# How to apply for a Tree Removal Permit

Updated 8/11/26

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**Please note**, a permit is required to remove trees over 5 inches Diameter at Standard Height (4.5 feet above ground level) in resource protection areas, residential zoned properties (RL, RM, and RH) greater than ½ acre in size, and in all other zoning districts including townhouse developments and planned development districts.

Please also note, if the tree in question is located in the city's **public right-of-way**, contact the city arborist at trees@fairfaxva.gov or report it through Fairfax City Resolve rather than applying for a tree removal permit.

See the accompanying process flowchart | Ver la guía en español

## Apply

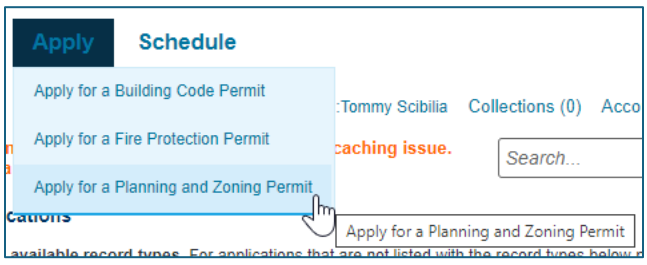
Follow the instructions below to apply for a **Tree Removal Permit ("PLN…")**.

1) If you do not already have a free account in our , create one by clicking the "Register Now" link on the portal home screen.

2) Log into the Permit Portal.

**Note:** Be sure to "Allow Pop-ups" on this website for it to function properly.

3) Hover over "Apply" and select "Apply for a Planning and Zoning Permit".




4) Read and accept the terms of the disclaimer.

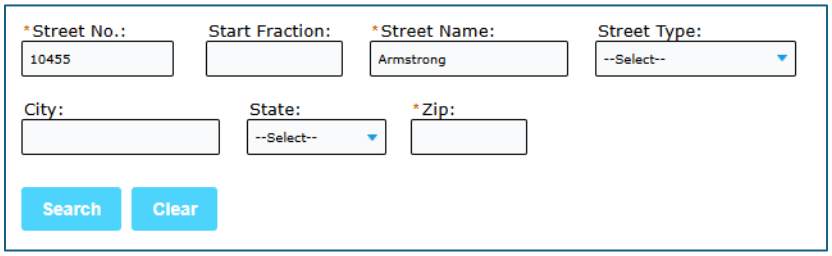
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5) Under "Tree Removal" select one of the "Tree Removal Permit" options.
   - Single-family lot: Trees located on residential lots including in planned developments
   - Other: Trees located in commercially zoned districts or common areas

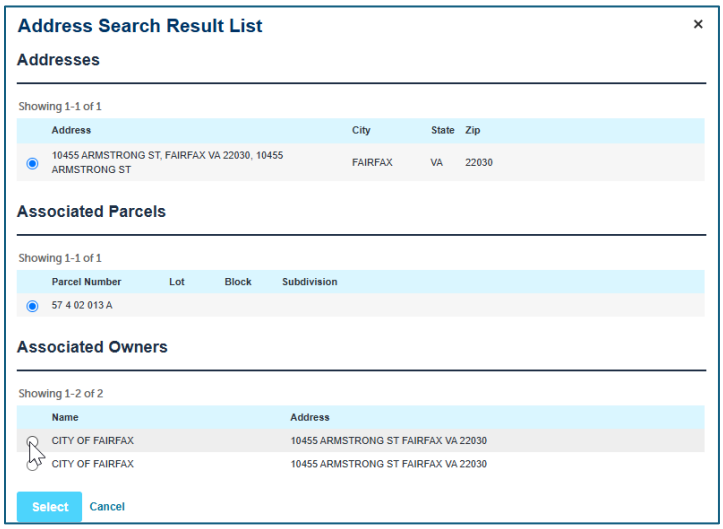



6) Click "Continue Application" at the bottom of the screen to start filling out the application. To enter an address, enter the street number and the street name, and click "Search". You can leave the additional fields blank.

**Note**: If the tree is located in a common area, i.e. there is no known street address, please contact staff at Zoning@fairfaxva.gov or 703-385-7830 to determine the address or parcel number to enter.

