

ORDINANCE 2025-3

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF INTERLACHEN, FLORIDA; REPEALING ORDINANCE 2019-1; PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF A TOWN TREE BOARD; PROVIDING FOR DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING FOR THE AUTHORIZATION OF TREE CARE; PROVIDING FOR DECLARING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES UNLAWFUL; PROVIDING FOR TREE PLANTING AND PRUNING GUIDELINES; PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF INTERLACHEN, FLORIDA:

SECTION I REPEAL

Section 1.1 - Repeal.

Ordinance 2019-1, which passed on second reading on March 12, 2019, is hereby repealed.

SECTION 2 PURPOSE

Section 2.1 - Purpose.

The purpose of this Ordinance is to declare and define the Town's power and authority over all trees, plants and shrubs located within the street rights-of-ways, parks and other places owned or legally controlled by the Town of Interlachen, Florida. Such power and authority shall promote and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare and further, shall accentuate the scenic, cultural, historical, and aesthetic attributes of the Town of Interlachen by establishing procedures and practices for fulfilling these purposes.

SECTION 3 DEFINITIONS

Section 3.1 – Definitions

Whenever used in this Ordinance, unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context:

- 1) "TOWN" shall mean the Town of Interlachen, Florida.
- 2) "PERSON(S)" shall mean a public or private individual, corporation, company, firm, association, trust, estate, commission, board, public or private institution, utility, or other legal entity.
- 3) "TREES" shall mean self-supporting woody perennial plants, whose one (1) main stem attains at least a diameter of three (3) inches or nine (9) inches in circumference at four and one half (4-1/2) feet above ground.

- 4) "STREET TREES" shall mean trees, shrubs and bushes on land lying within all streets or avenue rights-of-way.
- 5) "PARK TREES" shall mean trees, shrubs and bushes in public parks having individual names, and all areas owned by the Town.
- 6) "EXCEPTIONAL TREES." An exceptional specimen tree is defined as one with noteworthy characteristics like size, age, unique form, or species; making it a prominent focal point in a landscape. In many cases it's a tree that stands out due to its beauty, rarity, or unusual shape.

Characteristics of an Exceptional Specimen Tree include:

Size; (DBH of 24 inches or greater).

Age; Mature, old trees due to their historical significance.

Form & Shape; trees with unique or unusual branching patterns, canopies, or overall form.

Species & Rarity; rare, native trees of exceptional quality, historical or ecological significance. Trees that the Town Council has designated as having unique value.

Champion Trees; designated as such by the State of Florida, the United States, or the American Forestry Association.;

SECTION 4
CREATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TOWN TREE BOARD

Section 4.1 - Creation and Establishment of the Town Tree Board.

There is hereby created and established a Town Tree Board for the Town of Interlachen, Florida, which shall consist of five (5) members, comprised of Putnam County residents.

Town Tree Board members shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Town Council at a regularly scheduled Town Council meeting, and membership shall be renewed every December. All members shall serve without compensation.

At a minimum, the Tree Board shall meet quarterly. A quorum consisting of three (3) or more members must be present in order for an official meeting to be conducted and no action shall be taken by the committee except at an official meeting and then by the approval/vote of a majority of those present.

Section 4.2 - Filling of Vacancies.

Tree Board vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote of the Town Council at a regularly scheduled Town Council meeting.

Section 4.3 - Operation of the Town Tree Board.

The Town Tree Board shall choose its own Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Town staff shall take minutes of all Tree Board meetings, which shall become a public record.

Section 4.4 - Tree Board Duties and Responsibilities.

- A) It shall be the duty and responsibility of the Town Tree Board to Study, investigate, counsel, develop, and/or update and administer a written Arbor Day Tree Plan for the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal, or disposition of Arbor Day trees. The plan will be presented annually to the Town Council.
- B) Coordinate and promote Arbor Day activities to promote public awareness and education regarding trees, our natural resources.
- C) It shall be the duty and responsibility of the Town Tree Board to Study, investigate, counsel, develop, and/or update a written Tree Plan for the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal, or disposition of all public trees within the Town. The Plan will be presented annually to the Town Council and upon their approval, shall constitute the Town's Official Tree Plan.
- D) Other duties as assigned by the Town Council.

