

## Tree Mitigation Policy Revisions

The University's current Tree Mitigation Policy was last updated in 2007. Since then a number of issues have come up that warrant an update to the policy. These issues include the low size requirement for necessitating mitigation, prioritization of replacement on site, determining shrub vs tree, pruning of heritage trees, how to deal with palm trees and the low replacement cost for heritage tree mitigation in relation to the City of Gainesville's policy and inflation. The attached edited policy is PDC's draft update that addresses deficiencies and updates the policy's balance to reduce mitigation of small trees and increase protection of Heritage trees.

### **Issues:**

1. The current policy sets tree mitigation being required beginning at 3" DBH, while the City of Gainesville is set at 8" DBH. The 3" DBH threshold tends to include a lot of volunteer trees, which are not caught before they increase to that size. This leads in some cases to trees that should be removed for aesthetic reasons, not being removed since there is no desire to pay mitigation. The revised policy recommends changing the minimum threshold to 5" DBH to be more align with the City's, but remains lower to reflect the lessor mitigation being collected.
2. The current policy prioritizes replacement mitigation on site. While this is fine in many instances, it sometimes leads to bad design and overcrowding. The revised policy recommends eliminating the preference for onsite mitigation.
3. The current policy does not address when certain species are shrubs or trees. Examples of species that can be considered both include Crape Myrtles, Podocarpus and certain hollies. The revised policy clarifies that the determination will be based on the tree / shrub form of the species being removed.
4. The current policy is silent on the pruning of heritage trees. Since the policy gives no direction, it is up to each project to determine the amount of pruning that should be done to heritage trees. This can lead to unhealthy and unsightly pruning of what are generally specimen trees. The revised policy requires that a certified arborist oversees the pruning of heritage trees.
5. The current policy does not address palm trees. LVL's informal policy has been to relocate palms to other locations on campus. Unfortunately, the Grounds Department has been having trouble identifying new locations. Additionally, the cost of moving can be more expensive and the likelihood of survival can be lower than just replacing with commercially installed healthy palms. The revised policy clarifies how palms will be mitigated based on type and size.
6. The current policy for Heritage trees was developed in 2007. Since then the City of Gainesville has increased their mitigation requirements for Heritage trees dramatically. For example a 30" DBH Live Oak's mitigation under the University's current policy would be \$2,000, while the City of Gainesville's' would be \$ 15,543. The proposed changes to the tree mitigation policy are not of the same magnitude in cost and are more in line with inflation. The revised policy increases the cost of mitigation as the size of the tree increases by an increasing amount, but the cost remains much less than the City's. Additionally, this increase serves to more accurately reflect the value of the tree being removed, provide sufficient funding to offset that value, and discourage removal of heritage trees where they can be avoided.
7. The revised policy continues to direct that Grounds receive the money from mitigation, however it eliminates the \$50,000 threshold and directs that the money be spent for Open-space enhancement projects as approved by LVLC. This change will help to create a pool of money to finance campus improvements as identified in the Landscape Master Plan.

## Faculty Senate Bylaws

Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee. The Lakes Vegetation and Landscape Committee consists of six faculty members, three appointed by the President or the President's designee and three elected by the Senate from the faculty at large, plus one student member. The Chair is elected. This Committee is responsible for items that affect the use of University lakes, including guidelines for use of such lakes in order to preserve their ecological integrity and research capabilities, and the management and well being of natural areas containing non-domesticated plants and animals. It provides recommendations concerning enforcement of policies regarding the removal of trees and other vegetation. It provides input to the University Land Use and Facilities Planning Committee regarding planning of major landscape elements such as green space, open space, and significant architectural features to ensure their compatibility with existing and planned landscaping and master planning. **It provides recommendations to the Vice President for Finance and Administration about construction on campus, specifically concerning: programming, including general site suitability having an impact on trees, landscape, natural areas and lakes; schematic design, including tree removal, plans for transplants, replacements and/or mitigation based on building footprint, utility corridors and other construction activities; and design development including new landscaping, appropriateness and inclusion of any mitigation for tree removal.**

TREE MITIGATION POLICY  
Adopted by LVL, ~~October 2007~~December 2018

Tree mitigation is the act of compensating for healthy tree removal by planting a proportionate number of replacement trees on a site based upon the species and size of each existing tree that is lost or taking other actions to restore and biologically enhance existing green-space. Ideally, construction activities on the University of Florida campus should be designed and executed to avoid impacting trees, and when impacts are unavoidable, ~~the trees are moved and re-located onsite, trees shall be mitigated as specified in this policy. As this is not always possible,~~ the following tree mitigation policies are provided as a basis for offsetting the loss of values (aesthetic, ecological, monetary, etc.) from taking down a tree based upon its species, size, and relative health.

