

TEXT STUDY STAFF REPORT
Unified Development Code



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
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Study Title: Unified Development Text Amendments
No. 18

Public Notice: 2/4/2026; 2/18/2026; 3/4/2026

Purpose: To make additional minor changes and clarify the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances: Part II Unified Development Code (UDC)

Planning & Zoning Commission: 3/10/2026

Recommendation: Approved

Location: Parishwide

FINDINGS

1. *History.* Following the effective date of the Unified Development Code (08/02/2024), Parish staff have actively engaged with the UDC, identifying areas for improvement based on their direct experience with its implementation. A summary of key Council Actions relevant to this Text Study is summarized below.

Ord. No.	Adopted	Effective	Title	Relevant Code of Ordinances Impacted
23-5339	12/18/23	7/1/24	Comprehensive Rewrite, Part II UDC	Ch. 30, 40, 100, 120, 125, and 130
24-7591	6/6/24	6/6/24	UDC Effective date extension	Part II: UDC Chapters 100 - 900
24-7619	7/11/24	8/2/24	Part I Reference Alignment with Part II UDC	Part I of the Code of Ordinances
24-7620	7/11/24	8/2/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendments 1 and 2	Part II: UDC Chapters 100 - 900
24-5592	10/3/24	10/4/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 3	Part II: UDC Chapters 100 - 900
24-5611	11/7/24	11/7/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 4	Part I of the Code of Ordinances and Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
24-5641	12/5/24	12/5/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 5	Part I of the Code of Ordinances and Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
25-5700	3/6/2025	3/10/2025	Part I & II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 6, 7, & 8	Part I of the Code of Ordinances and Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900

25-5728	5/1/2025	5/5/2025	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 9	Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
25-5729	5/1/2025	5/5/2025	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 10	Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
25-5760	6/5/2025	6/9/2025	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 11	Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
Ord. Cal. No. 7897 – Postponed Indefinitely	N/A	N/A	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 12	Part II: UDC Chapter 400
25-5781	7/10/2025	7/10/2025	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 13	Part I Code of Ordinances & Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
25-5795	8/7/2025	8/7/2025	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 14	Part II: UDC Chapter 900
25-5796	8/7/2024	8/7/2025	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 15	Part II: UDC Chapters 100 & 400
26-5906	1/8/2026	1/24/25	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 16	Part II: UDC Chapters 100, 200, 400, 600, & 800
Ord. Cal. No. 8053	TBD	TBD	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 17	Part II: UDC Chapter: 400

2. *Summary of proposed changes.* Proposed changes are listed and categorized by the type of change involved below. These proposed changes are also shown in a ‘marked up’ version of the Code in **Appendix A**. In some cases, changes summarized manifest in the Code as part of multiple recommendations in **Appendix A**. To help ‘toggle’ between the proposed change summarized below and the recommended changes tracked in **Appendix A**, the corresponding numbers are listed at the end of each summary item below.

a. Policy changes include:

- i. Amend Chapter 100 – Administration, Section 100-5 Definitions and Chapter 400 – Zoning, to update existing regulations for Solar Farm uses. (Appendix A, **Recommendation No. 1**).
 - i. This item was postponed for two months and has been removed from Appendix A.
- ii. Amend Chapter 900 – Infrastructure, Sec. 900-2.3 Lot Standards to revise the planting requirements for all newly created or extended subdivisions or PUDs with more than 25 lots. (Appendix A, **Recommendation No. 4**).

b. Clarifications include:

- i. Amend Chapter 400 – Zoning, Sec. 400-8 Use Standards to clarify the minimum regulations for Gas Stations within the HC-1 and HC-2 Highway Commercial Districts. (Appendix A, **Recommendation No. 1**).
- ii. Amend Chapter 600 – General Development Standards, Sec 600-4.3 Sign Standards to clarify prohibitions for billboards along interstate interchanges to be consistent with DOTD State standards and to add greater spacing requirements. (Appendix A, **Recommendation No. 2**).
- iii. Amend Chapter 600 – General Development Standards, Sec. 600-3 Land Clearing, Tree Preservation, and Landscaping to reorganize, consolidate, and clarify existing, dispersed regulations into a single, new comprehensive section, being Section 600-3.5 Waterway Buffers. (Appendix A, **Recommendation No. 3**).

