

25.11.010 Purpose and intent

The purpose and intent of this Chapter 25.11 is to:

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E. Protect Tier 2 and Tier 3 trees and other trees that because of their unique historical, ecological, public health, or aesthetic value constitute an important community resource, and require flexibility in design to protect these trees;

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25.11.025 Essential public facilities

If this Chapter 25.11 applies to a proposal for an essential public facility as defined in Section 23.84A.010, review of the proposed facility is subject to the provisions of Chapter 23.80.

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25.11.060 Requirements for trees when development is proposed

A. Tree protection area

1. A tree protection area is required for all existing Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 trees that are not removed during development, as well as any tree relocated offsite if on private property or any tree planted onsite as part of required mitigation pursuant to this Chapter 25.11.

2. The tree protection area for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 trees shall be determined by the Director pursuant to this subsection 25.11.060.A and any rules promulgated by the Director.

3. The tree protection area may be modified based on species tolerance; expected impacts of construction activities; tree size, age, and health; and soil conditions not to exceed the area of the feeder root zone. The Director may require Master Use Permits or building permits to include measures to protect tree(s) during construction, including within the feeder root zone.

4. The tree protection area may be reduced by the Director pursuant to the provisions of Title 23 and this Chapter 25.11, as follows, provided that the Director may approve additional modifications not listed in this subsection 25.11.060.A.4, if the Director finds the modifications do not interfere with the overall health and stability of the retained tree:

a. Any new encroachment into the tree protection area may not be closer than one half of the tree protection radius. Existing encroachments closer than one half of the tree protection radius may remain or be replaced if no appreciable damage to the tree will result.

b. The tree protection area shall not be reduced more than 35 percent of the outer half of the tree protection radius unless an alternative tree protection area or construction method will provide equal or greater tree protection and result in long-term retention and viability of the tree as determined by a certified arborist.

c. Existing encroachments do not count toward the reduction.

d. The tree protection area may be temporarily reduced in size during a specific construction activity that is not likely to cause appreciable damage to the tree. Appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented per ANSI A300 standards or their

successor, and the tree protection area shall be returned to its permanent size after the specific construction activity is complete.

5. The tree protection area is required to include fencing, signage, and other safety requirements as required in the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections Tree and Vegetation Protection Detail.

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25.11.070 Tree protection on sites undergoing development in Neighborhood Residential, Lowrise, Midrise, commercial, and Seattle Mixed zones

A. Neighborhood Residential zones

1. Tier 2 trees may be removed only if:

a. The maximum lot coverage permitted on the site pursuant to Title 23 cannot be achieved without extending into the tree protection area as altered pursuant to subsection 25.11.060.A.3 or subsection 25.11.060.A.4;

b. Avoiding development in the tree protection area would result in a portion of a principal dwelling unit, or an accessory dwelling unit, being less than 10 feet in width; or

c. Tree removal is necessary for the construction of new structures; required vehicle access; required pedestrian access; or utilities, Director-required retaining walls, or other similar improvements associated with development.

2. For purposes of retaining an existing on-site and off-site Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, or Tier 4 tree:

a. Extension into front or rear setbacks is permitted but limited to an area equal to the amount of the tree protection area of those trees not located within required setbacks.

b. Reduction of required amenity areas is permitted but limited to an area equal to the amount of the tree protection area of trees retained.

3. Reserved.

4. For the purposes of this subsection 25.11.070.A:

a. Lot coverage calculation shall not include any portion of a parcel containing a biodiversity area or corridor, riparian corridor, priority habitat, priority area setback, wetland, wetland buffer, or steep slope erosion hazard area, unless the Director has approved critical areas reduction, waiver, or modification pursuant to Chapter 25.09; and

b. The tree protection area may be altered by the Director pursuant to subsection 25.11.060.A.3 and subsection 25.11.060.A.4.

B. Lowrise, Midrise, commercial, and Seattle Mixed zones

1. Tier 2 trees may be removed as follows:

a. If an otherwise allowable development area of 85 percent cannot be achieved without extending into the tree protection area, as follows:

1) Calculate the tree protection area on the lot. For the purposes of this subsection 25.11.070.B, the tree protection area may be altered by the Director pursuant to subsection 25.11.060.A.3 and subsection 25.11.060.A.4.

2) Subtract the tree protection area and the area of any portions of the lot between a property line and tree protection area when the portion of the lot is 15 feet or less measured from a lot line to a tree protection area from the lot area. If this number is less than 85 percent of the total lot area, Tier 2 trees may be removed.

