

Hillsborough County Grand Oaks Regulations

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Grand Oak Regulations

Overview\

A tree that has reached Grand Oak status is one of the largest, oldest specimens of its kind in our area. It has withstood decades of development, deforestation, windstorms and hurricanes. It is one of the hardiest and sturdiest trees of its species, and deserves special attention when being pruned and especially before being removed.

Grand Oak

A Grand Oak is a tree of the genus *Quercus* with a trunk measuring 34 inches DBH (tree trunk diameter measurement at 4.5 feet above grade) and greater, with a tree condition rating of good or better according the Tree Condition Evaluation Form, and with trunk circumference, height and crown measurements totaling a minimum of 175 points in accordance to the Tree Point System methodology.

Tree Point System

The Tree Point System classifies the significance of a tree through three measurements of the tree's anatomy and gives a point value for each measurement:

1. One (1) point per inch is allotted for the tree trunk circumference to the nearest inch measured at 4.5 feet above grade,
2. one (1) point per foot is allotted for the tree's overall height, and
3. one (1) point per four (4) feet is allotted for the crown spread to the nearest foot, averaging a measurement of the longest and shortest dimension of the tree's canopy.

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Grand Oak Ordinance Standards

- The developer must preserve all trees identified as a Grand Oak unless authorized for removal by the Administrator (staff). This provision does not apply for a Grand Oak located in road site distances, recovery and maintenance areas as shown in the Transportation Technical Manual unless the County Engineer otherwise renders a determination that a Grand Oak may be preserved in these areas.
- The developer is required to replace 50 percent of the total DBH of any tree having a DBH of 24 inches or greater or any clump of trees, as defined in this Code, that is to be removed from the site. Irreparably unhealthy or damaged trees, as determined by the Administrator, shall not require replacement. If the tree removed is a species which either has undesirable growth habits or is susceptible to freeze damage, as determined by the Administrator, replacement will not be required. A Grand Oak, however, must be replaced as indicated below if authorized for removal by the Administrator.

Grand Oak trunk measurement Replacement Ratio (in DBH):

- 34 inches < 48 inches DBH = 1:1
- 48 inches < 60 inches DBH = 1.5:1
- 60 inches DBH and greater = 2:1

This replacement requirement, however, will not apply when the Administrator has determined that Section 4.01.14.A.4.b of the Land Development Code is applicable. Replacement of a Grand Oak for these situations shall not exceed 20% of the DBH trunk diameter unless a lesser amount is appropriate as determined by the Administrator.

- Pruning of a Grand Oak, with the exception of minor pruning*, is prohibited unless conducted in accordance with the ANSI A 300 Pruning Standards as performed by an Arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) or a Registered Consulting Arborist with the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA). A notarized affidavit affirming an ISA Certified Arborist or an ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist will conduct or supervise the pruning on-site must be submitted to the County prior to the pruning of a Grand Oak. An ISA Certified Arborist or an ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist contracted by a property owner to prune a Grand Oak will assume full responsibility for all pruning activities determined in noncompliance with standards specified within the Land Development Code.
- *Minor Pruning: The pruning of a tree by removing branches measured no greater than 3 inches in diameter at the point of connection to a supporting branch and in accordance with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A 300 Pruning Standards.