2026

Get Started Guide

A Tree Information Forms Guide

Help document on what to enter in the tree information forms.

CITY OF SEATTLE

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Get Started

Are Tree Information Forms Required?

The Tree Information Forms (TIF) is required if all three of the following permit criteria are met:

1) You are applying for a development permit (CN, DM, GR, PH, or its revisions) that is not a subject-to-field-inspection (STFI) permit.
2) The permit application intake date (the date submittal fees are paid) is on or after January 4, 2027.
3) Your permit plan set shows trees used to meet Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Title 23 and/or 25.

View the links below for more information about the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) tree codes and standards:

- Trees & Codes - City of Seattle Website
- Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Title 23 – Land Use Code
- Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Title 25 - Environmental Protection and Historic Preservation

Tree Information Forms Purpose

The Tree Information Forms is intended to capture only those trees used to meet tree-related standards. You are not required to enter all trees on a development site into the TIF. To help applicants understand which trees are required to be included in the TIF, the SDCI uses a “development impact area” (see below).

Important:

- The Tree Information Forms do not replace the requirement to show trees in plan sets. You must still show all trees on site, in the right-of-way, and trees with branches overhanging or roots extending onto the property on your site plans and/or landscape sheets to demonstrate compliance.
- You may need to show certain trees on your site plan even if they are not required to be entered in your TIF. For example, an off-site tree that requires tree protection fencing on the property or a right-of-way tree to be removed should be on your site plan.

Development Impact Area

A development impact area (DIA) is the area where all construction, site access, heavy equipment use, storage or stockpiling of materials, and other construction activities such as grading, filling, trenching, excavation, or utility installation will occur.

Site plans are required to have a DIA shown. The DIA is intended to focus on the trees impacted by development and reduce the number of trees you need to show in the TIF when development is not occurring across the entire property.

In some cases, the DIA will be the entire site, and so you must enter all regulated on-site trees into the TIF. Any existing right-of-way trees or off-site tree plantings should only be entered if those are used to meet SDCI tree-related standards.

In other cases, the DIA is limited to only a portion of the site, then you enter the regulated trees within the DIA. Any trees or tree plantings outside the DIA or in the right-of-way should only be entered if those are used to meet SDCI tree-related standards.

What You Need to Fill out the Forms

You will need to have the following:

- An arborist report, site plan, or landscape sheet that has tree information and location that will help in filling out the tree information required for the TIF.
- A software application that allows Excel spreadsheet editing.
- Understanding of Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Title 23 and 25.

Tree Information Forms Workbook

There are three sheets in the TIF Excel workbook. Depending on the trees in your permit, you may be required to incorporate one, two, or all three sheets into your plan set.

1. Existing Trees Form
   A form for existing trees that you will remove or retain to meet tree-related standards.

2. Tree Plantings Form
   A form for the trees you propose to plant to meet tree-related standards.

3. Payment in Lieu (PIL) Summary
   An automatically generated summary if you select Payment in Lieu as the tree replacement option in the Existing Trees Form. The summary is required only if you elect Payment in Lieu.

Frequently Asked Questions

What trees do I include in the Tree Information Forms?

Important: The Tree Information Forms do not replace the requirement to show trees in plan sets. You must still show all trees on site, in the right-of-way, and trees with branches overhanging or roots extending onto the property on your site plans and/or landscape sheets to demonstrate compliance.

You should include trees in the TIF that are inside or outside the development impact area that you propose to:

Retain

- Tier 1 and Tier 2 trees that are required to be retained.
- Trees of any size used to meet tree-related standards that have all or part of their trunk on your property.
- Trees of any size used to meet tree-related standards that are in an environmental critical area (ECA), ECA buffer, or Shoreline District.
- Trees that are greater than 6 inches in diameter at standard height in the right-of-way (ROW) contiguous to your property that are used to meet the Green Factor standard.

Remove

- Tier 1-4 trees you plan to remove from your property.
- Trees of any size that you plan to remove from an environmentally critical area, ECA buffer, or Shoreline District on your property.

Plant

- Trees you will plant on site, off site, or in ROW to meet tree-related standards.

What trees do I exclude from the Tree Information Forms?

Note: You may need to show certain trees on your site plan even if they are not required to be entered in your TIF. For example, an off-site tree that requires tree protection fencing on the property or a right-of-way tree to be removed should be on your site plan.

Do **not** enter the following in the TIF that are inside or outside the development impact area that you propose to:

Retain

- Trees of any size that are not used to meet zoning code standards.
- Street trees that are used only to meet Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) standards.

- Trees that are not on your property.
- Hedges and shrubs that you will retain.

