

# **City of Tybee Island**

**Chatham County**

**Savannah MSA**

**2003 Population Estimate 3,474; +2.0% change from 2000 Census.**

**Not a Tree City USA.**

**No tree board established by ordinance.**

## **Article 7 TREE REMOVAL REGULATIONS**

**First adopted 1995. Last revised 1996.**

**Addresses public and private property.**

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Section 7-010	FINDINGS OF FACT
Section 7-020	PURPOSE
Section 7-030	APPLICATION AND EXCEPTIONS
Section 7-035	TREE PROTECTION DURING PLAT AND PLAN APPROVAL
Section 7-040	BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED
Section 7-050	TREE REMOVAL REQUIREMENTS
Section 7-060	REMOVAL OF SIGNIFICANT TREES
Section 7-070	TREE PROTECTION DURING DEVELOPMENT
Section 7-080	STANDARDS FOR TREE PLANTING AND REPLACEMENT
Section 7-090	PENALTIES FOR UNLAWFUL TREE REMOVAL
Section 7-100	APPEALS OF ACTIONS

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**Article 7**

**TREE REMOVAL REGULATIONS**

**Sections:**

<b>7-010</b>	<b>FINDINGS OF FACT</b>
<b>7-020</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>
<b>7-030</b>	<b>APPLICATION AND EXCEPTIONS</b>
<b>7-035</b>	<b>TREE PROTECTION DURING PLAT AND PLAN APPROVAL</b>
<b>7-040</b>	<b>BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED</b>
<b>7-050</b>	<b>TREE REMOVAL REQUIREMENTS</b>
<b>7-060</b>	<b>REMOVAL OF SIGNIFICANT TREES</b>
<b>7-070</b>	<b>TREE PROTECTION DURING DEVELOPMENT</b>
<b>7-080</b>	<b>STANDARDS FOR TREE PLANTING AND REPLACEMENT</b>
<b>7-090</b>	<b>PENALTIES FOR UNLAWFUL TREE REMOVAL</b>
<b>7-100</b>	<b>APPEALS OF ACTIONS</b>

**Section 7-010 FINDINGS OF FACT**

- (A) Natural vegetative growth and trees add physical, aesthetic, and economic value to the island and should be preserved where possible.
- (B) Trees, help stabilize the soil with their root systems and control soil erosion caused by storm damage as well as moderate surface runoff of rainwater.
- (C) Trees make life more comfortable on the island by providing shade, cooling both land and air, reducing noise and air pollution, providing scenic amenities, and provide habitat of desirable wildlife.
- (D) Trees are essential to the present and future health and welfare of residents and visitors to Tybee Island.

**(ORD. 1996-14;7/11/96)**

**Section 7-020 PURPOSE**

The various sections of this article are adopted for the following purposes:

- (A) To help control the effects of accelerated water run-off and soil erosion due to clearing, and assist in dune stabilization and mitigation of storm drainage.
- (B) To preserve and protect trees for buffers where land use and zoning requirements dictate such buffers.
- (C) To maximize the positive benefits of sitting buildings and parking on land in relationship to mature trees.
- (D) To ensure that responsible public agencies are made aware in timely fashion of proposed tree removal activities.
- (E) To help protect the investments of property owners and buyers, and provide mature native island trees for the enjoyment of future generations.

**Section 7-030 APPLICATION AND EXCEPTIONS**

The requirements of this ordinance shall apply to all parcels within the City. No trees shall be removed within the City of Tybee Island except in compliance with this ordinance, with the following exceptions:

- (A) No permit shall be required for the removal of trees which endanger or obstruct public safety and welfare as determined by the Zoning Administrator or designated City representative.

## Land Development Code

(B) No permit shall be required for the trimming or pruning of trees, provided that such maintenance activity shall not be so extensive as to constitute tree removal as defined above.

(C) This ordinance shall not apply to utility rights-of-way.

(D) No permit or mitigation shall be required in the event the zoning administrator or designated city representative determines that a tree is or imminently will cause damage to a structure or to appurtenances such as decks, patios, porches and the like. this subsection shall not have application to potential damage to sidewalks or driveways from tree roots.(ORD. 2003-22; 11/13/03)

(Ord. 2003-22 Trees, Amended, 12/15/2003)

### **Section 7-035 TREE PROTECTION DURING PLAT AND PLAN APPROVAL**

During The subdivision plat approval process, and also during the site plan approval process, the existing location of all significant trees shall be considered so as to preserve such trees unless no feasible alternative exists in order to make reasonable, beneficial, economic use of the property. To be considered are the locations and anticipated locations of drainage and utility structures, water and sewer lines, streets, sidewalks, driveways, final site contours, building footprints, and other impacts on existing significant trees. When no feasible alternative exists except to remove existing significant trees, their planned removal shall be noted on the plans, as well as the location, size, and types of trees planned to replace the trees planned to be removed.(ORD. 1996-14;7/11/96)

### **Section 7-040 BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED**

Any person desiring to clear land or remove trees to a density below that required in **Section 7-050** or remove a significant tree pursuant to this article shall apply for a building permit from the City. See **Section 9-030** of this ordinance for requirements and application procedure. A tree survey must be submitted before a permit can be issued. (ORD. 1996-14;7/11/96)

### **Section 7-050 TREE REMOVAL REQUIREMENTS**

(A) Under the limits and conditions set forth below, trees may be removed from a lot or parcel provided that a minimum density of three trees per each 4,500 square feet of area is maintained, or the pre-removal density, if the existing tree density is less.

