



Protection of Public Trees

About the City's Tree Protection Ordinance

The City of Houston's Tree Protection Ordinance, contained in [sections V and VI of Chapter 33 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances](#), was established for the protection and preservation of trees and shrubs on city property. This includes trees planted on right-of-way, medians, parks and other city property.

About Protected Trees

- Trees protected by the ordinance are determined by type and size. This street tree list can be found on the City's website at: www.houstontx.gov/planning/DevelopRegs/tree_shrub.html
- The ordinance requires removal of any tree that is on the City's street tree list and has a diameter equal to or greater than 1.5 inches to be authorized by city permit, and the tree must be replaced by a specifically stated formula found in the Code or Ordinances. This applies to trees affected by new construction, street reconstruction, renovation of existing structures, or parking lots.
- For existing trees that will remain after construction completion, tree protection is required during the construction activity.

About the Adopt-an-Esplanade Program

- The program welcomes organizations, homeowners associations and civic groups interested in providing long term support for the maintenance and aesthetic quality of esplanades/medians.
- For information on how your group or business can participate in this program, contact Marilu De La Fuente, Greenspace Adoption Coordinator at (832) 395-7029 or marilu.delafuente@houstontx.gov.



How Do I Contact the City about Trees?

- If you witness the removal of trees from street easements, please call (832) 395-7100 immediately so we can check for permits and avoid unnecessary street tree loss. This phone line is answered 24 hours a day.
- To report a city tree that needs attention, please contact the 3-1-1 Houston Service Center or fill out your report online at: <http://www.houstontx.gov/311/>. Please note: a city forester will evaluate all trees before any work is done.
- A permit is required to remove any tree on city property or on a setback. For specifics regarding plans for building or renovating a house, driveway or other project involving trees adjacent to a street, please contact 3-1-1.

Houston – A Tree City

Houston has been a Tree City since 1986. The Tree City USA designation is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. This recognition is awarded to cities that have met four standards: 1) Created a tree board or department, 2) Passed a tree care ordinance, 3) Created a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2.00 per capita and 4) Hold an annual Arbor Day observation and a proclamation. By meeting these standards, the City of Houston has created a foundation from which to promote and enhance our urban forest. It demonstrates to the world that we value our trees and the benefits they bring to our environment.