

**NATURE CENTERS COMMISSION**  
**Minutes**

Thomas Center, Bldg A, Room 204  
302 NE 6th Ave

October 8, 2015

Thursday – 6:30PM

I. Call to Order and roll call

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff Present
Amy Carpus (NOM)	Rupa Lloyd, Treasurer	Linda Demetropoulos
Grace Crummer (NOM)	Taylor Stein (POL)	
Kathy Ewel, Secretary (NOM)	Penny Weber (PR)	
Charlie Pederson, Chair		
Jon Reiskind (PR)		<b>Guests Present</b>
Leslie Straub (PR)		Mark Siburt, City Arborist

II. Agenda Approval

Charlie Pedersen suggested that the agenda be amended to allow Mark Siburt to make his presentation now rather than under New Business.

<u>Motion by:</u> Jon Reiskind	<u>Seconded by:</u> Kathy Ewel
<u>Moved to:</u> Approve agenda with amendment	<u>Upon vote:</u> Passed unanimously

XI. a. Presentation by City Arborist regarding tree ordinance

Mark Siburt described the City of Gainesville Tree Ordinance (copy of presentation attached). Work on the ordinance began in 2003 when the City Commission asked for recommendations on tree removal and how to lessen the effects of the southern pine bark beetle. The ordinance was developed with considerable input from many stakeholders and was finally approved in June 2013. Additional issues have been raised since then about mitigation due to development at several scales, leading the City Commission to question some aspects of the ordinance. The following issues were discussed at some length. A tree can be considered a heritage but not necessarily a high quality tree depending on species and size. Calculation of a tree's value is based on a formula that includes size, location on the property, and other subjective factors, and diminution of this value is always applied. Residents and developers who want to remove one or more trees must justify it on the permit and can plant more trees as mitigation or pay a fee. Mitigation rates are set to discourage cutting down trees. Removal of trees in favor of solar panels is permitted but controversial. When a tree appears to affect a sidewalk or driveway, it is often better to cut off the root rather than the tree. Monocotyledonous trees, such as palms, are regulated like dicotyledonous trees; a palm can be planted to replace another palm but it cannot be planted to replace a high-quality dicot.

More than \$1.7 million in mitigation fees has been collected in the two years since the ordinance went into effect, so the rate does not seem to be deter developers. Nevertheless, the City Commission is questioning need for mitigation and will discuss it on Oct. 14 at the Community Development Committee.

Charlie suggested it would be better for developers to bring tree evaluators to a prospective development first, before engineers, in order to save their money by saving trees. He asked about outreach to developers. Mark responded that outreach should be directed at developers from outside the region as local developers are more likely to be sympathetic.

Grace Crummer suggested that the unintended consequence of removing trees should be emphasized when Mark meets with the City Commission. Amy Carpus reported that Northwood Pines has had serious flooding since the new Walmart development went in. Charlie reminded the committee that one of our jobs is to advise the City Commission and that a large contingency in the city would feel this is an important issue. He also remarked on the fact that the ordinance outlines a straightforward process and is not subjective.

III. Approval of Minutes of August 13, 2015, meeting

<u>Motion by:</u> Jon Reiskind	<u>Seconded by:</u> Amy Carpus
<u>Moved to:</u> Approve minutes as submitted	<u>Upon vote:</u> Passed unanimously

There were no reports from other committees and boards.

X. Star awards. Linda Demetropoulos announced that the Star Award nomination forms have been posted and that they are due by October 31. The committee reviewed six pictures as decoration for the awards.