APPENDIX A
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TO
PART II: LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE
ST. TAMMANY CODE OF ORDINANCES
(last amended per Council Ord. No. 26-5921)

Proposed Changes Key:
Blue, Bold, and Underlined Text – Added Text
~~Red and strikethrough text~~ - Deleted Text

1. Amend Chapter 400 – Zoning, Sec. 400-8 Use Standards to clarify the minimum regulations for Gas Stations within the HC-1 and HC-2 Highway Commercial Districts.

Chapter 400 – Zoning

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Sec. 400-8 – Use Standards

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O. Convenience Store (with Gas)/Gas Station with Convenience Store.

The sale of gas and other fuel shall be an accessory use permitted in the zoning district when the criteria of this section are met:

1. In the HC-1 and HC-2 Highway Commercial District, a minimum parcel size of 40,000 square feet is required for such use. On parcels that are a minimum of 40,000 square feet but less than 60,000 square feet in size, the number of fuel pumping units shall be limited to a total of 4 units. For purposes of this provision, a fuel pumping unit, also commonly known as a gas pump, is defined as a unit that is capable of dispensing gas or other fuel to no more than 2 vehicles at the same time, and only when each vehicle to be fueled is positioned on opposite sides of the pump. On parcels that are a minimum of 60,000 square feet but less than 90,000 square feet in size, the number of fuel pumping units shall be limited to a total of 6 units. ~~On parcels that are 90,000 square feet or greater in size, the number of fuel pumping units shall not exceed 8 units.~~

2. Amend Chapter 600 – General Development Standards, Sec 600-4.3 Sign Standards to clarify prohibitions for billboards along interstate interchanges to be consistent with DOTD State standards and to add greater spacing requirements.

Chapter 600 – General Development Standards

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Sec. 600-4.3 Sign Standards

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F. Billboards.

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3. Location standards for billboard signs.

- a. A billboard sign must be located within 200 feet of the highway right-of-way. A billboard sign must be set back at least 15 feet from the highway right-of-way.
- b. A billboard sign is not allowed within or nearer than 500 feet from the edge of the property line of a residentially zoned district.

- c. A billboard sign may not be located within a triangular area formed by the highway rights-of-way lines and a line connecting them at points 50 feet from the rights-of-way intersection, ~~or 500 feet from an interstate entrance/exit ramp.~~ **A billboard sign may not be located adjacent to or within 500 feet of an interchange, intersection at grade, or safety rest area. Said 500 feet shall be measured along the Interstate or Highway from the beginning or ending of the pavement widening at the exit or entrance to the main traveled ways.**
- d. A billboard sign must be located within the same highway corridor from which a "billboard credit" was issued or within the 8 miles of the original site from which the "billboard credit" was issued.

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5. *Spacing of billboard signs.*

- a. No 2 billboard signs shall be spaced less than ~~1,000~~ **2,000** feet apart. In determining the physical spacing of billboards, the parish will consider existing billboards and approved billboard locations. **The minimum distance between structures shall be measured along the nearest edge of the pavement from the nearest edge of the sign to the nearest edge of the other sign.**
- b. **No more than one billboard shall be placed on a single parcel, regardless of spacing distances.**

3. **Amend Chapter 600 – General Development Standards, Sec. 600-3 Land Clearing, Tree Preservation, and Landscaping to reorganize, consolidate, and clarify existing, dispersed regulations into a single, new comprehensive section, being Section 600-3.5 Waterway Buffers.**

Chapter 600 – General Development Standards

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Sec. 600-3 Land Clearing, Tree Preservation, and Landscaping

Sec. 600-3.1 GENERALLY

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Exhibit 600-3-1-1 Summary of Land Clearing, Buffer, and Landscaping Regulations

