



## **No Net Loss of Trees Policy**

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## NO NET LOSS OF TREES POLICY

### I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there will be no net loss of trees on city-owned property as a result of discretionary construction and development activities. Trees are a vital component of the infrastructure for the City of Dunwoody, providing environmental and economic benefits, and contributing to a clean and healthy environment. As they grow, trees take in carbon dioxide from the air and produce life-giving oxygen. Trees provide food and shelter for wildlife, cut down on noise pollution by acting as sound barriers, and improve water quality, protect streams and protect marshes by slowing and filtering rain water. Trees in Dunwoody reduce the heat island effect associated with pavement and buildings by providing shade and cooling, which lessens energy demands and pollution. Properly placed trees can increase property values and add to the aesthetic vistas within the city.

Dunwoody's trees face many hazards and hardships including insects, disease, construction, drought, and air pollution. Protecting the trees along our roads and in our parks is in the best interest of the City of Dunwoody. Whenever safe, prudent, and practical, the city strives to maintain Dunwoody's trees in a healthy and thriving condition through professionally accepted arboricultural practices.

The City of Dunwoody seeks to curtail any loss of canopy coverage as described in City of Dunwoody's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 16 Land Development. This policy furthers the "Tree Protection" provisions by establishing standards of no net loss in canopy coverage on city-owned property.

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## II. Definitions

The terms and provisions of this policy shall apply to all public property owned by the City of Dunwoody and subject to city regulations.

### A. Permitting for Tree Removal

No person shall directly or indirectly remove or destroy any tree located on public property without obtaining approval pursuant to §25-31, or as provided in this section, whichever is appropriate. Destruction of a tree includes pruning and shaping practices not in line with ANSI A300 (Part 1) Standards for Tree Care Operations—Pruning.

1. Permits to remove or destroy trees for discretionary construction, renovation, or demolition on public property shall be obtained by making application to the City Arborist on a form prescribed by the city.
  - a. Applications must be accompanied by a landscape plan, prepared by a registered landscape architect, certified arborist or registered forester, showing tree replacements.
  - b. The replacement trees need not be located on the same parcel as the tree that was removed, destroyed or injured. The City Arborist shall consider all public property located within the entire corporate limits of Dunwoody for the purposes of eligible areas of replanting.
  - c. The City Arborist shall make suggestions related to appropriate tree species, size, season for installation and appropriate location for replacement trees.
  - d. Replacement tree plantings shall be completed within one calendar year.
  - e. Replacement tree plantings shall be inspected by the City Arborist and verified by the dated signature of the City Arborist on the approved plan.
  - f. In the event that there are not enough suitable locations for replacement trees on City property or right of way, the City may elect to satisfy the tree replacement requirement by providing trees at a publically advertised event for citizens—distributed in exchange for agreement that planting will be within the City of Dunwoody. Eligibility to receive trees will be determined by proof of residency.
2. Permits to remove or destroy trees for safety, landscaping, silviculture, infrastructure maintenance, or other purposes on public property shall be

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- a. The City Arborist shall make suggestions related to appropriate tree species, size, season for installation and appropriate location for replacement trees.
- b. The replacement trees need not be located on the same parcel as the tree that was removed, destroyed or injured. The City Arborist shall consider all public property located within the entire corporate limits of Dunwoody for the purposes of eligible areas of replanting.
- c. Replacement tree plantings shall be completed within one calendar year.
- d. Replacement tree plantings on public property shall be inspected by the City Arborist.
- e. In the event that there are not enough suitable locations for replacement trees on City property or right of way, the City may elect to satisfy the tree replacement requirement by providing trees at a publically advertised event—distributed in exchange for agreement that planting will be within the City of Dunwoody. Eligibility to receive trees will be determined by proof of residency.

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## III. Scope

The terms and provisions of this policy shall apply to all public property owned by the City of Dunwoody and subject to city regulations.

### B. Permitting for Tree Removal

No person shall directly or indirectly remove or destroy any tree located on public property without obtaining approval pursuant to §25-31, or as provided in this section, whichever is appropriate. Destruction of a tree includes pruning and shaping practices not in line with ANSI A300 (Part 1) Standards for Tree Care Operations—Pruning.

