

20.770.120 HERITAGE TREES

A. Heritage Tree Inventory

1. The City shall develop an inventory of Heritage Trees that shall satisfy the criteria of this of section. The initial inventory shall be the responsibility of the Urban Forestry Commission as established under VMC 12.02 and shall be updated annually by the Commission. The City Council, Planning Commission, Urban Forestry Commission, Neighborhood Association, a property owner, or any person may recommend to the City that a tree be designated a Heritage Tree.
2. The Heritage Tree designation may be applied to a tree or grove of trees.
3. The Urban Forestry Commission shall hold at least one public hearing on the proposed designations. The City shall notify each property owner by certified or registered mail when a tree on the owner's property has been proposed for designation to the Heritage Tree Inventory. The notice and a response form shall be mailed at least 30 calendar days prior to the public hearing. If the owner of the property objects to such designation in writing to the Urban Forestry Commission prior to the public hearing or at the public hearing, the designation procedure shall not proceed.
4. After the Commission completes its hearing, it shall establish a list of Heritage Trees based on the criteria found in this section. Decisions of the Urban Forestry Commission may be appealed to the Hearings Examiner/City Council by any aggrieved party.

B. Criteria

For any individual tree or grove of trees to be listed as a Heritage Tree(s), it must be in an apparently *healthy growing condition* and *one or more* of the following exist:

1. The tree has a diameter (at breast height) of 36 inches or greater;
2. The tree has a distinctive size, shape, or location, or is of a distinctive species or age which warrants a Heritage Tree status;
3. The tree possesses exceptional beauty which warrants a Heritage Tree status;
4. The tree is distinctive due to a functional or aesthetic relationship to a natural resource, such as trees located along stream banks or trees located along ridge lines; OR
5. The tree has a documented association with a historical figure, property, or significant historical event.

A grove may be considered for Heritage Grove Status if it is apparently in a healthy growing condition and one or more of the following criteria:

1. The grove is relatively mature and is of a rare or unusual nature containing trees that are distinctive either due to size, shape, species or age;
2. The grove is distinctive due to a functional or aesthetic relationship to a natural resource, such as trees located along stream banks, or trees located along ridge lines; OR
3. The grove has documented association with a historical figure, property, or significant historical event.

C. Heritage Trees Development Review

When development is proposed for property which contains a Heritage Tree, and the Director determines that the proposed development may affect a Heritage Tree, the property owner must have a tree preservation plan prepared by a qualified professional demonstrating how the Heritage Tree will be protected and preserved. A Heritage Tree shall be preserved unless the Urban Forestry Commission determines that the tree may be removed based on the removal criteria for Heritage tree in following section.

A tree preservation plan shall be composed of the following:

- a.** A site plan indicating the location of Heritage Trees.
- b.** The methods to be used to preserve the Heritage Trees.
- c.** If a Heritage Tree is proposed for removal, a narrative statement outlining the reasons why the Heritage Tree should be removed.
- d.** A mitigation plan indicating the replacement trees or additional new trees to be placed on the site. The mitigation plan should demonstrate, to the extent possible, that the character of the site will not substantially change as the result of development.

Site design adjustments may be allowed in some cases, as follows:

- a.** The Director may grant a variance to front, side, and/or rear yard setback standards by up to 20 percent to retain a Heritage Tree(s). The adjustment shall be the minimum necessary to accomplish preservation of trees on site and shall not conflict with the Uniform Building Code or other adopted ordinances or conditions placed on the property.
- b.** The Director may grant a 10 percent variance to the lot size and/or a ten percent variance to the lot width and/or lot depth standards in approving a short plat or other land division if necessary to retain Heritage Trees. The Director may accept a preliminary plat application and recommend approval to the hearing body of a plat which provides for similar variance to lot size, width and depth standards if necessary to retain Heritage Trees.

D. Removal of a Heritage Tree.

Except for the provisions in Section 20.770.030, no person may cut or remove a Heritage Tree without obtaining approval from the Urban Forestry Commission. The tree removal permit shall be approved if one of the criteria is satisfied:

- a.** Retention of the tree would make reasonable use of the property allowed under the current zoning impractical or impossible in that the development would not be allowed to meet the maximum density allowed by the applicable zoning or would require special design features that would significantly increase the cost of development by 5 percent or more.
- b.** The removal is necessary to accommodate a new improvement, structure or remodeled structure, and no alternative exists for relocation of the improvement on the site, or that variances to setback provisions of the Development Code will not allow the tree to be saved or will cause other undesirable circumstances on the site or adjacent properties.
- c.** The tree is hazardous, diseased or storm damaged and poses a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the public.
- d.** The tree has lost its importance as a Heritage Tree due to damage from natural or accidental causes, or is no longer of historic or natural significance.
- e.** The tree needs to be removed to accomplish a public purpose and no practical alternative exists.

