

# Welcome!

Thank you for attending the City of Courtenay Tree Protection and Management Bylaw public open house.

**Trees provide many values in our community, and we want to hear from you on how best to manage them for now and future generations.**

**Please review the presentation material, fill in the survey & sign in so we know how many people attended.**

A short presentation will be provided by City staff at 6pm, followed by a Question and Answer period.

**The following presentation boards are available for your viewing:**

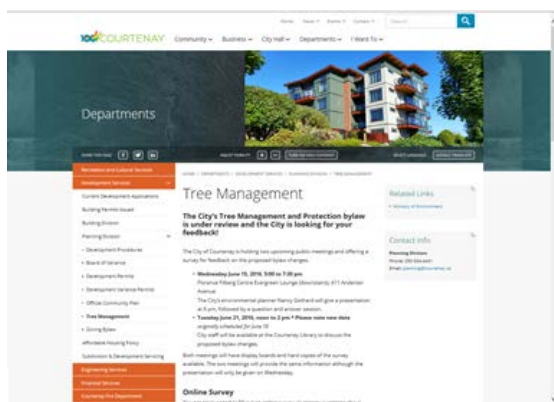
- Why protect and manage trees?
- Bylaw overview
- Tree targets for every property
- Protected species
- Tree protection requirements during development
- Proposed application fees, security requirements and fines for illegal activities
- Tree planting and care tips
- FAQs

### Did you know?

You can also fill in the public survey and Bylaw background material on-line at

[www.courtenay.ca/trees](http://www.courtenay.ca/trees)

Please share this link with your friends!



## TREE MANAGEMENT & PROTECTION BYLAW

The existing bylaw is being reviewed and we are seeking public input.

**Wednesday June 15th, 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm  
Evergreen Lounge, Florence Filberg Centre**

Staff will give a presentation at 6:00 pm followed by a question and answer session.

**Tuesday June 21st, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm  
Courtenay Library**

Staff will be available to discuss the proposed bylaw changes.

Fill in the survey online at [www.courtenay.ca/trees](http://www.courtenay.ca/trees) or in person at the City of Courtenay and be entered into a prize draw for a slow-release tree watering bag.

Please tell your friends!



Development Services | 250-334-4441 | [planning@courtenay.ca](mailto:planning@courtenay.ca)  
[courtenay.ca/trees](http://courtenay.ca/trees)

follow us  

# Why protect and manage trees?

## Did you know?

Under the *Community Charter*, municipalities have the ability to regulate trees. This is a 'broad power' and allows the community to decide on if they would like to protect trees, require replacements for removed trees, require that trees be planted even if none were growing before, and place conditions when removing trees such as installing tree protection fencing and requiring an arborist to monitor the tree during construction activities.

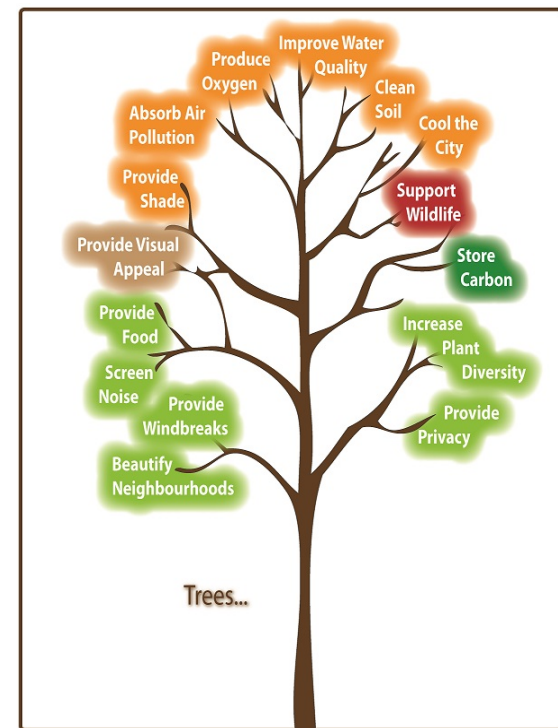
Official Community Plan (OCP) and Regional Growth Strategy policy supports tree protection and management.

The City of Courtenay OCP provides many references to the community's desire to protect and plant trees in the context of streets and boulevard beautification, key gateways into the City, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration and maintaining protected species.

The Comox Valley RGS provides many references to the community's desire to protect trees in the context of stormwater management and general ecological health.