Remove

- Trees in the right-of-way.
- Trees that are not on your property.
- Hedges and shrubs that you will remove.
- Trees that are less than six inches in diameter and standard height and not in an ECA, ECA buffer, or Shoreline District.

Plant

- Trees you choose to plant for aesthetics and are not used to meet tree-related standards.
- Trees you plant only to meet Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) standards.
- New hedges or shrubs.

Are there examples?

There are four diagrams (A-D) at the end of this guide with examples of what to enter into the TIF based on the development impact area (DIA) of your project site.

For examples where the **DIA is smaller than subject site**, reference:

- Diagram A - Trees to Enter into Tree Information Forms (TIF)
- Diagram B - Trees Not to Enter into Tree Information Forms (TIF)

For examples where the **entire subject site will be impacted by development**, reference:

- Diagram C - Trees to Enter into Tree Information Forms (TIF)
- Diagram D - Trees Not to Enter into Tree Information Forms (TIF)

Which dropdowns do I select?

Within the Tree Information Forms are two help tabs:

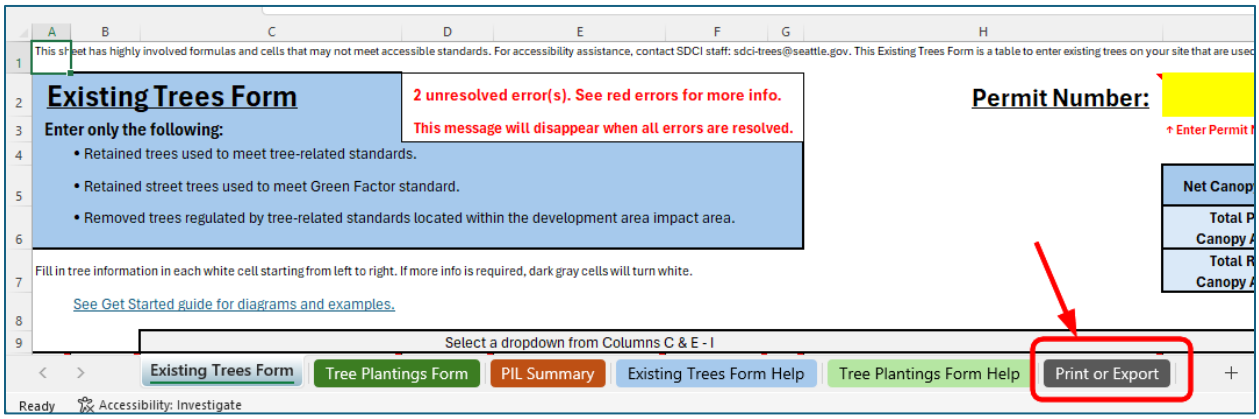
- Existing Trees Form Help
- Tree Plantings Form Help

Each help tab has a similar layout as the original form and describes the fields, what dropdowns to select, and what information to enter.

How do I export the Tree Information Forms?

First locate the Print or Export tab on the bottom of the TIF workbook. The tab only combines the Existing Trees and Tree Planting Forms.

Note: You will need to print or export the Payment in Lieu (PIL) Summary separately. To do that, be sure you're on the PIL Summary sheet, click File, and then Save As, Print, or Export.



Option 1: Copy and Paste

Open the Print or Export sheet. Select cells within the sheet, copy the cells, and paste them into your plan set.

Option 2: Print or Export Tab

Open the Print or Export sheet. Go to File and click on Save As, Print, or Export to save the Existing Trees and Tree Plantings Form.

Is there an SDCI Tree List?

Yes. The SDCI Tree List has mature tree size, canopy spread, and other tree information of the trees in the Seattle area. The list also includes planting and Green Factor tree recommendations.

How are do I incorporate the Tree Information Forms into my plan set?

Add your TIF into your plan set, preferably on the site plan or landscape sheet. Be sure your TIF is legible. You may also compile the TIF into separate plan set sheets if you have a large project with multiple sheets of tree information.

Diagram A

Trees to Enter into Tree Information Forms

Development impact area is smaller than subject site.

All trees in the site plan below should be entered into the Tree Information Forms (TIF). If a tree or tree planting is used to meet SDCI tree-related standards, it must be included in the Existing Trees or Tree Plantings Forms.

Site plans are required to have a development impact area (DIA) shown. The DIA is the area on the subject property where all construction, site access, heavy equipment use, storage or stockpiling of materials, and other construction activities such as grading, filling, trenching, excavation, or utility installation will occur.

Enter in the all regulated trees within the DIA. Any trees or tree plantings outside the DIA or in the right-of-way should only be entered if those are used to meet SDCI tree-related standards. Do not enter trees that are not required to be retained or are not used to meet SDCI tree-related standards. See "Diagram B" for what trees to omit.

