

## **Summary of the City of Grass Valley Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance Chapter 12.36**

### **What Is The Tree Ordinance?**

The City of Grass Valley acknowledges the importance of trees to the community's health, safety, welfare, and tranquility. Trees increase property values, provide visual continuity, provide shade and cooling, decrease wind velocities, control erosion, conserve energy, reduce stormwater runoff, filter airborne pollutants, reduce noise, provide privacy, provide habitat and food value, and release oxygen. In December 2005, the City Council adopted the Tree Ordinance, Chapter 12.36 of the Municipal Code, to ensure that the community trees would be prudently protected and managed so as to ensure these multiple civic benefits.

### **What Types Of Trees Are Protected Under This Ordinance?**

**Tree:** Any woody plant having a trunk eight (8) caliper inches or larger in Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) (54" above ground height) and as further defined within the definitions section of the Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance, Chapter 12.36.

**Significant Tree:** Any tree which measures eighteen (18) caliper inches or larger in Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) (54" above ground height).

**Heritage Trees:** Any tree listed on the official City of Grass Valley heritage tree list adopted by the City Council due to distinctive form, size, age, location, species, unique qualities, or historical significance.

**Street Trees:** Any tree within the public right-of-way.

### **When Are Permits Required? Who Can I Contact?**

The pruning or removal of any of the types of protected trees listed above (including the modification of surrounding area) may require review and/or permitting, depending on the nature of the proposed work. The matrix on the opposite side of this page presents the basic review process for tree permits in the City of Grass Valley. It is the responsibility of property owners and/or residents of the City of Grass Valley to be aware of tree-related regulations before engaging in any planning or activity that may require new tree planting or removal; or may impact existing trees. The City of Grass Valley is not responsible for location of trees marked for removal. All property lines should be verified before submitting your application.

It shall be the responsibility of all licensed tree cutters or any other person who is removing the tree to have a copy of the applicable tree permit, a valid city business license and any required state licenses in his or her possession and available for inspection upon request.

### **How Do I Identify and/or Mark My Trees?**

Trees should be identified on your application by a simple drawing of the trees in relationship to your property or home. All trees should be marked for inspection, within three (3) days of your application, with either bright colored tape, a small paint dot at the base of the tree or other identifiable marking that the can be seen easily.

### **What Is The Approval Process?**

Upon submission of your application it will be routed to the Public Works Superintendent for review and comment. The tree permit administrator will sign a proposed action and you will receive a letter indicating your ten (10) day posting period or requesting additional information. If no public objections are received you will receive a final action letter within seven (7) days. Permits are valid for 180 days from date of issuance.

### **How Can I Get A Copy Of The Full Tree Ordinance And/Or A Tree Removal Permit Application?**

Additional information, applications, and copies of the full tree ordinance are available from the Public Works Department (274-4350) located at City Hall, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley or on line at [www.cityofgrassvalley.com](http://www.cityofgrassvalley.com).

General information on urban forestry is available on-line at [www.fs.fed.us/ucf](http://www.fs.fed.us/ucf).

## Summary of Tree Removal Permit Application

Information is excerpted from Municipal Code Section 12.36

Section 12.36.040 A <b>Emergency Tree Removal Permit</b>	Section 12.36.040 B <b>Construction Related Tree Removal Permit</b>	Section 12.36.040 C <b>Tree Removal Permit</b>
<p>1) If the condition of a tree presents an immediate danger of collapse and requires immediate action for the safety of life or property, it may be removed without prior issuance of an emergency tree removal permit upon the order of the tree permit administrator or a member of the police or fire department.</p> <p>2) Emergency tree removal permits shall be reviewed and considered for approval by the tree permit administrator. The tree permit administrator may require the applicant to hire an arborist to review the evidence to ascertain whether the tree presented an immediate danger of collapse.</p>	<p>1) If a site has received development approval through a planning action consistent with the standards of this chapter, then a construction related tree removal permit shall be required for those trees approved for removal through that process. The city shall require the applicant to mitigate for the removal of each tree pursuant to Section 12.36.085 of this chapter. Such mitigation requirements shall be a condition of approval of the original development permit granted by the city.</p> <p>2) Construction related tree removal permits shall be required prior to the issuance of a grading and/or building permit for the subject property, whichever occurs first.</p>	<p>1) Tree removal permits are required for the following activities:</p> <p>a) Removal of trees greater than eight inches DBH on any private lands;</p> <p>b) Removal of significant trees or street trees greater than eighteen inches DBH on any public lands or within the public right-of-way.</p> <p>2) A tree or a grove of trees proposed for removal shall be conspicuously posted with a weatherproofed copy of the tree removal application a minimum of ten days before the tree permit administrator intends to make a decision on the permit.</p> <p>3) It shall be the responsibility of all licensed tree cutters or any other person who is removing the tree to have a copy of the applicable tree permit, a valid city business license and any required state licenses in his or her possession and available for inspection upon request. (Ord. 646 § 2 (part), 2005)</p>
<p>Process: Requires review by the Public Works Superintendent and approval by the Tree Permit Administrator. Request may be referred to an Arborist.</p>	<p>Process: Requires review and approval by the Planning Department. Request may be referred to the Public Works Superintendent, an Arborist, and/or the Planning Commission.</p> <p>A Tree Protection Plan, approved by the tree permit administrator is required prior to commencement of any work (Sec. 12.36.200).</p>	<p>Process: Applications for tree removal permits shall be reviewed and approved by the tree permit administrator pursuant to Section 12.36.080 (approval criteria) of this chapter.</p>

**Complete information is available from the Public Works Department  
125 East Main Street, Grass Valley or on line at [www.cityofgrassvalley.com](http://www.cityofgrassvalley.com)**

**Violations of the tree ordinance are subject to enforcement; Section 12.36.130.**