

**LEGISLATIVE #**

**190293A**



1 to Section 163.3174, Florida Statutes, held a public hearing on December 10, 2019, and voted  
2 to recommend the City Commission approve this text change to the Land Development Code;  
3 and

4 **WHEREAS**, at least ten days' notice has been given once by publication in a newspaper of  
5 general circulation notifying the public of this proposed ordinance and of public hearings before  
6 the City Commission of the City of Gainesville; and

7 **WHEREAS**, public hearings were held pursuant to the notice described above at which hearings  
8 the parties in interest and all others had an opportunity to be and were, in fact, heard; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the City Commission finds that the Land Development Code text amendment  
10 described herein is consistent with the City of Gainesville Comprehensive Plan.

11 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE,**

12 **FLORIDA:**

13 **SECTION 1.** Section 30-8.7 of the Land Development Code is amended as follows. Except as  
14 amended herein, the remainder of Section 30-8.7 remains in full force and effect.

15 **Section 30-8.7. Permits for Tree Removal; Mitigation.**

16 A. *Removal or relocation permits.* Except as provided below, no living regulated tree may be  
17 removed or relocated without a removal permit and mitigation as provided for in this  
18 section. Only the tree advisory board may approve or deny the removal, relocation or  
19 replacement of champion trees.

20 B. *Exemptions.*

- 21 1. ~~On property with single-family dwellings, permits shall be required only for the removal~~  
22 ~~of champion or heritage trees. On the following properties, permits are required only~~  
23 for the removal of champion or heritage trees: 1) single-family lots with an existing  
24 single-family dwelling(s); 2) single-family lots as depicted on a plat approved and  
25 recorded no later than July 20, 2017; and 3) single-family lots as depicted on a plat  
26 approved and recorded after July 20, 2017, when the lot is owned by the current or

1 future occupant of the lot or when at least 85% of the single-family lots on the plat have  
2 been fully constructed and permitted.

3 2. Developments in which 100% of housing is affordable to low-income households may  
4 mitigate for removal of high-quality heritage trees through inch-for-inch replacement  
5 rather than payment of the tree appraised value. For purposes of this section, “low-  
6 income households” means those that make less than 80% of the Gainesville area  
7 median income adjusted for family size, and “affordable housing” means housing where  
8 the total monthly cost of that housing including taxes, insurance, and utilities is less than  
9 30% of the household’s total monthly income.

10 ~~3.2.~~ Removal of loblolly or slash pines less than 20 inches in diameter from a natural or  
11 naturalized landscape shall not require mitigation planting, unless the removals result in  
12 a uniform tree density on the site of less than one tree per 900 square feet of unpaved  
13 area. Where resulting tree density would be less, sufficient mitigation trees meeting the  
14 standard of section 30-8.10 shall be established to achieve the specified minimum  
15 density.

16 ~~4.3.~~ Removal of regulated trees in connection with ecosystem management or restoration  
17 on parcels with conservation easements, in conservation management areas or on  
18 parcels managed as nature parks or preserves, provided the following criteria are met:

- 19 a. A plan for the removal and revegetation of the area has been approved by the city  
20 manager or designee;
- 21 b. The only trees that may be removed are of the following species: Loblolly Pine,  
22 Slash Pine, Water Oak, Laurel Oak, Sweetgum, Sugarberry, and any species not  
23 native to Alachua County;
- 24 c. The tree removal is being done in furtherance of restoration of a natural  
25 community or communities appropriate to the site as indicated by soils, remnant  
26 vegetation, and hydrological and geological conditions;
- 27 d. The applicant has demonstrated that after the removals, the land will be  
28 maintained in a manner that promotes the continuation of the restored natural  
29 community; and
- 30 e. The plan has been approved by the nature centers commission.

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32 5.4. For the immediate protection of the health, safety, or welfare of the public, trees may  
33 be removed without obtaining a permit in advance. However, the property owner or its  
34 authorized agent shall file a permit application during the next city work day. Permit  
35 approval shall be granted, provided the trees removed are mitigated in accordance with  
36 this code.

37 C. *Methods of mitigation.* Mitigation is allowed by two methods: 1) mitigation trees (on an  
38 inch-for-inch basis or as otherwise specified); and 2) mitigation payment. The amount of  
39 mitigation is as specified in subsections D. and E. below.