<u>Motion by:</u> Leslie Straub	<u>Seconded by:</u> Amy Carpus
<u>Moved to:</u> Select the picture of <i>Sabatia</i> (marsh pink).	<u>Upon vote:</u> Passed unanimously

XI. New Business

b. The Nomination Committee recommended that Charlie Pedersen continue as Chair, Jon Reiskind be Vice-Chair, Rupa Lloyd continue as Treasurer, and Kathy Ewel continue as Secretary. There were no further nominations. The slate was accepted unanimously.

c. The Sweetwater Wetland Park fee waiver policy was reviewed. Linda pointed out that special fee waiver days are specified; Charlie suggested that other days such as New Year's Day, Arbor Day, and the first day of spring might be considered. Jon Reiskind pointed out that the commission can request such exceptions, and Leslie suggested that access could be included on the get-in-free-day card given to volunteers. Two changes to the policy were suggested: 1) strike "these" from the last statement (which would now read "Requests will be considered..."), and 2) require a minimum of one adult chaperone per children. every

10

<u>Motion by:</u> Jon Reiskind	<u>Seconded by:</u> Leslie Straub
<u>Moved to:</u> Approve the Sweetwater Wetlands Park Fee Waiver Policy with two changes	<u>Upon vote:</u> Passed unanimously

Other New Business: On November 18, 2015, the Celebration meeting interferes with the NCC meeting. The Nature Center Commission will meet at 5:30 for a 30-minute meeting.

IV. Chair Report

Charlie reported that the proposed joint sales tax proposal with the County Commission is still under discussion; if this is not approved, there will be a parallel effort involving the City of Gainesville and Alachua County. Jon Reiskind mentioned that Commissioner Randy Wells was considering a 10 yr tax but Jon thought this was too long a period. A 2- 3-year period with possibility of renewal would likely be more successful.

V. Treasurer's Report

Linda presented the Treasurer's Report on Rupa's behalf. The board purchased a picnic table and benches (\$955) for the Sweetwater Wetland Park. The taxidermy specimens have been received and are paid for (\$1,532.50). The \$1,000 match for the grant to hire a firm for site condition assessments at Split Rock and Broken Arrow is also being taken from the FY 2015 budget.

We have a budget of \$5,573 for FY 2016: Materials and supplies: \$3,871; Printing and binding: \$1,552; Advertising: \$150. Linda will have staff prepare a wish list for helping with the Sweetwater Branch site in FY 2016.

Leslie suggested that staff let us know what priorities might be for 2016. Charlie pointed out that the management plan for Sweetwater Wetlands Park will be more complicated than others, since Gainesville Regional Utilities and Public Works are also involved. PRCA is in charge of visitor use amenities, whereas GRU and Public Works will deal with permitting. An operations plan and an agreement are being drafted. There is a proposed \$2 million visitor center and two viewing towers but there is not funding.

Leslie stated that it her observation that due to Sweetwater Wetland Park's location, there is more movement of wildlife crossing Williston Rd. Leslie said that a family of black-bellied whistling ducks crossing from a residential pond to the park was killed in traffic. A wildlife crossing sign and/or a lower speed limit is needed. She will discuss this with Geoff.

Kathy brought up the death of trees in Loblolly Swamp along 8<sup>th</sup> Ave., which has been attributed to changed hydrology from the construction of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

XVI. The PRCA update was circulated to the commission prior to the meeting.

<u>Motion by:</u> Jon Reiskind	<u>Seconded by:</u> Amy Carpus
<u>Moved to:</u> Adjourn	<u>Upon vote:</u> Passed unanimously

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Chair   
Jon Reiskind

Date 11/12/2015



**CITY OF GAINESVILLE**  
FLORIDA



**Mitigation Requirements**

The City of Gainesville Tree Ordinance  
Nature Centers Commission  
October 8, 2015

Prepared by Mark Sobut, City Arborist

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE** **Purpose of Meeting**

- Provide an overview of the current tree removal regulations and relevant issues.

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE** **History of Tree Ordinance Review**

- Starting in 2003, the City Commission requested the Tree Advisory Board recommend changes to the tree ordinance to reduce the impacts of the Southern Pine Beetle.
- Over the next 10 years, other tasks were added to the TAB's task as well as multiple reviews and edits the City Commission adopted the changes on June 6, 2013.

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE** **History of Tree Ordinance Review**

- At the July 16, 2015 and September 3 City Commission meeting, two separate referrals were made to the Community Development Committee regarding the required mitigation and appeal process of the tree ordinance.
- Presentation with CDC is scheduled for Wednesday, October 14, 2015, City Hall Room 16.

