

Public Non-Street Tree Removal

Reference Number PAR 06.00.03

Purpose

To provide guidelines for the protection or removal of non-street trees on city open space/park property.

Scope

City wide within public open space corridors that have a City Council approved Vegetation Management Plan that includes view preservation corridors for the general public.

Policy/Conditions

REGULATORY AUTHORITY:

The Bellingham Municipal Code, [Title 8](#) (Parks Code), Bellingham Municipal Code [13.4](#) (Street Trees and other vegetation) and Street Tree Policy PAR 06.00.01.

POLICY:

1. The City values the public open spaces and natural areas within the community. The preservation of the trees and other vegetation is a priority as they enhance the quality of life and general welfare of the city, enjoyment of the public and provide for wildlife habitat areas. Therefore, the trees and vegetation will be preserved and protected on public lands unless removal is for the public benefit within approved view sensitive area.
2. The location and growth of vegetation and trees is an issue of importance. Trees and views are both valued amenities, but unfortunately, the two sometimes come into conflict. This is especially true in view sensitive areas where views are greatly valued and have been, and will continue to be impaired by growth of trees. There are designated areas within the community that the views for the general public of natural features will be preserved. In these areas a vegetation management plan will be developed that provides guidelines for view corridors or windows where the plant vegetation can be removed. The removal will not be approved in designated active park areas.
3. Within resources available, the City will maintain the view protection in the designated corridors for public benefit. Private individuals or organizations can assist in the removal of designated trees in the view corridor after receiving approval from the City.
4. An individual or organization may request to remove a tree or other vegetation in the public property that has been designated as view protection corridor within a City Council approved Vegetation Management Plan.
5. The Parks and Recreation Director or designee will determine if the tree or vegetation should be removed based upon what the impact of the removal will have on the recreational or public experience using or viewing the open space area.
6. When the removal is approved based on a compatible or better solution as to tree species, then the requesting individual will be required to pay for the removal and the appropriate replacement planting as determined by the City.
7. If the removal is denied, then the requesting individual may appeal to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The Board will make a recommendation to the department or City Council on the appeal, as appropriate.

8. The final appeal will be made to the full City Council, the Council ruling is final.

Procedure

1. In areas or view corridors where a Vegetation Management Plan has been approved that includes view protection, individuals or organizations may request removal of plant material within the view protected areas. A letter is to be sent to the Parks and Recreation Director requesting approval for specific vegetation removal.
2. The Director or designated staff will meet with the individual and go over the Vegetation Management Plan and determine if removal is within the view corridor and is desirable for the public benefit.
3. When the removal is approved, the individual is to provide the City money for the replacement landscaping, then they can proceed with the removal as authorized and underwritten direction by the City.
4. When the removal is denied, they can submit a Letter of Appeal to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board within 10 days of the denial.
5. Any vegetation to be removed, will be marked/posted by the individual at least 15 days prior to the appeal meeting before the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.
6. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will make a recommendation on the appeal at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Their recommendation will be submitted to the department Director.
7. The Director will take action on the appeal recommendation by approving or forwarding to City Council for final ruling.

Approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on May 14, 1997.

Approved by City Council on June 9, 1997.

See Also

- [Bellingham Municipal Code, Title 8](#) (Parks Code)
- [Bellingham Municipal Code 13.40](#) (Street Trees and other vegetation)
- [PAR 06.00.01, Street Tree Planting, Removal And Maintenance Policy](#)

Status	Active
Level	Departmental
Chapter	Parks, Recreation and Cemetery
Section	
Developed By	Byron Elmendorf, Parks and Recreation Director
Issued	7/1/1997
Revised By	
Revised	
Approved By	Mark Asmundson, Mayor
Reviewed	
Archived	
Create Copy	No