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There are trees and shrubs on the University of Florida campus that have been designated as having particular significance. These plants are National/State Champions, Heritage Specimen trees, trees that are numbered and tagged as part of the University's "Tree Walk," and rare or unique plants used for teaching purposes. These plants are very difficult to replace and must be given special protection during any activity.

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Heritage trees are defined as canopy species measuring 20 inches or more in diameter (DBH), except for Water Oaks, Laurel Oaks, Loblolly Pines, Sugarberry and Sweetgums (*i.e.* "Large Canopy Trees") that shall be classified as heritage trees at 30 inches in diameter (DBH). Understory species shall be considered heritage at 15 inches DBH. All trees below the heritage threshold must be ~~relocated or~~ replaced on a two for one basis (~~two replacement trees for each removed~~). Heritage trees shall be replaced at a greater value than non-heritage trees with an additional replacement tree required for every (2) inch gain in diameter over the heritage size threshold. Trees that are also considered large shrubs shall be mitigated based on whether the ones being removed are being maintained as a tree or a shrub. Examples of such trees /shrubs include, but are not limited to, Crape Myrtles, Podocarpus, and Ligustrum japonicum. Cabbage palm trees shall be mitigated on a 2:1 basis. Other palms shall be mitigated as specified by this policy. Species recognized by the Exotic Pest Plant Council as an "invasive" exotic and those trees whose health is confirmed to be "fair" or worse as determined by ~~the project team and/or UF Urban Forester~~ a certified arborist and confirmed by the Lakes, Vegetation & Landscaping Committee (LVLC) shall be exempt from mitigation. Pruning of heritage trees shall be discouraged except as needed for the health of the tree and safety of people in proximity. Pruning of heritage trees shall follow the recommendations of a certified arborist. Pruning of heritage trees that has not followed the recommendations of a certified arborist shall incur penalties as determined by LVLC. Facility Services' Grounds department shall be exempt from mitigation and pruning requirements.

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Where it is not possible to plant replacement trees onsite, tree impacts shall be offset by contributing to a mitigation fund used to plant new trees or for ~~green space landscape~~ enhancement projects in appropriate locations throughout campus. When planners and architects make every effort to incorporate existing trees into their designs and there is ~~still~~ not room within the project site for all of the required replacement plantings, the offsite mitigation fee shall be calculated using the formula above with a value of \$250 per replacement tree as described in the UF Design & Construction Standards. ~~For example, a 4-inch diameter tree that is replaced 2:1 would require a fee of  $250 \times 2 = 500$ , while a 23-inch diameter heritage tree would be replaced 4:1 equal to  $250 \times 4 = 1000$ . These values should be used as a guide when seeking authorization for tree removal. At the discretion of the LVLC, Heritage Trees may shall be mitigated at higher rates as shown in the table below, consistent with this policy and to align more closely with actual costs of moving each tree.~~ Unauthorized tree removal is discouraged and shall increase the required mitigation to twice the rate applied to

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authorized removals. The table below provides the value of offsite mitigation fees including heritage trees.

The LVLC shall make recommendations to the VP for Business Affairs on the dispensation of tree mitigation monies that exceed \$50,000 for a single project. Otherwise, tree mitigation monies shall be paid into the PPD-Facilities Services tree account and held until green Open-space enhancement projects are approved by the LVLC for use of these funds.

These steps shall ensure fiscal accountability for audit purposes of PECO, Federal, State and other funding sources.

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TREE SIZE (DBH)	COST TO RELOCATE EXISTING TREE *	COST TO MITIGATE CANOPY TREES (ratios incorporated)	COST TO MITIGATE Water Oaks, Laurel Oaks, Loblolly Pines, Sugarberry and Sweetgums LARGE-CANOPY TREES (ratios incorporated)**	COST TO MITIGATE UNDERSTORY TREES (ratios incorporated)**
3 to 8	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
9	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	\$500
10	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	\$500
11	\$3,500	\$500	\$500	\$500
12	\$3,500	\$500	\$500	\$500
13	\$3,500	\$500	\$500	\$500
14	\$3,500	\$500	\$500	\$500
5-15 15	\$500 \$5,000	\$500 \$5,000	\$500 \$5,000	\$500 \$5,000
16	\$6,500	\$500	\$500	\$750
17	\$8,000	\$500	\$500	\$750
18	\$9,500	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
19	\$11,000	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
20	\$12,000	\$1,000 \$750	\$500	\$1,500 \$1,250
21	\$13,500	\$1,000 \$750	\$500	\$1,500 \$1,250
22	\$15,000	\$1,000 \$1,000	\$500	\$2,000 \$1,500
23	\$16,500	\$1,000 \$1,000	\$500	\$2,000 \$1,500
24	\$18,000	\$1,500 \$1,250	\$500	\$2,500 \$1,750
25	\$19,500	\$1,500 \$1,250	\$500	\$2,500 \$1,750
26	\$21,000	\$2,000 \$1,500	\$500	\$3,000 \$2,000
27	\$22,500	\$2,000 \$1,500	\$500	\$3,000 \$2,000
28	\$24,000	\$2,500 \$1,750	\$500	\$3,500 \$2,250
29	\$25,500	\$2,500 \$1,750	\$500	\$3,500 \$2,250
30	\$27,000	\$3,000 \$2,000	\$750	\$4,000 \$2,500
31	AVOID	\$3,000 \$2,250	\$750	\$4,000 \$2,500

