

TO: Residential Plan Review Applicants

FROM: Keith Mars, City Arborist
 Development Services Department

DATE: January 27, 2017

SUBJECT: Updated Instructions for Residential Plan Review- Tree Review

Beginning February 10, 2017, a separate Tree Ordinance Review Application (TORA) will no longer be required when submitting for residential plan review (PR). The application, fee, review, and issuance of a tree permit will all be consolidated into the Residential PR process.

Process	Current	Effective Feb. 10, 2017
Application	TORA Application separate from PR.	No separate TORA. Applicant must indicate “yes” for protected trees on PR application.
Tree Review and Inspection Fee	Collected with TORA.	Collected with PR tree review, no separate TORA or fee.
Review	Conducted with PR not TORA.	Only PR-Tree Review.
Permit	Issued when the PR tree review is approved. Tree Permit (TP) is not tied to PR in AMANDA.	TP will be created as a child of the PR just like the Building Permit (BP). Permit will be issued out of AMANDA and have a similar format as the BP.
Inspection	Inspection is listed on both the TP and BP.	All tree inspections associated with the PR/BP will be on the BP. Redundant TP inspection will not exist.

Figure 1: Changes to residential tree permitting procedures.

When is a tree review needed?

A Residential Plan Review-Tree Review is needed to review and permit the following as a result of development (e.g. new house construction, access to build site, staging, utility trenching).

- (1) Proposed removal of a regulated tree;
- (2) Proposed impacts in the full critical root zone of regulated trees;
- (3) Proposed pruning that exceeds 25% of the canopy.

What is the review timeline?

Residential Plan Review-Tree Review will occur on the same timelines as other PR review disciplines.

Is there a separate fee for Tree Ordinance Review?

Fee Type	FY17 Fee	Notes
Residential Development	\$323.44	Used for new construction, additions, etc.

Are predevelopment consultations still available?

Yes, a predevelopment consultation is available before submitting for residential plan review.

Is there a fee for consultations?

Fee Type	FY17 Fee	Notes
Predevelopment Consultation	\$167.44	Used when a site meeting is requested and residential development plans are not in review.

What needs to be included on the residential building plan documents for staff to review?

See Appendix A to this document.

What if there are protected trees on the property to be developed and/or on adjacent properties but the trees are not near the proposed work?

“Yes” should still be checked on your Plan Review Application and the City Arborist Program will determine if a Tree Review is truly needed or not. Applicants may not realize the potential impacts such as work access, utility upgrades, canopy clearance, etc. that must be considered in proposed work anywhere near protected trees. If staff finds that the tree review is not needed, the Plan Review-Tree Review will be closed, and the tree review fee will be removed.

What if a tree does not meet the criteria of being dead, diseased, or an imminent hazard but new construction is proposed and do not think the tree will survive?

If this scenario occurs indicate “yes” to protected trees on the application. In this case, staff will work with the applicant to determine if it is not reasonable to protect a tree due to its declining condition. Mitigation in the form of new trees and/or tree care for existing trees is a common determination. Photographs of the tree and/or an arborist report are suggested to expedite the review.

What are the possible outcomes of the PR tree review?

Approved-The PR-Tree Review has been approved. A Tree Permit will be created once the full Plan Review is approved. It will be created at the same time as the Building Permit.

Rejected-Additional information or plan modifications are needed. All updates must follow the Residential Plan Review process for updates. Instructions are included with the master comment reports generated by Residential Review staff.

How do I check on the status of the review?

Please use the following website to check on the review status:

https://www.austintexas.gov/devreview/a_queryfolder_permits.jsp

You can also contact the tree reviewer listed in AMANDA for your Plan Review.

What if I have additional questions?

Please send an e-mail to cityarborist@austintexas.gov



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SUBJECT: Appendix A: Standard Residential Plan Review-Tree Review Comments

The below standard comments are generated by the City Arborist staff when reviewing Residential Plan Review documents. Though project specific comments may be generated, the below standard comments will assist the applicant with including necessary details for staff review.

