



Section:	Planning and Development	13
Sub-Section:	Environmental Planning and Development	5280
Title:	TREE WORK IN THE DISTRICT	1

POLICY

It is the policy of the District of North Vancouver to preserve and enhance the District's attractive *forested character*, ecological systems and *natural parklands*, while recognizing the responsibility to minimize risk to the public and property.

REASON FOR POLICY

To clarify the responsibilities and procedures for work on trees in the District.

AUTHORITY TO ACT

Delegated to staff

Tree protection in the District of North Vancouver is outlined in the Tree Bylaw 7671. This policy prescribes the procedures to conduct work on trees within the District.

PROCEDURE

1.0 HAZARDOUS TREES ON DISTRICT PROPERTY

This section applies to all trees located wholly or in part on District property, dedicated roads and parks. On request, the *District Arborist* or *appropriate staff* will inspect trees on District property and will mitigate hazards to the public or property according to the procedures in 1.1 and Appendix 1, *Tree Rating Procedure for Trees on District Property*. If additional work not related to safety is requested, the District will consider the request subject to the conditions outlined in Sections 2.0 and 3.0.

- 1.1 Tree hazards will be mitigated in accordance with the procedure set out in Appendix 1, *Tree Rating Procedure for Trees on District Property* which is attached and forms part of this policy. The tree(s) identified with the highest rating for a hazard will be corrected first and as soon as practical within the work schedule limits as prescribed in Appendix 1. The Parks Department is issued a permit annually under the Tree Bylaw 7671 granting authorisation to mitigate hazardous trees.
- 1.2 Should the requester disagree with the tree assessment by the *District Arborist*, the requester may obtain a secondary opinion from a *qualified arborist* (at the requester's expense). This assessment will be reviewed and considered before a final decision is made. The *District Arborist* or *appropriate staff* reserves the right to make the final decision.

2.0 NON HAZARDOUS TREES ON DISTRICT PROPERTY

The *Manager of Environment* will consider a permit application to allow work not related to safety as defined in Section 1.0, and the Appendix 1, subject to the following:

- 2.1 The resident must make a permit application pursuant to the Tree Bylaw 7671
- 2.2 The permit fees and associated cost of the work and the cost of restitution will be the responsibility of the applicant.

- 2.3 All potential permit work will consider the tree's safety and long-term health and must not adversely affect the aesthetic appearance, viability of the tree and its ecological values.
- (a) If removal is requested, the *District Arborist* or other *appropriate staff* will assess the tree in terms of its contribution to the streetscape and *forested character* of the neighbourhood; its contribution to wildlife habitat and the ecosystem; and the uniqueness of the specimen. Replacement with trees and/or appropriate vegetation will be required as compensation.
 - (b) If removal of a number of trees or significant pruning work is permitted, the work may be required to be staged over a period of time at the discretion of the *District Arborist* or *appropriate staff* to lessen the impacts. Replacement with trees and/or appropriate vegetation will be required as compensation.
 - (c) Requests for removal of trees to improve view and sunlight and abate twig, leaf and needle drop, are not acceptable reasons to remove healthy trees, however, some pruning may be permitted with consideration for the health, integrity, appearance and survival of the trees. Replacement with trees and/or appropriate vegetation will be required as compensation.
 - (d) Requests for removal of otherwise healthy but heavily phototropic trees which create a moderate aerial encroachment onto private property will be considered, where pruning would remove an excessive portion of the live crown and compromise long-term health and viability. Replacement with trees and/or appropriate vegetation will be required as compensation.
 - (e) The following trees will not be considered for pruning or removal:
 - Yew (*Taxus brevifolia*)
 - Arbutus (*Arbutus menziesii*)
 - Yellow Cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*)
 - Western White Pine (*Pinus monticola*)
 - Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*); or
 - *Unique specimen trees*;unless there are compelling circumstances to warrant removal, such as a tree within a building or development envelope where all design options to save the tree have been exhausted or where pruning will save the tree or reduce a hazard.
 - (f) *Topping* of trees.
Topping of trees is not an acceptable pruning method and will not be permitted, with the exception of previously topped trees.
 - (g) *Previously topped trees*.
Previously topped trees may be re-topped if at the discretion of the District Arborist or appropriate staff, topping would be a suitable technique to sustain the tree, reduce or eliminate a future hazard (or existing hazard) or be appropriate for the specific circumstances as assessed on a case-by-case basis. It is recognized that a topped tree still has wildlife and aesthetic value as well as having an important function with respect to maintaining slope stability, groundwater, and reducing precipitation impacts to the soil. If the tree is allowed to be re-topped, then other appropriate tree species and/or vegetation will be required as replacement for the possible future removal of the re-topped tree(s).