Requirement Criteria: <i>Land Use, Lot Size and Number of Lots</i>	Land Clearing Permit	Tree Survey	Planting Plan	NAT & LA Areas	Mitigation Plan	Natural and Landscaped Area Size
"NAT" = Natural Areas in accordance with Sec. 600-3.2(D)						
Mitigation is applicable to all types of property upon which landscaping or preservation is required as per Section 600-3.2(D) & 600-3.3(E)						
Waterway Buffers apply to all property types per Sec. 600-3.2(E) <u>Section 600-3.5 Waterway Buffers.</u>						

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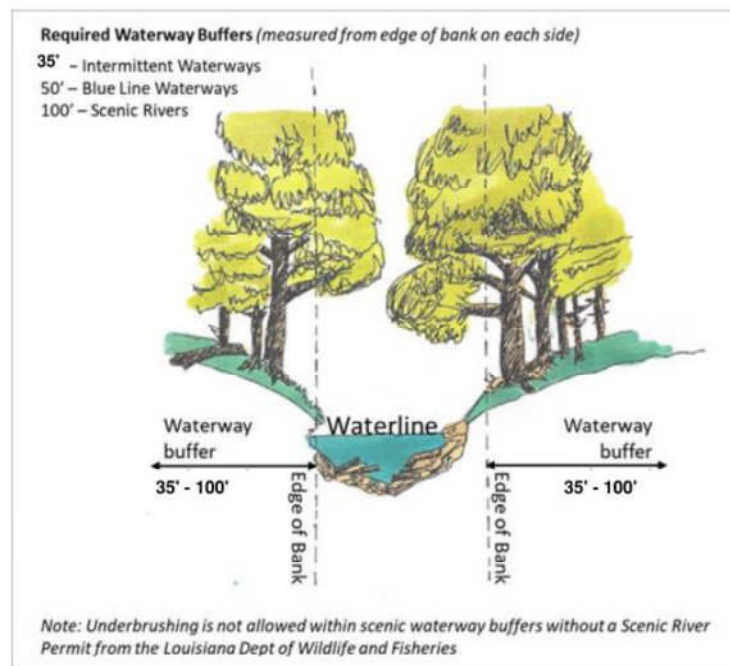
Sec. 600-3.2 Land Clearing Standards.

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~~E. Waterway Buffers.~~

1. ~~*Purpose.* Waterway buffers are intended to protect the water quality of natural waterways and wetland areas abutting a development site.~~
2. ~~*Waterway buffer delineation.* Upon submittal of a land clearing permit application, the applicant must delineate waterway management buffers in accordance with the standards and distance requirements described in this subsection.~~

~~Exhibit 600-3-5 Required Waterway Buffers.~~



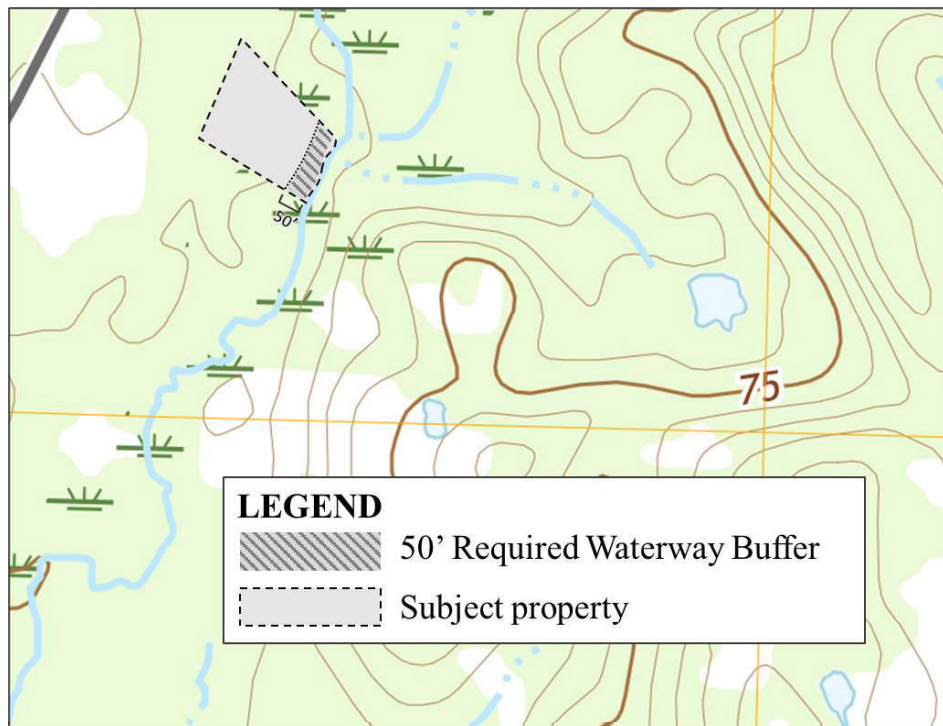
~~3. *Scenic river buffer.* Treatment of a site area adjacent to a scenic river shall be in accordance with permits issued by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). Under brushing is not allowed within a waterway buffer without a scenic review permit from the LDWF.~~

