

STAFF REPORT

Date: June 24, 2026

Permit Application Number: T2026-0124

Property Address: 2900 North Roosevelt Boulevard, Key West, Florida

Reviewer: Zach Bentley, Asst. Urban Forester, ISA Certified Arborist FL-362805A

Subject: Conceptual Landscape Plan Review 1

Overview

The applicant has submitted a conceptual landscape plan requesting the removal of 137 palm trees and 34 dicot trees. Additionally, the plan includes the transplantation of 41 existing trees. The applicant has provided a comprehensive tree survey that includes clear photographs, accurate species identification, and condition assessments for all existing trees proposed for removal or relocation.

Chapter 108 – Planning and Development

The proposed landscape plans for the redevelopment of 2900 North Roosevelt Boulevard have been reviewed for compliance with the applicable provisions of the City of Key West Land Development Regulations and the City's tree protection and landscaping requirements.

Based upon my review, the submitted landscape package demonstrates substantial compliance with the City's landscape objectives and provides sufficient information for staff and Tree Commission evaluation.

The following review criteria have been addressed:

- Landscape plans have been prepared, signed, and sealed by a licensed Florida Landscape Architect.

- The proposed landscape palette exceeds the City's minimum requirement that at least seventy (70) percent of the required landscaping consist of native plant species.
- Palm species comprise less than twenty-five (25) percent of the overall tree palette, allowing the landscape design to emphasize broad-canopied dicot tree species capable of producing meaningful long-term shade.
- A comprehensive tree mitigation plan has been provided for all proposed tree removals. The proposed mitigation exceeds the minimum replacement requirements established by the City.
- Existing trees proposed for preservation, relocation, or removal have been documented through a complete tree inventory identifying species, caliper, height, condition, and disposition.
- Existing site conditions are thoroughly documented through supporting photographs and corresponding tree inventory information.
- The proposed planting plan provides a diverse mixture of native canopy trees, understory trees, palms, shrubs, and groundcover that is appropriate for the environmental conditions of Key West.

Tree Mitigation Analysis

The total caliper inches of dicot trees proposed for removal is 319.75 inches. To mitigate these removals, the applicant proposes the installation of 369 dicot trees totaling 1,013.5 caliper inches. This represents a net gain of 643.75 caliper inches of dicot canopy trees beyond what is required to replace the existing inventory. This represents a 217% increase in caliper inches. All the species are suitable and, on the City's, approved list. Additionally, approximately 66% of the 369 dicot plantings are canopy tree species, providing significant long-term environmental and aesthetic benefits to the site. All canopy trees being planted have a minimum planted height of 14' and maximum planted height of 20'.

The proposed landscape plan also includes the installation of 60 palm trees. All proposed palms are on the City's approved list. Of the 137 palms to be removed 101 are Christmas Palms which are not on our city's approved list.

Tree Species Analysis

The proposed species include Gumbo Limbo, Pigeon Plum, Green Buttonwood, Satinleaf, Sea Grape, Spanish Stopper, Strangler Fig, Shortleaf Fig, Blolly, Wild Tamarind, and Simpson Stopper. Collectively, these species represent a diverse mixture of canopy trees, understory trees, wildlife-supporting species, and coastal specialists that will provide both aesthetic and ecological benefits to the site and the surrounding community.

Gumbo Limbo (*Bursera simaruba*)

Gumbo Limbo is one of South Florida's most recognizable native canopy trees. It is highly tolerant of salt spray, drought, wind, and hurricane conditions, making it exceptionally suited for urban environments in the Florida Keys. Its attractive exfoliating red bark provides year-round visual interest, while its broad canopy contributes significant shade to parking areas and pedestrian spaces.

Pigeon Plum (*Coccoloba diversifolia*)

Pigeon Plum is a durable native tree well adapted to coastal conditions and alkaline soils. It develops a dense canopy that provides shade and screening while producing fruit utilized by native wildlife. Its ability to withstand urban stressors makes it a valuable component of commercial landscape designs.

Green Buttonwood (*Conocarpus erectus*)

Green Buttonwood is among the most durable native trees available for coastal landscaping. It exhibits excellent tolerance to salt, drought, wind, poor soils, and periodic flooding. Its dense branching structure and attractive foliage provide year-round visual appeal while contributing to storm resilience and habitat value.

Satinleaf (*Chrysophyllum oliviforme*)

Satinleaf is highly valued for its ornamental qualities, including dark green foliage with distinctive copper-colored undersides. Native to the Florida Keys and South Florida hammocks, it performs well in urban settings and provides seasonal fruit for birds and wildlife. Satinleaf adds aesthetic diversity and ecological value to the landscape palette.

Sea Grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*)

Sea Grape is one of the signature native species of the Florida Keys. It demonstrates exceptional tolerance to coastal conditions, salt spray, sandy soils, and high winds. Its large, rounded leaves create a bold tropical appearance while providing effective shade and visual buffering. The fruit also serves as an important wildlife resource.

Spanish Stopper (*Eugenia foetida*)

Spanish Stopper is a native understory tree known for its attractive exfoliating bark, dense evergreen canopy, and excellent adaptability to urban environments. It performs well in confined planting areas and contributes important structural diversity to the landscape. The species also provides food resources for native birds.

Strangler Fig (*Ficus aurea*)

Strangler Fig is one of South Florida's most important native canopy trees. Mature specimens develop expansive canopies that provide substantial shade and cooling benefits. The fruit produced by this species serves as a critical food source for numerous native bird species and wildlife. Its inclusion adds significant ecological value and long-term canopy benefits to the site.

Shortleaf Fig (*Ficus citrifolia*)

Shortleaf Fig is another highly valuable native canopy species that thrives in South Florida's coastal environment. Similar to Strangler Fig, it supports a wide variety of native wildlife through its fruit production while contributing substantial shade and urban forest canopy. The species is well adapted to the climatic conditions of Key West.

Blolly (*Guapira discolor*)

Blolly is a hardy native tree commonly found throughout the Florida Keys. It exhibits excellent tolerance to drought, wind, and alkaline soils while providing attractive evergreen foliage and wildlife habitat. Its moderate size makes it suitable for commercial landscapes where long-term durability is essential.

Wild Tamarind (*Lysiloma latisiliquum*)

Wild Tamarind is among the premier native canopy trees of the Florida Keys. It develops an attractive spreading canopy that provides excellent shade while maintaining a refined appearance. The species demonstrates exceptional drought tolerance and wind resistance and is well suited for parking lot and streetscape applications.

Simpson Stopper (*Myrcianthes fragrans*)

Simpson Stopper is a versatile native tree known for its attractive cinnamon-colored bark, evergreen foliage, and adaptability to a wide range of site conditions. It performs exceptionally well in urban landscapes and provides fruit that benefits native wildlife. Its ornamental qualities make it a valuable component of high-quality landscape designs.

Overall Landscape Assessment

The proposed landscape plan utilizes a diverse collection of native Florida Keys and South Florida tree species that are exceptionally well suited to the environmental conditions of Key West. The species selection demonstrates careful consideration of long-term sustainability, storm resilience, drought tolerance, wildlife value, and aesthetic appeal.

The proposed planting palette emphasizes canopy-producing dicot trees that will provide meaningful shade to parking areas, reduce heat island effects, and improve pedestrian comfort.



Zach Bentley, Asst. Urban Forester

City of Key West