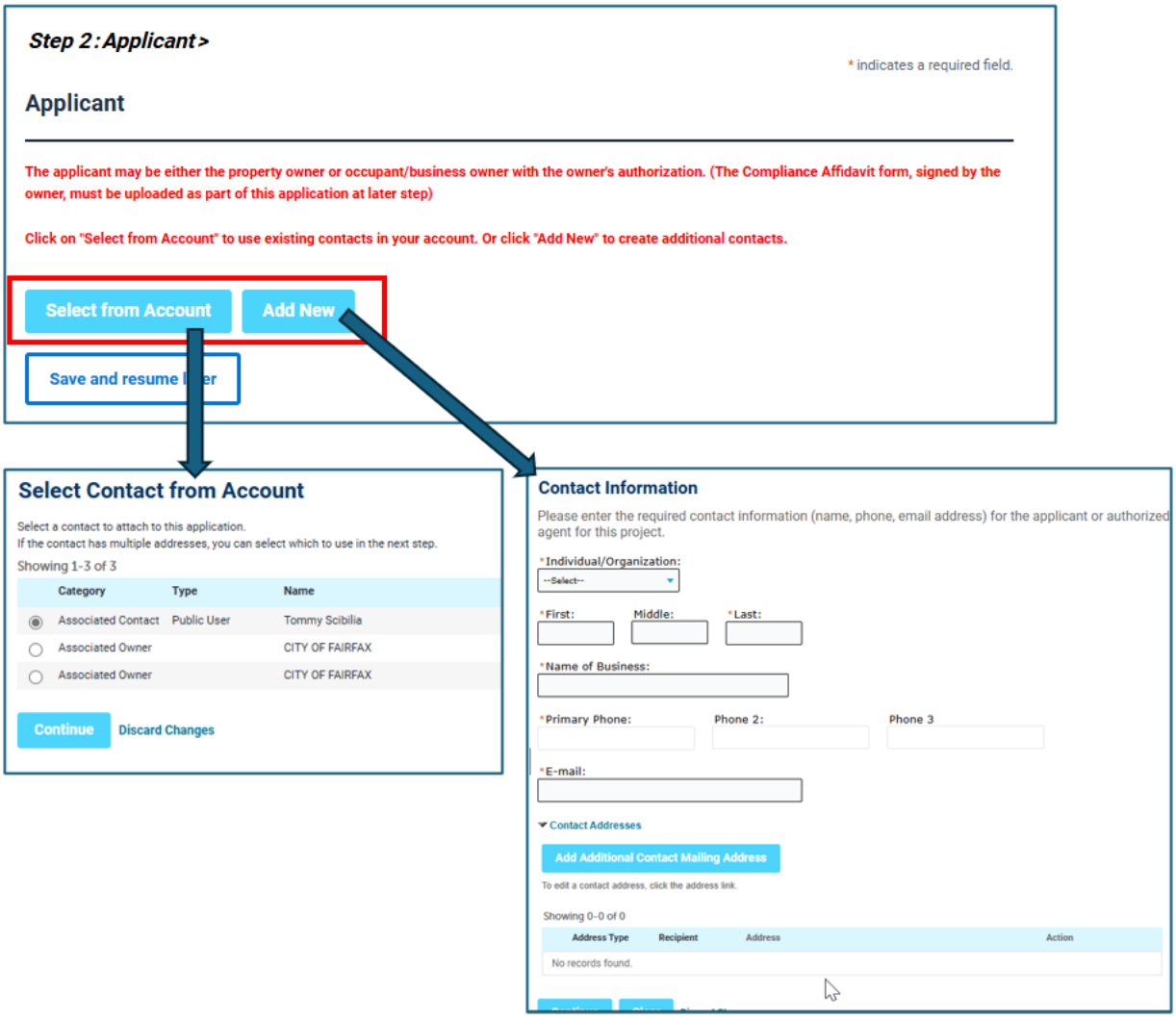



7) The pop-up window will display the street address and parcel number, which should already be selected. At the bottom of the window, select a property owner, and click "Select" to continue. Click "Continue Application" on the main screen.



