

# City of Charlotte Tree Ordinance Guidelines

## Checklists for Plan Submittal

(refer to the [City of Charlotte Code Chapter 21 - Tree Ordinance](#) at [Municode.com](#) for more detail)

### Tree Ordinance Checklist for COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (excluding single-family detached and duplex development)

#### **ADDITIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS**

(≥ 1000 square feet (sq ft) or 5% of existing sq ft or 10% façade change) –

##### **Tree Protection/Tree Save ([Sec. 21-91 – 21-94](#)):**

1. Provide a tree survey of existing trees in the right of way & setback along any road frontage that are 2" diameter and larger. On sites developed after 2011, show existing tree save areas
2. Show any existing trees in parking areas and a 60 ft radius around each tree
3. Show tree protection barricades on the plan with dimensions from tree. Fence should encircle trees completely and be shown on appropriate sheets in the plan set (ie demo, grading, erosion control, site, landscape, utility) to avoid conflicts
4. Add tree protection notes on the grading & erosion control plans and detail [CLDS 40.02](#)

##### **Tree Planting ([Sec. 21-96](#)):**

1. Provide a planting area on private property equal to 5% of the total impervious area for the site
2. Provide internal tree calculations including total site, total impervious and number of required trees at 1 tree per 10,000 sq ft of impervious area (sidewalks, gravel, paving, building, etc)
  - a. In existing paved areas:
    - i. Islands must be 8 ft wide and a minimum 200 sq ft per tree
    - ii. All parking spaces must be within 60 ft of a tree. Show 60 ft radius on plan
  - b. In newly paved areas:
    - i. Islands must be 8 ft wide and all parking spaces within 40 ft of a tree. Show 40 ft radius on plan
3. Provide calculations for street trees including street name, linear footage, and required number of perimeter trees based on 40 ft spacing for large maturing trees or 30 ft spacing for small maturing trees on streets with overhead distribution lines (not street lights, phone or cable lines).
  - a. Planting area must be a minimum 8 ft wide and can be on private property or in the right of way (r.o.w.)  
**(NOTE: planting in the r.o.w. on State maintained roads requires a separate permit from NCDOT and may delay the plan approval process)**
  - b. If required 8 ft planting strip does not exist, pavement cutouts equal to 200 sq ft with a minimum 5 ft width may be substituted
4. All new trees must be 2" caliper; 75% large maturing shade trees where possible; and 50% native species from the approved species list
5. Show location of site lighting on landscape plan 30 ft from any tree and any pedestrian scale lighting 15 ft from any tree
6. Add tree planting notes on the landscape/site plan and planting details [CLDS 40.01](#) & [40.09](#)

#### **NEW DEVELOPMENT - SUBURBAN**

(includes complete removal of structures to redevelop) (Wedges zoned B-1, O-2, etc) –

##### **Tree Protection/Tree Save ([Sec. 21-91 – 21-94](#)):**

1. Provide tree survey of existing trees 2" caliper or larger in the r.o.w.
2. Show a minimum of 15% of the overall site being preserved as 'tree save'. If less than 15% of the site has existing trees, additional trees are required at a rate of 36 trees per acre. If any area of tree save cannot be preserved, it will be re-planted at 150% of the area removed (up to 22.5% of the site) at a rate of 36 trees per acre
3. Any tree save area less than 30 ft in width must have boundaries and property lines delineated on site by a surveyor prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> plan submittal.

4. Show a 10 ft 'No Build Zone' adjacent to tree save areas.
5. Show tree protection barricades on the plan with dimensions from tree. Fence should encircle trees completely and be shown on appropriate sheets in the plan set (i.e. grading, erosion control, site, landscape, utility, demo) to avoid conflicts
6. Add tree protection notes on the grading & erosion control plan and detail [CLDS 40.02](#)

**Tree Planting ([Sec 21-96](#)):**

1. Provide a planting area on private property equal to 10% of the total impervious area for the entire site
2. Provide internal tree calculations for the site including total impervious area and number of required trees at 1 tree per 10,000 sq ft of impervious area (sidewalks, gravel, paving, building, etc)
3. Provide calculations for street trees including street name, linear footage, and required number of perimeter trees based on 40 ft spacing for large maturing trees or 30 ft spacing for small maturing trees on streets with overhead distribution lines (not street lights, phone or cable lines)
  - a. Planting area must be a minimum 8 ft wide and can be on private property or in the r.o.w. (**NOTE:** planting in the r.o.w. on State maintained roads requires a separate permit form NCDOT and may delay the plan approval process)
4. New trees must be a minimum 2" caliper; 75% large maturing shade trees where possible; and 50% native species from the approved species list
5. Show all parking spaces within 40 ft of a tree (new or protected) and show 40 ft radius on plan
  - a. In lots with continuous islands running the length of the parking lot and 8 ft wide, the requirement is 60 ft . Show the 60 ft radius on plans
  - b. Bus & tractor trailer parking lots require a 10 ft wide planting strip around the perimeter of the lot and trees spaced 40 ft apart with protective bollards
6. New tree islands must be 274 sq ft for large maturing trees and 200 sq ft for small maturing trees
7. Show location of all site lighting on landscape plan 30 ft from any tree and any pedestrian scale lighting 15 ft from any tree
8. Add tree planting notes on the landscape/site plan and planting details CLDS 40.01 & 40.09