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE** **Mitigation for Developments**

Category	Mitigation
High quality heritage trees, in fair or better condition	Mitigation payment based on tree appraised value, limited to three trees per acre averaged over the entire site. If more than three trees per acre in this category are located on the site then the trees with the highest tree appraised value throughout the site shall be used to calculate the payment. High quality heritage trees proposed for removal in excess of the overall average of three per acre shall require mitigation trees on an inch-for-inch on a diameter basis.
Heritage trees of other than high quality species, in fair or better condition	Mitigation trees on an inch-for-inch diameter basis.
Any heritage trees in less than fair or better condition; and any other regulated tree	Mitigation trees consisting of two trees of high quality shade species established for each tree removed.

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE** **High Quality Species**

- Live Oak, Sand Live Oak, Bluff Oak, Basket Oak, Southern Red Oak, Southern Magnolia, Florida Maple, Longleaf Pine, Spruce Pine, Cedar Elm, Winged Elm, Florida Elm, Bald Cypress, Pond Cypress, Tupelo, Mockernut Hickory, Pignut Hickory, Pecan, Persimmon, Basswood, Tulip Poplar, White Ash, Green Ash and Yaupon, Dahoon, and American Holly species.

**GAINEVILLE Fair or Better Condition**

- **Sec. 30-23. Definitions**
  - *Fair or better condition* means that the tree has a relatively sound and solid root, trunk, and canopy structure, no major insect infestation or pathological problem, or problems that cannot be remedied with cultural practices, and a life expectancy greater than 15 years as determined by the city manager or designee. In the event of a disputed health condition, the condition rating system outlined in the latest edition of the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers Guide for Tree Appraisers shall be used by the city manager or designee to evaluate the health condition. A score of 60 or higher shall qualify a tree as fair or better condition.

**GAINEVILLE Heritage Trees**

- *Heritage trees* are trees that are larger than 20 inches diameter breast height; except for Water Oaks (*Quercus nigra*), Laurel Oaks (*Quercus hemispherica*), Sweetgums (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), Loblolly Pine (*Pinus taeda*) and Slash Pine (*Pinus elliotii*) which become heritage trees only when they are larger than 30 inches diameter breast height.

**GAINEVILLE Tree Appraised Value**

- The dollar value to the city of a tree on private or public property used for the purpose of calculating cash recompense for removal or destruction. The tree appraised value shall be calculated as follows:
- $(3.14) \times (\frac{1}{2} \text{ diameter breast height})^2 = \text{trunk area}$
- $(\text{trunk area}) \times (\text{unit factor for square inch price, as determined annually by the tree advisory board in consultation with the city manager or designee}) = \text{square inch value}$
- $(\text{square inch value}) \times (55\% \text{ diminution rating}) = \text{tree appraised value}$
- Example calculation: 20" Live Oak in fair or better condition:
- $(3.14) \times (\frac{1}{2} \times 20)^2 = 314 \text{ square inches of trunk area}$   
 $(314 \text{ sq. in}) \times (\$40) = \$12,560 \text{ square inch value}$   
 $(\$12,560) \times (.55) = \$6,908 \text{ tree appraised value}$

**GAINEVILLE Inch for Inch Mitigation**

- Heritage trees of other than high quality species, in fair or better condition
- High quality heritage trees proposed for removal in excess of the overall average of three per acre shall require mitigation trees on an inch-for-inch on a diameter basis.