The limb structure, or crown, of a Heritage Tree may be pruned in any one year period without obtaining approval from the Urban Forestry Commission, provided that at least 80 percent of the existing tree crown remains undisturbed. Any person who wishes to prune a Heritage Tree in excess of 20 percent of the existing crown shall obtain approval from the Urban Forestry Commission subject to the following conditions:

- a.** The protected tree shall be pruned following acceptable arboricultural standards.
- b.** The tree shall be pruned in a manner which ensures safety to public and private property and shall be done by a qualified professional.
- c.** Any other conditions necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the community development plan.



Officers Row grove

How to Nominate a Tree

Complete the enclosed nomination form and property owner/ tree owner agreement. *The property owner must agree to the nomination and potential designation of their tree/s before Urban Forestry can entertain the nomination.*

Review the information included in this pamphlet, including the criteria for a Heritage Tree, the designation process, the level of protection, and assessment procedures should the tree/s be considered for removal.

If you require assistance determining if your nomination is appropriate or to gather necessary data on the tree, contact Urban Forestry at 360-487-8332 or Urban.Forestry@cityofvancouver.us.

Thank you for considering nominating a tree or grove of trees for Heritage status with the City of Vancouver.

What is a Heritage Tree?

Heritage Trees are approved for official designation through a public hearing for their unique size, age, historical, or horticultural significance. Once accepted, Heritage Trees are designated with a small plaque and listed in the Heritage Tree registry.

For a tree, or group of trees, to be considered for Heritage Tree status, it must satisfy at least one of the following criteria:

Specimen: A tree of exceptional size, form, or rarity.

Historic: A tree recognized by virtue of its age, its association with or contribution to a historic structure or district, or its association with a noted person or historic event.

Landmark: Trees that are landmarks of a community.

Collection: Trees in a notable grove, avenue, or other planting.

The Heritage Tree Program was created by City Ordinance in 1997 (VMC Section 20.770.120) to protect and recognize our unique trees. The Urban Forestry Commission designates a tree as a Heritage Tree provided the tree meets the program criteria. To view the current Heritage Tree registry visit www.cityofvancouver.us/urbanforestry



Old Apple Tree

Our Trees. Our Legacy.

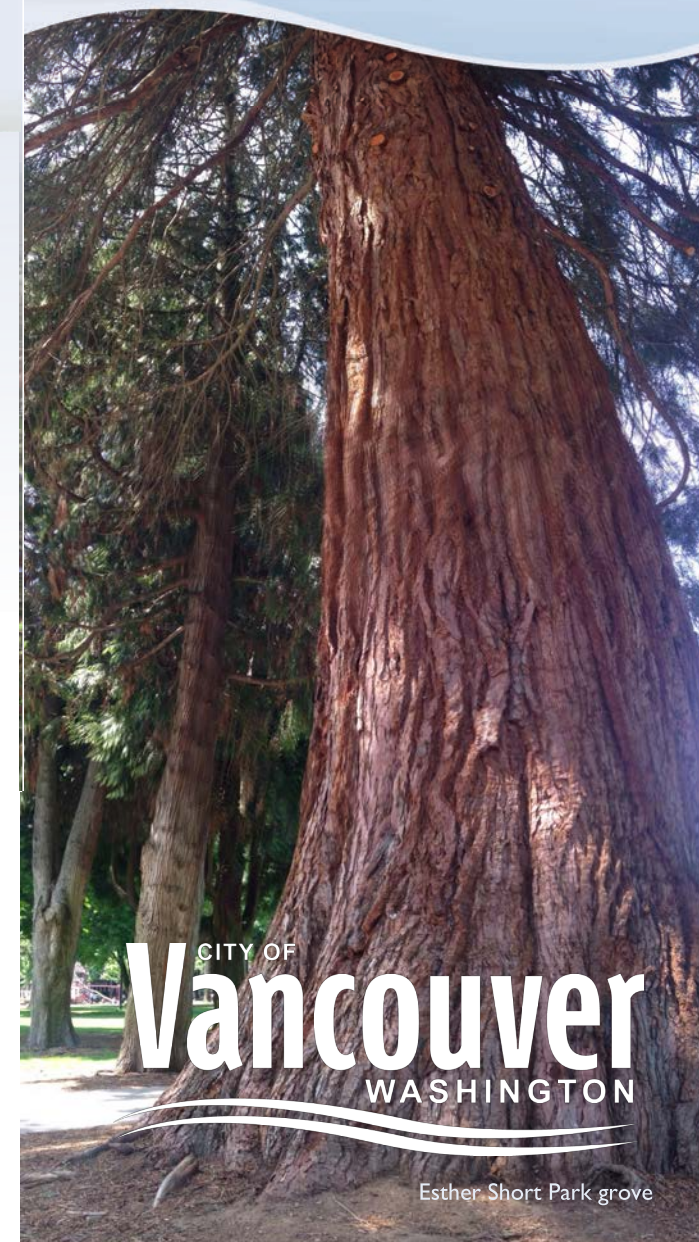
Vancouver's Heritage Tree Program aims to preserve and recognize the significant trees in our community. By preserving our natural resources, we preserve a vital link to our past and a connection to our future.

