



Tree Requirements for Residential Construction

Greater San Antonio Builders Association

January 18, 2023

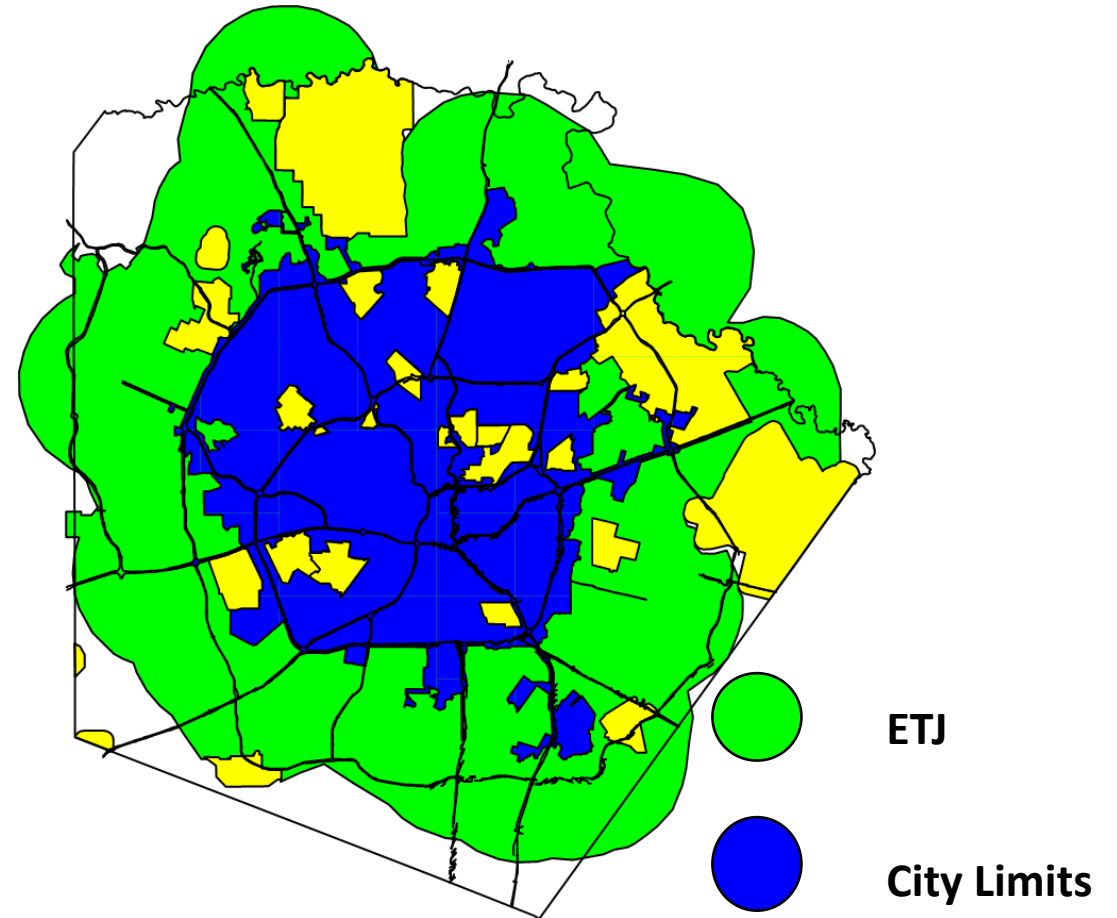
Presented by: Mark C Bird – City Arborist



**DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES**

Tree Preservation Requirements

- Applies to any private property within city limits and ETJ
- Sec. 35-523. - Tree Preservation.
 - (a) **Applicability.**
 - (1) **Generally.**
- A. The regulations contained in this division shall apply to any private property located within the city limits and the ETJ of the city
- C. The regulations contained in this division shall regulate all activities that result or may result in the removal of significant or heritage trees or areas of tree canopy as defined herein. Said activities include any of the following:
 1. Industrial, commercial, office, multi-family, residential and institutional development, including all new construction and any additions that increase the total floor area of a structure by more than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet.
 3. Any grading, filling or clearing of land.
 4. Any clear, selective or individual cutting or removal of any significant or heritage tree or areas of tree canopy as defined.
 6. Trenching or excavation that may damage or destroy any significant or heritage tree or areas of tree canopy as defined.





Tree Permits

City Limits:
building permit
per lot

ETJ: may bundle
up to 15 lots
(same block, same
unit)

Top issues for tree reviews and failed inspections

Incorrect information on application (A1, A2, A4)

Tree survey/inventories: missing/miss-measured trees

Not referencing overall/master tree plan especially when building in large platted subdivisions

Work starting without approved tree permit (applies to home construction in the ETJ)

Not planting correct number of trees

Not planting the correct size of trees





Two Methods to Achieve Preservation

- Tree Survey/Inventory Method
- Tree Stand Delineation Method (aerial imagery)
 - Using Tree Stand requires Heritage Tree Survey

What are Protected Trees?