SECTION 5 AUTHORIZING AND PROVIDING TREE CARE

Section 5.1 - Authorizing and Providing Tree Care.

- A) The Town Maintenance Department or agents thereof shall have the right to plant, prune, maintain and remove trees, plants and shrubs within the lines of all streets, alleys, avenues, lanes, squares and public grounds, as may be necessary to ensure public safety or to preserve or enhance the symmetry and beauty of such public grounds.
- B) The Town Maintenance Department or agents thereof may remove or cause to be removed any tree or part thereof which is in an unsafe condition or which by reason of its nature is injurious to sewers, electric power lines, gas lines, water lines or other public improvements, or is affected with any injurious fungus, insect or other pest.
- C) The Town Maintenance Supervisor or his/her designee shall consider the Tree Board's goals and objectives as set forth in the Tree Plan.

SECTION 6 DECLARATION OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES

Section 6.1 - Declaration of Unlawful Activities.

- A) It shall be unlawful as a normal practice for any person(s) or entity to remove, disfigure, top, or damage any tree on public property, but for the following exceptions:
 - 1) In emergency situations.
 - 2) When performed by the Town Maintenance Department and/or their agents.
 - 3) When performed by person(s) whose written request has received written approval from the Town Council.
 - 4) When performed in the course of municipal construction or municipal landscaping that has been approved by the Town Council.
 - 5) When performed pursuant to contracts with the Town of Interlachen which specifically define the activity to be accomplished.

- 6) When a tree is located across both private and public property lines, the property owner must obtain prior written authorization from the Town Maintenance Supervisor or his/her designee before initiating any tree removal. The full cost of removal shall be the responsibility of the property owner, unless the Town determines that the tree poses a hazard to public safety.

B) It shall be unlawful to attach any sign, wire, rope, or cable to any tree on Town property without a written request and written approval from the Maintenance Supervisor.

C) It shall be unlawful to paint any tree on Town property, except for timber harvesting or land-clearing purposes.

D) It shall be unlawful for any person(s) to prevent delay or interfere with Town employees or agents thereof while engaging in activities authorized by this Ordinance.

SECTION 7

TREE PLANTING

GUIDELINES

Section 7.1 – Trees Allowed to be Planted.

Species, other than those listed below may not be planted without the recommendation of the Tree Board and approval by the Town Council. Planting trees that are on the Florida Invasive Species Council's list is prohibited.

- A) **Small:** Common Hoptree, Carolina Buckthorn, American Plum, Chickasaw & Flatwoods Plum, Fringetree, Wax Myrtle, Yaupon Holly, Sparkleberry, Rusty Blackhaw.
- B) **Medium:** Hornbeam, Dahoont Holly, Chinquapin, Flowering Dogwood, Sabal Palm, Red Cedar
- C) **Large:** American Holly, Sand Live Oak, Pond Cypress, Pignut Hickory, Turkey Oak, Southern Magnolia, Shumard Oak, Hop Hornbeam, Longleaf Pine, Bald Cypress .

Section 7.2 – Spacing.

The spacing of trees will be in accordance with the tree list size class. No trees may be closer than the following:

- A) **Small:** 20 feet
- B) **Medium:** 30 feet
- C) **Large:** 50 feet, except in special plantings designed or approved by a landscape architect

Section 7.3 – Distance From Curbs & Sidewalks.

- A) **Small:** 2 feet
- B) **Medium:** 3 feet
- C) **Large:** 4 feet

Section 7.4 – Distance From Street Corner & Fire Hydrants.

No tree shall be planted closer than 20 feet from any street corner, measured from the point of the nearest intersecting curbs or curb lines. No trees shall be planted closer than 15 feet of any fire hydrant.2 feet

Section 7.5 – Tree Planting Guidelines.

The suggested tree planting guidelines in attachment “A” of this Ordinance were adopted from the American National Standards Institute 300.

Section 7.6 – Tree Pruning Care.

The suggested tree pruning guidelines in attachment “B” of this Ordinance were adopted from the American National Standards Institute 300.