**Trees also provide a variety of values to the community as shown in the illustrations below.**

**Can you think of any other values that trees provide?**



***The survey asks if you support stronger tree protection and management policies and regulations than what is currently in place.***

# Bylaw overview

## The existing Bylaw:

The City of Courtenay already has a Tree Bylaw which applies to the properties shown on the map below. In order to remove trees in this area, an applicant must first obtain a Tree Cutting Permit from the City.

In these areas the City works with the applicant to try to retain as many trees as possible or plant new trees when trees are removed. The City also requires sediment and erosion control measures to be in place when doing large scale tree removal.

## Proposed changes to the Bylaw:

The key changes proposed in the new Bylaw include:

- ✓ Setting a target number of trees that must be retained or replanted on all properties, depending on property size;
- ✓ Applying the bylaw to all lands within the City, and including more species under special protection;
- ✓ Different permit fees and security requirements.

*The City is proposing an approach to tree management that aims to:*

- *Retain and protect trees where it is safe and feasible to do so, and*
- *Require replacement trees when a tree is not safe or reasonable to retain including the option to pay into a Tree Replacement Fund for planting programs on other lands.*

*By setting a target number of trees for each property, the applicant, City staff and the community can understand what is expected for each property before someone applies to have a tree removed.*

*The survey asks if you support the Bylaw applying to all lands within the City and whether you support the use of a target number of trees for each property.*

## Why these changes?

The proposed bylaw is based on a number of assumptions:

- **That trees are important but that not all can be retained.** Trees should be retained where safe and reasonable to do so, but this must be balanced with the right to the enjoyment of one's yard.
- **That development will continue to occur** in our community, including intensification of existing neighbourhoods and that some trees will be removed in the process.
- **That trees provide values and services to the entire community** and therefore when they are removed, they should be replaced for the benefit of future generations.
- **That every property should be treated the same** so as to ensure trees are spread throughout the community, to not penalize a property that has many trees on it and to ensure that all properties are contributing to the community's 'share' of the services trees provide.

# Tree targets for every property

The proposed Bylaw would contain a 50 trees per hectare requirement. This is proposed based on experience from other B.C. communities, and what appears to be reasonable for an individual property. This target number would be used to inform how many trees a property owner has to retain and/or replace when developing or removing trees.

Some examples of common zones and lot sizes are listed below to show how many trees would typically be required:

Zone	Where are examples of this Zone in Courtenay?	Minimum lot size	Number of trees that would be required
R-1, Residential One	Much of east Courtenay	650m <sup>2</sup> (approximately 0.16 of an acre, a small urban lot)	3
R-2, Residential Two (allows secondary residences in some instances)	Much of west Courtenay	750m <sup>2</sup> (approximately 0.2 of an acre)	4
RR-2, Rural Residential Two	Adjacent the Courtenay cemetery	1250m <sup>2</sup> (approximately ¼ acre)	6
RR-5, Rural Residential 5	Headquarters Rd. near Vanier School	4000m <sup>2</sup> (approximately 1 acre)	20