- a. ~~If the LDWF determines a permit is not required, the parish's buffer width requirement shall be between 35'–50' feet, as measured from the edge of the waterway embankment or bank as illustrated in Exhibit 600-3-5, and as determined by the Department of Engineering.~~
- b. ~~*Boat house exception.* To permit construction of the boat house, an applicant must submit prior to the review and issuance of a building permit—a land clearing permit to the Coastal Management Office for review and approval. Pre-clearing in anticipation of later applying for a building permit is not authorized and shall require submittal of replanting plan to remediate unpermitted activities. If a land clearing permit is submitted in accordance with these standards and approved by the Coastal Manager, a maximum area of 40-foot wide by 100-foot deep along a scenic river waterfront may be cleared for the construction of a boat house.~~

~~4. *Intermittent Waterway Buffer.* Applicants with property adjacent to intermittent waterways, designated by a broken/dashed line on USGS Quadrangle Map, shall provide a minimum 35-foot wide waterway buffer, as measured from the edge of the bank.~~

~~5. *Blue Line Waterway Buffer.* Applicants with property adjacent to Blue Line Waterways, as designated by solid blue line on USGS Quadrangle Map, shall provide a minimum 50-foot wide waterway buffer, as measured from the edge of the bank on either side.~~

Exhibit 600-3-6 Example Blue Line Waterway Buffer.



~~Map excerpt from 2020 USGS The National Map, Louisiana – St. Tammany Parish 7.5 Minute Series (topo) Waldheim Quadrangle.~~

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~~F. E. Wetland Areas.~~

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~~G. F. Land Clearing Preparation and Operations.~~

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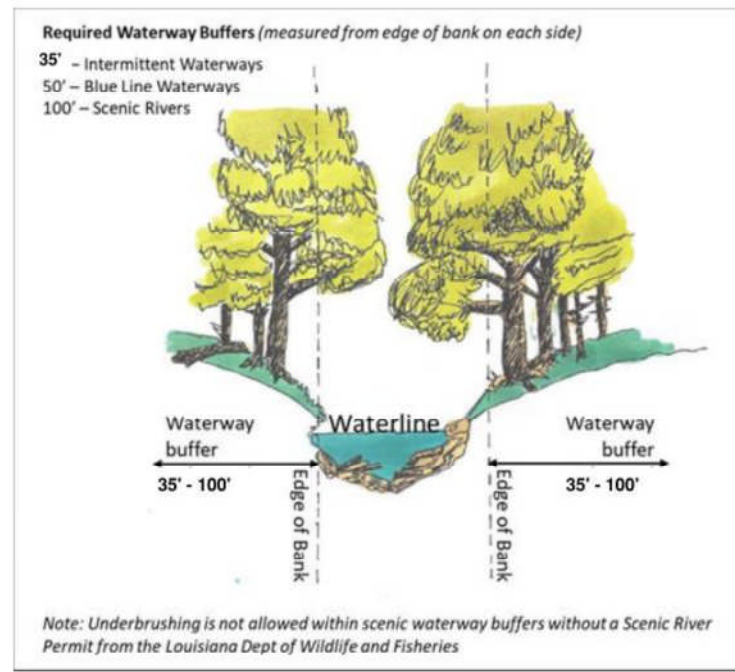
~~H. G. Monitoring and Enforcement.~~

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Sec. 600-3.5 Waterway Buffers.