2.4 The District reserves the right to refuse any permit requests

3.0 Issuing of Permit: Trees on District Property

If the requirements of 2.0 are met, a permit may be issued for the requested work subject to the following:

- 3.1 The applicant will be required to submit a signed *neighbourhood consent form* distributed as per section 6.0, the form shall be distributed by the applicant to the affected owners in the area wherein the affected owners state that they are aware of the request and have no objection to the work requested. Information to accompany the *neighbourhood consent form* includes a photo of the tree(s), the species of the tree(s), the corresponding tree numbers slated for the work with a sketch or plan locating the trees proposed for work.

- 3.2 In the event that one or more of the affected owners object to the proposed work, the *District Arborist* or *appropriate staff* will attempt to facilitate a solution acceptable to the applicant, affected owners and the *appropriate staff* from the District. Every effort must be made by the applicant to obtain unanimous consent, however, where unanimous consent is not achieved, the District reserves the right to issue the permit under the following circumstances:
- 3.2.1 the proposed work will contribute to the *sustainable management* of its forested land;
 - 3.2.2 the proposed work is required to satisfy other District bylaws, regulations or conditions of development (e.g. Street and Traffic bylaw)
- 3.3 Where consensus has been reached, the applicant will be required to include a replanting plan to compensate for any trees removed.
- 3.5 After clarifying the proposed work with the *District Arborist*, or *appropriate staff*, the applicant will provide a written quote for the work plus the cost of any restitution required as quoted by a *Prime Contractor* that meets the requirements to conduct tree work on District Property. The District reserves the right to refuse any quote if it is deemed unsatisfactory to accomplish the required work including cleanup and replanting.
- 3.6 The permit may be issued when the District has received the following:
- a) the completed signed *neighbourhood consent form*, as prescribed in Section 6.0
 - b) the completed permit application form
 - c) a property map or sketch to scale indicating the location of the proposed tree work, the species of the tree(s) with a corresponding number tag attached to each tree
 - d) Corresponding photo(s) of the tree(s) before and after the work is done, from the same orientation, may be required to complete the file
 - e) a payment to cover the cost of permit fee(s)
 - f) a payment equal to the estimate (including applicable taxes) for the requested pruning or removal work
 - g) a refundable deposit (as per tree permit application) to ensure restitution requirements are met. If after 60 days the requirements for restitution have not been met, the District will cash the deposit and complete the restitution requirements.

4.0 Tree Work and Inspections on District Owned Land

- 4.1 **Alpine Areas:** Trees adjacent to developed trails in the alpine areas will be visually inspected upon request. Hazards will be mitigated as per section 1.0 and trail blockages removed. User frequency of these parklands will be considered when assessing the trees. Habitat enhancement through the creation of *Wildlife Trees* will be done wherever possible.
- 4.2 **Natural Parkland and Urban Parkland:** Trees adjacent to *mulch trails, engineered full serviced trails, gravel connector trails* and District sanctioned areas of congregation (e.g. Barbeque pits, picnic sites and viewpoints) will be visually inspected upon request. Hazards will be mitigated as per Section 1.0 and trail blockages removed. User frequency of these parklands will be considered when assessing the trees. Habitat enhancement through the creation of *wildlife trees* will be done wherever possible. Perimeters of parkland adjacent to other property will be inspected for tree concerns upon request and hazards mitigated as per Section 1.0.
- 4.3 **Unopened Lane Allowances, Road Allowances and Other District Owned Land:** Trees in and adjacent to unopened lane allowances, road allowances and other District owned land will be inspected for tree concerns on request and hazards mitigated as per Section 1.0.
- 4.4 **Tree Clearing on District Property:** In order to ensure that clearing of District Lands is done in accordance with District Standards, all clearing and site preparation of approved development of District lands shall be conducted under the supervision of the *District Arborist* or *other appropriate staff*. A security deposit may be taken from the applicant to ensure that the protection measures are adhered to.

5.0 Public Notification: Tree Work on District Property

- 5.1 Work to be conducted on trees rated as "Priority 1", pursuant to the rating procedure described in Appendix 1, will not invoke the requirement for Public Notification.
- 5.2 In residential areas the District Arborist or appropriate staff and Parks Arboriculture crew or Prime Contractor assigned the work shall give three (3) working days notice to the area residents regarding the work to be conducted on trees rated as "Priority 2 through Priority 5." The notification shall describe

the work to be done using standardized Door Hangers or other appropriate methods. The number of residents to receive notification shall be determined as described in Section 6.0, Public Consent.

- 5.3 On District parkland outside of residential areas for "Priority 2 through Priority 5" work, signs will be erected at least 48 hrs prior to work being performed to notify park users of trail closures and scheduled hazard tree mitigation work.