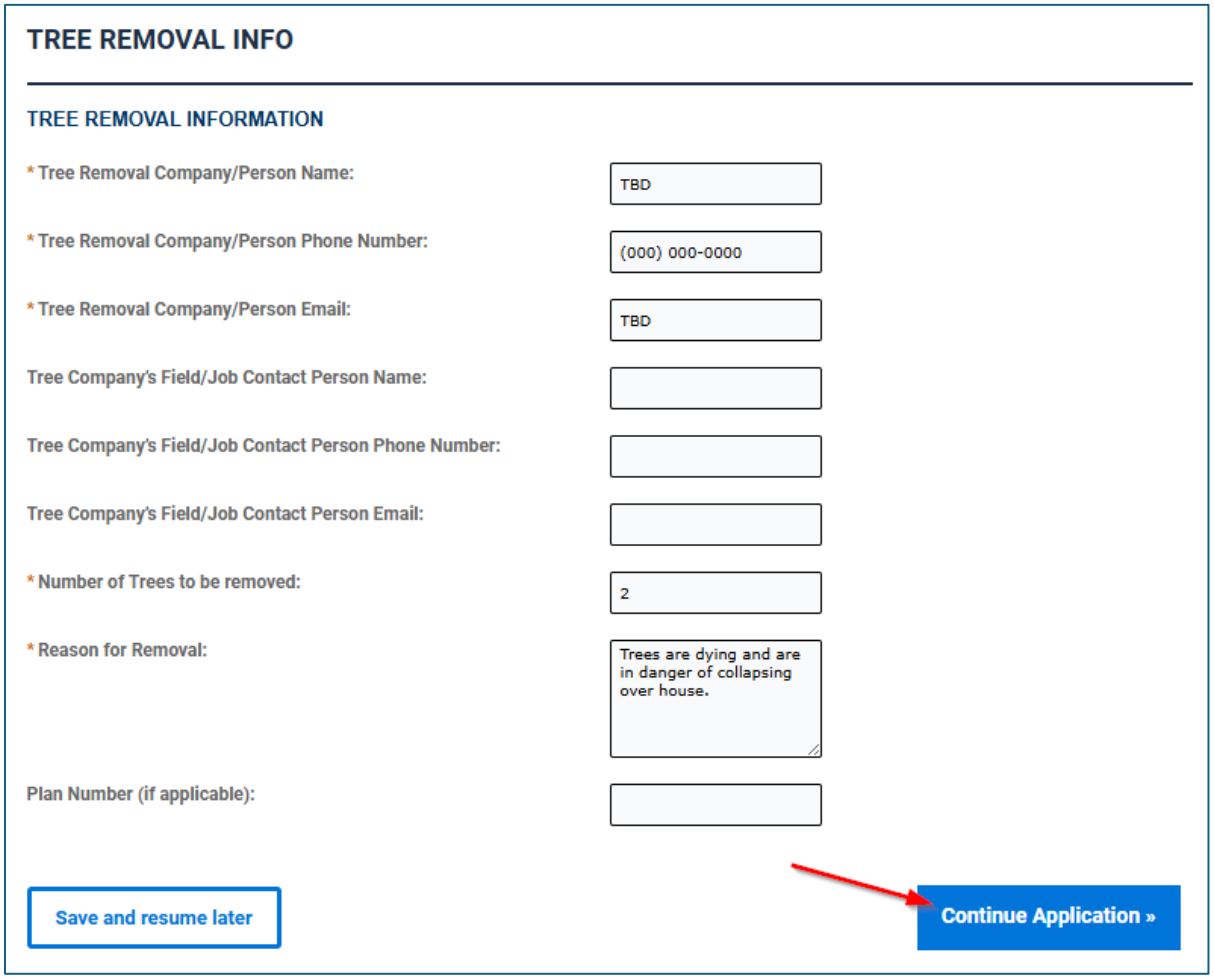

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8) On the next screen you will be prompted to assign an applicant. You can either select a contact already associated with your account or assign the role of applicant to another person. To select from your account, click “Select from Account”, select the contact you want to use from the pop-up window, follow prompts to complete contact information, and click “Continue”. If you want to add a new contact as applicant, click “New”, add required contact information, and click “Continue”. Click “Continue Application” to proceed.




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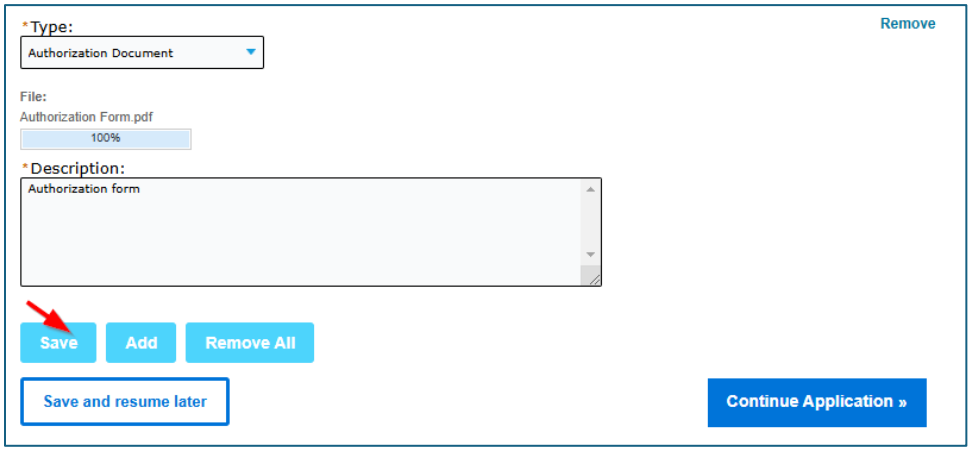
9) The next screen is where you will enter information about your project, including tree removal company information, number of trees to be removed, the reason for removal, and any related site plans (if applicable). If you do not yet know who the tree removal company will be, you can enter "TBD" in the name and email fields, and "000-000-0000" in the phone number field. Click "Continue Application" to proceed.