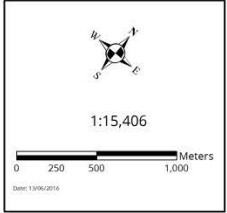
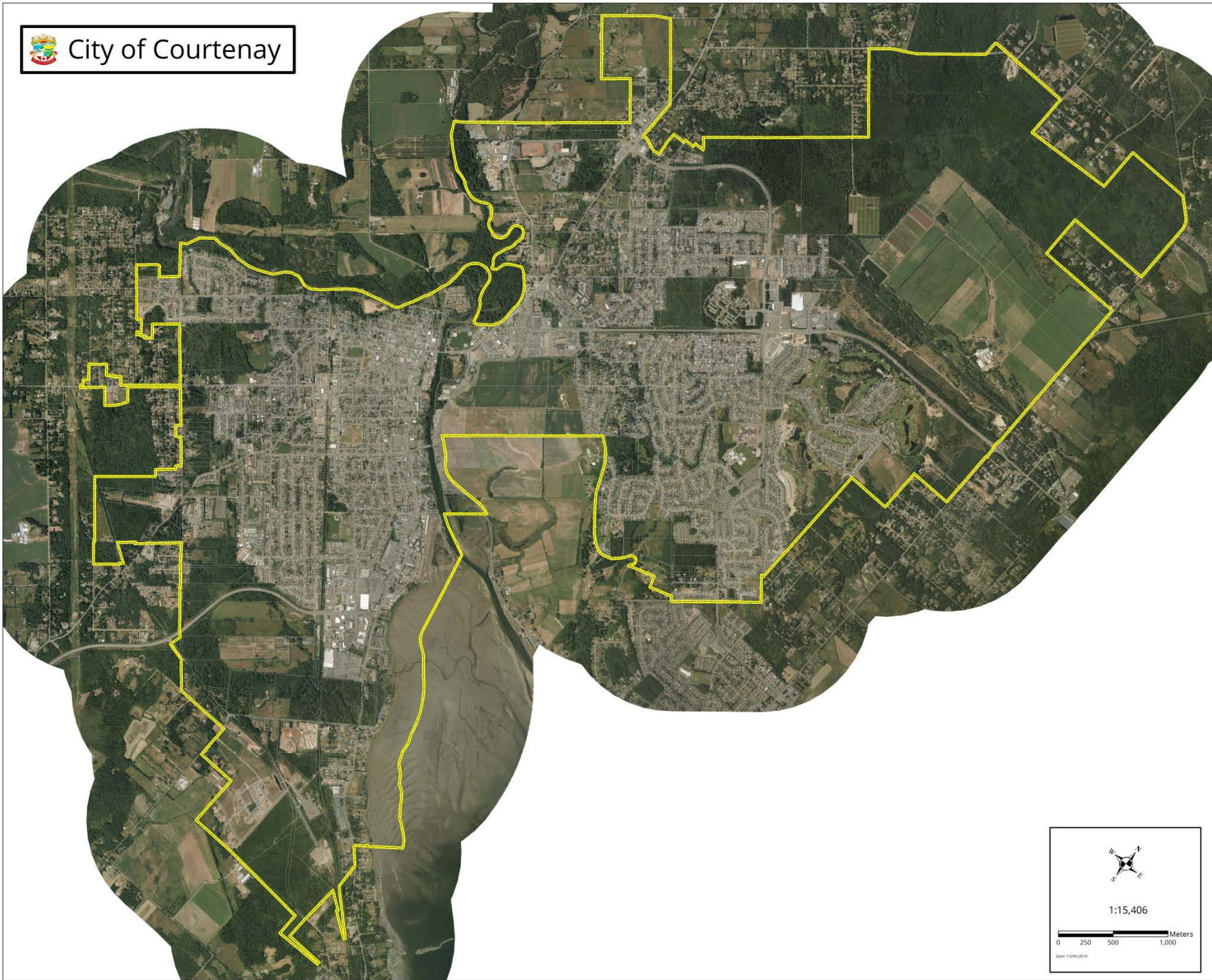
**For existing neighbourhoods**, an applicant for a tree removal permit would have to show how they will achieve the target number of trees on their property. The goal would be to retain existing trees, but where retention is too difficult, there would be other options for replacement. For example, the applicant could plant a new tree on their property or pay into the City's Tree Planting and Replacement Fund. If paying into the fund, the cost per tree would be \$300 to cover costs of obtaining the tree, planting and maintaining it in its first year.

**For new multi-lot subdivisions over 1 acre in size**, the proposed bylaw would require that the developer examine the opportunity for retaining the 50 trees per hectare prior to determining their subdivision layout. The retained trees could be located on private or public land.

**The Survey asks a number of questions on this topic:**

- *if you support the use of tree targets for every property and whether you believe they are a good number, too high, or too low.*
- *if multi-lot subdivisions should use a different tree retention or replacement requirement than existing neighbourhoods.*
- *how strongly you value keeping existing trees rather than allowing replacements for removed trees.*





# Protected Species

Garry oak and Pacific dogwood trees are designated protected species under the current Bylaw. This means that only under very rare circumstances can these trees be removed such as hazardous condition or if they are preventing a landowner from developing to their allowed zoning.

The species listed below are proposed to be added to the protected species list because they are native and currently rare in the community and may be at the northern extent of their range, thus providing important genetic diversity to changing climate conditions.

