

# NO NET LOSS OF TREES POLICY

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CITY OF CHAMBLEE  
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

[3506 BROAD STREET]  
[CHAMBLEE, GA 30341]

# NO NET LOSS OF TREES POLICY

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## PURPOSE

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The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there will be no net loss of trees on City property. Chamblee's trees contribute to a clean, healthy environment. As they grow, trees take in carbon dioxide from the air and produce life-giving oxygen. Trees are a vital component of the infrastructure for the City of Chamblee, providing environmental and economic benefits. Trees reduce the heat island effect caused by pavement, buildings, and other impervious surfaces. Trees provide shade and cooling, which lessens energy demands and pollution. Properly placed trees can increase property values and add to the aesthetic vistas within the City.

Chamblee's trees face many hazards and hardships including insects, disease, construction, drought, and air pollution. Protecting the trees along our roads and in our parks is in the best interest of the City of Chamblee. The City strives to maintain trees in a healthy and non-hazardous condition through professionally accepted arboricultural practices.

This policy establishes standards of no net loss in canopy coverage on city-owned property. Furthermore, this policy reinforces the City's commitment to environmental, economic, and social stewardship. By incorporating environmental considerations into public use of resources, the City of Chamblee will positively impact human health and the environment, reduce costs and improve the environmental quality of the region.

## DEFINITIONS

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When used in this policy, the following words, terms and phrases, and their derivations shall be the meaning ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

**AGENT** means an official contracted or subcontracted person who is authorized to act on behalf of the City of Chamblee and represent their interests.

**CALIPER** means the diameter of a tree trunk, applied only to new or replacement plantings that is taken six inches above the ground for up to and including four-inch caliper size, and twelve inches above the ground for larger sizes.

**CITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR** means the Development Director or other employee or agent as designated by the City Manager

**CITY LANDSCAPE COORDINATOR** means the Development Director or designee of the City of Chamblee having primary enforcement responsibilities under this policy, and charged with the responsibility for approval of all tree removals and tree replacements in the City of Chamblee required pursuant to this policy.

**EMPLOYEE** means an individual drawing a salary or wage from the City, whether on a full-time, part-time basis or contractual third-party. The term shall encompass all members of the City without regard to whether or not such individual is compensated.

**LANDSCAPE PLAN** means a plan that identifies areas of tree preservation and methods of tree protection within the protected zone, as well as all areas or replanting. Within replanting areas, the common and botanical names of the proposed species, the number of plants of each species, the size of all plants, the proposed location of all plants, and any unique features of the plant shall be indicated.

**OFFICIAL** means any elected or appointed person who holds office or serves in a position of public capacity.

**REVEGETATION** means the replacement of trees and landscape plant materials into the minimum required landscape areas, as determined by the Unified Development Ordinance, conditions of zoning approval, or the Tree Preservation Ordinance.

**TREE** means any self-supporting wood perennial plant which at maturity attains a caliper of four inches or more.

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## SCOPE

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The terms and provisions of this policy shall apply to all public property owned by the City of Chamblee and subject to City regulations.

1. Permitting for Tree Removal
  - a. No person shall directly or indirectly remove or destroy any tree located on public property without obtaining approval pursuant to Section 320 of the Unified Development Ordinance, or as provided in this policy, whichever is appropriate. Destruction of a tree includes pruning and shaping practices not in line with ANSI A300 (Part 1) Standards for Tree Care Operations—Pruning.
  - b. Permits to remove or destroy trees for new construction, renovation, or demolition on public property shall be obtained by making application to the City Landscape Coordinator in a form prescribed by the City.
  - c. Applications must be accompanied by a landscape plan showing tree replacements.
2. The replacement trees need not be located in the same parcel as the tree was removed, destroyed or injured. The City Landscape Coordinator shall consider the entire City for the purposes of eligible areas of replanting.
3. The City Landscape Coordinator shall make suggestions as to an appropriate tree species and appropriate location for replacement trees.
4. Replacement tree plantings shall be completed within one calendar year.
5. In the event that there are not enough suitable locations for replacement trees on City property or right of way, the City may elect to satisfy the tree replacement requirement by providing trees at a publically advertised event for citizens—distributed in exchange for agreement that planting will be within the City of Chamblee. Eligibility to receive trees will be determined by proof of residency.

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## EXCEPTIONS

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The City of Chamblee’s policy to ensure there will be no net loss of trees on City property is not always practicable. The following situations are exceptions to the No Net Loss of Trees Policy:

1. If a tree is dead or presents a hazard or danger to health, safety, or welfare of the public, such tree may be removed immediately by the City or the City's agent. Within five working days of said removal, the City or the City's agent must provide a tree removal application to the City Landscape Coordinator. Re-vegetation shall follow based on the City Landscape Coordinator's suggestions as to an appropriate tree species and appropriate location for replacement trees.
  - a. Trees, alive or dead, that pose a hazard to the health, safety and welfare of the population at large;
  - b. Trees, alive or dead, that pose a specific threat to persons and/or real property; and
  - c. Trees, alive or dead, that negatively impact the best management practices of the orderly operation of motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic through Chamblee, may be removed without the need for compensatory re-vegetation.
2. If a tree is diseased or insect-infected, such tree may be removed after consultation with the City Landscape Coordinator. Within five business days of said removal, the City of Chamblee or the City's agent must provide the tree removal application to the City Landscape Coordinator. Re-vegetation may then follow, based on the City Landscape Coordinator's suggestions as to an appropriate tree species, size, season for installation and appropriate location for replacement trees.
3. During a period of any emergency, such as a tornado, ice storm, flood, or any other act of nature, the requirements of this policy may be waived or modified as required by the City Manager, Public Works Director, Parks Director, City Landscape Coordinator, or those individuals' designee.
4. Trees that are located on, inside, or immediately adjacent to a utility easement, that are removed as a function of emergency and/or imperative repair or maintenance work, do not require compensatory re-vegetation.
5. Trees that are located on, inside, or immediately adjacent to any utility easement, whether the trees are alive or dead, and are, in the opinion of the City Landscape Coordinator, in conflict with utility lines in that easement, or will grow into a conflict with utility lines in that easement, be they above ground or underground utilities, may be removed by the City or by the City's duly authorized third-parties, to mitigate or eliminate such conflict without the need for compensatory re-vegetation.

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## **RESPONSIBILITY**

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As the steward of the City's sustainability program, the Development Director shall have the following duties and powers in regards to the No Net Loss of Trees Policy.

The City Landscape Coordinator has primary enforcement responsibilities for this policy and is charged with the responsibility for approval of all tree removal and tree replacement plans for public property in the City of Chamblee required pursuant to this policy.

1. Communicating with the City Department Heads when a tree could potentially be removed or damaged due to performing essential work duties.

2. Reviewing all plans for tree removal and tree replacement on public property in the City of Chamblee as required pursuant to this policy.
3. Monitoring and ensuring the success of the No Net Loss of Trees Policy, and when appropriate, working with City Department Heads to assess technical feasibility and/or cost effectiveness.
4. Work with the Development Director to make certain that employees are aware and educated about this No Net Loss of Trees Policy.