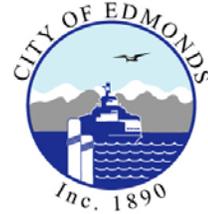


City of Edmonds Development Information



Tree and Vegetation Protection and Removal

The City of Edmonds encourages the retention of healthy trees and so regulates tree removal in several ways. The following handout is intended to educate property owners and the development community about the general requirements regarding tree removal on private property. Separate requirements apply if a tree is located within the right-of-way (contact the Engineering Division for further guidance on trees in the right-of-way). The information referenced in this handout is summarized from Chapters 18.45 and 23.40 through 23.90 of the Edmonds Community Development Code (ECDC).

In Critical Areas or Buffers

If a tree is located near a wetland, stream or steep slope, it may be in a critical area or buffer (contact the Planning Division for assistance with a critical area determination). If located in a critical area or buffer, a permit is required to cut or remove healthy trees because that work is considered to be an alteration to a critical area. "Alteration" means any human-induced action which changes the existing condition of a critical area or its buffer.

Hazard Tree Removal in Critical Areas or Buffers

If a certified arborist determines that a tree in a critical area or buffer is hazardous, poses a threat to public safety, or is an imminent risk of damage to private property, a permit for removal is not required. However, the City still must review the activity to ensure the work complies with the critical areas code.

The following information must be submitted to the City for review and approval prior to any such work:

1. A site plan showing existing structures, the critical area and/or buffer, the location(s) of the tree(s) to be removed, and location(s) of required replacement tree(s).
2. Tree Risk Assessment Form completed by an ISA Certified Arborist/Tree Risk Assessor for each tree.
3. Photos of the tree(s).
4. Cover letter describing the project and the selected native replacement tree(s).
5. Reports from professionals such as a geotechnical engineer or biologist, as applicable.

Per ECDC 23.40.220.C.7.b, tree cutting is limited to pruning and crown thinning unless the arborist determines that the creation of a wildlife snag or removal is the preferred alternative.

All cut vegetation must be left within the critical area or buffer unless removal is warranted due to potential disease or pest transmittal or to improve slope stability. Any trees removed from critical areas must be replaced on-site at a 2:1 ratio with native species. Replacements must be at least 1 inch diameter at breast height for deciduous trees or a minimum of 6 feet in height from the top of the root ball for evergreens.

In Single Family Zones

If no critical areas are present on or adjacent to the subject site, no permit is required for tree and vegetation removal on single family parcels, **except:** 1) if the parcel is improved or partially improved and can be subdivided into more than two lots, 2) if the parcel is unimproved and could be subdivided, or 3) if the tree is on a slope exceeding 25 percent.

In All Other Zones

A permit is required for tree and vegetation removal on all multifamily, business and commercial parcels whether critical areas are present or not. Alterations on such sites must not only meet the requirements of the critical areas code, but also those found in ECDC 20.13 – Landscaping Requirements.

Emergencies

Pre-approval permits are not required in emergency situations involving imminent danger to life or property or substantial fire hazard. However, any emergency removal must be done in compliance with applicable codes, and post-event review is required when a permit would have otherwise been required to conduct the work. Before and after photographs are very helpful to document emergency situations.

Violations and Penalties

Violations are misdemeanors. Fines for tree cutting violations can be up to a maximum of \$3,000 per tree. These fines are tripled to a maximum of \$9,000 per tree for trees that are cut within any critical area, critical area buffer, or the right-of-way.

Tree Protection Standards

Protection measures are required for all trees which are to be retained on-site during the development process. The tree drip line area is the ground surrounding the trunk measured from the outside edge of foliage in all directions. Where the drip line of a tree overlaps a construction line, this needs to be indicated on the plot plan and the following tree protection measures must be employed:

1. The applicant may not fill, excavate, stack or store any equipment, or compact the earth in any way within the area defined by the drip line of any tree to be retained.
2. Rope barriers or hay bales shall be installed to protect roots.
3. Rock walls shall be constructed around the tree, equal to the dripline, when existing grade levels are lowered or raised by the proposal. The diameter of this wall must be equal to the tree's drip line.
4. No ground level impervious surface shall be installed within the dripline area.
5. The grade level around any tree to be retained may not be lowered by the greater of the following areas: (1) the area defined by the drip line of the tree, or (2) an area around the tree equal to one foot in diameter for each one-inch of tree caliper.

Permit Types and Application Requirements

There are different permits and application requirements depending on where the project is located.

| Non-Hazard Trees in Critical Areas and Non-Exempt Single Family | All Other Zones |
|---|---|
| Type II Permit – Land Clearing and Grading | Type I Permit – Staff Design Review |
| Fee: See Fee Sheet (Type II Permit) <i>Note: Additional fees may apply.</i> | Fee: See Fee Sheet (Type I Permit) <i>Note: Additional fees may apply.</i> |
| Land use application | Land use application |
| Cover letter describing the project and how the applicable codes are met and photos of the subject trees. | Cover letter describing the project and how the applicable codes are met and photos of the subject trees. |
| Plot plan (1" = 30' or similar) showing, as applicable: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Location and type of all existing tree(s)/vegetation, what is to be removed, and location, size and species of replacements 2. Topography and any critical areas and buffers 3. Location of existing and proposed structures, driveways and utilities 4. Tree drip lines 5. Other information required by code | Plot plan (1" = 30' or similar) showing, as applicable: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Location and type of all existing tree(s)/vegetation, what is to be removed, and location, size and species of replacements 2. Topography and any critical areas and buffers 3. Location of existing and proposed structures, driveways and utilities 4. Tree drip lines 5. Other information required by code |
| Restoration plan describing replanting and maintenance. | Restoration plan describing replanting and maintenance. |
| A report from an ISA-certified arborist or registered landscape architect. | A report from an ISA-certified arborist or registered landscape architect. |
| Report from professionals such as a geotech or biologist, as appropriate | Report from professionals such as a geotech or biologist, as appropriate. |
| Adjacent Property Owners (APO) list (Handout #P2) | |

Note: This information should not be used as a substitute for City codes and regulations. The Edmonds Community Development Code (ECDC) may be viewed at www.edmondswa.gov. The applicant is responsible for ensuring compliance with the fees and regulations that are applicable at the time of submittal. If you have a specific question about a certain aspect of your project, please contact the Planning Division at 121 Fifth Avenue North, (425) 771-0220. Please note that other local, state, and/or federal permits or approvals may be required.