

Department of Community and Economic Development  
Planning Division  
**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY/CODE INTERPRETATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
POLICY/CODE**

**INTERPRETATION #:** CI-123

**MUNICIPAL**

**CODE SECTIONS:** 4-4-130 Tree Retention and Land Clearing Regulations

**REFERENCE:** N/A

**SUBJECT:** Fee In-Lieu for Replacement Trees

**BACKGROUND:** If a property is being developed and the applicant asserts that the number of trees that must be removed cannot be replanted onsite the Administrator may allow the applicant to pay a fee in-lieu of planting new trees. The City determines the amount due by approximating the current market value of replacement trees and the labor to install them.

The fee in-lieu of replanting is not available for property owners who remove trees without an associated development permit or a Routine Vegetation Management Permit.

**JUSTIFICATION:** Replacing mature trees with saplings at a 1:1 ratio of caliper inches on a previously developed site is even more difficult than replanting trees on a site under development.

**DECISION:** Enable the option to pay a fee in-lieu of replanting for any violation of RMC 4-4-130, Tree Retention and Land Clearing Regulations.

**ADMINISTRATOR  
APPROVAL:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
C. E. "Chip" Vincent

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 31, 2017

**APPEAL  
PROCESS:**

To appeal this determination, a written appeal--accompanied by the required filing fee--must be filed with the City's Hearing Examiner (1055 South Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057, 425-430-6515) no more than 14 days from the date of this decision. Your submittal should explain the basis for the appeal. Section 4-8-110 of the Renton Municipal Code provides further information on the appeal process.

*DISCLAIMER: Excerpts from the Renton Municipal Code shown below may not contain the most recently codified text. In such instances, code amendments implemented through this Administrative Code Interpretation shall be construed to affect the current code and past/future Administrative Code Interpretations not yet codified in the same manner as shown below. Should any conflicts result the Administrator shall determine the effective code.*

**CODE  
AMENDMENTS  
NEEDED TO  
IMPLEMENT  
DETERMINATIONS:**

**4-4-130 Tree Retention and Land Clearing Regulations**

**J. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES:**

**4. Replacement Required:** The City may require, for each tree that was improperly cut and/or removed in violation of this Section, ~~or without, an approved Land Development Permit and associated tree retention and land clearing plan,~~ replacement planting ~~of~~ with a one or more trees of equal size, quality and species ~~or replacement trees at a ratio~~ of one-to-one (1:1) caliper inches. The replacement trees will be of sufficient caliper to adequately replace the lost tree(s), and ~~at be~~ a minimum of two (2) caliper inches (2") in caliper. The City may require a bond to ensure the survival of replacement trees. If the Administrator determines that it is infeasible to replace trees on the site, payment into the City's Urban Forestry Program fund may be approved in an amount of money approximating the current market value of the replacement trees and the labor to install them. The City shall determine the value of replacement trees.

**STAFF CONTACT:** Paul Hintz, x7436