Standard Comments for Residential Plan Review-Tree Review

General

TOR Comment #: The application was checked “yes” for protected trees, but the plans do not show any protected trees. Please clarify.

Plan Depictions

TOR Comment #: Properly represent to scale and label the ¼, ½, and full Critical Root Zones (CRZs) of all protected trees (19”+ diameter) on the site plan sheet and the foundation plan if any CRZs overlap proposed foundation. Include any protected trees on adjacent properties that have CRZs that extend onto the subject property.

TOR Comment #: Provide a Tree Legend of all protected sized tree diameters and species on and adjacent to the property. Accurately identify the species (ex. Live Oak, Post Oak, Cedar Elm, American Elm, etc. - not just Oak or Elm).

TOR Comment #: Show the proposed access routes, material staging, dumpster and spoils placement, portable toilet and concrete washout as applicable. These uses cannot be within the ½ CRZ of any protected trees.

TOR Comment #: Show all existing and proposed utility routes and meter locations (water, waste water, gas, electric). Avoid the ½ CRZs of any protected tree with any newly proposed work. Please indicate if any of the utilities are existing with no changes.

TOR Comment #: Provide existing and proposed grade lines on the site plan if any changes to grade are anticipated with the work.

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Critical Root Zone Preservation

TOR Comment #: Environmental Criteria Manual Section 3.5.2 states the following critical root zone preservation standards.

1. A minimum of 50 percent of the CRZ must be preserved at natural grade, with natural ground cover.
2. No cut or fill greater than four (4) inches will be located closer to the tree trunk than $\frac{1}{2}$ the CRZ radius distance.
3. No cut or fill within the distance from the tree which is three (3) times the trunk diameter (also can be determined by calculating the $\frac{1}{4}$ CRZ). For example, no cut is allowed within 60-inches of a tree which has a 20-inch diameter trunk.

Please demonstrate compliance with CRZ preservation regulations.

TOR Comment #: Environmental Criteria Manual Section 3.5.2 states that there is no cut or fill greater than 4" allowed within the $\frac{1}{2}$ CRZ of protected trees and there is no impact allowed in the $\frac{1}{4}$ CRZ. Piers (with beams or suspended slab) may be permitted within the $\frac{1}{2}$ CRZ on a case-by-case basis dependent upon tree impact and at City Arborist staff discretion.

TOR Comment #: The proposed slab-on-grade foundation is located adjacent to the $\frac{1}{2}$ CRZ of (insert tree species and diameter). The foundation plans and/or details show impacts in the $\frac{1}{2}$ CRZ from over-build/over-excavation of the foundation pad, positive drainage, proof-rolling or other impacts beyond the perimeter beam. Either adjust the foundation away from the tree or use alternative foundation details to avoid impacts in the $\frac{1}{2}$ CRZs.

TOR Comment #: The foundation preparation design and notes refer to a soils report for foundation preparation guidelines to be followed, but this report was not included with the structural plans for review. The soils report, in its entirety, must be provided to complete the tree review for this site. Additional tree comments are likely if the report recommends excavation within the CRZs of the protected trees on site.

Tree Canopy Preservation

TOR Comment #: Are impacts to protected tree canopies expected? If so, a private qualified arborist should assess and provide the pruning requirements needed for the project. If 25% or more of the canopy is desired to be removed, a qualified arborist must provide a written report for staff review.

Pool Construction

TOR Comment #: Identify placement of pool equipment. Pool equipment construction trench should avoid $\frac{1}{2}$ CRZs of all protected trees.

TOR Comment #: Identify construction and excavation route on property to construct proposed pool. Route should avoid half CRZs of all protected and heritage trees, if applicable. Indicate area of mulch road if impacts to half CRZs are inevitable.

Demolition

TOR Comment #: Put a note on the site plan that demolition in the $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ CRZs of protected trees must be done with hand tools.