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# Tree Manual

Public Services Department

September 2022

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## 1 Purpose of the Town's Tree Manual

The Town's Tree Manual provides guidelines regarding the planting, maintenance, removal, protection, pruning and preservation of trees in Town right-of-way and on Town-owned property.

The policies and standards contained in this document are subject to change in the discretion of the Public Services Department. Review and approval of these guidelines shall be conducted by the Public Services Department.

## 2 Contact Information

### Town Website

For the Encroachment Permit Application, visit our website: [www.townofleland.com](http://www.townofleland.com).

### Trees on Town Property

For any maintenance inquiries regarding trees on Town-owned property, submit your request through Leland 311: [www.Leland311.com](http://www.Leland311.com).

### Permit Review Questions

For Encroachment Permit review questions, contact the Town Engineer or their designee:

Adrianna Weber, Engineering Technician II  
102 Town Hall Drive Leland, NC 28451  
(910) 408-3052

## 3 Permits and Plan Reviews

### Encroachment Permit

An Encroachment Permit is required prior to performing work or placing facilities, including trees, within a Town right-of-way or on Town property, as outlined in Chapter 46, Article III of Town code.

The Encroachment Permit fee will be calculated at the time of the application based on the Town of Leland Stormwater and Streets Fee Schedule.

Submit an Encroachment Permit Application in accordance with the steps outlined on the Town's website: <https://www.townofleland.com/public-services/streets/right-way-permits>. Submit one application for all Town tree activities associated with a specified property or project.

Proposed trees within North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) rights-of-way or on NCDOT property are required to meet the landscape and permit requirements of NCDOT. The Town of Leland cannot approve requests to plant trees within NCDOT rights-of-way or on NCDOT property. Contact the District 3 District Engineer & Resident Engineer Office for any plantings within NCDOT rights-of-way or on NCDOT property.

District 3 District Engineer & Resident Engineer Office Phone Number  
300 Division Drive Wilmington, NC 28401  
(910) 398-9100

**Tree Planting Plan**

Applications must include a planting plan illustrating the following:

- Scale drawing, including site location, road names, north arrow, name of applicant, and graphic scale
- Sight distance triangles, if applicable
- Proposed location of planting(s)
- Proposed plant list, including botanical names, common names, size (mature canopy size and height), caliper, and spacing
- Proposed irrigation, if applicable
- Existing conditions, such as roadway configuration, signage, utilities, existing vegetation, and drainage features
- Note adjacent land uses

**Tree Protection Plan**

A Tree Protection Plan must be reviewed and approved by Public Services prior to any activity impacting trees within Town right-of-way or on Town property. The plan shall illustrate all activity near the tree and proposed barriers that will be used to protect the trees. All work shall meet the requirements of ANSI A300 tree care standards.

The Public Services Department will review the encroachment permit application, tree protection, and planting plan.

**4 Tree Planting Guidelines**

**Setback Distance Guidelines**

The minimum setback distances from center of tree to infrastructure must meet the guidelines outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Setback Distance Guidelines for Tree Plantings

<b>Infrastructure Type</b>	<b>Minimum Setback Distance from Center of Tree</b>
Sidewalks	2 feet
Back of curb	2 feet
Driveways	10 feet
Structures	10 feet
Manholes	10 feet
Catch basins	10 feet
Center line of drainage ditches and swales	5 feet
Fire hydrants	10 feet
Water meters and other utility boxes	5 feet
Utility lines that cross the planting strip	10 feet
Traffic signs	10 feet
Utility poles and streetlights	10 feet
Other trees	20 feet to 40 feet, depending on species
Utility easements	Plantings discouraged*
Drainage easements	Plantings prohibited

\*Plantings within utility easements are subject to removal without compensation.

Any modifications to these minimum setback distances must be approved by the Town Engineer or their designee. The Town may require adjustments to setback distances as part of the Encroachment Permit review.

If trees are removed and replaced, the replacement trees must follow the setback distance guidelines included in Table 1.

Root barriers must be used to protect public infrastructure, as needed. Root barriers will be required and must be installed if recommended by the designer and included on planting plans provided to the Town for review.

## **Clearance Requirements**

### **Sight Triangles**

Landscaping, including trees, shall not obstruct the view of motorists and must comply with the sight triangle requirements of the Town of Leland Street Design Manual:

<https://www.townofleland.com/public-services/streets/street-technical-standards>.

Sightlines to roadway signs must be visible and unobstructed.