10) The next step is where you will add your required attachments. You will need to submit the following items with this application type. Note this list is not exhaustive, and more or fewer items may be needed for staff to complete their review:
    - Tree location map with tree(s) to be removed labeled, as well as any labels needed to help staff locate the trees onsite such as nearest street address or other landmark. See an **example tree location map** at the end of this document.
    - Photos of each tree requested to be removed.
    - Owner Authorization Form which must be signed by the applicant and property owner or owner's agent.
        - **Note**: If the tree straddles a property line, all affected property owners must sign this form.

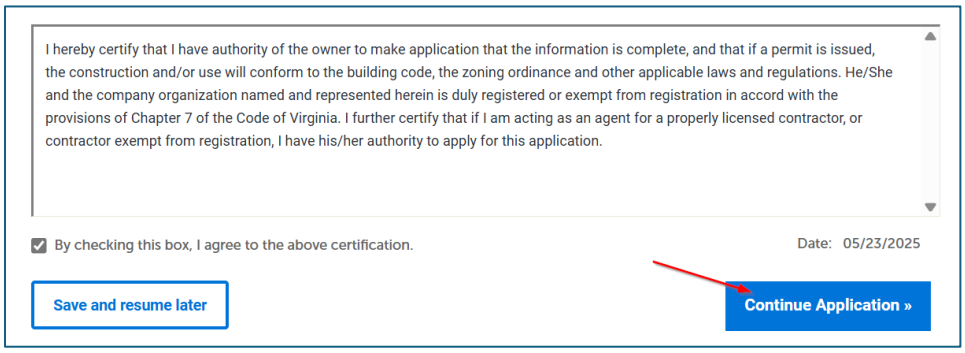
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11) To upload Attachments, click “Add” at the bottom of the screen, click “Add” again in the pop-up window, select the documents for upload, and click “Continue”. Select the document type from the dropdown menu (note that certain document types are required to be selected in order to submit the application), enter a short description, and click “Save”. Click “Continue Application” to move to the next step.

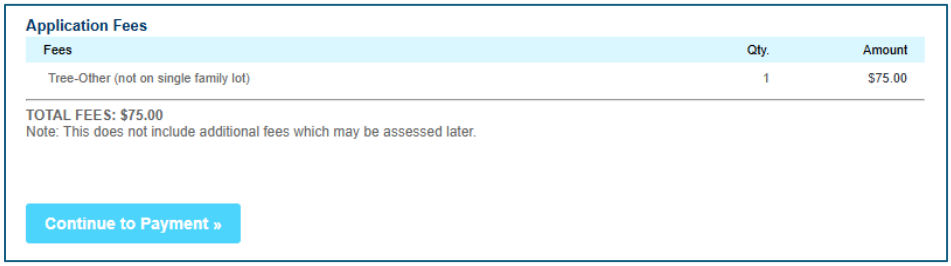



12) Review the next page with info on checking with HOA bylaws as applicable. Click “Continue Application”.

13) Review the summary page, agree to the certification, and click “Continue Application” to proceed.




14) You will be prompted to pay the review fee. Click “Proceed to Payment” to pay with either a credit card or bank info.




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15) Once payment is complete, a permit record number will be provided ("PLN…"). **If you do not see a record number, the application was not submitted and it will not be reviewed.**

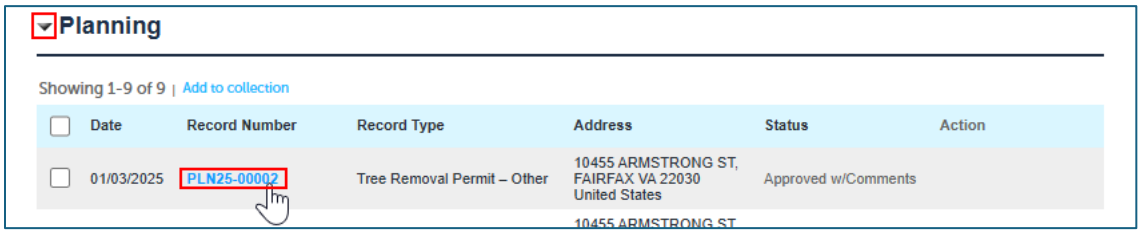
**Note:** If the initial submission did not contain enough information for staff to assess what permits are needed, you will receive an email stating that the submission is incomplete, prompting you to resubmit with additional information or attachments (see separate guide: **How to Resubmit Applications**).