**GAINEVILLE Inch for Inch Mitigation**

- Total sum of inches (diameter) removed must be replaced with smaller trees
  - Example: 25" live oak
  - Replacement trees
    - Size: 30 gallon (2.5")
    - Cost: \$100
  - $25"/2.5" = 10 \text{ trees}$
  - $10 \times \$100 = \$1,000$

**GAINEVILLE 2:1 Mitigation**

- Any heritage trees in less than fair or better condition; and any other regulated tree
  - For each tree removed, two trees must be replanted

### GAINEVILLE On Site Mitigation

- Sec. 30-254 (b)(1)
  - The installation of new trees for a development as required by this chapter may count as mitigation for trees removed from the site, except where those removed trees are of a high-quality species.
- Example:
  - Project requires 50 trees for parking lot, retention pond, street trees, etc. which equals 125" (50 trees x 2.5")
  - Mitigation for removals in addition to the tree appraised value is 150" or 60, 30 gallon trees; resulting in a difference of 25"
    - Option 1 – Plant 10 more trees on site
    - Option 2 – Increase container size
      - Increase 50 trees to 45 gallon (3") = 25" additional caliper inches
    - Option 3 – Pay to tree mitigation fund \$1,000

### GAINEVILLE Tree Removal Permit

### GAINEVILLE Permit Approval Criteria Sec. 30-254(e)

- Removal or relocation of a regulated tree may be approved by the reviewing board, city manager or designee based upon one of the following findings:
  - that the tree poses a safety hazard or has been weakened by disease, age, storm, fire or other injury; or
  - that the tree contains a disease or infestation that could spread to other trees; or
  - that the tree prevents the reasonable development of the site, including the installation of solar energy equipment or the installation or replacement of utility lines; or
  - that the tree is causing or is likely to cause (as evidenced by competent substantial evidence) structural damage or problems to buildings or underground facilities due to excessive root or trunk growth, or soil expansion and contraction caused by uneven water uptake; or
  - should be removed for some other reason related to the public health or welfare. This finding cannot serve as the sole basis for removal of high quality trees.

### GAINEVILLE Tree Regulations Handout

### GAINEVILLE Single Family Zoning

- RSF1, RSF2, RSF3, & RSF4

### GAINEVILLE Tree Mitigation Fund

- Sec. 30-254 (b) (2)
  - This fund may be used for new tree plantings associated with public improvement projects or for the preservation of trees through the purchase of conservation lands, but shall not be used for tree maintenance or toward the installation of new trees that would already be required for a development.

**GAINESVILLE Tree Mitigation Fund Policy**

**GAINESVILLE Tree Mitigation Fund Policy**

1. **Tree Planting:** The City of Gainesville's Tree Mitigation Funds may be used to fund the following tree planting related activities.
  - Purchasing trees for planting on public lands.
  - Purchasing irrigation and/or irrigation supplies related to the establishment of new tree plantings on public land.
  - Purchase of mulch, staking materials, or other necessary supplies to ensure the proper installation and long-term survival of new tree plantings on public land.
  - Contractual services related to tree planting and establishment on public lands.
  - Funds shall not be used for tree maintenance or for the installation of new trees that are required for a development.

**GAINESVILLE Tree Mitigation Fund Policy**

2. **Establishment of newly-planted trees:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used for establishment of newly planted trees on public land for a period of no more than three (3) years. Funds shall not be used for tree maintenance or for the installation of new trees that are required for a development. Related establishment functions could include but are not limited to: watering, fertilizing, mulching, and pruning.
3. **Land Acquisition:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used for the following land acquisition activities:
  - Acquisition of land to preserve high quality trees, heritage tree(s), or high quality natural habitat for public parks and preserves.
  - To meet the recommendations of PRCA Master Plan to acquire neighborhood parks as long as a park preserves high quality shade trees or heritage trees.

**GAINESVILLE Tree Mitigation Fund Policy**

4. **Habitat Restoration Projects:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used for City nature park habitat restoration projects provided the projects include planting of new trees of species native to our region and that the projects have the recommendation of the Tree Advisory Board.
5. **Staffing:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used to fund City employees or interns to facilitate tree planting and establishment programs and projects funded with Tree Mitigation Fund.
6. **Tree Advisory Board Updates:** Each Tree Advisory Board meeting will include from staff a summary of expenditure and inputs to the Tree Mitigation Fund to date. The Tree Advisory Board will be appraised at an early point during the planning phases of proposed expenditures which will remove more than \$25,000 from the fund.