**NEW DEVELOPMENT – URBAN**

**(includes complete removal of structures to redevelop)**

**Tree Protection/Tree Save([21-91 – 21-94](#)):**

1. Provide tree survey of existing trees 2" caliper or larger in the r.o.w.
2. Sites zoned UMUD & UMUD-O within the I-277 loop, and any TOD, MUDD, or UMUD in Transit Station Areas are EXEMPT from tree save requirement on private property.
3. Transit station areas, mixed-use centers, NS (12 acres or less), and I-1 & I-2 zones have the following options, entirely or in combination:
  - a. Provide tree save on site
  - b. Plant or replant trees at 36/ac on site
  - c. Install a green roof
  - d. Offsite mitigation (may not be used with payment in lieu)
  - e. Payment in lieu (may not be used with off-site mitigation)
4. Corridors outside of Transit Station Areas, entirely or in combination:
  - a. Provide tree save on site
  - b. Plant or replant trees at 36/ac on site equal in area to 150% of the area not preserved (up to 22.5% of the site)
  - c. Install a green roof equal in area to 150% of the tree save area not preserved
  - d. Offsite mitigation equal to 150% of the area not preserved (may not be used with payment in lieu)
  - e. Payment in lieu equal in area to 150% of the tree save area not preserved (may not be used with off-site mitigation)

**Tree Planting ([Sec. 21-96](#)):**

1. Provide minimum 10% landscape area as a percentage of total impervious area for the entire site on private property
  - a. Within the I-277 loop, see subsection [9.906\(4\)\(e\)](#) of the Zoning Ordinance for requirements
  - b. In MUDD and UMUD outside the I-277 loop, the planting area may be 5% of total impervious area

2. Provide internal tree calculations for total site, total impervious and number of required trees at 1 tree per 10,000 sq ft of impervious area (sidewalks, gravel, paving, building, etc)
3. Provide calculations for street trees including street name, linear footage, and required number of perimeter trees based on 40 ft spacing for large maturing trees or 30 ft spacing for small maturing trees for streets with overhead distribution lines (not street light, phone or cable lines).
  - a. Planting area must be a minimum 8 ft wide. Trees in the r.o.w. must be spaced no closer than 35 ft for large maturing trees, and 25 ft for small maturing. (Plan may differ from table calculation)
  - b. On State maintained roads trees must be shown on the plan with dimensions from the trees to the 'edge of the travel lane' OR be planted on private property outside the r.o.w. (NOTE: tree planting in the r.o.w. on State maintained roads requires a separate permit form NCDOT and may delay the plan approval process)
  - c. For urban retail sites, trees may be planted in raised planters or tree pits and must include sub-drainage and irrigation. Include associated details and notes on the plan
4. New perimeter trees must be 3" caliper if large maturing and 2" caliper if small maturing; 75% large maturing shade trees where possible; and 50% native species from the approved species list
5. Show all surface parking spaces within 40 ft of a tree (new or preserved) and show 40 ft radius on plan
6. New tree islands must be 274 sq ft for large maturing trees and 200 sq ft for small maturing trees
7. Show location of all site lighting on landscape plan 30 ft from any tree and any pedestrian scale lighting 15 ft from any tree
8. Add tree planting notes on the landscape/site plan and planting details [CLDS 40.01](#) & [40.09](#)

**Example:**

Tree Ordinance Calculations:

Impervious area = \_\_\_\_\_ sq ft\*

Landscape area = \_\_\_\_\_ sq ft \_\_\_\_\_ % of imperv

Total site area = \_\_\_\_\_ sq ft

\*Internal tree req = Imperv area / 10,000 sq ft = \_\_\_\_\_ trees

Street name = \_\_\_\_\_ linear feet (lf) \_\_\_\_\_ trees required; \_\_\_\_\_ existing, \_\_\_\_\_ proposed

Street name = \_\_\_\_\_ lf \_\_\_\_\_ trees req; \_\_\_\_\_ existing, \_\_\_\_\_ proposed

Tree Save Area

\_\_\_\_\_ sq ft, \_\_\_\_\_ % of site

\_\_\_\_\_ sq ft supplemental tree save