1 1. *Mitigation trees.* Mitigation trees shall be of high quality shade species as identified on  
2 the Gainesville tree list and sited in accordance with the requirements of section 30-  
3 8.3.A. The installation of new trees for a development as required by this chapter may  
4 count as mitigation for trees removed from the site, except where those removed trees  
5 are of a high-quality species. Increasing the diameter of trees required to be planted  
6 with a development shall not be used to meet mitigation requirements. The preference  
7 is for mitigation trees to be planted on the site, but where it is demonstrated that no  
8 space is available, mitigation trees may be planted offsite within city limits as approved  
9 by the city manager or designee.

10 2. *Mitigation payment.* Mitigation payment shall be based on tree appraised value, or as  
11 otherwise specified in this code. Payment shall be made prior to the approval of a final  
12 development order, or prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for any  
13 development requiring only building permits. Mitigation payments received by the city  
14 shall be deposited in the city tree mitigation fund, which must be used in accordance  
15 with this subsection. This fund may be used for new tree plantings associated with  
16 public improvement projects or for the preservation of trees through the purchase of  
17 conservation lands, but shall not be used for tree maintenance or toward the  
18 installation of new trees that would already be required for a development. In addition,  
19 this fund may be used for an ecological assessment of the urban forest every five years,  
20 and for an update of the urban forest management plan every ten years.

21 a. *Offsets for tree mitigation payment.* A tree mitigation payment may be offset by  
22 installing improvements that create an improved growing environment for existing  
23 or proposed trees located within the project's street tree landscape zone within the  
24 public right-of-way, including:

- 25 i. Use of a pre-manufactured, modular structural product to suspend and support  
26 paving over the root zone volume area of the tree in order to prevent soil  
27 compaction.
- 28 ii. Provision of root zone volume greater than the required minimum as specified  
29 in section 30-8.3.A, provided that the root zone volume does not exceed six feet  
30 in depth. Credit will be granted per cubic foot over the required minimum up to  
31 2,000 cubic feet total root zone volume. Trees must be provided with a  
32 minimum of 1,000 cubic feet of root zone volume to be eligible.

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34 Proposed improvements and installation methods must be consistent with industry  
35 standards, and must be approved by the city arborist or urban forestry inspector  
36 prior to installation and inspected and approved prior to any credit towards the  
37 project's tree mitigation payment. The requested offset may not exceed the  
38 project's total tree mitigation payment, and proposed improvements must be used  
39 on the project requiring tree mitigation. Improvements must be installed by a  
40 qualified installer of the product as identified by the manufacturer's specifications.  
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D. *Removal and mitigation of regulated trees subject to subdivision or development plan approval.* When tree removal or relocation is contemplated in conjunction with any development requiring approval of a development plan or subdivision plat, such removal or relocation shall be considered and either approved or denied at the same time a development plan or plat is approved or denied, based upon the criteria specified in Subsection F of this section. No separate tree removal permit is required. All of the required plans, data or other information required with the application shall be included on the proposed development plan or on the supporting documents submitted with the plan or the plat. The following requirements apply:

1. Decisions on tree removal shall be based on a tree survey or a qualitative tree survey. The landscaping plan shall show all trees to be preserved, provide for protective tree barriers that meet the requirements of Section 30-8.8, and specify the details of the mitigation required in this section.
2. Construction drawings shall be submitted to the building department and application for building permits made before any trees are removed.
3. Subdivisions must be designed to maximize preservation of high-quality heritage trees. The owner/developer shall avoid or minimize removal of high-quality heritage trees by implementing practicable design alternatives including, but not limited to:
  - a. Limiting the scope, degree, or magnitude of the proposed project;
  - b. Exploring alternative on-site locations to avoid or reduce impacts to heritage trees;
  - c. Designing open-space common areas to incorporate high-quality heritage trees;
  - d. Configuring lots to include high-quality heritage trees along the sides of the lot, rather than in the center where removal is necessary for construction; and
  - e. Preserving trees along roadways as street trees.

~~4.3.~~ After a certificate of occupancy has been issued for a development, any additional tree removal shall require either a tree removal permit or a development plan amendment. Failure to obtain a tree removal permit before removing or relocating any existing regulated tree or any tree that was planted to comply with the approved development plan shall be subject to the measures for enforcement specified in Section 30-8.43.

