

# GUIDELINES FOR TREE PLANTING PERMITTING PROCESS



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Street trees provide a range of benefits to our neighborhoods and commercial districts that are vital to San Francisco's quality of life. Therefore, a tree-planting permit is required to ensure that street trees are properly planted to maximize tree benefits, protect public safety, and limit conflicts with infrastructure.

## PERMIT APPLICATION MATERIALS

Submit the following materials by mail to:

**City and County of San Francisco**  
**1155 Market Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**  
**San Francisco, CA 94103**

- Completed application form
- If the planting is related to new construction or other requirements of SF Planning Code Sec. 143, include the approved site plans (see the item 2 below)

## PLANTING PROCESS

1. After submission of the completed application, call 415-554-6700 to schedule an inspection to evaluate the proposed tree locations and species.
2. **Final verification of street tree species and planting sites requires a pre-site inspection** to locate infrastructure and traffic elements that have a bearing on street tree planting per Department of Public Works Order # 178,631 (summarized on reverse side), Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, California Building Code Title 24 and other relevant regulatory codes and guidelines. **A TWO (2) WEEK NOTICES IS REQUIRED FOR A PRE- INSPECTION BEFORE CONSTRUCTING SIDEWALK BASINS. ONE (1) WEEK FOR A SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT FOR FINAL INSPECTION PRIOR TO SIGN OFF ON A JOB CARD.**
3. Call Underground Service Alert at 800-227-2600 to check for the location of your underground utilities. If underground utilities are closer than the required minimum distance or if you have questions, call the Department at 415-554-6700.

## FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Contact the nonprofit San Francisco Friends of the Urban Forest at 561-6890 for information about their neighborhood tree planting and maintenance projects.
  - Use a licensed and insured contractor for tree work, preferably an Arborist certified with the International Society of Arboriculture.
- For more information call the Bureau of Urban Forestry at 415-554-6700 or visit us at <http://sfpublicworks.org/trees>.

**CALL 415-554-6700 FOR INSPECTION TO CONFIRM LOCATION AND SPECIES**  
**KEEP THESE INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR REFERENCE**

## SUMMARY OF DPW ORDER 178,631 PLANTING GUIDELINES

It is recommended that the Permittee carry adequate liability insurance for his/her own protection and in order to carry the foregoing provisions into effect.

### GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- ❑ Trees to be planted must be from a minimum 15-gallon sized nursery container.
- ❑ Depending on the sidewalk width, the maximum new basin size is 4ft. by 4ft; the minimum is 2 ½ ft. by 3ft.
- ❑ In no case shall the new street tree result in an obstructed sidewalk width of less than 48 inches.
- ❑ Raised structures around the tree basin can present a tripping hazard and are not allowed.
- ❑ A basin cover, perimeter of red brick, or other approved material is encouraged in the tree basin in the following cases:
  - a. The sidewalk is less than 7ft. wide
  - b. Bus Zones when a planting is allowed
  - c. Areas with heavy pedestrian traffic
  - d. Sidewalk with a grade of 10% or greater
  - e. Tree basins adjacent to parking meters

### MINIMUM RESTRICTIONS

Trees **may not** be planted within :

- ❑ 25ft. in front of a traffic signal
- ❑ 25 ft. of the property line on the approach to an intersection and 5ft of the property line on the exit from an intersection as the traffic flows IF a corner property
- ❑ 9, 15, and 21 feet of a street light for small, medium, and large mature size trees respectively
- ❑ 6ft of a utility pole
- ❑ 3ft of a parking sign unless the Department of Parking and Traffic agree to relocate the sign
- ❑ 3ft of a gas line, water line, electrical conduit and sidewalk furniture
- ❑ 5ft of a sewer line
- ❑ 5ft of a fire hydrant
- ❑ 10ft from a fire escape
- ❑ A bus zone when the sidewalk is less than or equal to 15ft
- ❑ A restricted parking Blue Zone
- ❑ 12-15ft of existing trees if both are small mature sized trees

The property owner shall check for the presence of underground utilities in the area of proposed planting and shall be solely responsible in avoiding interference with or damage to electric or telephone conduits, sewers and other utilities. Check for the location of your underground gas and utility services by calling Underground Service Alert (USA) at 800-227-2600.

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# APPLICATION FOR TREE PLANTING PERMIT

Mail complete applications to : Bureau of Urban Forestry, 1155 Market St, 3rd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103

Check payable to: CCSF – DPW – BUF | Telephone: 415-554-6700 Fax: 415-522-7684



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DATE \_\_\_\_\_ APPLICATION # \_\_\_\_\_ APPROVED BY \_\_\_\_\_

# TO REMOVE \_\_\_\_\_ SPECIES \_\_\_\_\_

# TO PLANT \_\_\_\_\_ SPECIES \_\_\_\_\_

## TREES TO BE PLANTED

Street Tree(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Species \_\_\_\_\_

Street Tree(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Species \_\_\_\_\_

Sig.Tree(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Species \_\_\_\_\_

Construction related. (Site plans or diagrams are required)  
Building Permit number if applicable

To be planted by Friends of the Urban Forest (FUF)

## SITE INFORMATION

Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cross Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICANT/AUTHORIZED AGENT INFORMATION Check here if same as above

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to hold harmless the City and County of San Francisco, its agents, officers, and employees from any damage or injury caused by reason of planting, placement, maintenance, or removal of the planter or plants. The owner or owners of the respective property shall be solely liable for any damages. The City has the right to make changes in parking restrictions, such as designating new bus stops or blue zoned parking areas. If parking restrictions change adjacent to your sidewalk landscaping, your sidewalk landscaping permit may be rescinded and you will be required to remove the landscaping and reinstall concrete sidewalk paving. Any proposed changes in parking restrictions will require public notice and require a public hearing prior to implementation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant/Authorized Agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Property Owner

\_\_\_\_\_ Authorized Agent

Updated 01/16

We encourage all applicants to submit plans by e-mail to [urbanforestrypermits@sfdpw.org](mailto:urbanforestrypermits@sfdpw.org)