SECTION 8 PENALTY

Section 8.1 - Penalty.

The violation of any provision of this Ordinance shall be punished by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500.00).

SECTION 9 CONFLICTING ORDINANCES

Section 9.1- Conflicting Ordinances.

All laws and ordinances of the Town of Interlachen which conflict with the terms of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 10 SEVERABILITY CLAUSE

Section 10.1 - Severability Clause.

If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held to be invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Ordinance are declared severable.

SECTION 11 EFFECTIVE DATE

Section 11.1 - Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its final passage as provided by law.

Passed On First Reading

June 10, 2025

Passed On Second Reading

July 8, 2025

Approved by:

First Reading

Second Reading

Beverly Bakker
Chairperson, Beverly Bakker

YES

YES

Joni Conner
Vice-Chairperson, Joni Conner

YES

YES

Carolyn Bennett
Council, Carolyn Bennett

YES

YES

Carolyn Meadows
Council, Carolyn Meadows

YES

YES

Council, David Yonts

YES

ABSENT

Attest:

James R Hanes
By: Mayor, James "Rick" Hanes

Joni Payne
Town Clerk, Joni Payne

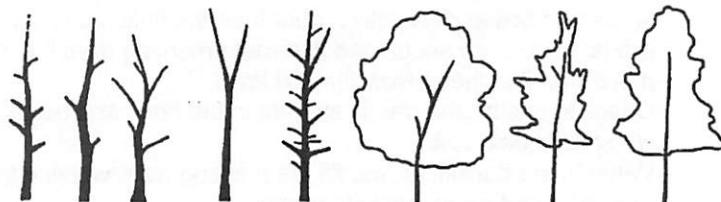


(TOWN SEAL)

Tree Planting Cue Card

provided by Roots Plus Growers™

1 Start with a quality grade tree as specified in the Florida Grades & Standards for Nursery Stock.



- Select trees with a quality trunk form, branch arrangement and canopy uniformity.

2 Check for root system quality.

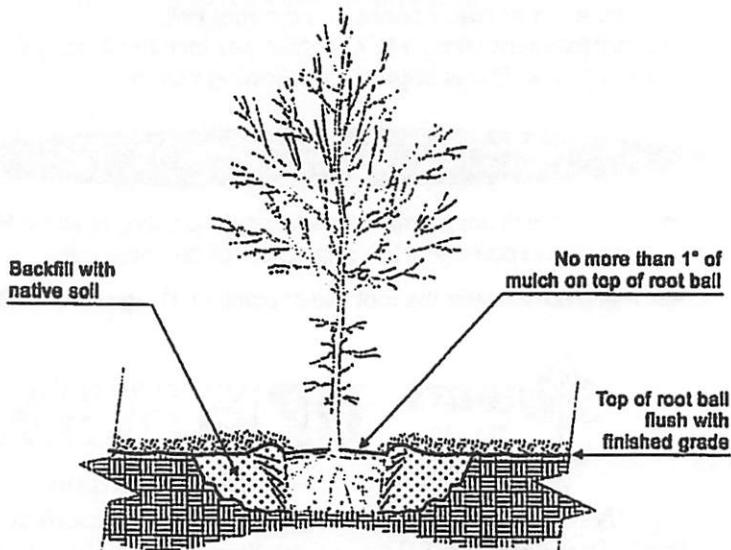
- Field-grown (B&B) trees should be hardened-off or pre-dug at the nursery until new roots are visible through the burlap.
- Trees should be solid in the root ball.
- Top most structural root should emerge from the trunk in the top two inches of the root ball.

3 Tree shipping and unloading.

- Trees should be protected during shipping by a tarp or shipped in an enclosed truck.
- Trees should never be lifted by the trunk. Lift using root ball straps or container handles.
- On the job site, store trees upright, in the shade, and irrigate twice daily with 5 gallons per caliper inch applied directly to the root ball until planting.
- Do not store trees on asphalt.

4 Planting hole preparation.

- Prepare the planting hole twice as wide as the root ball and slightly less than the depth of the root ball.
- Dig the planting hole shallower in areas with wet soil conditions and backfill up to the edge of the root ball.