1. **Purpose. Waterway buffers are intended to protect the water quality of natural waterways and wetland areas abutting a development site.**
2. **Waterway Buffer Delineation. Any applicant proposing development on property subject to waterway buffer requirements shall delineate waterway management buffers in accordance with the standards and distance requirements described in this subsection. Waterway buffers shall be required on all applicable properties, regardless of land clearing requirements otherwise administered under this Section.**

Exhibit 600-3-20 Required Waterway Buffers.



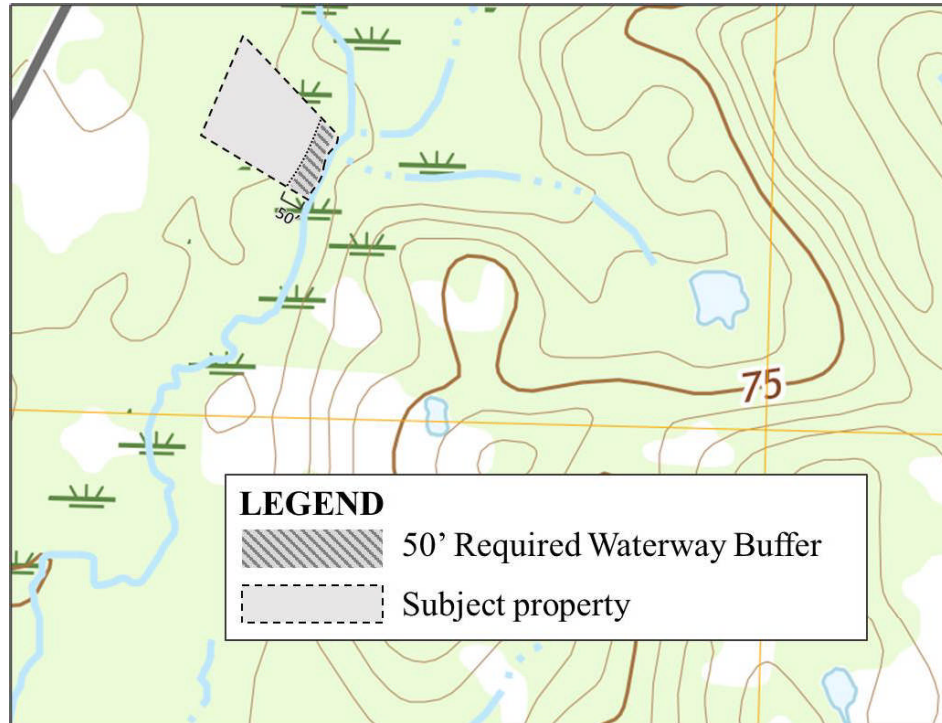
3. Scenic River Buffer. Treatment of a site area adjacent to a scenic river shall be in accordance with permits issued by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). Underbrushing is not allowed within a waterway buffer without a scenic review permit from the LDWF.

- a. **If the LDWF determines a permit is not required, the Parish’s buffer width requirement shall be between 35’-50’ feet, as measured from the edge of the waterway embankment or bank as illustrated in Exhibit 600-3-20, and as determined by the Department of Engineering.**
- b. **Boat house exception. To permit construction of a boat house, an applicant must submit a land clearing permit to the Coastal Management Office for review and approval prior to the review and issuance of a building permit. Pre-clearing in anticipation of later applying for a building permit is not authorized and shall require submittal of replanting plan to remediate unpermitted activities. If a land clearing permit is submitted in accordance with these standards and approved by the Coastal Manager, a maximum area of 40-foot-wide by 100-foot-deep along a scenic river waterfront may be cleared for the construction of a boat house.**

4. Intermittent Waterway Buffer. Applicants with property adjacent to intermittent waterways, designated by a broken/dashed line on USGS Quadrangle Map, shall provide a minimum 35-foot-wide waterway buffer, as measured from the edge of the bank.

