2. Planting of replacement trees or designation of existing trees on the abutting property within ten feet of the right-of-way as street trees. Designated street trees shall be a minimum of two inches in caliper and shall comply with the requirements in section B. In order to assure protection and replacement of the trees on private property, a covenant shall be recorded identifying the tree(s) as subject to the protections and replacement requirements in this chapter; or
 3. If sufficient space to replant tree(s) is not available, the Community Development Director may allow a fee in-lieu of planting the tree(s) to be placed into a City fund dedicated to obtaining trees, planting trees and/or tree education in Oregon City.
- D. Trees that are listed as invasive or nuisance species as defined in OCMC 17.04.605 may be removed without replacement.

12.08.045 – Gifts, fee-in-lieu of planting, and funding.

The City of Oregon City may accept gifts, which are specifically designated for the purpose of planting or maintaining trees within the City. The Community Development Director may allow a fee in-lieu of planting the tree(s) to be placed into a city fund dedicated to planting trees in Oregon City. The Community Development Director may determine the type, caliper and species of the trees purchased with the fund. The cost of each tree may be adjusted annually based upon current market prices for materials and labor as calculated by the Community Development Director. A separate fund shall be established and maintained for revenues and expenditures created by activities specified in this chapter. The Natural Resources Committee shall have authority on behalf of the City to seek grants and alternative funding for tree projects. Funds from such grant awards shall be administered by the City pursuant to this section.

12.08.050 - Violation—Penalty.

The violation of any provision of this chapter shall be constitute a civil infraction, subject to code enforcement procedures of OCMC 1.16 and/or OCMC 1.20.