5 Tree preparation.

- Remove the black weed cloth liner, plastic wrap, or container.
- Remove any string, strapping, or wire wrapped around the trunk.
- Cut any circling roots prior to planting.

6 Tree planting.

- Place the tree in the center of the hole with the top most root in the root ball at or slightly higher than the finished landscape grade; in no case should the first root emerging from the trunk be more than 2 inches below the soil level.
- Check to ensure the tree is straight in the hole, and begin filling in with native field soil.
- Water in the backfill as you fill the planting hole, working the soil to ensure that no air pockets remain.

7 Finishing planting.

- At the edge of the root ball, make a soil berm 2-3 inches high to form a shallow water holding area. Water immediately after planting with 5 gallons of water per caliper inch.
- Apply a 4 inch layer of mulch to an area 2 feet in diameter per trunk caliper inch, but with no more than 1 inch of mulch on top of root ball.
- Do not pile mulch directly against the tree trunk.

8 Irrigation requirements for establishment.

- Use low volume drip irrigation for optimum growth & survival.
- If an automatic system is not used, a strict irrigation schedule is necessary for survival.

Tree Size: 2-4" caliper

Irrigation for vigor - Daily for 1 month; every other day for 3 months; weekly until established.

Irrigation for survival - Twice weekly for 3-4 months.

Tree Size: >4" caliper

Irrigation for vigor - Daily for 6 weeks; every other day for 5 months; weekly until established.

Irrigation for survival - Twice weekly for 4-5 months.

- At each irrigation, apply 3 gallons per inch trunk caliper to the root ball. For example, apply 9 gallons on a 3" caliper tree. Apply in a manner so all water soaks into the root ball.
- Establishment takes 3 to 4 months per inch trunk caliper. In drought conditions irrigate the following summer.

Important Planting Notes

- The best soil amendment for successful planting is water. Research has shown no benefit to using other soil amendments.
- Place no soil over the root ball at planting. Deep planting kills trees.



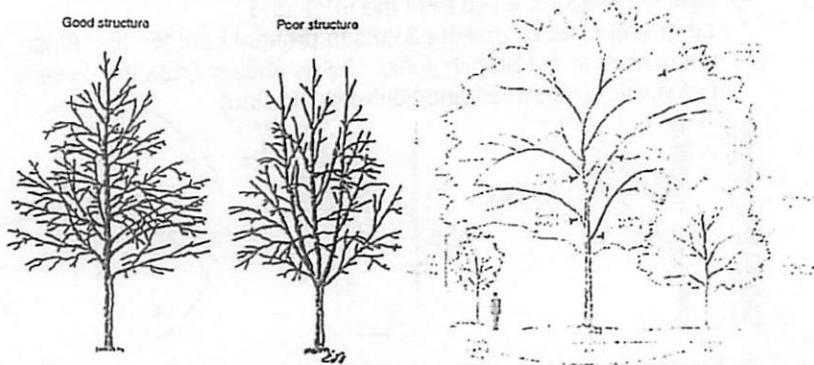
This tree grading cue card provided to you courtesy of Roots Plus Growers & The University of Florida IFAS Extension

Tree Pruning Cue Card

Provided by RPG, Florida Chapter ISA & UF/IFAS

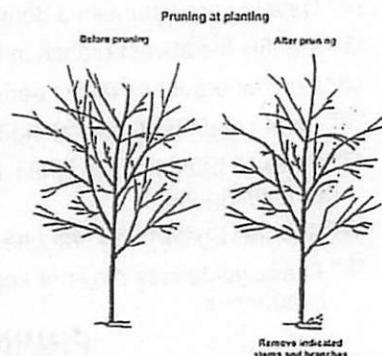
Trees with appropriately pruned crowns and roots become more stable and healthy. Here are some guidelines for executing these practices on young large-maturing shade trees.

