

PROTECT CHARLESTON COUNTY'S TREES

Say NO to Charleston County
Public Works Exemption for
Grand Tree Removal



PROPOSED AMENDMENT CHANGES

Charleston County Council has proposed amendments to the tree protection and preservation ordinance that would exempt county-led road projects from needing authorization from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) before cutting down trees. This could lead to the loss of hundreds of grand trees all across Charleston County.

Since 1992, the Charleston area has lost more than 10,000 acres of tree coverage. We should be protecting our trees, not making it easier to cut more of them down.

Currently, all requests to remove protected trees must be reviewed and approved by the BZA. Charleston County wants to eliminate the BZA's authority from this process for county-led road projects and consolidate the decision-making power to them alone. This removes a step in the process of cutting down protected trees that we cannot afford to lose.

WHY THIS MATTERS

THE TREES IN CHARLESTON COUNTY ARE VALUABLE IN BOTH THEIR CHARACTER AND RESILIENCE.

Grand trees are a defining cultural feature of the Lowcountry and have characterized our communities for centuries.

Trees help build resilience in the face of climate change, increased urban development, and flooding.

Trees provide shade with their extensive canopies that cool pavement on hot summer days.

Their root systems stretch underground and soak up excess water from heavy rain and flooding events—up to 10,000 gallons of stormwater a year for mature trees!

Their strong root systems are also beneficial at holding soil together and curbing erosion. Trees offset carbon emissions, breathe in carbon dioxide, and breathe out oxygen, providing humans and animals with clean air.

Tree-lined roads are one of the defining elements of the Lowcountry. We must protect the things that make the Lowcountry special.

It is crucial that the BZA remains as the independent board to evaluate proposals for protected tree removals for everyone.

Charleston County Public Works should not be granted an exemption. If they are allowed to cut down trees without the required consideration of minimal impacts, Charleston County will see an increase in losses of trees across county roads, and with it the loss of a defining feature of our Lowcountry culture.

STAND UP FOR OUR TREES

Sign a citizen-driven petition to say no to the proposed tree amendments



Learn more about this issue in an episode of SURGE Radio

Tie a bow around roadside trees with yarn to draw attention to the trees that could be affected by these amendment changes.

Take a photo and tag us on social media!



And share photos of trees that are meaningful to you.



Write a Letter-to-the-Editor to submit to the Post & Courier

Reach out to members of Charleston County Council



WHAT CAN YOU SAY?

- The Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend Charleston County Council DENY these amendments. Members of Charleston County Council should listen to their recommendation and **deny approval of the proposed amendments** to the tree protection ordinance.
- Grand trees are **fundamental to the culture and character** of Charleston.
- Trees provide much-needed **shade and wildlife habitat**.
- Trees help **offset carbon emissions**, clean our air, and **absorb stormwater**.
- According to the Post & Courier, the **Charleston area has lost more than 10,000 acres of tree coverage** since 1992.
- Requiring that tree removals for county-led road projects are reviewed by the BZA helps incentivize designing roads to **minimize impacts to grand trees**.
- Having an independent board evaluate proposals for protected tree removals is a **productive method** to help ensure we lose protected trees only when absolutely necessary.



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Consider our trees: they are our history, our present, and—if we make the right decisions—our future.

QUESTIONS? REACH OUT TO EMMA BERRY WITH THE COASTAL CONSERVATION LEAGUE
EMMAB@SCCCL.ORG, 843-972-3485



SHOW UP FOR OUR TREES

On October 9th, Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend denial of proposed amendments to the tree protection and preservation ordinance that would exempt county-led road projects from needing authorization from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) before cutting down trees.

County Council will now decide whether to take the recommendation from Planning Commission or to move forward with the proposed amendments. Please attend the Public Hearing and encourage Council to deny these amendments.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH AT 6:30PM

Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Lonnie Hamilton, III Public Services Building
4045 Bridge View Drive, North Charleston



Questions?

Reach out to Emma Berry with the
Coastal Conservation League
(emmab@sccccl.org / 843-972-3485)

CONTACT COUNTY COUNCIL

Contact members of County Council and encourage them to DENY the proposed amendments.

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Additionally, public comments can be sent to public-comments@charlestoncounty.org