



BUFFER DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Frequently Asked Questions | as of Dec.20, 2021

The Village of Pinehurst adopted Ordinance #21-06 which amends the Pinehurst Development Ordinance (PDO) regulations pertaining to landscaping and buffering requirements. Particularly, the new regulations will change the landscape plan requirements for new single-family residential development. Presently, the PDO requires a set number of trees (4-16 depending on zoning district) to be shown on a landscape plan. The updated regulations move from a set number to the establishment of perimeter buffer yards and specifies a set number of trees per buffer yard based on the length of the yard. The number of trees is based on the linear footage of the yard per the Buffer Yard Standards.

Are these landscaping regulations new?

Yes and no. For non-residential development, the existing regulations remain the same. For single-family development, the proposed regulations update the Village's existing landscaping requirements by creating perimeter buffer yards around a property whereas the current development regulations require a specified number of trees based on the zoning district ranging from 4-16 to be located anywhere on a property. The proposed regulations are more focused on mitigating the impact of development. The most significant change involves land disturbing development activity on vacant lots when no other permit has been issued and will require buffer yards to be established.

Why is the Village updating its landscaping and buffering requirements?

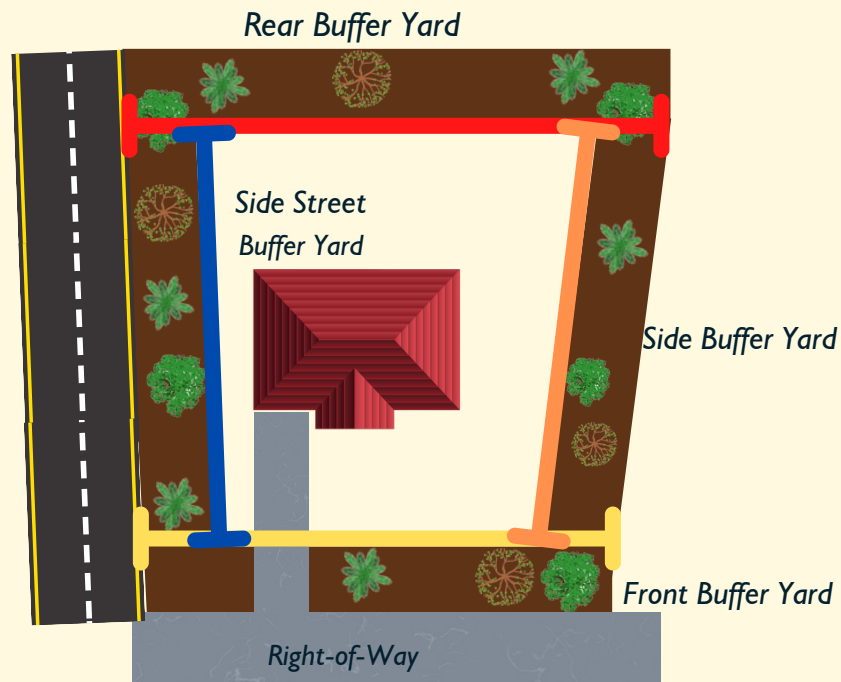
During the Comprehensive Planning process, public input indicated that the Village's tree-lined corridors and tree canopies were essential characteristics contributing to the community's uniqueness and namesake as Pinehurst—which literally means "Grove of Pines." Based on our namesake, history, and community input, the Village is updating its landscaping and development buffer requirements.

What is the goal of the updated buffer development regulations?

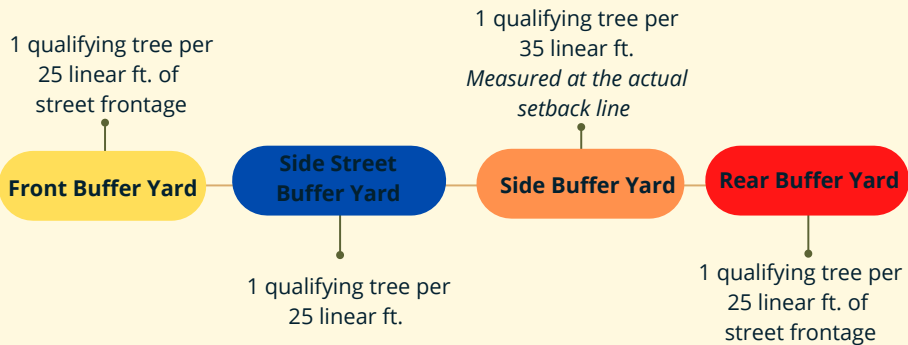
To maintain community character and buffer the impact of development and adjacent street right-of-way. This is done by either planting new trees in buffer yards or retaining existing qualifying trees on the lot.

What is the purpose of a buffer yard?

A buffer yard is a landscaped or vegetated area intended to partially obstruct the view of adjacent land uses or properties from one another. Buffer yards are not intended to act as a complete screen between properties.



