



Legislative Summary

O-27-25

Protecting Trees and Tree Replacement in Critical Areas

The City of Annapolis Office of Law created this summary for the use of Annapolis City Council members during their consideration of the legislation.

Bill Summary

O-27-25 codifies City policy on cutting and replacing trees in sections of the City that have been zoned as Critical Areas.

Background

Critical areas in the City of Annapolis are land close to shorelines designated as sensitive to development activity, where damage to water quality and natural habitats needs to be minimized.

Development in the Critical Area Overlay Map can be limited or denied if it's in a resource conservation area. Critical Areas are around the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and property within 1,000 feet of state and private wetlands.

Details

O-27-25 creates new regulations for trees on private land in Critical Area Overlay zoning districts.

Section 21.54.130

- B.** Property owners must get a permit from the Planning and Zoning Department before removing trees larger than five inches in diameter, as measured 4 1/2 feet from the ground. The section also includes documentation needed to get a permit.



C. Tree Removal Criteria—This portion sets the conditions under which a tree can be removed: it must be dead, dying, or damaged beyond the ability to live, the removal must benefit nearby trees, or the tree must be a serious problem for the property or building on the property.

D. Tree Replacement—This subsection lays out the requirements for replacing the tree that is being removed and where the replacement tree can be planted. The tree must be a native species unless the property owner gets permission for another type of tree.

E. Enforcement.

Property owners violating this section's provisions may lose their permit and face any abatement the City requires. They also face fines and citations.

Contractors who violate the provisions can be suspended from further tree work in the City.

F. Fees, Fines, and Violations. Subsection F explains the rules for fees, fines, and citations for violating this section. It also includes an option for a fee-in-lieu of tree replacement.

Section 21.72.010

This section updates the related definitions in the City Code to conform to the State definitions.