Significant trees small species:
5" diameter at breast height
(DBH/4.5'): Texas Persimmon,
Texas Redbud, Texas
Mountain laurel, Condalia,
Possum haw, Hawthorne

Significant trees large species:
6" DBH (ex. Oaks, elms,
pecans, sycamore)

Significant trees large species:
10" DBH – one trunk (Ashe
juniper/Mountain cedar,
Huisache, Mesquite, Arizona
ash, Hackberry)

Heritage trees small species:
12" – one trunk (listed above)

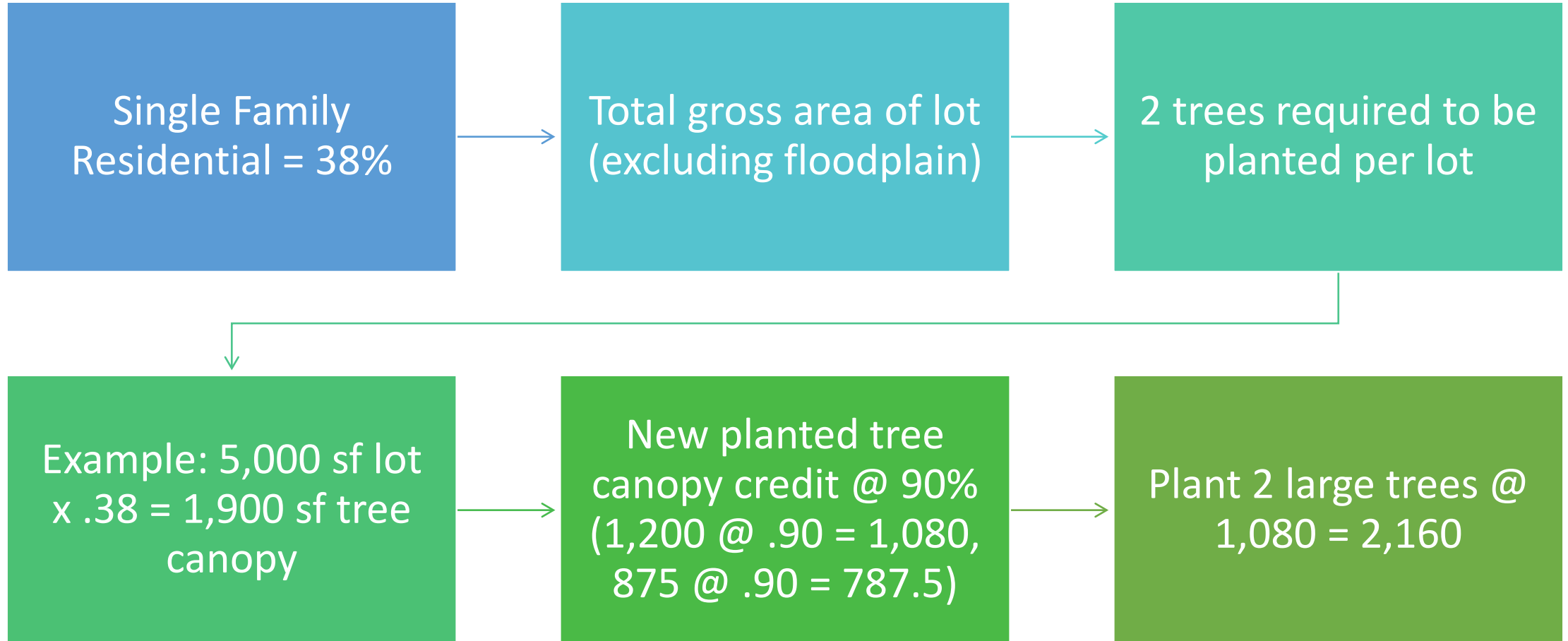
Heritage trees large species:
24"


Tree Canopy & Tree Preservation

- Can be a combination of tree preservation and the required two trees
- Residential tree canopy requirement = 38% of gross lot
- Residential tree preservation requirement = 35% of protected significant trees & 100% heritage trees



Tree Canopy Requirement





Tree Preservation and Two Tree (minimum) Requirements

- Significant Trees: 35% within each platted lot, excluding street right-of-way and easements.
 - Heritage Trees: 100% within each lot.
 - Builder on single-family lots shall plant two (2) one and one-half (1.5) inch caliper new trees, which shall be native, large canopy trees
-



Tree Mitigation Options

Preservation –
undersize trees
(less than 6”)

Plant – additional
trees (min. 1.5”
caliper or upsize
above 1.5”)

Combination of
planting &
payment

Floodplain & Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Floodplain preservation: 80% all trees not heritage, 100% heritage trees

ESA (riparian buffer/steep slopes: 80% of all tree not heritage, 100% heritage trees

Note: below minimum preservation of significant and/or heritage trees in floodplain and ESA requires a Variance to the Planning Commission



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