5.4. The requirements for mitigation of regulated trees approved for removal as part of development plan or subdivision plat review are as follows:

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

CATEGORY	MITIGATION
	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.
<u>High-quality heritage trees in 100% affordable housing developments as defined by Section 30-8.7.B.2.;</u> heritage trees of other than high quality species, in fair or better condition, excluding laurel oaks and water oaks.	Mitigation trees on an inch-for-inch diameter basis.
Any heritage trees in less than fair or better condition; any heritage laurel oak or water oak; and any other regulated tree.	Mitigation trees consisting of two trees of high quality shade species established for each tree removed.

- 1 E. *Removal and mitigation of regulated trees not part of subdivision or development plan*  
2 *approval.* Any person desiring to remove or relocate a regulated tree, except tree removal  
3 approved as part of subdivision or development plan approval, shall file a tree removal  
4 permit with the City Manager or designee. As a condition to granting a permit, the applicant  
5 shall mitigate each tree being removed. The following requirements apply:
- 6 1. Permit applications shall include the name of the property owner, address from which  
7 tree will be removed, tree species and diameter, and reason for removal of the tree.  
8 The permit application shall be signed by the property owner and, if applicable, its  
9 authorized agent. Applications for tree removal shall also include a scaled drawing of  
10 the site showing tree size and location, and a statement of how any other regulated  
11 trees are to be protected during any approved tree removal and any associated  
12 construction or clearing, or grade changes. The City Manager or designee shall attempt  
13 to verify the information contained in the application and shall either approve or deny  
14 the application as to each regulated tree proposed to be removed.
  - 15 2. Where construction is associated with the tree removal, construction drawings shall be  
16 submitted to the building department and application for building permits made before  
17 any trees are removed.
  - 18 3. The requirements for mitigation of regulated trees not associated with development  
19 plan or subdivision plat review are as follows:

CATEGORY	MITIGATION
<b><u>1) Single-family lots with an existing single-family dwelling(s); 2) Single-family lots as</u></b>	

<b><u>depicted on a plat approved and recorded no later than July 20, 2017; and 3) Single-family lots as depicted on a plat approved and recorded after July 20, 2017, when the lot is owned by the current or future occupant of the lot or when at least 85% of the single-family lots on the plat have been fully constructed and permitted</u> <del>Single-Family Dwellings</del></b>	
High quality heritage trees, in fair or better condition, wherever they are located on the property.	Mitigation trees on an inch-for-inch diameter basis, with a minimum of two shade trees of high quality species planted on site for each tree removed.
Heritage trees of other than high quality species and high quality heritage trees in less than fair or better condition, wherever they are located between the property lines and legal setbacks.	Mitigation trees consisting of two shade trees of high quality species planted on the site for each tree removed.
<b>All Other Uses</b>	
High quality heritage trees, in fair or better condition.	Mitigation payment based on tree appraised value, and mitigation trees consisting of a minimum of two shade trees of high quality species planted on site for each tree removed.
<u>High-quality heritage trees in 100% affordable housing developments as defined by Section 30-8.7.B.2.;</u> <del>h</del> Heritage trees of other than high quality species, in fair or better condition; and high quality heritage trees, in fair or better condition, which are causing structural problems to buildings or underground utilities.	Mitigation trees on an inch-for-inch diameter basis, with a minimum of two shade trees of high quality species planted on site for each tree removed.
Any heritage trees in less than fair or better condition; and any other regulated tree.	Mitigation trees consisting of two shade trees of high quality species planted on the site for each tree removed.

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2 **SECTION 2.** It is the intent of the City Commission that the provisions of Section 1 of this  
3 ordinance become and be made a part of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Gainesville,

1 Florida, and that the sections and paragraphs of the Code of Ordinances may be renumbered or  
2 relettered in order to accomplish such intent.

3 **SECTION 3.** If any word, phrase, clause, paragraph, section, or provision of this ordinance or  
4 the application hereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional, such  
5 finding will not affect the other provisions or applications of this ordinance that can be given  
6 effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application, and to this end the  
7 provisions of this ordinance are declared severable.

8 **SECTION 4.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are to the extent of such  
9 conflict hereby repealed.

10 **SECTION 5.** This ordinance will become effective immediately upon adoption.

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12 **PASSED AND ADOPTED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

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26 This ordinance passed on first reading this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

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28 This ordinance passed on second reading this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
LAUREN POE  
MAYOR

Attest:

Approved as to form and legality:

\_\_\_\_\_  
OMICHELE D. GAINEY  
CLERK OF THE COMMISSION

\_\_\_\_\_  
NICOLLE M. SHALLEY  
CITY ATTORNEY