

# STEWARDSHIP PLAN

## Part 5

### Cutting Requests in the Natural Reserves: Hazardous Trees and View Covenant Issues

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Revised by: New Document \_\_\_\_\_ Date: NA \_\_\_\_\_

Reserves Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Major Changes
0	Creation of Document by Rick Leary

### 1. **Pruning**

Pruning may be needed to remove density within the crown, reduce wind resistance, increase the health and condition of the trees, and provide “view corridors” and “windowing” through canopies to improve views. When pruning needs to be performed, ANSI 300 standard will be followed. This standard is recognized by the National Arborists and the International Society of Arboriculture.

All woody debris 8 inches or less in diameter should be lopped and scattered so that the majority of it is in contact with the ground. Alternately, the woody debris can be hauled and chipped. Wood chips will be left at designated locations on each end of a reserve to be used as mulch following replanting.

Wood greater than 8 inches in diameter will be cut in lengths sufficient for it to be left in contact with the soil for degradation, forest restoration, and ecosystem management value. Leave large branches and trunks running parallel to the contour with the slope except in steep slope areas. In the event that the amount of woody debris exceeds the Reserve Threshold, wood will be cut in 18 inch length and left on site for residential firewood use.

### 2. **Tree Removal**

The criteria for tree removal are as follows:

- A. Hazardous trees
  - Remove potentially hazardous trees
  - Remove excessively decayed or diseased trees
  - Remove trees in poor health, condition, and structure due to previous topping practices
- B. Optimize view corridors and replace trees with more appropriate species
- C. Create space for establishment of more preferred trees and species

### 3. **Hazardous Trees.**

Request for tree removal can occur at any time when a tree meets criteria A, B, or C above. **If the tree is in a Critical Area as defined in SMC 20.80, City Planners may only allow hazardous trees to be removed. Sometimes critical area issues can be mitigated, but this can be an expensive proposition though.**

A hazardous tree report must be obtained from an arborist or consulting arborist listed on the City of Shoreline approved list available on their website. The arborist should issue a hazardous tree report in the format required by the City of Shoreline. The arborist needs to sign the document.

- 1. If the arborist concludes that the tree is highly hazardous(usually a rating of 9 through 12), s/he will check a box on the second page recommending whether the tree is to remain untouched for observation, to be pruned, or

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to be removed. The reserves chairman should also sign the document, listing the Reserves Chairman as contact, with a contact telephone number, and the date.

2. The signed and dated report should be submitted to the City of Shoreline Planning Department for review and approval. A city planner may request to look at each of the trees and verify the ratings before approving either removal or pruning to lower the hazardous rating as recommended by the arborist.
3. Trees with hazardous ratings of 6 to 8 may be submitted to the City of Shoreline Planning Department if the arborist recommends pruning the tree to improve the health and survivability of the tree or to remove minor hazards, such as a dead limb extending over a trail or a structure.
4. Whenever hazardous trees are removed, re-vegetation of the site should be evaluated. Large sunny areas are more prone to non-native plant infestation or to producing monocultures where hardy native plants can proliferate. Only native plants should be considered for re-vegetation. If trees are to be planted, smaller plants have a higher probability of survival when watering routinely is not possible. Otherwise, shrubs or groundcover may be more appropriate.

#### 4. **Options B and C**

Options B and C are more problematic in that they will require a clearing and grading permit. Reports by an arborist, a soil engineer, a stream or wildlife biologist, and a geotechnical scientist may also be required depending upon the conditions. A pre-application meeting with the City will be helpful in establishing what reports might be needed in order to get the City Planner's cooperation.

#### 5. **Tree Retention in Non-critical Areas**

The Shoreline Municipal Code 20.50.350 states at least 20% of significant trees on a given site shall be retained that is not in a critical area. Any tree removal needs to account for the health and stability of the reserve in addition to meeting the minimum requirements of the SMC.

#### 6. **General Approach to Working in the Reserves**

Phasing pruning and removals over time negatively impacts the site in multiple ways. It causes repeated site disturbances and compaction from foot traffic, the felling of branches and trunks, and the use of pruning and removal equipment. In addition, subsequent pruning and removal phases increase the damage and loss to existing understory vegetation as well as the loss of newly planted trees, shrubs, and ground covers. Finally, excessive impact on steep slopes increases the potential for erosion, reducing slope stability. The roots of existing trees remain in the soil long after trees are removed maintaining soil stability until new vegetation is established.

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If trees are removed, it can be done all at once. But planting could be done over time, as could/should coppicing if allowed, since the impact is much lower. Also planting multiple small plants is much better than one large plant since less soil is disturbed, and soils are better protected. Planting many bare-root trees rather than a few large container or ball & burlap trees usually results in a greater number of surviving trees and, in a few years, trees as large as those that were planted at larger sizes. Small plants can be ordered from a number of local nurseries in smaller quantities (less than 50). Bare root stock are available, generally at quite low cost, from some nurseries, but these nurseries have minimums in quantity and dollar amount.

7. **Soils**

The soil in the Bear Reserve is classified as Indianola sandy loam. According to the report Slope Stability And Water Problems Associated With Soil And Vegetation Of Innis Arden, by Adams and Harris (U of W College of Forest Resources Soil Lab) the soil in Bear Reserve is “is all well-drained sandy loam with excellent infiltration potential.” See the survey maps and documents available on the Innis Arden website Reserves section for more information.

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