(B) Except as provided in **Section 7-060**, no **significant tree** shall be removed from any vacant lot or undeveloped parcel within the City.

(C) If the sitting of a building footprint, the associated driveway, and parking areas require the removal of tree to a density of less than that stated in subsection (A), the City Manager or designated City representative may issue a permit to remove trees to a density below this standard under the following conditions:

1. The applicant must show that, within the applicable setback limitations, no locations for building footprints and driveway/parking exist that comply with the density requirement above.
2. Removal of trees shall be limited to either the fewest number or the least total DBH necessary for sitting of the building and the least destructive configuration of driveway/parking.
3. Following construction, trees shall be re-planted on the lot/parcel to establish the minimum density as stated in subsection (A). Such planting shall be in accordance with the standards set forth in **Section 7-090**.(ORD. 1996-14;7/11/96)

**Section 7-060 REMOVAL OF SIGNIFICANT TREES**

(A) Significant trees may be removed only under the following situations or conditions:

1. Upon showing by the applicant that removal of a significant tree is necessary to make reasonable beneficial, economic use of the property; such showing must demonstrate that there is no feasible alternative that would preserve the tree, and must be made for each significant tree the applicant proposes to remove,
2. For improvements, expansion and/or new construction of infrastructure services, including water/sewer systems and streets, but only if no alternatives are available; and,
3. Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit allowing the removal of a significant tree, the City Administrator shall confirm in writing that one (1) or more of the situations enumerated hereinabove exists.

(B) The Building Permit allowing the removal of a significant tree shall require the landowner/permittee to comply with the requirements set forth in **Sections 7 and 8** and the additional following conditions:

1. Each removed significant tree shall be replaced with one (1) or more trees of like species, having an aggregate DBH at least equal to the DBH of the removed tree, and meeting the requirements of **Section 7-080**; such replacement tree(s) shall be considered to be one (1) tree for the purpose of meeting the density requirements established in **Section 7-050(A)**; and, the exception to this ordinance is a dead or diseased tree. **(Ord. 2002-20; 09/12/2002)**
2. Such other conditions as may be proposed by the City Administrator and approved by City Council. **(ORD. 1999-20; 06/10/99)**

(Ord. 2002-20 Removal of Significant Trees, Amended, 02/05/2003; Ord. 1999-20, Amended, 06/15/1999)

**Section 7-070 TREE PROTECTION DURING DEVELOPMENT**

On each lot or tract where construction is ongoing pursuant to a validly issued Building Permit, protective barricades shall be placed around trees at the tree dripline which are to be retained, and shall remain in place throughout construction. The areas within the protective barricades shall remain free of all building materials, construction debris, vehicles, and development activities. Penalties for violation of this section shall be the same as found in section 7-090. **(ORD. 1999-21; 06/10/99)**

(Ord. 1999-21, Amended, 06/15/1999)

**Section 7-080 STANDARDS FOR TREE PLANTING AND REPLACEMENT**

(A) Pursuant to Building Permit. Trees planted or replaced pursuant to a validly issued building permit in accordance with this article shall be botanically compatible with local conditions, healthy, disease and pest free, and may have a minimum size of two (2) inches, caliper measure. The permittee/landowner shall choose the species of replacement trees from the native species list for Tybee Island, and ideally, planting should be done immediately following construction or in the earliest growing season thereafter.

(B) Pursuant to citation of violation. If commercially available within the area, replacement trees planted pursuant to citation of violation shall be of the same type (species) and size (height and DBH) as the trees being replaced. If not so available, one two (2) inch tree, caliper measure, for each two (2) inches DBH of the tree being replaced, shall be planted from the approved species list for Tybee Island.

(C) All replanted or replacement trees must survive at least two (2) full calendar years for the permittee/landowner to be considered to be in full compliance with this Article. If the replanted tree becomes unhealthy or dies, it must be removed from the site and replaced as soon as

## Land Development Code

conditions permit. This duration is not to exceed one calendar year.

- (D) Off-Site Tree Planting Option. If it is not possible to replant trees to the specifications required in these regulations, the applicant may chose to plant the required trees on city property in a location specified by the Zoning Administrator. A donation may be made to the Palm' s Up fund per an established fee schedule.

### **Section 7-090 PENALTIES FOR UNLAWFUL TREE REMOVAL**

Violation of this Article of the ordinance shall be subject to the following fines and restrictions:

- (A) Any person who violates any provision of this ordinance or fails to comply with any notice issued pursuant to the provisions of this ordinance, upon being found guilty of violation, shall be subject to a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each unlawfully removed tree.
- (B) In lieu of, or in addition to, the penalties imposed in Subsection (A) herein above, the party or parties found to be in violation of this ordinance shall be required to plant or replace trees, pursuant to the requirements of **Section 7-080**. The requirements of this subsection are mandatory, and shall apply regardless of any other penalties imposed for violations of this article.
- (C) Where violation of this article is associated with construction, pursuant to a City Building Permit, a Certificate of Occupancy may not be issued until such violation has been remedied and trees are planted or replaced, pursuant to the requirements of **Section 7-080**, as necessary to meet the requirements of this ordinance. The requirements of this subsection are mandatory, and shall apply regardless of any other penalties imposed for violation of this ordinance.(**ORD. 1996-14;7/11/96**)

### **Section 7-100 APPEALS OF ACTIONS**

Appeals of decisions of the City Administrator, City Marshal, or his designee, pursuant to this ordinance shall be made to the Mayor and Council pursuant to Tybee Island City Council meeting procedures.