Vegetation must be trimmed to provide clear sight in the area between 2 feet and 6 feet above roadway elevations. The Public Services Department may adjust this clear zone on individual site determinations.

### **Vertical Clearance**

Vertical clearances of 15 feet above streets and 8 feet above sidewalks must be maintained at all times.

### **Utility Clearance**

Vegetation should not impact the illumination of any streetlight.

Trees must be maintained such that they do not impact overhead utility lines. Clearances shall meet the utility providers recommendations and requirements.

## Plant Selection

Native plant species are preferred within Town right-of-way or on Town property.

Tree species that are commonly considered include:

- Ash
- Beech
- Black Gum
- Burch
- Cedar
- Cherry
- Crabapple
- Crepe Myrtle
- Cypress
- Devilwood/Wild Olive
- Dogwood
- Elm
- Fringe
- Ginkgo
- Golden Rain
- Holly
- Honey Locust
- Hornbeam
- Loblolly Pine
- Maple
- Oak
- Pistache
- Poplar
- Red Buckeye
- Redbud
- Redwood
- Serviceberry
- Silverbell
- Sugarberry
- Washington Hawthorne
- Wax Myrtle

The list above is not an all-inclusive list. Other species of tree may be submitted for planting and are subject to review and approval.

Plantings must be healthy and of good quality at time of installation. Plant materials must meet minimum container size, class, and other requirements outlined in American Standard for Nursery Stock published by the American Nursery and Landscape Association or the Town Ordinances, whichever is greater.

## Spacing of Trees

Proposed trees must be spaced to allow for proper growth and long-term health. The spacing required for planting will be as recommended by the designer and included on the planting plans provided to the Town for review.

Proposed trees must follow the below minimum spacing guidelines unless otherwise approved by the Public Services Department:

- For small trees (< 15 feet in height once mature), 20-foot spacing
- For medium trees (15 feet to 40 feet in height once mature), 30-foot spacing
- For large trees (> 40 feet in height once mature), 40-foot spacing

Landscaping of trees and shrubs must allow for proper mower operation, which avoid excessive mower maneuvering or hand trimming.

### Tree Planting Standards

Plants must be installed in accordance with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) recommendations and requirements.

Trees should not be planted in existing or proposed utility or drainage easements.

### Roundabout Landscaping

Roundabout landscaping will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

## 5 Maintenance and Tree Removal

If a resident or a homeowners' association (HOA) installs plantings within a Town right-of-way, the individual or homeowners' association is responsible for the maintenance of the planting(s), including but not limited to trimming, pruning, and/or removal as needed.

For maintenance requirements, reference the Town's Right-Of-Way Maintenance Policy:

<https://www.townofleland.com/public-services/streets>.

### Tree Pruning

All pruning should conform to the below guidelines and must meet the requirements of ANSI A300 tree care standards.

- Prune to maximize clearance and visibility for pedestrian and vehicular traffic (see vertical clearance requirements in Section 4)
- Prune to improve tree form and structure by removing co-dominant stems, as well as dead and/or crossing branches
- All final cuts must be made without cutting into the branch collar or leaving protruding stubs
- Clean cuts must be made with sharp tools
- All pruning debris should be removed from the site. All grassed areas shall be raked, and all streets and sidewalks shall be swept or blown clean

### Pruning on Town Property

The Public Services Department is responsible for the maintenance of trees on Town property planted by or on behalf of the Town. To request tree maintenance, submit a work order request through Leland 311: [www.Leland311.com](http://www.Leland311.com).

### Pruning on Private Property

It is the property owner's responsibility to prune trees and vegetation originating on private property to allow for clear and safe pedestrian and vehicular traffic within public rights-of-way and on adjacent public property.

### Tree Removal

The Public Services Department will remove a Town tree if determined to be dead, dying, or endangering the safety of residents and/or property, as determined by the Public Services Director or their designee. To request tree removal, submit a work order request through Leland 311: [www.Leland311.com](http://www.Leland311.com).

If a resident or a homeowner's association (HOA) installs plantings within a Town right-of-way, the individual or HOA is responsible for the removal of the planting(s).

A tree removed pursuant to this Section will be removed in its entirety, including the stump. If the stump cannot be removed, the stump will be cut and ground down such that the site is flush with the surround grade. All tree removal debris should be removed from the site. The surrounding grade will be stabilized and restored to allow for proper drainage. The area will be stabilized with seed, sod, or other sufficient ground cover to prevent sediment runoff. All grassed areas shall be raked, and all streets and sidewalks will be swept or blown clean.