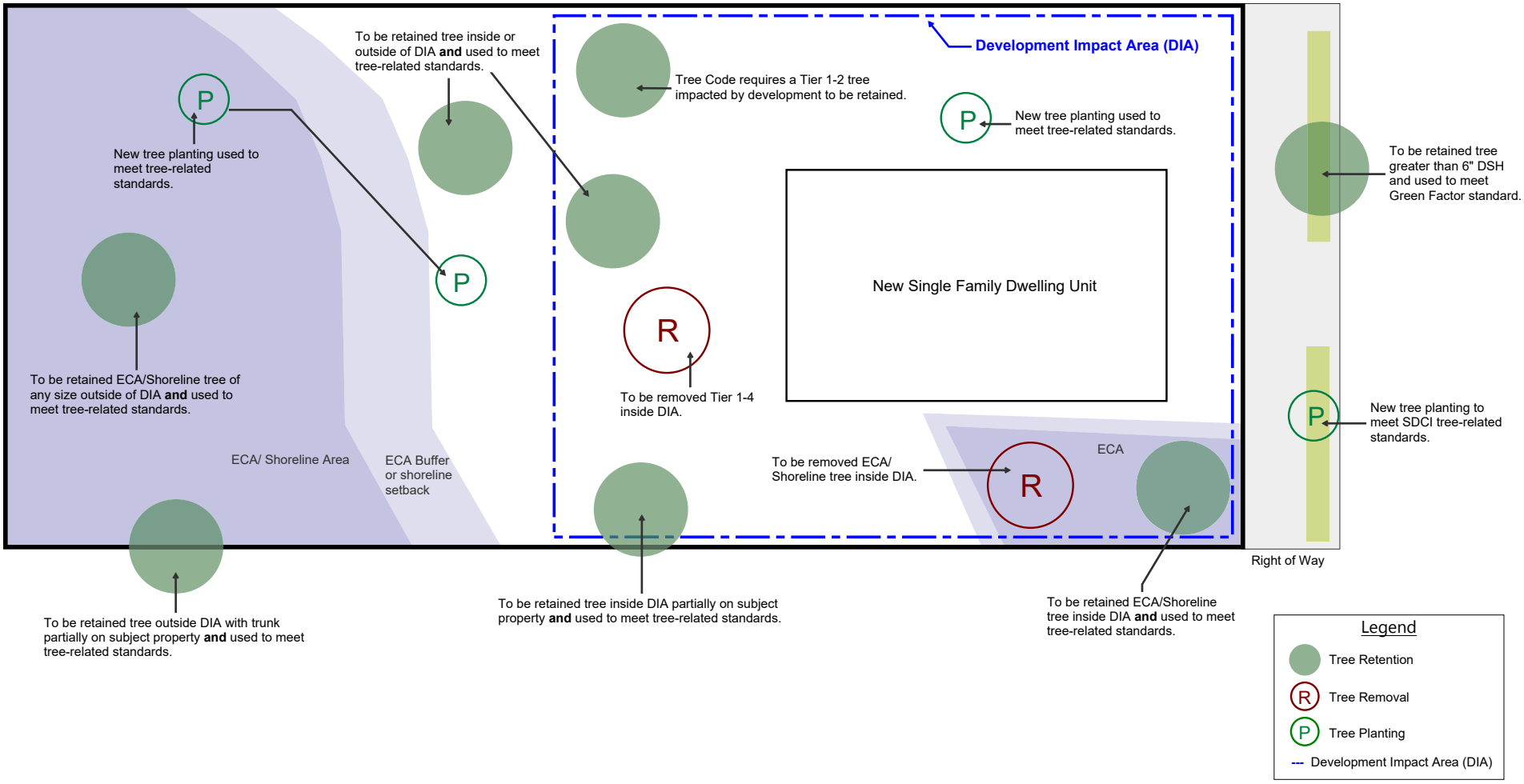


Diagram B

Trees Not to Enter into Tree Information Forms

Development impact area is smaller than subject site.

Omit all trees in the site plan below from the Tree Information Forms (TIF). Do not enter trees or tree plantings into the TIF that are not required to be retained or are not used to meet SDCI tree-related standards.

Site plans are required to have a development impact area (DIA) shown. The DIA is the area on the subject property where all construction, site access, heavy equipment use, storage or stockpiling of materials, and other construction activities such as grading, filling, trenching, excavation, or utility installation will occur.

You may need to show certain trees on your site plan even if they are not required to be enter in your TIF.
See "Diagram A" for what trees to include in the TIF.