**GAINESVILLE Tree Mitigation Fund**

- Total Revenue = \$1,795,681.05
- Total Expense = \$79,320.52
- Balance = \$1,716,360.53

▪ As of 9/1/2015

**GAINESVILLE Tree Mitigation Fund**

- Expenditures to date
  - Materials and Supplies
    - \$44,334.26
  - Contractual Services
    - \$16,594
  - Staff
    - \$18,392.26
  - Total = \$79,320.52

## GAINESVILLE Future Projects

- NW 6<sup>th</sup> St Rail Trail (University – NW 7<sup>th</sup> Ave)
  - Currently out for bid
- SW 6<sup>th</sup> St Rail Trail (SW 5<sup>th</sup> Ave – Depot Ave)
- Downtown trees
- Empowerment Center
- NE 8<sup>th</sup> Ave (Waldo Road – NE 25<sup>th</sup> St)
- Tree Giveaway Event

## GAINESVILLE Tree Board of Appeals

- Sec. 2-430.16. (a) The tree board of appeals shall consist of three members nominated by the tree advisory board and appointed by the city commission. Any candidate for the tree board of appeals shall be qualified in arboriculture. The board is authorized to hear appeals from any order, decision, or determination made by the city manager or designee with respect to the removal of trees, documentation regarding failure to protect trees during development and construction, or the determination/interpretation of the tree appraised value with respect to the mitigation requirements for heritage trees. Appeals shall be filed with the city manager or designee. The tree board of appeals shall apply standards and considerations found in section 30-254 and 30-254.1 of the Land Development Code and shall have authority to decide any question involving the interpretation of the city manager or designee's order.

## GAINESVILLE Tree Board of Appeals

- Typical appeal situations:
  - Citizen opposes the removal of a tree posted by the City.
  - Property owner disagrees with denial of a tree removal permit.
  - Developer disagrees with the determination/interpretation of the tree appraised value.
- The Tree Board of Appeals does not have the authority to reduce the mitigation, unless the code has been interpreted incorrectly.

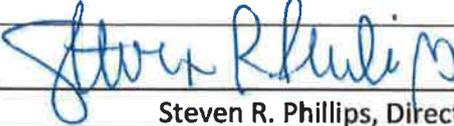
## GAINESVILLE Contact Information

- Mark Siburt, City Arborist
- 352-393-8187
- [siburtmd@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:siburtmd@cityofgainesville.org)

## GAINESVILLE Gainesville Tree Ordinance

Questions?



<b>Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department</b>	No. 1.6.1a
<b>POLICY</b>	Issued: November 20, 2014
<b>Subject: Use of Tree Mitigation Funds</b>	Revised: 03-11-2015
Approval:  _____ Steven R. Phillips, Director	

Approved by the Tree Advisory Board on February 9, 2015.

**POLICY:** This policy provides guidance as to the appropriate uses, intent, and mechanism for expenditure of funds from the City of Gainesville’s Tree Mitigation Fund.

**INTENT:** The intent of the Tree Mitigation Fund is to augment the City’s Urban Forestry Programs by funding projects that exceed the basic service levels for tree planting, routine pruning maintenance and hazard abatement, and removal of hazardous trees that were funded by the City at the time the changes to the Land Development Code were adopted by the Gainesville City Commission in 2013. These changes allowed the removal of significant high quality Heritage trees from the Urban Forest in exchange for money that would then be used for enhancement projects only. The Tree Mitigation Fund was never intended to pay for the City’s routine, basic urban forestry services.