5. Blue Line Waterway Buffer. Applicants with property adjacent to Blue Line Waterways, as designated by solid blue line on USGS Quadrangle Map, shall provide a minimum 50-foot-wide waterway buffer, as measured from the edge of the bank on either side.

Exhibit 600-3-21 Example Blue Line Waterway Buffer.



Map excerpt from 2020 USGS The National Map. Louisiana - St. Tammany Parish 7.5-Minute Series (topo) Waldheim Quadrangle.

6. Exclusions. Intermittent and Blue Line Waterway Buffers not regulated by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) are not required where a Major Subdivision - Final Subdivision Plat and Construction Plan is approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

4. Amend Chapter 900 – Infrastructure, Sec. 900-2.3 Lot Standards to revise the planting requirements for all newly created or extended subdivisions or PUDs with more than 25 lots.

Chapter 900 – Infrastructure

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Sec. 900-2.3 Lot Standards

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K. Planting Requirements

1. All newly created or extended subdivisions or PUDs with more than 25 lots must provide planted Class ~~A~~ **B** tree(s) in the front yard of each lot at least 30 ft. apart prior to the property owner obtaining occupancy of the structure per **Exhibit 900-2-5** Required Trees in Major Subdivisions.
2. As defined, a Class ~~A~~ **B** tree, at the time of planting, shall have a minimum caliper of at least ~~2.5~~ **1.5** inches, measured 6 inches above the root ball and a minimum height of ~~10~~ **8** feet, as per the National Nursery Association Standards. ~~A list of appropriate Class A **B** trees can be found in Exhibit 600-3-19 Approved Native Trees and Shrubs.~~ All required trees shall be watered, mulched, and maintained at all times and shall be located outside of any required easement or servitude.

3. Required Class B trees shall be selected exclusively from the following approved list:

- a. Redbud (Cercis canadensis)
 - b. American Snowbell (Styrax americanus)
 - c. Silverbell (Halesia diptera)
 - d. Hop Hornbeam (Ostrya virginiana)
 - e. Ironwood / Blue Beech (Carpinus caroliniana)
 - f. Persimmon (Diospyros virginiana)
 - g. River Birch (Betula nigra)
 - h. Red Buckeye (Aesculus pavia)
 - i. Yaupon Holly (Ilex vomitoria)
 - j. Crab Apple (Malus angustifolia)
 - k. Fringe Tree (Chionanthus virignicus)
 - l. Parsley Hawthorn (Crataegus marshalii)
 - m. Mayhaw (Crataegus opaca)
 - n. Savannah Holly (Ilex x Savannah)
 - o. Dahoon Holley (Ilex cassine)
 - p. Eagleston Holly (Ilex x Eagleston)
4. To promote canopy diversity and reduce the risk of disease or pest infestation:
- a. No single tree species shall constitute more than thirty percent (30%) of the total required Class B trees within a subdivision or PUD.
 - b. Subdivisions subject to this Section shall utilize a minimum of three (3) different tree species from the approved list.
5. A tree planting plan identifying tree species, quantities, caliper sizes, and planting locations shall be submitted for review and approval. The planting plan shall be prepared and stamped by a Registered Landscape Architect licensed in Louisiana and shall be approved prior to the Final Subdivision Plat and Construction Plan approval. Alternative species selection or deviation from the diversity requirements may be approved by the Planning Director upon a written finding that approved species are unavailable, unsuitable due to site conditions, or inadvisable due to documented pest or disease concerns.
6. Any trees which are diseased or dying as certified by a registered landscape architect or arborist may be removed and replaced at the cost and expense of the owner.

Exhibit 900-2-5 Required Trees in Major Subdivisions.

Average Width of Proposed Lots within the Subdivision	Number of Required Trees
60 ft. – 89 ft.	1 Class A <u>B</u> Tree
90 ft. – 149 ft.	2 Class A <u>B</u> Trees
150 ft. +	3 Class A <u>B</u> Trees