3. Permits to remove or destroy trees for discretionary construction, renovation, or demolition on public property shall be obtained by making application to the City Arborist on a form prescribed by the city.

a. Applications must be accompanied by a landscape plan, prepared by a registered landscape architect, certified arborist or registered forester, showing tree replacements.

b. The replacement trees need not be located on the same parcel as the tree that was removed, destroyed or injured. The City Arborist shall consider all public property located within the entire corporate limits of Dunwoody for the purposes of eligible areas of replanting.

c. The City Arborist shall make suggestions related to appropriate tree species, size, season for installation and appropriate location for replacement trees.

d. Replacement tree plantings shall be completed within one calendar year.

e. Replacement tree plantings shall be inspected by the City Arborist and verified by the dated signature of the City Arborist on the approved plan.

f. In the event that there are not enough suitable locations for replacement trees on City property or right of way, the City may elect to satisfy the tree replacement requirement by providing trees at a publically advertised event for citizens—distributed in exchange for agreement that planting will be within the City of Dunwoody. Eligibility to receive trees will be determined by proof of residency.

4. Permits to remove or destroy trees for safety, landscaping, silviculture, infrastructure maintenance, or other purposes on public property shall be obtained by making application to the City Arborist on a form prescribed by the city.

a. The City Arborist shall make suggestions related to appropriate tree species, size, season for installation and appropriate location for replacement trees.

b. The replacement trees need not be located on the same parcel as the tree that was removed, destroyed or injured. The City Arborist shall consider all public property located within the entire corporate limits of Dunwoody for the purposes of eligible areas of replanting.

c. Replacement tree plantings shall be completed within one calendar year.

d. Replacement tree plantings on public property shall be inspected by the City Arborist.

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- e. In the event that there are not enough suitable locations for replacement trees on City property or right of way, the City may elect to satisfy the tree replacement requirement by providing trees at a publically advertised event—distributed in exchange for an agreement that planting will be within the City of Dunwoody, in a location suitable for the tree to grow and thrive, not on any public property or duly recorded easement. Eligibility to receive trees will be determined by proof of residency, and distributed on a first come, first served basis.

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## IV. Exceptions

The City of Dunwoody's policy to ensure there will be no net loss of trees on city property is not always practicable. The following situations are exceptions to the No Net Loss of Trees Policy.

- A. If a tree is dead or presents a hazard or danger to health, safety, or welfare of the public, such tree may be removed immediately by the City or the City's agent. Within five working days of said removal, the City or the City's agent must provide a tree removal application to the City Arborist. Re-vegetation shall follow based on the City Arborist's suggestions as to an appropriate tree species and appropriate location for replacement trees. 1. Trees, alive or dead, that pose a hazard to the health, safety and welfare of the population at large; and 2. Trees, alive or dead, that pose a specific threat to persons and/or real property; and 3. Trees, alive or dead, that negatively impact the best management practices of the orderly operation of motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic through Dunwoody, may be removed without the need for compensatory re-vegetation.
- B. If a tree is diseased or insect-infected such tree may be removed after consultation with the City Arborist. Within five business days of said removal, the City of Dunwoody or the City's agent must provide the tree removal application to the City Arborist. Re-vegetation shall may then follow, based on the City Arborist's suggestions as to an appropriate tree species, size, season for installation and appropriate location for replacement trees.
- C. During a period of any emergency, such as a tornado, ice storm, flood, or any other act of nature, the requirements of this policy may be waived or modified as required by the City Manager, Public Works Director, Parks Director, City Arborist, or those individuals' designee.
- D. Trees that are located on, inside, or immediately adjacent to a utility easement, that are removed as a function of emergency and/or imperative repair or maintenance work, do not require compensatory re-vegetation.
- E. Trees that are located on, inside, or immediately adjacent to any utility easement, whether the trees are alive or dead, and are, in the opinion of the city arborist or his/her designee, in conflict with utility lines in that easement, or will grow into a conflict with utility lines in that easement, be they above ground or underground utilities, may be removed by the city or by the city's duly authorized third-parties, to mitigate or eliminate such conflict without the need for compensatory re-vegetation.

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## V. Responsibility

### A. City Arborist

The City Arborist has primary enforcement responsibilities for this policy and is charged with the responsibility for approval of all tree removal and tree replacement plans for public property in the City of Dunwoody required pursuant to this policy.

DUTIES: The City Arborist shall have the following duties and powers in regards to the No Net Loss of Trees Policy:

1. Communicating with the City Department Heads when a tree could potentially be removed or damaged due to performing essential work duties.
2. Reviewing all plans for tree removal and tree replacement on public property in the City of Dunwoody as required pursuant to this policy.
3. Monitoring and ensuring the success of the No Net Loss of Trees Policy, and when appropriate, working with Administration to assess technical feasibility and/or cost effectiveness.
4. Work with the Director of Sustainability to make certain that employees are aware and educated about this No Net Loss of Trees Policy.