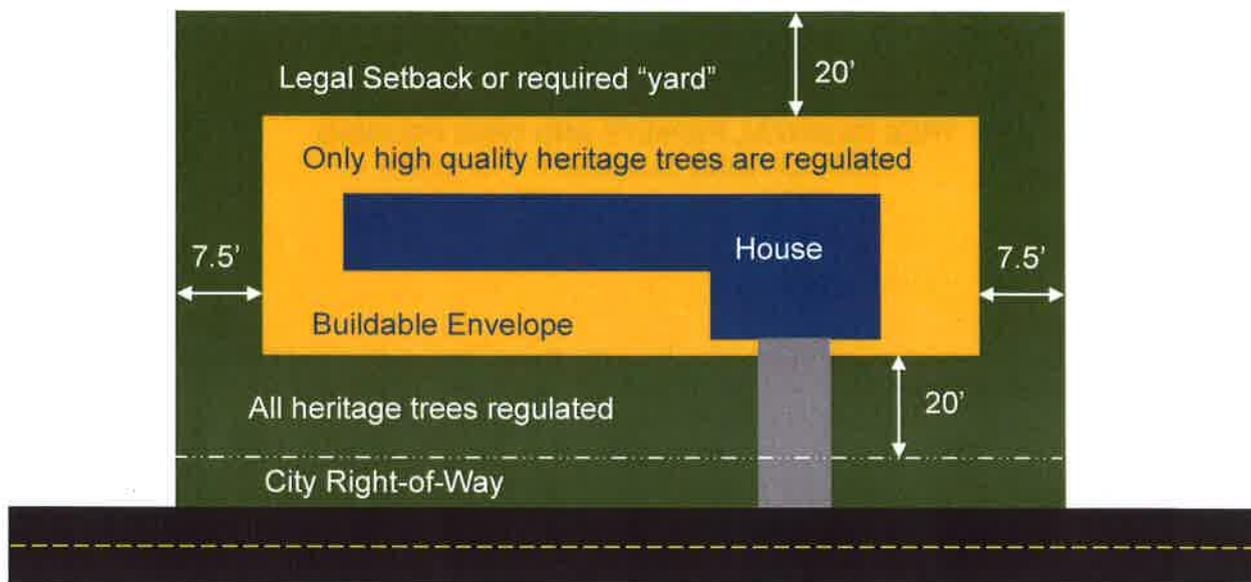
**PRACTICE:**

The City of Gainesville’s Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department receives mitigation funds resulting from the removal of trees, tree violations, and other tree related consequences. These funds are placed in the City’s tree mitigation fund, a separate city fund that holds funds collected as tree mitigation. Section 30-254 (b)(2) of the City’s Land Development Code provides guidance for the use of these funds. Specifically, the Code states that “This fund may be used for new tree plantings associated with public improvement projects or for the preservation of trees through the purchase of conservation lands, but shall not be used for tree maintenance or for the installation of new trees that are required for a development.” This policy is intended to provide additional guidance and clarification for the use of the Tree Mitigation Funds. The City Manager or his designee approves the use of all Tree Mitigation project funds as recommended by staff.

**PROCEDURE:**

The following provides additional detail regarding appropriate uses, intent, and mechanism for expenditure of funds from the City of Gainesville’s Tree Mitigation Fund.

1. **Tree Planting:** The City of Gainesville's Tree Mitigation Funds may be used to fund the following tree planting related activities.
  - a. Purchasing trees for planting on public lands.
  - b. Purchasing irrigation and/or irrigation supplies related to the establishment of new tree plantings on public land.
  - c. Purchase of mulch, staking materials, or other necessary supplies to ensure the proper installation and long-term survival of new tree plantings on public land.
  - d. Contractual services related to tree planting and establishment on public lands.
  - e. Funds shall not be used for tree maintenance or for the installation of new trees that are required for a development.
2. **Establishment of newly-planted trees:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used for establishment of newly-planted trees on public land for a period of no more than three (3) years. Funds shall not be used for tree maintenance or for the installation of new trees that are required for a development. Related establishment functions could include but are not limited to: watering, fertilizing, mulching, and pruning.
3. **Land Acquisition:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used for the following land acquisition activities:
  - a. Acquisition of land to preserve high quality trees, heritage tree(s), or high quality natural habitat for public parks and preserves.
  - b. To meet the recommendations of PRCA Master Plan to acquire neighborhood parks as long as a park preserves high quality shade trees or heritage trees.
4. **Habitat Restoration Projects:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used for City nature park habitat restoration projects provided the projects include planting of new trees of species native to our region and that the projects have the recommendation of the Tree Advisory Board.
5. **Staffing:** The Tree Mitigation Funds may be used to fund City employees or interns to facilitate tree planting and establishment programs and projects funded with Tree Mitigation Fund.
6. **Tree Advisory Board Updates:** Each Tree Advisory Board meeting will include from staff a summary of expenditure and inputs to the Tree Mitigation Fund to date. The Tree Advisory Board will be appraised at an early point during the planning phases of proposed expenditure which will remove more than \$25,000 from the fund.