Buffer Yard Standards



Planted Tree Type	Min. Planting Height	Min. Planting Caliper
Evergreen	6 feet	2 inches
Tall Trees: Appendix F	8 feet	2 inches
Short Trees: Appendix F	6 Feet	1.25 inches

How do buffer yards work on vacant residential parcels?

Buffer yards are established when a vacant tract of land or an individual lot undergoes land-disturbing activity. This means that trees may have to be planted to meet the ordinance's perimeter buffer yard landscaping requirements, which can be accomplished by retaining existing qualifying trees or by planting new trees. The number of trees to be retained or planted is based on the following:

One tree every 25 linear feet*

- Front yard
- Side Street Yard
- Rear Yard

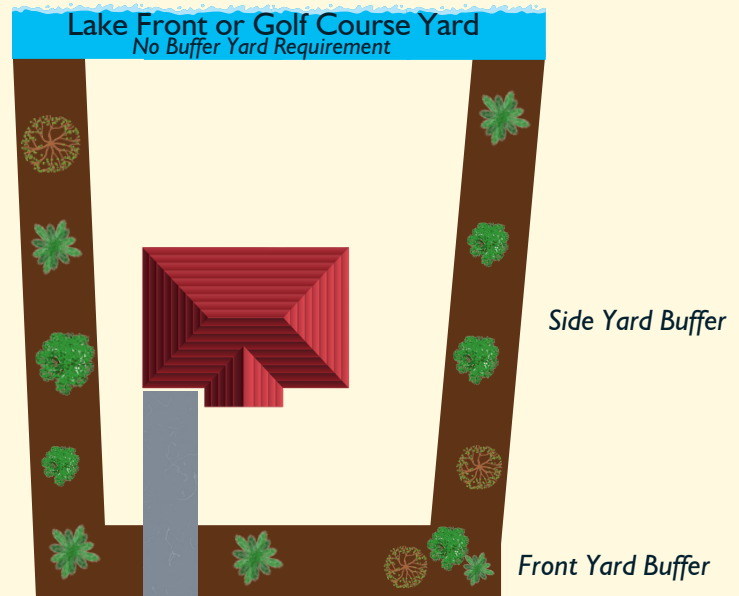
One tree every 35 linear feet*

- Side Yard

No requirement for golf course or lakefront yard

*Grouping and spacing of trees are permitted.

Example (not to scale)



Front Yard: $125' / 25 = 4$ front yard trees

Side yard: $175' / 35 = 5$ side yard trees

Golf Course or Lakefront = no requirement

Total Trees Required = 9

Note: Current PDO requirements for a R-15, R-20 and R-30 Lot = 8 trees

Will the proposed new residential landscape buffer standards prohibit clear-cutting trees?

No, nothing in the proposed standards prohibits removal of trees on private property. The new buffer standards may be met through new plantings or credits provided by retaining existing qualifying vegetation on site. For example, an existing 16" diameter pine tree could count for two required trees in a particular buffer yard. Heavily treed lots within the Village may meet the buffer yard requirements through existing qualifying trees on site.

Does this mean I cannot remove trees on my property?

No, the proposed ordinance does not prevent you from removing trees from your property or cutting down dead, diseased, or dying trees. Likewise, it does not prevent you from practicing agriculture. However, you will need to maintain or plant any required landscaping or buffering triggered by development activity (e.g., new single-family development permit).

What existing trees count toward the buffer requirements?

Qualifying trees are those 8" in diameter and larger located in the associated perimeter buffer yard. If there are not enough existing qualifying trees, it may be possible to qualify trees between 3" and 8" in diameter.

Do street trees count?

No, street trees are those located in the street right-of-way, not on a private lot. The Village manages trees growing along its public streets. Street trees do serve a landscape function, but they are not sufficient in number alone to create a buffer yard.

What kind of trees may I plant?

The Village encourages residents to plant native species such as pine; however, any tree identified as a large or small tree in Appendix F of the Pinehurst Development Ordinance may be used.

Can I minimize the number of trees that are required to be planted when the buffer yard requirements are triggered?

Yes, in addition to the one credit for retaining qualifying trees, larger diameter trees can get extra credit to reduce the number of trees to be planted. One additional tree credit is granted for every four-inch increase in tree girth above 12" diameter breast height (DBH) in the buffer yard where the tree is located.

For example, a 24-inch diameter tree would count for four required trees.

$12+4+4+4= 4$ trees

This reduces the number of trees to be planted. Another incentive is using smaller trees to meet the tree requirement when larger trees on the site are not available or there are other site limitations (e.g. steep slopes, wetlands). Staff can also authorize the use of existing trees within the building envelope to count towards this requirement.

Do I have to have a permit if I want to remove a tree from my lot?

Generally, you will not need to get a permit or pay a fee to the Village to remove a tree outside of the Historic District. Inside the Historic District, a certificate of appropriateness may be required for removal of trees in the front yard. A development permit may be required for extensive land disturbing activities such as site alteration and grading to prep for development or removal of trees included in a previously approved landscape plan.