There are nearly 40 Heritage Trees and groves throughout Vancouver, and new trees are added regularly. View the list at www.cityofvancouver.us/urbanforestry.

Do you know of a special tree? Nominate it today!

- Anyone can nominate a heritage tree!
- Requires property owner consent
- Urban Forestry provides inspections every five years
- Heritage Trees are protected by City Code and once designated cannot be removed without consent of the Urban Forestry Commission.

Heritage Tree Program



CITY OF
Vancouver
WASHINGTON

Esther Short Park grove

Heritage Tree Nomination Form

Nominator Information

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Property/ Tree Owner Information

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Tree Information

Location (street address)

Species of tree

Single tree or grove of trees (if grove, how many)

What is noteworthy about the tree/s that meet the criteria?

☐ Size?

☐ Shape?

☐ Unique species?

☐ Beauty?

☐ Function (shade, natural resources?

☐ History?

Contact Urban Forestry Staff if you need support to determine the size, age, and condition of tree/s

Size: Height in feet (approx.)

Crown in feet (approx.) distance of total spread from one side to the other

Circumference in inches (distance around trunk at 4.5 ft from ground)

Age of tree (if known)

Condition: Healthy? Diseased? Pruning/ structural Problems?

Explain any known issues with the tree?

Explain why the tree/s should be nominated for heritage distinction, including any documented historical facts about the tree, on separate piece of paper. Include photos.

Submit nomination form and owner’s consent to the Urban Forestry Commission by email to Urban.Forestry@cityofvancouver.us or mail to P.O. Box 1995 Vancouver, WA 98668.

Agreement of the Property Owner and The City of Vancouver to Designate a Heritage Tree

In exchange for the City's designation of the subject tree as a Heritage Tree, the Property Owner agrees to protect, maintain and care for the Heritage Tree located on his or her property. This agreement shall run with the land and bind all successors, heirs and assigns to this property. Property Owner agrees to abide by conditions set forth in the City of Vancouver Code, Section 20.770.120, particularly:

- "When development is proposed for property which contains a Heritage Tree, the property owner must have a tree preservation plan prepared by a qualified arborist demonstrating how the Heritage Tree will be protected and preserved."
- "No person may cut or remove a Heritage Tree without obtaining approval from the Urban Forestry Commission following the set criteria."
- "The limb structure or crown of a Heritage Tree may be pruned in any one year period without obtaining approval from the Urban Forestry Commission, provided that at least 80 percent of the existing tree crown remains undisturbed."
- "Any person who wishes to prune a Heritage Tree in excess of 20 percent of the existing crown shall obtain approval from the Urban Forestry Commission subject to [various] conditions."

Property Owner understands that sponsorships or assistance for care of the tree may be available from the City's Urban Forestry program. In addition, if the Property Owner may want any advice, it can be offered at no cost by the City Forester or designee (360/ 487-8328).

Property Owner as owner of the _____ (species) tree now being considered for this distinction, hereby consent to its being designated a Heritage Tree by the Urban Forestry Commission of Vancouver, Washington.

