

Inspector contact info: <https://charlotteexplorer/> click Planning layer > Land Development – Urban Forestry Inspectors

Plant Material

1. Minimum tree size at planting is 2" caliper and 8' tall for single-stem trees. All multi-stem plants must be tree form, maximum 3 to 5 trunks, and minimum 10' tall. Where 3" single-stem caliper trees are specified/required the minimum height shall be 10' tall, if multi-stem trees are specified then they shall be a minimum of 12' tall.
2. All new trees must have **straight trunks with strong central leaders intact to the top of the crown** unless multi-stem trees are specified. All required trees shall be typical of their species and variety, have normal growth habits, have well-developed branches, be vigorous and have fibrous root systems. Trees with major girdling roots will NOT be accepted. Trees with co-dominant branching will NOT be accepted. Trees that have been sheared, topped or cut back to multiply the branching structure will NOT be accepted. Trees shall be free of abrasions, damage, disease, pests and cracks. All pruning cuts greater than ½ inch diameter shall have callus tissue formed prior to planting. No pruning cut on the trunk shall be more than one-half the diameter of the central leader at the height where the cut was made. Root flares shall be located at grade. Trees with more than 2" of soil covering the root ball/flare from will NOT be accepted (CLDS.40.09).
3. Size of required plants, spread of roots and size of balls shall be in accordance with ANSI Z60.1 (latest edition) as published by the American Nursery & Landscape Association, except where specified/authorized by Urban Forestry. All required trees of a particular species and variety shall be uniform in size and configuration.
4. Perimeter trees in urban zones shall be 3" in caliper and be free of branches up to 6' from the top of root crown (ball).
5. A minimum of 50% of new trees must be native species, and sites with more than 20 trees required will have to install multiple (3 or more) species pursuant to the Tree Ordinance Guidelines.
6. 75% of required trees must be large mature species except in situations with overhead power line conflicts.

Planting Requirements

7. See CLDS 40.01 & 40.09 (on plan) for detailed tree planting requirements.
8. Plastic hose parts will NOT be accepted for tree staking. See CLDS 40.01 for approved staking method/materials.
9. All strapping, and top 1/3 of wire basket and burlap must be cut away and removed from root ball when planting.
10. For new planting areas, remove all pavement, gravel sub-base and construction debris; remove compacted soil and add 18" new topsoil, or till and amend the top 18" of existing soil to meet topsoil/planting mix standards for trees (within entire minimum area of 274 square feet).
11. Trees planted on public street right-of-way require approval from [Urban Forestry](#) prior to installation.
12. Review soil requirements in the [Tree Ordinance Guidelines](#).

Utility Issues

13. If utility is to be installed in/near any required tree(s) or Tree Save Area(s), call Urban Forestry **PRIOR** to utility installation.
14. Large maturing trees may not be planted within 25' of overhead power distribution or transmission lines.
15. If trees conflict with any utilities or signs; call Urban Forester to resolve **BEFORE** planting.
16. Adjust tree planting locations to avoid existing underground utilities. Plant 15' from all underground utilities.
17. **No light poles, utilities or transformers can be installed in tree islands.**
18. Commercial scale lighting (> 15' in height) must be a minimum distance of 30' from a tree. Pedestrian scale lighting (≤ 15' in height) must be a minimum distance of 15' from a tree. **Show site lighting on landscape plan.**

Tree Save and Preservation

19. Tree protection must be installed and verified by [Urban Forestry](#) prior to starting ANY construction activity.
20. Show tree protection and trees save areas on demolition, erosion control, grading and landscape plan sheets.
21. Commercial tree save areas must be recorded on a final plat with the Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds before Urban Forestry holds can be released. A 10' no build zone around tree save areas must be referenced on the plat.
22. Tree Save Areas shall be free of invasive plant species. If an area proposed for tree save contains invasive plant species at time of proposal, such invasive plant species shall be removed prior to final CO.
23. The area of any easements (water, sewer, utility, etc.) can NOT be counted toward the tree save requirement.
24. Any activity in tree save areas must be accomplished without mechanized equipment.
25. No structure will be allowed within 10' of tree save areas unless approved by Urban Forestry.
26. All trees on public street right-of-way/property are protected and removal must be permitted by Urban Forestry.
27. Contact Urban Forestry **PRIOR** to any crane set-up, machinery operation or temporary building erection that may impact protected trees, tree save areas, including City trees in public right-of-way. Impacts may include but are not limited to: encroaching in tree drip-lines, excavation, soil compaction, tree trimming, erecting and dismantling of construction cranes.

General

28. Submit required CO/hold release form at <https://charlottenc.gov/developmentcenter> for an inspection of tree protection/planting areas, a minimum of 3 days before the CO/hold release is needed.
29. Visit City of Charlotte's CLT Development Center website for additional information and urban forestry requirements: <https://charlottenc.gov/developmentcenter> then click *Trees*.

Charlotte Urban Forestry - Tree Planting and Preservation Requirements (updated 1/26/2022)

30. All tree save payment-in-lieu, perimeter tree payment in lieu, and City tree mitigation payments (checks) must be submitted to:

Attn: Urban Forestry Supervisor
CLT Development Center
600 E. Fourth St. (1st Floor)
Charlotte, NC 28202