***The survey asks if you support the species listed below being added to the protected species list.***

**Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*)**

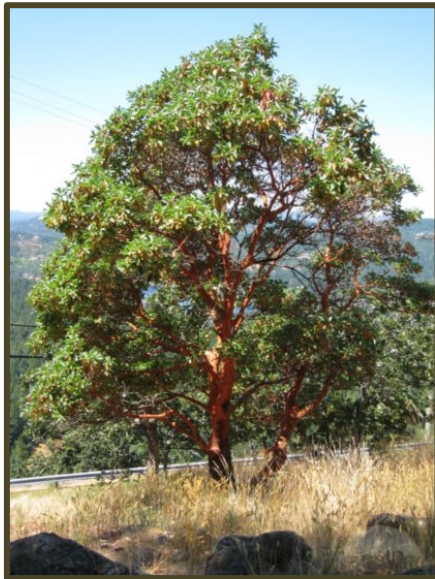


**Pacific dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*)**

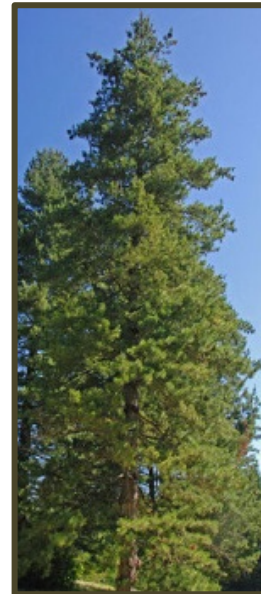


## The City is proposing that the following species be added to the protected species list:

**Arbutus**  
(*Arbutus menziesii*)



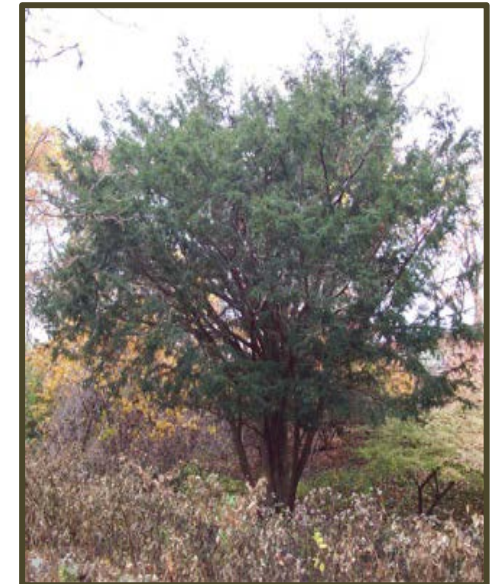
**Western white pine**  
(*Pinus monticola*)



**Trembling aspen**  
(*Populus tremuloides*)



**Pacific yew**  
(*Taxus brevifolia*)

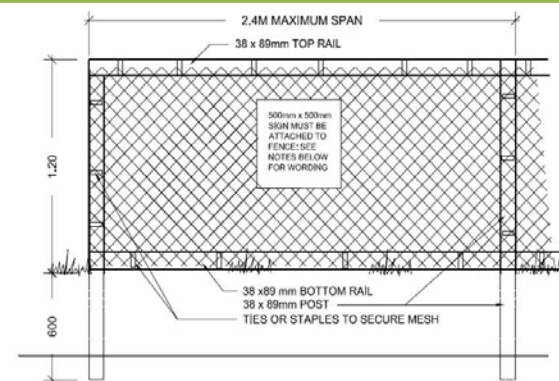


# Tree requirements during development

One false move and the viability of a tree that has lived hundreds of years can be compromised. Because trees are living things, their condition and requirements can change depending on how they are impacted. It is important that retained trees are properly protected throughout all the development and construction phases, and are cared for once the development is complete. In some instances monitoring is required to ensure this occurs.

## **Tree protection fencing would be a requirement**

The proposed Bylaw would include the requirement that whenever doing development around a tree that is to be retained on a property, that protection measures (such as temporary fencing) be in place around the root protection zone to avoid damage to the tree during development. If work is proposed within the root protection zone, an arborist would be required to advise on how to do so carefully so as not to damage the retained tree. Failure to install and maintain the temporary fencing could result in fines.



## ***Did you know?***

The City requires Erosion and Sediment Control measures to be in place whenever doing large scale tree clearing that disturbs soil. This would continue to be the case under the new Bylaw.



## **Monitoring and follow up reporting may be required**

In cases where tree removal and protection is occurring over a long period of time, is on a complex site or is in proximity to sensitive or rare species, an applicant may be required to have an arborist monitor the site to ensure that the retained trees are protected and in good health.

