



City Trees and the Coast Live Oak Ordinance

The City of Berkeley regulates the pruning, removal, and planting of City trees and administers the coast live oak ordinance.

Any tree growing on the City-maintained portion of the public right-of-way, or on City-owned property is a City tree. This refers to any tree growing between the sidewalk and the street, in a street median, in a public park, or on any other property owned by the City of Berkeley. View a [map](#) of Berkeley City trees.

All trees in these areas are City trees and are maintained by the City of Berkeley's Urban Forestry Unit, regardless of who planted them. You can submit requests to the Urban Forestry Unit for the pruning, removal, or planting of City trees.

The City of Berkeley also has restrictions on the pruning or removal of coast live oak on private or public property.

SUBMIT A REQUEST FOR PRUNING OR REMOVAL OF A CITY TREE

To request pruning or removal of a City tree by phone or email:

- Call Customer Service at 311 if in the city limits, or at (510) 981-2489
- Send your request by email to trees@berkeleyca.gov
- Call the Parks Division Office at (510) 981-6660

Include the reason you are requesting to have the tree pruned or removed. Once your request is received, an arborist will inspect the tree within 2-4 weeks.

The Urban Forestry Unit makes all determinations about whether a city tree will be pruned or removed, and what pruning will be done. The City does not prune or remove trees to improve a view, to minimize fruit, seed, or leaf drop, to increase sunlight to a landscape or property, based solely on the presence of pests or disease, or for other discretionary purposes.

Once a site has been inspected, the arborist will make an attempt to contact you with the results of the inspection, and the job will be added to the work schedule. Because Urban Forestry staff also responds to all tree-related emergencies, it is not possible to give a date for the scheduling or completion of the

work at the time of inspection. No Parking signs are usually posted 72 hours in advance of when the work is expected to begin.

APPLY FOR A PERMIT TO PRUNE OR REMOVE A CITY TREE

Professional arborists may apply for a permit to prune or remove a City tree. You can find arborists through [ISA \(International Society of Arboriculture\)](#) or [ASCA \(American Society of Consulting Arborists\)](#).

To work on a City tree, you must:

- Be a state licensed tree service contractor
- Have a City of Berkeley business license
- Have liability and workers compensation insurance
- Be an ISA Certified Arborist (pruning only)

To apply for a permit, [complete the permit form](#) and send to trees@berkeleyca.gov. After receiving the permit, a City arborist will inspect the tree and decide whether pruning or removal will be permitted.

THE CITY RESTRICTS THE REMOVAL OR EXCESSIVE PRUNING OF COAST LIVE OAK

[Title 6.52 of the Berkeley Municipal Code](#) restricts the removal or excessive pruning of coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) in Berkeley. Excessive pruning is defined as removal of more than 25% of the functioning leaf, stem, or root system of a tree in any 24 month period. This applies to single stem trees with a circumference of 18" (5.7" diameter) or multi-stem trees with a combined circumference of 26 inches (8.3" combined diameter) measured at 4 feet from grade.

To request an exception to the ordinance, fill out a [Coast Live Oak Pruning or Removal Form](#) and send to trees@berkeleyca.gov.

SUBMIT A REQUEST TO PLANT A CITY TREE

Request a tree in South and West Berkeley

Residents in South and West Berkeley can request a tree through the Trees Make Life Better Program. This grant-funded program will plant 1,000–1,800 trees in areas of Berkeley that have fewer trees than the rest of the City.

Check the [area map](#) to see if you live in one of the eight areas that are eligible for tree planting through this program. If you are interested in applying for a tree, fill out our [Trees Make Life Better application](#).

Requests for all areas can be made at any time. All tree planting begins with a site inspection. After inspection, an arborist will make a species plan. Any site modification (concrete cutting, dead tree removal, etc.) will be scheduled at that time. Trees are planted when conditions are best, from December to July.

Citywide Tree Planting Program

You must submit a [tree planting application](#) whether you are requesting the City plant a tree, or if you are planning to purchase and plant the tree yourself.

After receiving your application, staff will check that the proposed location meets the [tree planting location standards](#) for minimum distances from the tree to surrounding infrastructure. Staff will then select the species and exact location for the new tree.

Applications are accepted year round. However, the City only plants trees in the winter and spring months to best ensure the establishment of the new trees. Process times for applications for the City to plant a new tree are seasonally based, and may take a few months to complete an inspection. Inspections for applications to plant the tree yourself will be expedited.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

TREE PRUNING REMOVAL PERMIT (166.4 KB)

COAST LIVE OAK PRUNING REMOVAL (139.98 KB)

TREE PLANTING APPLICATION (175.3 KB)

TREE PLANTING FAQs (73.52 KB)

TREE PLANTING LOCATION STANDARDS (46.34 KB)

TREES MAKE LIFE BETTER APPLICATION (192.39 KB)

News



High Impact Traffic Team Operation on February 11

28 Cited at Berkeley DUI / Driver License Checkpoint



Berkeley Police Department Holding DUI Checkpoint December 18



Celebrate the Holiday Season Responsibly

PARKS DIVISION

Email: trees@berkeleyca.gov

Phone: (510) 981-6660, TDD: (510) 981-6903, FAX: (510) 981-6665

Related BMC

MUNICIPAL CODE 6.52

MUNICIPAL CODE 12.44

MUNICIPAL CODE 12.45

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