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32	AVOID	<u>\$3,500</u> <u>\$2,250</u>	\$1,000	<u>\$4,500</u> <u>\$2,750</u>
33	AVOID	<u>\$3,500</u> <u>\$2,500</u>	\$1,000	<u>\$4,500</u> <u>\$2,750</u>
34	AVOID	<u>\$4,000</u> <u>\$2,500</u>	\$1,250	<u>\$5,000</u> <u>\$2,750</u>
35	AVOID	<u>\$4,000</u> <u>\$2,750</u>	\$1,250	<u>\$5,000</u> <u>\$3,000</u>
36	AVOID	<u>\$4,500</u>	<u>\$1,500</u>	<u>\$5,500</u>
37	AVOID	<u>\$4,500</u>	<u>\$1,500</u>	<u>\$5,500</u>
38	AVOID	<u>\$5,000</u>	<u>\$1,750</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>
39	AVOID	<u>\$5,000</u>	<u>\$1,750</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>
40	AVOID	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>\$2,000</u>	NA
41	AVOID	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>\$2,000</u>	NA
43	AVOID	<u>\$6,500</u>	<u>\$2,250</u>	NA
44	AVOID	<u>\$6,500</u>	<u>\$2,250</u>	NA
45	AVOID	<u>\$7,000</u>	<u>\$2,500</u>	NA
46	AVOID	<u>\$7,000</u>	<u>\$2,500</u>	NA
47	AVOID	<u>\$8,000</u>	<u>\$2,750</u>	NA
48	AVOID	<u>\$8,000</u>	<u>\$2,750</u>	NA
49	AVOID	<u>\$8,500</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
50	AVOID	<u>\$8,500</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
51	AVOID	<u>\$9,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
52	AVOID	<u>\$9,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
53	AVOID	<u>\$9,500</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
55	AVOID	<u>\$9,500</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
55	AVOID	<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
56	AVOID	<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
57	AVOID	<u>\$10,500</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
58	AVOID	<u>\$10,500</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
59	AVOID	<u>\$11,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	NA
60	AVOID	<u>\$11,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
61	AVOID	<u>\$11,500</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
62	AVOID	<u>\$11,500</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
63	AVOID	<u>\$12,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
64	AVOID	<u>\$12,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
65	AVOID	<u>\$12,500</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
66	AVOID	<u>\$12,500</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
67	AVOID	<u>\$13,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
68	AVOID	<u>\$13,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
69	AVOID	<u>\$13,500</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	NA
70	AVOID	<u>\$13,500</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
71	AVOID	<u>\$14,000</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
72	AVOID	<u>\$14,000</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
73	AVOID	<u>\$14,500</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
74	AVOID	<u>\$14,500</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
75	AVOID	<u>\$15,000</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
76	AVOID	<u>\$15,000</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
77	AVOID	<u>\$15,500</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
78	AVOID	<u>\$15,500</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
79	AVOID	<u>\$16,000</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	NA
80	AVOID	<u>\$16,000</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	NA
81	AVOID	<u>\$16,500</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	NA
82	AVOID	<u>\$16,500</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	NA

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<u>83</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$17,000</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>84</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$17,000</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>85</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$17,500</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>86</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$17,500</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>87</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$18,000</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>88</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$18,000</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>89</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$18,500</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>90</u>	<u>AVOID</u>	<u>\$18,500</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>NA</u>

\* Source: Davey Resource Group ([www.davey.com](http://www.davey.com))

\*\* Large Canopy Trees are Laurel & Water Oaks, Sweet gum, Loblolly Pine and Sugarberry\*\* An evergreen or deciduous tree whose mature height can be expected to range between 15 feet and 35 feet and which has an expected crown spread range between 15 feet and 25 feet as determined by the latest edition of "American Standards of Nursery Stock" as set forth by the American Association of Nurserymen.