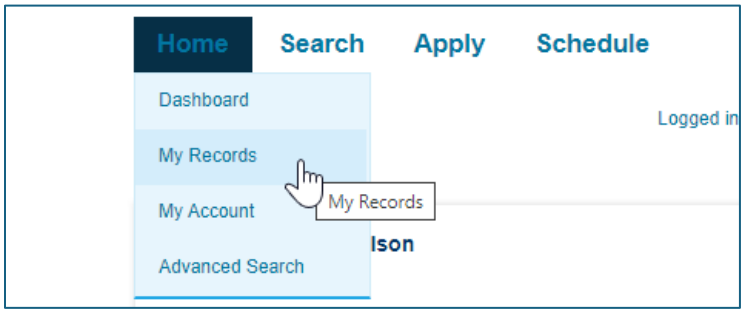
16) You will get emails from the portal throughout the review process letting you know if there is any action that needs to be taken.

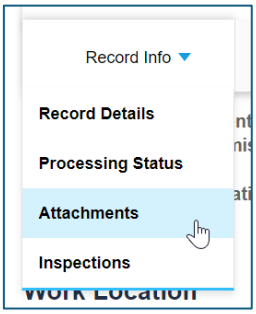
17) Tree removal permits are currently being reviewed within 7-10 calendar days of application acceptance.

18) Once approved, you will receive an email from the permit portal instructing you that replacement tree planting must occur within 120 days of permit issuance (see **Inspections** section below). More information on what type of replacement tree(s) should be planted will be contained within the body of the permit itself.

19) To download the permit, navigate to "My Records", click on the record number ("PLN…") under the **Planning dropdown**, and navigate to "Attachments" under "Record Info".



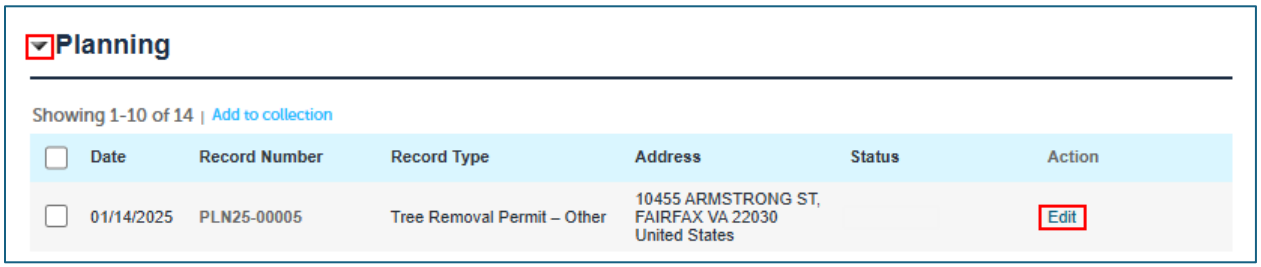

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# Inspections

1) Once approved, you must plant replacement trees as outlined in the tree removal permit within 120 days of permit issuance.
    - **Note:** Planting is to occur either March to May or October to December during non-frozen soil conditions.

2) Photos of each planted tree must be uploaded to the record in the Permit Portal. To upload photos, login to the Permit Portal, navigate to the record by hovering over "Home" and clicking on "My Records". Expand the "Planning" section and click "Edit" in the action column for the Tree Removal Permit record.




3) Update any information that needs to be updated by clicking "Edit" next to the relevant field on the summary page. To upload additional documents, see step 9 in the previous section.




4) On the summary page, agree to the certification, and click "Submit Updated Information".

5) If after 120 days from permit issuance staff has not received photos of the replacement trees via the Permit Portal, staff will conduct a site inspection. If it is determined replacement trees were planted per permit conditions, no further action will be taken. If it is determined replacement trees have **not** been planted, you will receive an email from the portal and Zoning enforcement action will begin, starting with issuance of a Notice of Violation.

*End of section*

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# Example Tree Location Map




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