When many trees are removed in a forested stand, the applicant may also be required to wind firm the remaining trees and provide a report to the City demonstrating this has occurred.



# Proposed application fees, security requirements and fines for illegal activities

	Tree Cutting Permit Fees	Protection Securities	Tree Replacement Securities	Penalties																
<b>Current Bylaw</b>	\$250 for the permit and an additional \$5 for every tree removed.	None	<p>When replacement trees are required, an applicant must submit a replacement security (\$250/new tree) to ensure that the applicant plants the required replacement tree.</p> <p>Upon planting, the City returns 80% of the security and the remaining 20% is held by the City for 3 years to ensure successful establishment of the tree.</p>	<p>\$1000 ticket per tree removed without a permit</p> <p>or</p> <p>up to \$10,000 per tree if successful prosecution in court.</p>																
<b>Proposed Bylaw changes</b>	<p>Sliding scale fee structure, reflecting that not all tree cutting and management situations are the same:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Single family lots up to 1000m<sup>2</sup> (approximately ¼ acre) or only two trees removed on any sized lot:</td> <td>\$50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single family lots between 1000m<sup>2</sup> and 4000m<sup>2</sup> (between ¼ and 1 acre):</td> <td>\$100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Larger lots, and new multi-lot subdivisions:</td> <td>\$250/acre</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hazardous tree removal:</td> <td>No fee</td> </tr> </table> <p>The \$5 fee for each tree removed would also not apply.</p>	Single family lots up to 1000m <sup>2</sup> (approximately ¼ acre) or only two trees removed on any sized lot:	\$50	Single family lots between 1000m <sup>2</sup> and 4000m <sup>2</sup> (between ¼ and 1 acre):	\$100	Larger lots, and new multi-lot subdivisions:	\$250/acre	Hazardous tree removal:	No fee	<p>The City is considering requiring a protection security fee of \$1000 per tree, when conducting development close to a protected tree. The protection security would be returned upon proof that the tree was not damaged during adjacent development activities.</p> <p>This is suggested as best practice because tree protection fencing can fall apart over time, and can be removed. Some other communities in B.C. require a protection security.</p>	<p>Security fee increase from \$250 to \$300 to reflect the current costs of purchasing and installing a tree.</p> <p>Returning 100% of the security fee 1 year after planting rather than in two installments 3 years apart.</p> <p>The option to pay into the Tree Planting and Replacement Fund would also be available to applicants in some circumstances.</p>	<p>The proposed Bylaw would add more activities that are subject to ticketing:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Cutting or damaging without a permit:</td> <td>\$1000/tree</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Failure to install and/or maintain protection fencing:</td> <td>\$250/tree</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Failure to replant a tree:</td> <td>\$350/tree</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Remove remains of tree prior to investigation:</td> <td>\$250/tree</td> </tr> </table> <p>If pursued through the courts, the up to \$10,000 per tree penalty would remain a penalty option.</p>	Cutting or damaging without a permit:	\$1000/tree	Failure to install and/or maintain protection fencing:	\$250/tree	Failure to replant a tree:	\$350/tree	Remove remains of tree prior to investigation:	\$250/tree
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*The Survey asks if you support the sliding scale fee structure and protection securities.*



# Tree planting and care tips

If you are planting trees, whether as a requirement of a Tree Cutting Permit or not, there are a few tips to consider to set your new young tree up for success!

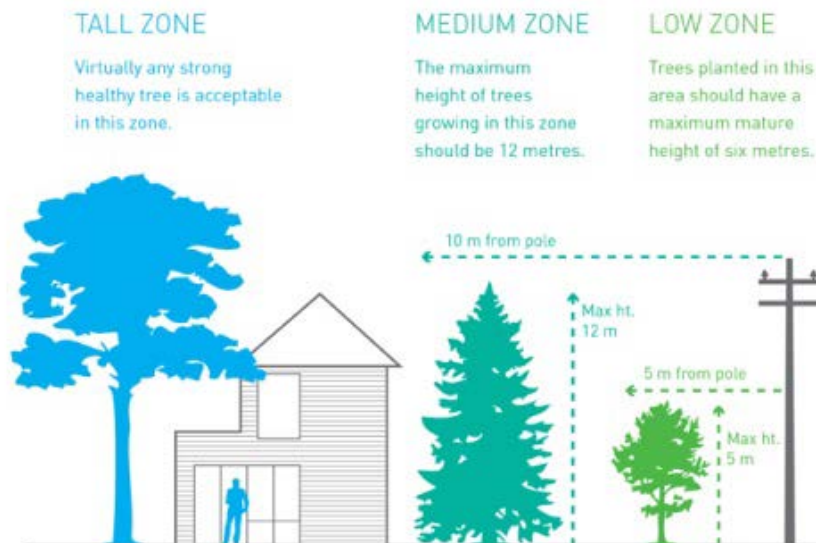
## Right tree in the right location

When planting a new tree think about the values you want it to provide:

Aesthetics? Shade? Privacy?

