

Tree In-Lieu Fee Payments

The Philadelphia Zoning Code provides two sections of landscape requirements – [§ 14-705, Landscape and Trees](#) and [§ 14-803\(5\), Parking Landscape and Screening](#). These sections of the Code provide specific requirements for parking lot landscape and screening, landscape buffers between zoning districts, yard trees, the preservation of heritage trees, and tree replacement requirements for trees that are removed through development and/or site clearing. The Planning Commission (PCPC) reviews these requirements and the Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) grants zoning permit approval.

Waivers

In certain situations, it may be either impractical or impossible to comply with the number of trees and plants or landscape dimensional requirements of the Zoning Code. This could be due to site constraints or hardships such as an underground utility line or a limited amount of space on the site to meet tree replacement requirements. If PCPC staff makes a determination that it would be impractical or impossible to comply with Code requirements according to the criteria contained in Section 9.4 of the [Planning Commission regulations](#), some or all of the landscaping requirements may be waived. If a waiver is issued, any trees that would otherwise be required are subject to a mandatory in-lieu fee.

In-Lieu Fee Payment Process

Following the issuance of a zoning permit by L&I that requires an in-lieu fee payment by the applicant, the applicant must make an in-lieu fee payment to Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR) prior to building permit issuance. Once that payment has cleared, PPR will provide the applicant with an approval letter/receipt that the applicant shall attach to the building permit application. Payment shall be made to PPR as follows:

- **Make an appointment by e-mail:** Urban Forestry Unit, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, parksandrecreation@phila.gov. Please attach zoning permit and approved landscape plan.
- **Pay in-person at:** One Parkway Building, 1515 Arch St, 10th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102
- **Method of Payment:** Cashier's Check or USPS Money Order ONLY, made payable to Fairmount Park

In-Lieu Fee Calculation

The in-lieu fee shall be calculated as follows:

\$1,000: For each tree waived from the requirements of § 14-705(1)(d) (Landscape Buffering Between Different Zoning Districts), § 14-705(1)(e) (Yard Tree Requirements), and § 14-803(5) (Parking Landscape and Screening).

AND

By Inch: For each diameter at breast height (DBH) inch of tree waived from the requirements of § 14-705(1)(g) (Tree Replacement Requirements), as indicated in the following chart:

Overall density of existing trees on lot	Fee
Up to 75 DBH inches per acre	\$400 per inch
Greater than 75 and less than 250 DBH inches per acre	\$200 per inch
Greater than 250 DBH inches per acre	\$50 per inch

The in-lieu fee shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the appraised value of the property, as shown in the average of two appraisals conducted by independent certified appraisers, for lots that meet ALL of the following conditions:

- Is less than 70 acres in total size;
- Is zoned I-1, I-2, I-3, or I-P;
- Has a principal Industrial or Wholesale, Distribution, and Storage Use; and
- Includes no Residential uses

What if I Need to Revise My Landscape or Zoning Plan?

Any revisions to your landscape plan will need to be approved through L&I's [zoning permit amendment process](#). If proposed changes are ineligible for a permit amendment, a new permit must be filed. If either an amended permit or new permit triggers additional in-lieu fees, the additional fees must also be paid prior to issuance of a building permit.

If a building permit expires or is abandoned, the in-lieu fee will be credited to the lot for four years from the date of payment.

In-lieu fee refunds will be granted up until issuance of a building permit.

Does this apply to Street Trees?

No. Street trees required by [§ 14-705\(2\) \(Street Tree Requirements\)](#) are not eligible for either the waiver or in-lieu fee payment at this time. Street trees are still subject to the existing deposit and bonding process as provided for in [§ 14-705\(2\)\(c\)\(4\)](#).

What if I Have Questions?

Please contact us at planning.development@phila.gov or parksandrecreation@phila.gov.

Disclaimer

In-lieu fee payments must be made in a manner consistent with the Philadelphia Code and City-issued regulations and [code bulletins](#). If this document conflicts with any adopted regulation, ordinance or code, the adopted regulation, ordinance, or code will govern.