Tree Location (address, tax lot):_____

Signed:_____ (Property Owner)

Date:_____

Submitted by Urban Forestry Commission: _____ (date)

February UFC Program and Staff Reports

6. Program Updates

AmeriCorps & Friends of Trees (FOT):

·2 students from Hudson's Bay have successfully completed their 60-hour internship with Urban Forestry (UF), 3 others are close to completion, and 5 new interns will start this Saturday 2/17

·Rescheduled Sam Brown Naturespaces planting will occur this Saturday, 2/17 – limited to 50 volunteers but high community interest suggests high demand for native plantings, environmental justice, community-building opportunities

·UF planted 26 trees at the WA State School for the Blind on 2/3, will plant ~25 more trees this fall

·UF Commissioners Clif & Susan Law tabled at Farmer's Market on Saturday – 8 newsletter signups and 40+ educational conversations with community members

Friends of Trees

·Very successful planting with high volunteer turn-out on 1/27 makeup planting (rescheduled from 1/13 due to inclement weather)

·150 trees will be planted at the 2/24/24 westside planting – thank you to commissioners who helped with outreach & coordination!

Annual Report 2023:

Staff is finalizing our 2023 Annual Report. Please send any highlights or partners to Jessica George.

Arbor Day 2024 Planning:

The Outreach Subcommittee and staff are developing plans for Arbor Day 2024.

Mac Awards 2023:

The Commission will be awarding the annual Mac Awards as part of Arbor Day. The Commission will vote on this year's nominees at the March meeting. Individuals, organizations, and businesses that have made a significant positive impact on Vancouver's urban forest are eligible for the Mac Award. Activities worthy of recognition include organizing a tree planting project, educating others about the benefits of trees or proper tree care, preserving trees during land development, donating time and/or funds to advance the mission of the Urban Forestry program, developing creative partnerships in community forestry, or any other activity that inspires community stewardship of the urban forest. Please nominate candidates.

Subcommittee Reports:

Outreach:

Feb Outreach Meeting.

- Website: Whenever you visit the website, please keep note of anything you see that needs fixing or improving and email Jessica.
- Farmer Market: All set for Feb 10, 10 a.m. -2 p.m. Table topic: Tree topping. Email Riley for more info. Our interns will join us and may do some pruning in Esther Short Park too.
- Arbor Day: Wed, April 10, around noon, with students. Planning for ceremony, service project, pop-up arboretum, and scavenger hunt.
 - o Do you have a MAC Award recipient in mind? Show them some love! Nominations are open. The nomination forms are attached.
 - o Save the date for Arbor Date! Commissioners welcome to come celebrate and volunteer.
- Tree Care Handbook: We can use the handbook to get out the word to homeowners when new subdivisions are built... can piggyback with the occupancy inspection process. Interns and AmeriCorps are on board for helping out to create the handbook!
- New Outreach Materials on the way: All materials are getting updated and revamped with the new city branding. Stay tuned.
- Canvassing Opportunities: Outreach committee members (and all commissioners) are welcome to join in for canvassing this spring... spread the word about tree care and corridor plantings. Email Ian to join in! Next canvassing date, Feb 24.
- Newsletter: Email Riley with content ideas for February or future months.

Policy:

No report

Invasive:

No report

Pollinator:

No report

Corridor:

No report.

8. Urban Forestry Staff Report

Since the January Commission meeting, staff has been onboarding our two new staff, winter planting projects, next steps with our Urban Forest Management Plan and our workload to ensure all aspects of our program are moving forward. Our winter planting projects are being implemented and we anticipate planting more than 1,000 trees this winter. Nick Redmond returned to work on light duty at the end of January.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB):

We will be implementing our 2024 EAB action items which include: removal/replacement of declining ash trees (approx 20 trees); round 2 of treatment to preserve quality ash trees; and other action items. We are seeking funding from Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assist with implementation of our EAB management plan.

Staff worked with Parks and Operations to finalize our 2024 Park Proactive Pruning sites which are as followed:

Pruning Cycle Year 3 (2024)

Fisher Basin, Bagley nature area, First Place, Cascade Park, Engineering Marine, Winter Park, Waterfront Park, Arnada, John Ball, Homestead, Liberty, Lieser Crest, DuBois, Van Vleet, Tanglewood/Stein. Parks not completed in 2024 will be move to the 2025 list.

Staff is also working closely with Pavement Management on 2024 Proactive Street Tree Management Program prior to paving season. Phase 1 streets postcards were mailed the week of Feb 11th and staff anticipate the start of canvassing and inventorying the streets the week of Feb 18th.

Staff is preparing for the five-year IRA Grant that was awarded to develop a green youth work force program to assist us with young plant care through the summer months.

Our site visit inspection backlog is less than 14 days (goal is 10 day response time) and hovering around 30 requests. Development and inspection request are steady. Staff is completing final site inspections for all new development to ensure quality trees are planted per the approved tree plan.