

City of Charlotte, NC Tree Ordinance Guidelines

Commercial Tree Save: 21-94

Commercial sites developing for the first time after 2010 will have a fifteen (15) percent tree save requirement that may be located anywhere on the site, and on private property. All tree save areas are subject to City approval. Commercial sites are defined as all development types except single family subdivisions and single family homes.

Tree save areas may be located in areas meeting other requirements such as undisturbed buffers and Post Construction Controls Ordinance natural area. All tree save areas are subject to approval by City of Charlotte Urban Forestry Staff. While it is preferred, tree save area is not required to be a single contiguous area.

Commercial tree save may be satisfied by existing trees providing canopy or by trees planted when existing tree canopy is not present. When tree save areas must be planted trees are planted at a rate of thirty-six (36) trees to the acre. All planted trees must meet the standards set forth by the American National Standards Institute for nursery stock. Trees planted to meet this requirement must be a minimum of two (2) inch caliper. Tree save areas composed of existing trees or planted trees are to be natural areas with ground cover of mulch or native vegetation. Turf grass in tree save areas is prohibited.

Trees required to be planted by section 21-96 (f) (1) of the tree ordinance may not count for this requirement. Trees in tree save areas may satisfy the parking space to tree proximity requirement so long as the parking space is within forty (40) feet of the trunk of these trees. Proximity is not to be measured from the edge of a given tree save area.

Planted tree save areas must have a minimum width of thirty (30) feet and be planted at thirty-six (36) trees to the acre. Trees planted within city maintained right of way may not satisfy this requirement.

Existing tree save areas less than thirty (30) feet in width must be staked in the field prior to plan submittal. Tree save dimensions less than the thirty (30) feet standard for existing trees will only be approved thru special conditions and will be dependent on site conditions such as tree species and topography. All tree save areas must be approved by City of Charlotte Urban Forestry staff.