

CHAPTER 3 CREDITS AND FLEXIBILITY

The Landscaping Code allows for reductions in the amount of trees planted and the distribution of landscaping within parking areas, in exchange for the inclusion of desired features. Use this chapter to determine whether credits and flexibility may apply.

3.1 TREE RETENTION

If protected properly, trees retained through development offer more immediate benefits to the urban forest than newly transplanted trees. Therefore, retained trees are a priority when feasible. An incentivized credit is offered for retained trees to reflect this priority. To receive the credit, trees must be healthy and have minimal serious defects. Proper pruning to mitigate minor defects may be indicated on the Arborist Report and Tree Protection Plan as necessary.

An Arborist's Report (Appendix 4), Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and subsequent tree protection measures consistent with Chapter 7 of this Volume are required for each tree proposed to be retained if tree retention credits are desired.

Credit for qualifying retained trees will be given according to their species as small, medium or large trees (refer to Tree Size definition) in the following manner:

1. Each retained tree of at least equal size to that required gives a credit of one tree;
2. Each retained tree that is 8 inches to 20 inches in DBH gives a credit of two trees;
3. Each retained tree that is 20 inches to 32 inches in DBH gives a credit of three trees;
4. Each retained tree over 32 inches in DBH gives a credit of four trees.

For example: If a development is required to install 8 trees and they elect to retain an on-site tree of 20 inches to 32 inches in DBH, they will only have to install 5 trees on their site.

NOTE: Species considered invasive or ecosystem nuisances including, but not limited to, the following are not eligible for the retained tree credit:

- Any previously topped trees
- *Ailanthus altissima* (tree of heaven)
- *Ilex aquifolium* (English holly)
- *Acer platanoides* (Norway maple)
- *Robinia pseudoacacia* (black locust)
- *Prunus laurocerasus* / *lusitanica* (cherry / Portuguese laurel)
- Additional trees may be added to this list as necessary by the City's Urban Forester

3.2 EVERGREEN TREES

Scientific research shows that evergreen trees provide more consistent stormwater benefit to the urban environment than deciduous trees, due in part to their persistent foliage year round. Therefore, transplanting evergreens is preferred over deciduous trees in appropriate situations. A credit is offered to incentivize transplanting evergreens above and beyond the minimum requirements for evergreens (refer to Section 4.2.1 Tree Selection and Species Diversity of this Manual) to reflect this benefit.

Credit for transplanting evergreen trees will be given in the following manner:

1. Each evergreen tree planted that is above the minimum amount of required evergreen trees as defined in Section 4.2 gives a credit of 1.1 trees.
2. For sites planted with evergreens which account for more than 2/3 of the required trees, additional Parking Lot Distribution Flexibility is available; refer to TMC 13.06.090B .

3.3 LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES

For sites utilizing Low Impact Development techniques as defined in the City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual as their primary stormwater management approach, additional flexibility is available on Parking Lot Distribution requirements; refer to TMC 13.06.090B .

3.4 IN-LIEU FEES

In limited instances when specific site characteristics do not support the preservation or planting of trees, in-lieu fees may be paid into the City Urban Forestry Fund instead of installing trees per the requirements. Applicants must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the PDS Director that specific site constraints make the tree installation problematic to the reasonable use of the site. Landscaping buffer requirements, including required trees in the landscaping buffer, may not be modified through this provision. Trees and landscaping must still be installed to the maximum extent practicable. Funds collected will be used by the City Urban Forestry Program to plant trees on other public or private property within the City.

If a project is allowed to pay In-Lieu Fees instead of installing trees, the fees will be in the following amounts:

Price per tree
\$750.00

In-Lieu Fee is based on 1.5 times the current market cost for the City to purchase, plant and maintain a 2-2 ½ inch caliper tree through the establishment period (the first three years). These fees may be adjusted to keep up with current market cost.