

LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA) RECOMMENDATION to the BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Regarding: AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTERS 138 AND 166 OF THE PINELLAS COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR AND AMENDING THE REGULATION OF TREES AND LANDSCAPING; AMENDING PROVISIONS RELATED TO NUISANCE SPECIES AND INVASIVE SPECIES; AMENDING PLANT MATERIAL SPECIFICATIONS; AMENDING NON-RESIDENTIAL AND MULTI-FAMILY LANDSCAPING STANDARDS; AMENDING THE APPROVED SPECIES LIST; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AND AMENDING DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

LPA Recommendation: The LPA finds that the proposed amendments to the Pinellas County Land Development Code are consistent with the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan and recommends approval to the Board of County Commissioners (vote 6-0).

LPA Case No. LDR-25-02

LPA Public Hearing Date: November 12, 2025

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the LPA find the proposed amendments to the Pinellas County Land Development Code **consistent** with the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan.

Staff further recommends that the LPA recommend **approval** of the proposed amendments to the Pinellas County Land Development Code to the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners.

SUMMARY REPORT:

Chapters 166 and 138 of the Land Development Code are being revised to more effectively regulate the county's tree permitting process, revise tree replant requirements and landscaping requirements for residential and commercial properties, and revise tree mitigation requirements for removals. Provisions related to tree permitting from these sections are being combined into a stand-alone tree ordinance in Chapter 58 (Environment), and remaining provisions in Chapter 166 (Habitat Protection) and Chapter 138, Article X, Division 3 (Landscaping Requirements) are being updated.

The overarching goal with the update is to achieve improved outcomes in tree canopy retention and replacement by incentivizing tree replanting on private property with a "right tree, right place"

approach. The drivers include the formulation of a practical methodology to calculating tree mitigation, calibrating tree planting requirements on residential lots, and providing a flexible approach to landscape compliance on non-residential and multi-family sites.

The following is a summary of updates:

- Move tree permitting and replacement requirements from LDC chapters to create a stand-alone tree code in Chapter 58 (Environment).
- Redefine tree replacement requirements for permitted tree removal based on a simple but practical methodology.
- Revise and simplify the tree rating system for more consistent application and outcomes.
- Revise minimum trees per lot requirement for residential properties.
- Clarify language pertaining to existing development and compliance with previously approved site plans.
- Designate Tree Bank Fund payment in lieu of replanting amounts for residential and commercial properties.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PINELLAS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Staff finds that the proposed Ordinance, at a minimum, is consistent with the following adopted goals, objectives, policies, and strategies of the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan:

- NRC POLICY 3.1.3: Reduce ecologically undesirable non-native vegetation.
- NRC STRATEGY 3.1.3.1: Require the removal of ecologically undesirable non-native vegetation from (re)development sites, and in conjunction with County projects.
- NRC OBJECTIVE 1.3: Protect and enhance the urban and natural tree canopy to reduce stormwater runoff, improve air quality, decrease urban heat island effects, and provide shade and habitat.
- NRC POLICY 1.3.1: Maximize retention and enhancement of the County's urban and natural area tree canopy.
- NRC STRATEGY 1.3.1.1: Utilize the Land Development Code to preserve and enhance urban and natural area tree canopy.
- NRC STRATEGY 1.1.1.1: Utilize the Land Development Code to promote sustainability, including:
 - Encourage and incentivize the use of Florida Friendly Landscaping™ principles.
 - Encourage and incentivize the retention of mature and native urban tree canopy and replanting of trees removed for development.

PROPOSED BCC HEARING DATE: December 16, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. (1st of two required hearings)

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED TO DATE: None.

PERSONS APPEARING AT THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY HEARING: None.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Strikethrough/underline amendments to Chapter 138 & 166 of Land Development Code
- Proposed Tree Ordinance – Chapter 58 (Environment)