**Mitigation [Sec 30-254 (d)]:** There are several factors that determine what the mitigation is for trees removed. The size (diameter), species, condition, and the zoning of the property will decide the mitigation. The standard mitigation is two – 15 gallon trees replanted for every one tree removed. Mitigation trees must be at least 8' tall, 1.5" in trunk caliper, and Florida Nursery Grade #1. If there is not enough space for mitigation trees on site, as determined by the City Arborist, trees may be planted on other properties within the city limits or mitigation can be paid to the Tree Mitigation Fund. As the quality of tree species, condition and zoning regulations increase, so does the mitigation. Mitigation trees must be from the Gainesville Tree List. Please see a copy of "Sec. 30-254 Permits for tree removal; mitigation" for more details.

**Trees Removed Without A Permit [Sec 30-312 (c) (2)]:** If a heritage tree was removed without a permit then the required mitigation shall be double what is required as mitigation in section 30-254.

**Permit Approval Criteria [Sec 30-254 (e)]:** Removal or relocation of a regulated tree may be approved by the reviewing board, city manager or designee based upon one of the following findings:

- (1) that the tree poses a safety hazard or has been weakened by disease, age, storm, fire or other injury; or
- (2) that the tree contains a disease or infestation that could spread to other trees; or
- (3) that the tree prevents the reasonable development of the site, including the installation of solar energy equipment or the installation or replacement of utility lines; or
- (4) that the tree is causing or is likely to cause (as evidenced by competent substantial evidence) structural damage or problems to buildings or underground facilities due to excessive root or trunk growth, or soil expansion and contraction caused by uneven water uptake; or
- (5) should be removed for some other reason related to the public health or welfare. This finding cannot serve as the sole basis for removal of high quality trees.

**Pruning Regulations [Sec. 30-256 (c)]:** All trees may be pruned to maintain shape and promote their shade-giving qualities and to remove diseased or dying portions in areas where falling limbs could be a hazard to people or property. Tree pruning shall be done in accordance with the most current version of the American National Standard for Tree Care Operations "Tree, Shrub and Other Woody Plant Maintenance" (ANSI A300) and "Pruning, Trimming, Repairing, Maintaining, and Removing Trees, and Cutting Brush—Safety Requirements"(ANSI Z133). No more than 25 percent of the crown should be removed at one time. On young trees, limb removal shall leave no more than 33 percent of the trunk bare of branches. So that shade trees can grow with sturdy structure, the top branch or leader shall not be removed. Hooks shall not be used to climb trees unless the tree is being taken down. Mature trees overgrowing vehicular use areas shall be pruned to allow the passage of emergency vehicles. Excessive pruning, pollarding, or pruning of trees into round balls of crown or branches, which results in an unnecessary reduction of shade and promotes weak branch attachments is prohibited. If the city manager or designee finds same additional shade trees shall be required to be planted on the site on up to an inch-for-inch basis.

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE  
PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT  
TREE REMOVAL PERMITS AND TREE PRUNING  
REGULATIONS SUMMARY – 12/1/2014**

**Tree Removal Permits**

**Cost:** Free

**Application:** Obtain tree removal permit application from the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs office located at 306 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor

OR

Log onto our website at:

<http://www.cityofgainesville.org/ParksRecreationCulturalAffairs/TreestheUrbanForest/TreeRemovalRegulations.aspx>

Every effort will be made to respond within five (5) working days of receipt of application. Tree inspection results or permit will be returned by mail, email or fax. Immediate inspections are not always possible, so please plan ahead. Permit applications can be sent via FAX to 352-334-3299 or email to the Urban Forestry Office at [urbanforestry@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:urbanforestry@cityofgainesville.org), or traditional mail to PO Box 490, Mail Station 24, Gainesville, FL 32627.

