

SDCI**Director's Rule 8-2023**

Applicant: City of Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections	Page 1 of 2	Supersedes: N/A
	Publication: 7/6/2023	Effective: 7/26/2023
Subject: Payment in lieu of tree replacement pursuant to the Tree Protection Code	Code and Section Reference: SMC 25.11.110	
	Type of Rule: Code Interpretation	
	Ordinance Authority: SMC 3.06.040	
Index: Land Use Code/Technical Standards and Procedural Requirements	Approved	Date
	_____ Nathan Torgelson, Director, SDCI	

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this Rule is to provide guidance for the payment in lieu of tree replacement pursuant to Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Section 25.11.110 Off-site planting and voluntary payment in lieu. A formula from the *Guide for Plant Appraisal*, published in 2018, 10th edition, authored by the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers, was used to develop the cost per square inch to replace a tree which included establishment costs.

The methodology included a survey of tree species from Seattle area nurseries to determine an average cost per square inch of tree. City departments responsible for tree planting and establishment were also consulted in determining costs of tree replacement and establishment according to SMC 25.11.110.

Rule:

The formulas to calculate the payment in lieu amount are as follows:

Square Inches of Tree Removed multiplied by the Payment In-Lieu Amount as identified by this Rule.

OR

In specific circumstances, where the required mitigation is a cost per tree, the Number of Trees multiplied by the Payment In-Lieu Amount identified by this Rule.

The following table establishes the required mitigation and the Payment In-Lieu Amounts associated with the code allowance for payment in lieu of on-site replacement. **Each tree shall be calculated individually and the total dollar amount of all trees mitigated through a payment in-lieu of onsite planting must be provided in advance of any permit that authorizes the tree removal.**

Table 1. Payment In-Lieu Contributions

Payment Categories	Required Mitigation	Payment In-Lieu Amount¹
Tier 1 Trees	Cost per square inch ² of trunk for each tree removed	\$17.87 per square inch of tree removed
Tier 2 Trees	Cost per square inch of trunk for each tree removed	\$17.87 per square inch of tree removed
For individual trees that are part of a tree grove and any Tier 1 or Tier 2 tree that is below 24 inches DSH	Cost per tree	\$8,080 (For Tier 1 and Tier 2 trees that are below 24 inches DSH, the payment shall be equal to the amount for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 tree that is 24 inches DSH)
Tier 3 Trees	Cost per tree	\$2,833

¹ The dollar amounts in this table will be evaluated periodically to ensure they continue to align with the cost of planting and establishing trees and adequately mitigate the trees removed.

² To determine the square inch of tree removed you:

- Measure diameter of each tree at standard height (in inches) and divide by 2 to get the radius.
- Square the radius and multiply by pi (π). ($r^2 \times 3.14$) = square inch of tree removed.