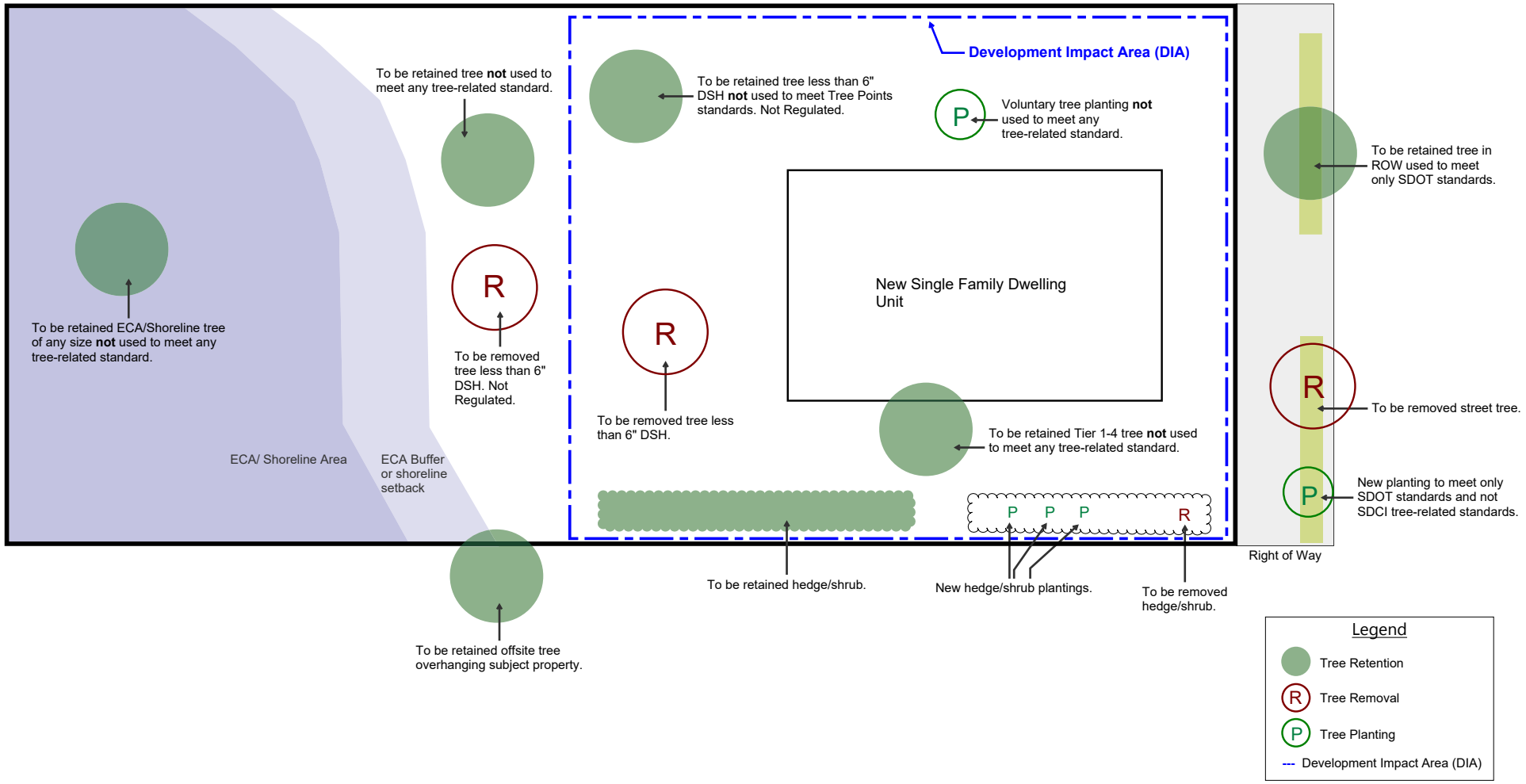


Diagram C

Trees to Enter into Tree Information Forms

Entire subject site will be impacted by development.

All trees in the site plan below should be entered into the Tree Information Forms (TIF). If a tree or tree planting is used to meet SDCI tree-related standards, it must be included in the Existing Trees or Tree Plantings Forms.

Site plans are required to have a development impact area (DIA) shown. The DIA is the area on the subject property where all construction, site access, heavy equipment use, storage or stockpiling of materials, and other construction activities such as grading, filling, trenching, excavation, or utility installation will occur.

Enter all regulated on-site trees into the TIF. Any existing right-of-way trees or off-site tree plantings should only be entered if those are used to meet SDCI tree-related standards. Do not enter trees that are not required to be retained or are not used to meet SDCI tree-related standards.
See "Diagram D" for what trees to omit.