3) When multiple Tier 2 trees are located on a lot, the minimum number of trees needed to reach 85 percent may be removed based on the evaluation required by subsection 25.11.060.C.

4) When the tree protection area of an off-site Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 tree is located on the lot, this area shall be included in accordance with subsection 25.11.070.B.

b. In Midrise, Commercial, and Seattle Mixed zones Tier 2 trees may be removed, if an otherwise allowable development area of 100 percent cannot be achieved without extending into the basic tree protection area more than allowed pursuant to subsection 25.11.060.A.

c. For the purposes of this subsection 25.11.070.B, allowable development area shall not include any portion of a parcel containing a biodiversity area or corridor, riparian corridor, priority habitat, priority area setback, wetland, wetland buffer, or steep slope erosion hazard area, unless the Director has approved a critical area reduction, waiver, or modification pursuant to Chapter 25.09.

2. If an applicant chooses to retain Tier 2 trees that would otherwise be allowed to be removed under subsection 25.11.070.B.1 or if encroachment into the tree

protection area of an off-site Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 tree cannot otherwise be avoided, modifications to development standards are allowed as follows:

a. For development not subject to design review, the following Type I modifications to standards:

1) Front and rear setback and separation requirements, if applicable, may be reduced by a maximum of 100 percent;

2) Amenity areas may be reduced by a maximum of 100 percent;

3) Landscaping and screening may be reduced by a maximum of 100 percent; and

4) Structure width, structure depth, and facade length limits, if applicable, may be increased by a maximum of 50 percent.

b. The following Type I modifications to standards are permitted for development that: i) Receives public funding or an allocation of federal low-income housing tax credits; and ii) is subject to a regulatory agreement, covenant, or other legal instrument recorded on the property title and enforceable by The City of Seattle, Washington State Housing Finance Commission, State of Washington, King County, or other similar entity as approved by the Director of Housing; and iii) either: restricts at least 40 percent of rental units to occupancy by households earning no greater than 60 percent of median income, and controls the rents that may be charged for a minimum period of 40 years: or restricts at least 40 percent of ownership dwelling units earning no greater than

80 percent of median income, and controls the sale price of the units for a minimum period of 50 years:

1) Setback, separation, amenity area, landscaping, and screening requirements, if applicable, may be reduced by a maximum of 100 percent; and

2) Structure width, structure depth, and facade length limits, if applicable, may be increased by a maximum of 100 percent.

c. For development subject to design review, the departures permitted in Section 23.41.012.

d. Parking reduction. A reduction in the parking quantity required by Section 23.54.015 and the modification of standards for safe access of any required parking of Section 23.54.030 may be permitted in order to protect a Tier 2 tree, if the reduction would result in a project that would avoid the tree protection area.

e. In Lowrise zones, for a principal structure with a base height limit of 40 feet that is subject to the pitched roof provisions of subsection 23.45.514.D, the Director may permit the ridge of a pitched roof with a minimum slope of 6:12 to extend up to a height of 50 feet if the increase is needed to accommodate, on an additional story, the amount of floor area lost by avoiding development within the tree protection area and the amount of floor area on the additional story is limited to the amount of floor area lost by avoiding development within the tree protection area.

3. Tree removal required for development to achieve the allowable development area according to subsection 25.11.070.B.1 or height limits of the applicable zone includes, but is not limited to, the construction of new structures; required vehicle

access; required pedestrian access; or utilities, Director-required retaining walls, or other similar improvements associated with development.

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25.11.090 Tree replacement, maintenance, and site restoration

A. In all zones, Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 trees removed in association with development or because they are hazardous, infested by insects, pests, or pathogens, or an invasive or nuisance tree, or in accordance with the removal criteria in subsection 25.11.050.D, shall be replaced by one or more new trees, the size and species of which shall be determined by the Director; the tree replacement required shall be designed to result, upon maturity, in a canopy cover that is at least roughly proportional to the canopy cover prior to tree removal. Site restoration where there is on-site tree replacement in association with development shall include the removal of all invasive vegetation and shall prohibit replacement with invasive species. When on-site replacement is proposed, such trees count toward the Green Factor under Section 23.86.019 and private property tree point requirements under Section 23.44.120. When off-site replacement is proposed, preference for the location shall be on public property.

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25.11.130 Definitions

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"Tree protection area" means the area surrounding a tree defined by a specified distance, in which excavation and other construction-related activities are prohibited, unless pre-authorized by the Director. The tree protection area is delineated using a radius

that is equal to one foot for every inch DSH of the tree, except as altered through subsections 25.11.060.A.3 or subsection 25.11.060.A.4.