**Tree Removal Permit Requirements**

**Detached single family homes (RSF1, RSF2, RSF3, or RSF4):** Only heritage trees are regulated. Tree species of high quality are regulated anywhere on the property. All other heritage tree species are regulated in the legal setback.

**For all other zoning designations:** Tree removal permits are required for trees 8" in diameter except Slash and Loblolly Pine which require permits when they are 20" in diameter.

**Commercial:** All businesses and offices

**Multi-family housing:** Condominiums, triplex, apartments

**Planned Developments:** Rock Creek, Turkey Creek Forest, Sorrento, Blues Creek, Hillcrest, Kensington Park, Mill Pond, Walnut Creek, Vintage View, Lenox Place (not a complete list)

Note: All trees planted in parking lots, adjacent to the street or in areas which might be part of the approved landscape plan require permits, even if they are smaller than 8" in diameter.

**Definitions**

**Heritage trees:** All native trees species are Heritage trees when they are larger than 20" in diameter, except for Water Oaks, Laurel Oaks, Sweetgums, and Loblolly Pines, which become Heritage trees at 30."

**High Quality Species:** Live Oak, Sand Live Oak, Bluff Oak, Basket Oak, Southern Red Oak, Southern Magnolia, Florida Maple, Longleaf Pine, Spruce Pine, Cedar Elm, Winged Elm, Florida Elm, Bald Cypress, Pond Cypress, Tupelo, Mockernut Hickory, Pignut Hickory, Pecan, Persimmon, Basswood, Tulip Poplar, White Ash, Green Ash and Yaupon, Dahoon, and American Holly species.

**Legal Setbacks:** The area between the lot line and a determine distance where structures are not allowed and must remain a "yard." Example: front: 20' from edge of right-of-way  
back: 20' from the rear lot line  
sides: 7.5' from the property edges on the sides

Precise distances vary depending on the neighborhood. If the tree is close to the house and inside the distances listed above, it won't need a permit. If you're not sure, the City Planning Division at 334-5023 can clarify the setback distance for the property in question.

Return to:  
 City Of Gainesville  
 Nature Operations Division  
 P.O. Box 490, Station 24  
 Gainesville, FL 32627



Permit Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (352) 393-8171  
 Fax: (352) 334-3299  
 Email: urbanforestry@cityofgainesville.org  
 Location: Thomas Center B-306 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Ave

## TREE REMOVAL PERMIT AND REPLANTING AGREEMENT

The Gainesville Land Development Code requires mitigation for each regulated tree removed. The amount of mitigation ranges from the standard mitigation (two – 15 gallon trees replanted for each regulated tree removed) to Tree Appraised Value. The size (diameter), species, and condition of the tree as well as the zoning and where on the property the tree is located, will determine the mitigation. Mitigation trees must be nursery-grown, at least 8’ tall (15-gal) and 1.5” in caliper, and Florida Nursery Grade #1. Please see the “Sec. 30-254 Permits for tree removal; mitigation” handout for more details. The “Gainesville Tree List” handout provides the species that are approved for mitigation.

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT

Tree Location (Street Address): \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last

Owner’s Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Owner’s Email Address (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**All fields must be filled out completely.**

Number to Remove	Species	Diameter	Reason for Wanting to Remove Tree

Tree(s) must be marked (paint, tape, flag, etc.).

Check box if a representative would like to be present at the time of inspection.

**Property Owner’s Signature Required\*:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name Signature

\*Confirms agreement to satisfy mitigation requirement in accordance with Section 30-254, Gainesville Code of Ordinances; submit a Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) Permit with the City’s Public Works Department, per Section 23-38, if the tree removal requires a road and/ or lane closure, sidewalk closure or any part of the right-of-way; and request utilities to be marked by calling 811, when stump removal requires work below ground.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_ Not Regulated \_\_\_\_\_ Permit valid through: \_\_\_\_\_

Mitigation required: \_\_\_\_\_

City of Gainesville Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector’s Comments \_\_\_\_\_

