



*Steve Weiss, AICP*  
*Planning Director*

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY

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# PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## FILING INSTRUCTIONS FOR TREE REMOVAL PERMIT APPLICATION

The following instructions are intended to provide the necessary information and procedures to facilitate the processing of a Tree Removal Permit & Environmental Assessment application. Cooperation with these instructions will insure that the application can be processed in the most expeditious manner possible.

**THE TREE REMOVAL PERMIT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FILING PACKAGE MUST CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING:**

1. A completed and signed application form; with attachment, if necessary.
2. A current recorded deed of the property. If the property involved is owned by a corporation, limited liability company (LLC), partnership, trust, or similar entity, appropriate documentation will be required to provide proof that the person(s) signing on behalf of said entity is properly authorized to do so.
3. A Preliminary Title Report issued by a title company licensed to business in the State of California dated less than 30 days prior to the date of submittal of this application.
4. If any of the properties involved do not abut a public street, a copy of appropriate documentation of legal access (e.g. recorded easement) for said property shall be provided.
5. A scaled site plan exhibit.
6. A minimum of three (3) ground-level panoramic photographs clearly showing the whole project site. Include a locational map identifying the position from which the photos were taken and the approximate area of coverage of each photograph.
7. If the project site is located within the Santa Ana River or San Jacinto River Watersheds, or the Santa Margarita River Watershed or the Whitewater River Watershed, and the completed Project Specific WQMP Checklist form determines a Preliminary Project-Specific Preliminary Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) is required, a copy of said Plan must be provided.
8. A completed and signed [Land Use and Permit Application Processing Agreement](#).
9. Digital copies of the all the above listed items in a format acceptable to the Planning Department (e.g. PDF).
10. Initial payment of deposit-based fees for a Tree Removal Permit application and Environmental Assessment (EA03) initial payment of deposit-based fees.

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For assistance in the preparation of any of these forms, please contact the Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) Ombudsman staff. Click on the following link <http://rctlma.org/Departments/Administrative-Services/Ombudsman> for more information.

Site Plan must be drawn to scale on a map and must show clearly the following information:

1. Assessor's Parcel Number(s).
2. Name(s), address(es), and telephone and fax number(s), and email address of applicant and owner(s).
3. Scale not less than 30 ft. per inch.
4. North arrow.
5. Title of Exhibit (i.e. Tree Removal Permit and Environmental Assessment) and date prepared
6. Overall dimensions of the property and lot lines.
7. Location and names of adjoining streets.
8. Location and dimensions of existing and proposed structures.
9. Existing elevation or contours.
10. Location, number, species, and size (diameter at breast height) of all trees to be removed and all trees to remain.
11. Utility lines, or underground conduits, which may be affected by proposed tree removal.

### EXCERPT FROM RIVERSIDE ORDINANCE NO. 559

The purpose of Riverside Ordinance No. 559 is to ensure that the timberlands of the County will be protected and the ecological balance of such timberlands will be preserved by regulating the removal of living native trees in the unincorporated area of the County of Riverside that is above 5,000 feet in elevation. The Board of Supervisors further finds and declares that in view of the proximity of the timberlands to urban centers of a large and expanding population, and the unique nature of the timberlands themselves, the enactment of this ordinance is necessary in order to protect and preserve such lands so that the interest and welfare of the people of Riverside County will be protected.

No person shall remove any living tree native tree on any parcel or property greater than one-half acres in size, located in an area above 5,000 feet in elevation and within the unincorporated area of the County of Riverside, without first obtaining a permit to do so, unless exempted by the provisions of this Ordinance.

The provisions of this ordinance **do not** apply to:

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Any timber operations conducted under the Forest Practice Act (Division 4, Chapter 8, Public Resources Code) unless a timberland conversion permit application is filed with the State Forester;

Any tree removed on lands owned by the United State Government of the State of California;

Any activities conducted by a public utility, subject to jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission or any other constituted public agency, where, to construct and maintain safe operation of facilities under their jurisdiction, trees are removed, pruned, topped, or braced;

All trees removed by any federal or state agency;

Any tree required to be removed by other codes, ordinances, or laws of Riverside County, the State of California, or the United States;

Any tree that the California Division of Forestry or United States Forest Service recommends be removed because it is diseased, dying, or dead, or otherwise detrimental to the forest health;

Any tree that constitutes an immediate threat to the public health, safety, or general welfare and requires emergency removal;

Any tree removed because of a stand management or stocking control program accompanied by a written plan prepared by a California Registered Professional Forester and approved by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection or its designee.

All trees on any parcel or contiguous parcels of real property, less than one-half acre in size. Parcels shall be considered as contiguous even if they are separated by roads, streets, utility easements, or railroad rights-of-way.

Any tree removed from property subject to a conditional use permit, public use permit or variance which contains conditions regulating the removal of trees, providing such permit or variance has been duly approved in accordance with the provisions of Riverside Ordinance No. 348.

Any tree that the fire protection agency having jurisdiction requires be removed as part of an approved fire hazard reduction program.

Any tree within twenty (20') feet of an existing structure permitted or approved by the County of Riverside.

The Planning Director may approve the removal of one or more living native trees when the following findings are made:

1. The removal will not significantly increase soil erosion or the flow of surface water; and,
2. In order to further the health of the forest community, because:
  - A. The trees are growing too close to existing structures, or,
  - B. The stocking density considering the amount of land involved, is so crowded that the health and vigor of the other trees on said land or adjoining lands are impaired, or;

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3. The location of the tree or trees to be removed occupies the site of a proposed approvable structure or paved area, provided that no permit for removal of trees shall be issued unless the project is designed to minimize the removal of trees, such that no fewer than 50% of all trees, excluding those in dedicated road right of ways, remain uncut and ½ of these trees are located in the front yard area or are entirely visible from the roads providing access to the property; or,
4. The tree or trees to be removed are located on residentially zoned property with an existing dwelling permitted or approved by the County of Riverside.

In order to protect trees from insects and disease and to minimize the accumulation of combustible fuels, the following shall apply to any tree that is removed within the geographic area covered by this ordinance, unless the removal is conducted pursuant to the Forest Practices Act of the State of California.

1. All stumps shall be cut as close to the ground line as practical, with a maximum stump height of twelve (12) inches.
2. All conifer tree stumps shall be treated by applying a minimum one-quarter (¼) inch thick coating of powdered borax.
3. Any material that is to be utilized as firewood or for other purposes shall not be piled against other conifer trees.
4. All slash generated shall be either removed from the site within thirty (30) days of creation, or chipped and spread out after a minimum fourteen (14) day drying period. Any slash chipped shall be chipped no later than thirty (30) days or less than fourteen (14) days after creation.

An applicant may appeal the decision of the Planning Director to the Planning Commission, in accordance with the procedures set forth in Ordinance No. 559.

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