

Proposed Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance Package

Package includes:

- Amendments to the Commercial, Industrial, multi-family portions of the Dwelling District, Special Use, Park, University and Hospital Zoning Ordinances
- Amendments to the Subdivision Control Ordinance
- Amendment to the Trees and Flora Ordinance

No amendments are proposed for the Central Business District, or single-family portions of the Dwelling District Zoning Ordinances

Tree Canopy Coverage Area

Goal: To establish a minimum level of tree canopy coverage, whether newly planted or preserved, in new development and on parcels being redeveloped.

The level chosen is an average tree canopy coverage area of 40%. Current tree canopy coverage area for Marion County is 23.3%. Existing tree canopy coverage ranges from 8.8% in Center Township to 48.6% in Washington Township.

The tree canopy coverage area will vary according to land use. It is based on the characteristics of the land use such as the typical size of buildings, extent of pavement and amount of open space.

<u>Average tree canopy coverage area</u>	<u>40%</u>
Industrial development	Varies from 10 -15%
Commercial development	25%
Low density single-family development	45%
Medium to high density single-family development	35%
Multi-family development	45% of required open space
Special uses	Varies from 25% to 45%

Tree canopy coverage area is calculated by the current area within the dripline for existing trees. For newly planted trees, the canopy coverage area is based on a roughly 15-year growth of the tree (700 square feet for overstory trees, 250 sq. ft. for evergreen trees, 175 sq. ft. for understory and multi-stemmed trees)

Although the tree canopy coverage area can be met by the planting of new trees, an incentive is given for the preservation of existing trees. When calculating tree canopy coverage area, the area covered by existing trees may be multiplied by 1.5. Undesirable trees such as mulberry and tree-of-heaven are not eligible for the multiplier.

Sports fields are exempted from tree canopy coverage.

Preserved trees must be protected during construction and afterwards.

Parking Lot Landscaping

Revises the requirements for interior parking lot landscaping in the Commercial Zoning Ordinance, and establishes interior parking lot landscaping in the Industrial Zoning Ordinance

In Commercial Zoning Ordinance:

- Lowers threshold from 100 parking spaces to 20 parking spaces
- Requires one tree for every 12 parking spaces

In Industrial Zoning Ordinance:

- Requires interior landscaping in visitor and employee parking areas but not in loading areas or outdoor vehicle storage areas.
- Threshold set at 20 parking spaces.
- Requires one tree for every 12 parking spaces

Street Trees in Subdivisions

Requires street trees as part of the infrastructure of subdivisions

- Requires a shade tree for every 40 linear feet on both sides of the street or an ornamental tree for every 25 linear feet on both sides of the street. Types of trees may be mixed.
- Unless there are overhead utility lines, 75% of the trees shall be overstory trees.
- Where there are overhead utility lines, all of the trees shall be understory trees. Transmission easements are exempt from tree planting.
- Trees may be grouped. This allows variety in planting design and avoidance of driveways, utilities, etc.
- Trees are to be planted within 25 feet from edge of pavement.

Street trees count towards the canopy coverage area requirement for a plat (45% canopy coverage in the D-1, D-2, D-3 and D-S districts and 35% canopy coverage in the other single-family and two-family districts).

Multi-family districts

Unlike the commercial and industrial districts, there is no requirement for interior landscaping of parking lots.

Unlike the other districts, the tree canopy coverage area is not based on entire site, but only on the area of required open space.

By current ordinance, the minimum open space ratio ranges from 3.850 in the D-6 district down to .270 for the tallest structures in the D-10 district. The open space ratio is the amount of open space divided by the floor area.

Tree Removal Ordinance

Requires a permit for tree removal in stands of trees one-half acre in size or larger or in a Stream Protection Corridor.

- Exempts:
 - trees under 4” caliper,
 - hazard trees,
 - utility maintenance,
 - public rights-of-way,
 - developed residential lots less than three acres in size,
 - tree-related agricultural enterprises such as orchards.
 - invasive, exotic tree species.
- Creates four classes of woodlands based on the size of the trees in the woodland. Creates a fifth class based on proximity to streams.
- Amount of allowable tree removal is based on the class,
 - Natural Forest Remnant: up to 15% may be cleared
 - Mature Woodland: up to 30% may be cleared
 - Young Woodland: up to 50% may be cleared
 - Other Woodland: up to 100% may be cleared
 - Stream Protection Corridor: up to 10% may be cleared.
- Additional tree removal may be permitted if a woodland evaluation shows that:
 - The trees are at the end of their natural life expectancy
 - Condition of the trees is poor
 - Insect or pathological problems are present
- Mitigation:
 - Amount: Trees from 4” to 18” in caliper are to be replaced at a rate of one new tree for each removed tree. Trees over 18” in caliper are to be replaced at a rate of one caliper inch of new planting for each caliper inch removed.
 - Location: Trees are to be mitigated on site. Once all reasonable onsite planting locations are planted, mitigation may occur offsite, but must be within Marion County, within 10,000 feet of the site, and within the same watershed.