**When selecting a location for the new tree consider these factors:**

- Property lines, overhead infrastructure, pavements, buildings and other trees. Ensure that the tree at maturity won't interact with any of these things, including its roots, and that the tree is on your private property.
- Planting native local species to minimize care of the tree and provide local biodiversity benefits.
- Planting large deciduous trees to the south and west of homes provides summer shade and allows light in winter.
- Planting evergreen trees between prevailing winds can reduce heat loss.



The image above is from BC Hydro's website on *planting near powerlines*

## Give it a good start

**PLANT:**

- with sufficient soil and compost, in a hole 2-3 times the size of the root-ball;
- do not bury the stem;
- top dress the hole with mulch;
- loosely stake if necessary.

**WATER:**

- the root zone of new trees weekly within their first two summers;
- drip irrigation around the root ring of the tree works, or gently running the hose for 1 minute;
- evenly watering the roots ensures even root development;
- daily lawn watering is not recommended for trees as it can cause root decay;
- older trees may need some bi-monthly watering in drought conditions.

**PROTECT** the tree from mowing damaged, trenching, soil contamination and compaction throughout its long life.



The image above shows a person using a slow release drip irrigation watering bag which is a great way to water young trees evenly while conserving water

# More tree planting and care tips

## Take care when pruning

Not all pruning is equal and some pruning methods can be damaging to the tree.

**When pruning a protected species you must contact the City with a notification that an arboriculture care practitioner is conducting the pruning, including their contact information.**

When doing pruning on your own, follow these guidelines:

- Do not “top” a tree, or remove the majority of a tree’s crown, where that tree has not been topped previously.
- Do not “lift prune”, or remove the lower live branches of the crown (green branches) to reduce the live crown to less than 50%.

To minimize damage and synchronize with the natural growth cycle, prune in winter. Avoid heavy pruning when leaves are expanding in early spring, when tree energy reserves are low. Timing for light pruning is less critical. For maximum display of spring flowering species, prune after bloom. Prune dead limbs and branches at any time.

### Timing is Important

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Best Time	●	●										●
Worst Time				●	●							
Light Pruning	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●

## When in doubt, ask an arborist

ISA Arborists (certified by the International Society of Arboriculture) can provide the following advice:

- Tree risk assessment
- Tree preservation plans
- Pruning and care recommendations
- Plant appraisal

Arborists can be found in the local directories (on-line and yellow pages).

## Basic Pruning Guidelines

### Use the Correct Tools



Hand pruners are useful for small branches, up to about 1/2-inch diameter. Use loppers or a saw for larger branches, or for species with hardwood.



Long-handled loppers may be used to remove larger diameter branches, but precise cuts are more difficult to make.



Curved blade pruning saws cut on the pull stroke. Newer blade designs are able to cut large and small diameter branches quickly and cleanly. Pruning saws are available with fixed or folding blades, or mounted on a pole. Larger pruning saws are sometimes used by professionals.

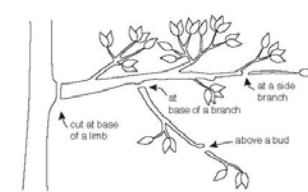


Chainsaws are not recommended for general pruning except by professionals as a time saver. (Consider hiring an arborist for large or potentially dangerous work.)

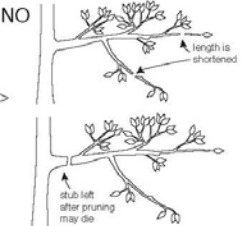
### Remove Whole Limbs or Branches

It is preferable to remove an entire limb or branch rather than to shorten its length. Branches may be cut back to a twig, or twigs to a bud, where new growth will resume. This technique respects natural growth patterns.

YES



NO



Examples of poor pruning practice shown below

