



Development CITY OF AUSTIN
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Building a Better and Safer Austin Together

Urban Forestry Committee Meeting October 12th, 2023

Jim Dymkowski DSD-Community Tree Division



Staff Briefing on Tree Removal Permitting, Process, and Public complaints

- Which trees are regulated?
- How to request information on removing a tree?
- Who to contact about permission, how long it takes, and forms/processes required?
- If you suspect trees are being illegally removed, who/how do you contact? Off hours are a particularly troublesome.

Regulated Trees in Austin

Levels of Tree Ordinance Protection



8" and larger

- Survey required on commercial site plan submittals



19" and larger are Protected Trees

- All species are protected
- Tree permit required for removal or impacts (residential and public)



24" and larger may be Heritage Trees

- Only specific species qualify
- Variance required for removal or impacts that exceed code requirements
- Variances can be administrative
- Greater penalties for unpermitted impacts

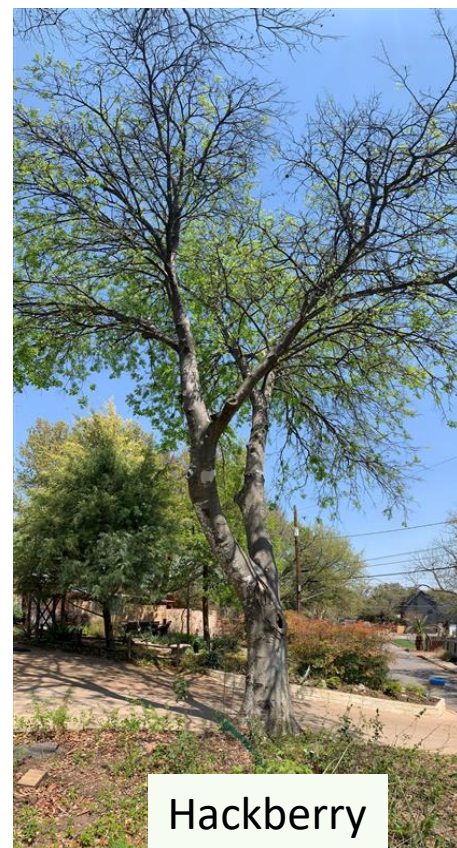


30" and larger Heritage Trees

- Proposed variances must go through public process

Regulated Trees in Austin

- Includes hackberry, cedar, invasives, hazardous trees, etc.
- Certain species are designated as Heritage Trees when they reach 24" diameter (LDC 25-8-602)
- Palm trees are not regulated under the COA tree ordinance.




Hackberry



Ash Juniper

How to Request Information on Removing a Tree?

- City Arborist webpage - <https://www.austintexas.gov/page/tree-reviews-and-permitting> On this page there are Helpful Links - Trees on Residential Property
 - Step 1: Identify regulated trees on your property.
 - Step 2: Determine whether a building permit is required.
 - Step 3: Apply for your permit(s).
 - Optional: How to schedule an on-site Pre-plan Submittal Consultation
-  <https://www.austintexas.gov/page/schedule-appointment-development-services>
- City Arborist Resource Account - cityarborist@austintexas.gov
- Contact 311

Who to Contact Permitted Removal?

- City Arborist Resource Account - cityarborist@austintexas.gov
- Contact 311
- How long it takes –The Planning and Development Review Department shall take action on an application to remove a protected tree: not later than the 10th working day after the complete application is filed.
- Forms/processes required? - Austin Build + Connect (AB+C)
- <https://www.austintexas.gov/abc-applications> - Tree Ordinance Review Application (TORA)

Supporting the Public



- Monthly lunch and learns
 - Get Tree Smart: Tree Review Staff
 - Tree and Environmental Inspections: Inspections Staff
- Offer informal in person or virtual Q&A's
- Community Engagement

Who to Contact if You Suspect Un-permitted Removal?

- From City Arborist webpage - Report a Tree Violation - Look for a Permit
- Use the [Public Search](#) tool in the Austin Build + Connect (AB+C) Portal to see if a permit has been issued for the work you're seeing.
- Under Search by Property, enter the street address where the work is taking place. Click Submit.
- In the search results, you will be able to click on the Permit/Case Number to view details of the permit.
- If no permits are listed in the public database, you may have witnessed a violation of City tree regulations.

Who to Contact if You Suspect Un-permitted Removal? – Cont.

- To report a Tree Violation - Contact 311 - [Request a City Service](#) tool to report a suspected tree violation online. For Service Type, select “DSD - Environmental Complaint” from the dropdown menu.
- You can also download the [Austin 3-1-1 mobile app](#) or call [3-1-1](#) or [512-974-2000](#) (outside city limits) and speak to a representative.
- All complaints (service requests) city wide are tracked through CSR 311 ! Very similar to AFD and APD.
- The Environmental Inspections Division is in the process of obtaining approval for responding to after-hours 311 tree complaints. This would include having inspectors on-call from 3:30 pm – 8:00 pm. Monday thru Friday and Saturday 7:30am-5:00pm. The after-hours schedule will align with what is already approved and in place for CODE Enforcement’s after hours and weekend enforcement teams.



Questions?

Thank you!

Cityarborist@austintexas.gov