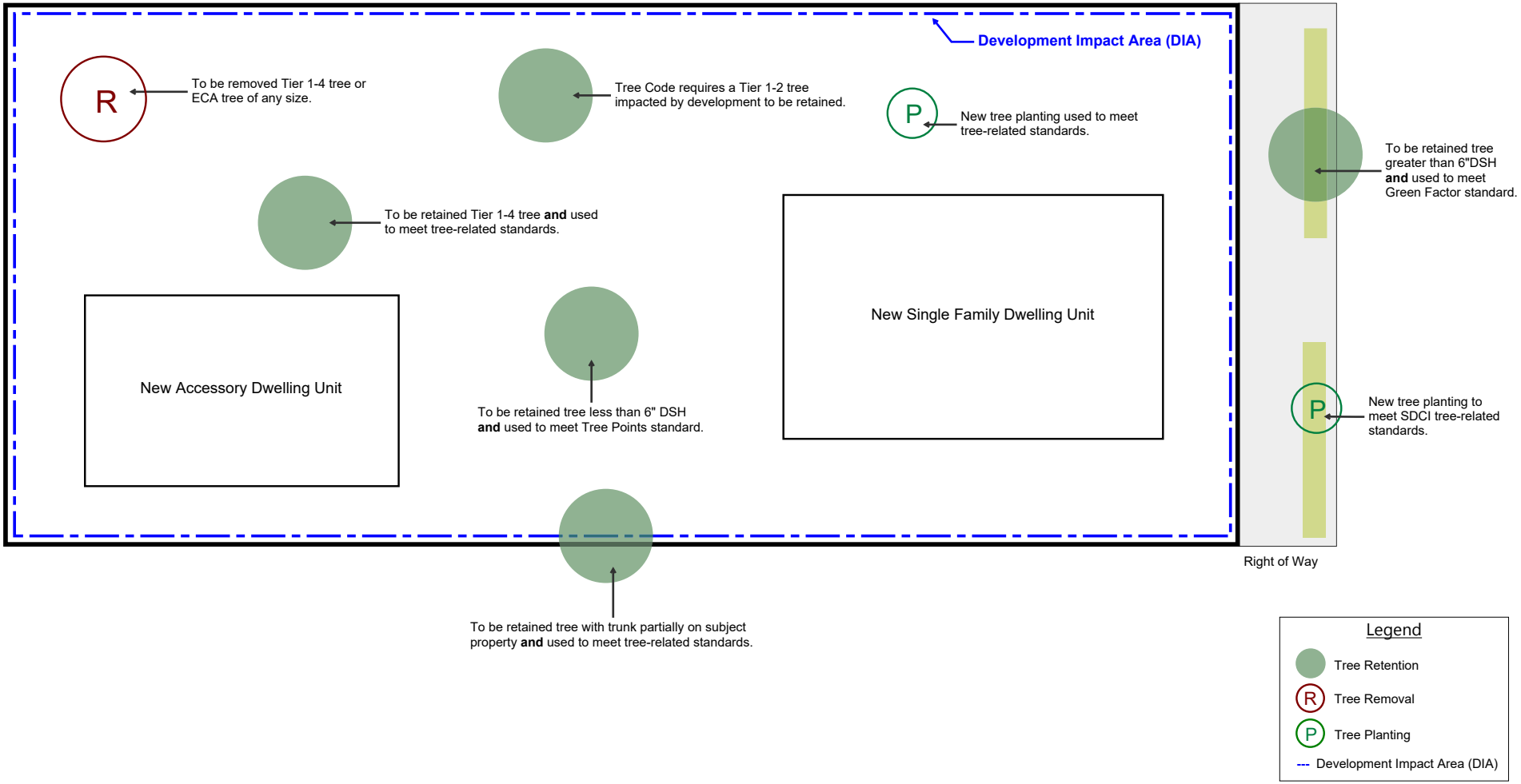


Diagram D

Trees Not to Enter into Tree Information Forms

Entire subject site will be impacted by development.

Omit all trees in the site plan below from the Tree Information Forms (TIF). Do not enter trees or tree plantings into the TIF that are not required to be retained or are not used to meet SDCI tree-related standards.

Site plans are required to have a development impact area (DIA) shown. The DIA is the area on the subject property where all construction, site access, heavy equipment use, storage or stockpiling of materials, and other construction activities such as grading, filling, trenching, excavation, or utility installation will occur.

You may need to show certain trees on your site plan even if they are not required to be enter in your TIF.
See "Diagram C" for what trees to include in the TIF.

