



St. Johns County Tree Information for Residential Home Sites

If the lot is within a subdivision, PUD, or PRD with an approved NSP, please refer to the NSP for minimum tree requirements.

Clearance sheet site plan requirements:

1. If existing trees are to be used to meet the minimum tree requirement, provide the locations, types, and diameters of those trees on the site plan. The diameter of an existing tree is measured at 4.5 feet above the ground. Any trees except exempt trees with a diameter of 2 inches and greater may be used for tree inch value. Existing palm trees that are of protected size may be counted for 6 inches of value.

2. If trees are to be planted for tree inch value, provide a table showing the tree types, quantities, and calipers that will be used to meet the minimum tree inch requirement. Caliper size is measured 6 inches above grade. Any palms to be planted are given value based on their clear trunk size. If the palm has 6 feet to 15 feet of clear trunk, it receives 3 inches of value. If it has greater than 15 feet of clear trunk, it receives 6 inches of value. Canopy trees shall be spaced at least 20-30 feet apart when planting.

When planting trees for value, the following note must be placed on the site plan: "At least 70% of the trees must be canopy type with no more than 50% of one species, and at least 50% must be native."

3. Both preserved and planted trees may be used together to meet the minimum tree inch requirements.

4. Any trees that meet specimen criteria as defined in section 4.01.05.D of the Land Development Code must be shown on the site plan.

5. Trees may not be planted or preserved for tree inch value if they are located within easements or wetlands. The areas of all easements and wetlands may be subtracted from the lot size area when calculating the minimum tree inch requirement.

Exempt trees – Trees that cannot be used for value include camphor, Chinaberry, tallow, Brazilian pepper, mimosa, Australian pine, queen palm, and Washington palm.

Canopy trees – Trees that will attain a mature canopy of 30 feet wide by 35 feet tall. Examples include laurel and live oak, pecan, hickory, elm, river birch, maple, sycamore, red cedar, magnolia, poplar, cypress, and pines.

Multi-trunk trees – Trees that normally grow with two or more trunks. Each trunk may be measured and added together to obtain tree inch value.