



Understanding the Community Tree Management Ordinance

Athens-Clarke County Community Tree Program

Parking Lot Trees

Parking lot trees are among the most important trees on any developed site because of how greatly they improve the surrounding community. These trees considerably benefit an area by reducing surface temperatures, extending the life of the surrounding pavement, beautifying the site, reducing volatile organic compounds emitted from parked cars, and reducing stormwater runoff. Parking lot trees must be carefully selected because they will often face situations that are inhospitable to plant growth.



A parking lot without trees is inhospitable and hard on the environment.



These well-dispersed trees will shade the lot at maturity.

Regulations

- One tree is required for every seven parking spaces
- No more than 14 continuous parking spaces are allowed without a landscape island or peninsula
- Trees must be evenly distributed throughout the parking lot
- Large canopy trees must be planted along the perimeter of the area, or they can be planted in islands or peninsulas if 400 square feet of open soil is present
- Trees must be 2 inches in caliper diameter to qualify
- Trees may not be planted farther than ten feet from or closer than three feet to the edge of the parking lot
- Interior planting strips should have a minimum width of nine feet
- Perimeter planting strips should have a minimum width of seven feet

Species Selection

Only the sturdiest of trees can stand up to the rigors of growing in a parking lot. Even so, some of the strongest trees are not suitable because their fruits would pose a risk to the public.

Preferred Species

Elm, Chinese
 Elm, Winged
 Hornbeam, European
 Maple, Trident
 Oak, Shumard
 Oak, Willow
 Pine, Loblolly
 Pistache, Chinese
 Planetree, London

Suitable Parking Lot Species

Ash, Green	Oak, Cherrybark
Baldcypress	Oak, Laurel
Birch, River	Oak, Northern Red
Blackgum	Oak, Nuttall
Buckthorn, Carolina	Oak, Overcup
Buckthorn, Common	Oak, Scarlet
Cottonwood, Eastern	Oak, Southern Red
Cypress, Leyland	Pine, Longleaf
Ginkgo (male)	Pine, Shortleaf
Goldenraintree	Pine, Slash
Hornbeam, American	Pine, Virginia
Katsuratree	Poplar, Tulip
Magnolia, Sweetbay	Redcedar, Eastern
Maple, Chalk	Silverbell, Carolina
Maple, Hedge	Sourwood
Maple, Sugar	Sycamore, American
Oak, Black	Zelkova, Japanese

Soil Area Requirements

All urban trees require significant soil volume to obtain their maximum potential. Athens-Clarke County simplifies planning by regulating soil surface area. The following regulations apply to trees planted to meet the requirements in the Community Tree Management Ordinance.

Trees Canopy Size	Required Open Soil Area
Large Canopy	400 ft ²
Large Canopy Parking Lot Tree	9 ft X 36 ft island
Medium Canopy	225 ft ²
Medium Canopy Parking Lot Tree	9 ft X 18 ft island
Small Canopy	100 ft ²
Very Small Canopy	25 ft ²



Small islands produce small trees.



Large islands produce large trees.

For more information, contact the Athens-Clarke County Community Forestry Coordinator at (706)613-3561 voice, (706)613-3566 fax, or by e-mail at forester@co.clarke.ga.us.