1 Shade trees that will become large perform best in urban landscapes when grown with one trunk extending 30' or more into the crown. Large limbs should be spaced along this trunk, not clustered together at one point. Newly planted Florida #1 or better nursery trees have one trunk at least half way up the tree (left). Trees with more than one large upright trunk are considered lesser quality and more prone to failure in the landscape (right). (Below left illustration)

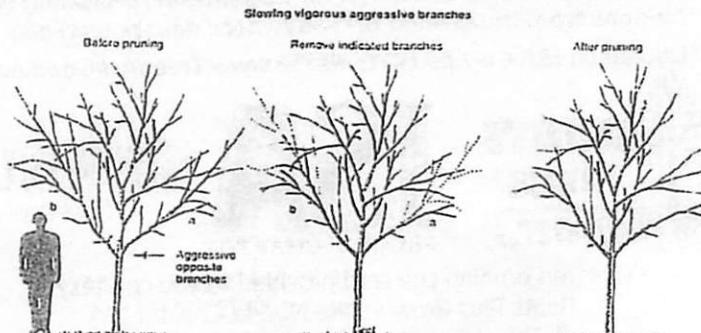


2 Trees with competing stems can be pruned so there is one trunk to the top of the crown (left). Pruning in this manner at planting and every few years results in a strong tree with one dominant trunk (center and right). (Above right illustration)

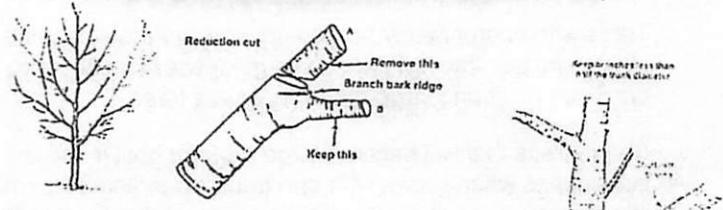
3 Removing or shortening competing upright stems back to lateral branches in the top half of the crown will encourage one trunk to dominate. The one trunk in the crown center should be more visible after pruning.



4 Shortening all large lower branches when the tree is young also forces more growth into one trunk which makes it strong. Trunk wounds will be small with little resulting decay when these shortened low branches are removed later.

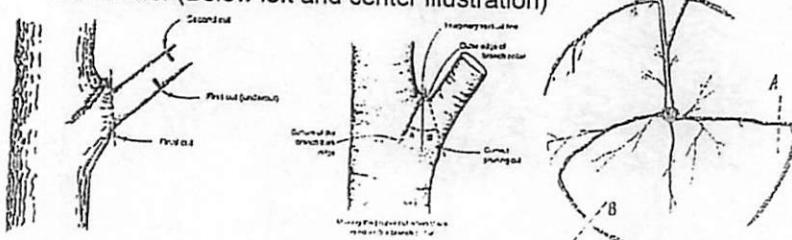


5 Reducing large stems and branches back to a live lateral branch slows growth on the pruned stem because foliage was removed. This shifts growth to the leader stem and encourages it to become the dominant trunk. (Below left illustration)



6 The branch at the bottom right should be shortened because it is large in relation to the trunk. The two small branches do not need pruning because they will not compete with the trunk. (Right illustration)

7 Branches are removed from the trunk and other branches by making 3 cuts to prevent bark tearing. Final cut is back to the branch collar. Cut as shown when the collar is not visible. (Below left and center illustration)



8 Pruning roots at planting that circle or dive into soil removes roots that could cause stability and health problems later. Cut at A not B. (Above right illustration)

Structural Pruning Checklist

- ☛ Develop and maintain a dominant leader
- ☛ Identify the lowest branch in the permanent crown
- ☛ Prevent branches below permanent crown from growing too large
- ☛ Space main branches along the dominant trunk
- ☛ Keep all branches less than 1/2 the trunk diameter by shortening or thinning them
- ☛ Suppress growth on branches with included bark
- ☛ These guidelines may not apply for trees pruned for utility line clearances

PRUNING SAFETY

- ☛ Prune from the ground with proper tools and safety equipment
- ☛ Do not prune anywhere near powerlines
- ☛ Hire an ISA Certified Arborist for larger trees, if pruning cannot be done from the ground or if anywhere near powerlines
- ☛ Locate an ISA Certified Arborist at www.TreesAreGood.com



This tree pruning cue card provided to you courtesy of
Roots Plus Growers the Florida Chapter ISA
& The University of Florida IFAS Extension