6.0 Public Consent: Tree Work on District Property

Upon a permit application for work on non-hazardous trees on District owned land, the *District Arborist or appropriate staff* will assess the level of impact to the neighborhood due to the requested work. If the permit application is of moderate or high impact, or involves trees on Park property, then the *District Arborist* will first review the permit application with the *Manager of Environment* to determine if the application should proceed. If the permit application is allowed to proceed, then the level of public consent will be determined as follows:

- 6.1 **Low impact pruning or removal.** This includes as a minimum, the distribution of the neighbourhood consent form by the applicant to the properties directly adjacent to the proposed work, this requirement may be exempted at the District Arborist's or appropriate staff discretion where the work is in a location which will not affect adjacent properties [e.g. a tree in adjacent greenbelt or hedge on the boulevard not affecting other properties]
- 6.2 **Moderate impact pruning or removal.** This includes as a minimum, the distribution of the *neighbourhood consent form* by the applicant to six (6) properties adjacent to proposed work. The number of signatures required may be reduced at the discretion of the District Arborist or appropriate staff, where it is deemed that the proposed work is unlikely to affect six (6) adjacent properties.
- 6.3 **High impact pruning or removal.** The *District Arborist or appropriate staff* may contact the local neighbourhood association and the general neighbourhood as per 6.2 above. The Parks Department shall also install signage in the vicinity of the site, indicating the work to be completed. Based on the response from the signage and the neighbourhood association, a public consultation meeting may be arranged by the appropriate staff. This process shall occur a minimum of twenty (20) working days in advance of the proposed commencement of work.
- 6.4 The District Arborist may exempt the need for unanimous consent, and/or require an amendment to the proposed work to achieve agreement by the affected property owners and unanimous consent.

7.0 TREE WORK ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

- 7.1 Tree work on private property is regulated under the Tree Bylaw 7671 as defined in Section 22.
- 7.2 Property owners must determine whether the trees on their property are governed by the Tree Bylaw 7671

SECTION C: DEFINITIONS

Affected owners	Means the registered owners of land or parcel abutting the applicant's land or parcel, or the location of the tree(s), and includes all other owners the <i>District Arborist</i> or <i>appropriate staff</i> deems to be affected. Rental property tenants must be canvassed for their support and their signature will be considered additional to the required minimum; however written authorization from the registered owner of land or parcel is required for all applications, unless the tenant or managing agent can provide documented legal power of attorney.
Arboriculture crew	Parks staff who have the necessary qualifications and safety certification to complete hazard tree mitigation work on District land.
Appropriate staff	Means the <i>Manager Environment</i> , and <i>Manager of Parks</i> , <i>District Arborist</i> , any District staff that are <i>Qualified Arborists</i> and any District staff as assigned by the District Arborist.
DBH	Means the diameter of the tree measured at breast height standardized at 1.3 meters from the ground. On sloping ground, diameter at breast height is measured on the uphill side of the tree. If the DBH point falls on a swelling in the trunk or the trunk is forked, co-dominant or 1.3m coincides with a lateral branch, measure diameter below the swelling at a point where the diameter is smallest. Where the trunk splits into several trunks at ground level or below 1.3m measure the diameter of each stem individually.
District Arborist	Means the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver, District Arborist, Community Forester or their designate.
Door hanger	A standardized form that can be hung on the doorknob or left in the mailbox stating a contact name and number for the District as well as a brief description of the work to be completed.
Engineered full service trails	Trails that have an engineered sub-base and are approximately 2.5m in width. Lighting may be provided for night use. These trails are hard surfaced with asphalt or concrete pavers. These trails provide major linkages between neighbourhoods and have a high use level.
Externally visible stem cracks	A separation of the wood fibres along the long axis and visible to the inspector, including hazard beam, banana, stave failure or shell buckling cracking of the stem.
Forested Character	The District of North Vancouver has, as an attribute, a well-developed planted and natural forest. It is the general intent to manage existing trees and forest areas in order to preserve and enhance this attribute as well as the habitat and other ecological values it provides.
Frequency of target:	
Low frequency target	Where the likelihood of a falling tree or limbs striking a target or people is low including <i>mulched trails</i> .
Moderate frequency target	Where the likelihood of a falling tree or limbs striking a target or people is moderate, including a residential road, <i>engineered full service trails</i> or <i>gravel connector trails</i> .
High frequency target	Where the likelihood of a falling tree or limbs striking a target or people is high, including buildings, arterial or collector roads.
Gravel connector trails	Trails that provide linkages to the Engineered Full Service Trails or well-used trails in parks and green belts. These trails are usually 2.5m wide and have a maintained surface of compacted aggregate. These trails may be moderate to high use.
Impacts:	
Low impact pruning	Means minor tree work that includes <i>standard pruning practices</i> that only affects the

adjacent neighbours to the work and will have little or no detrimental impact on the appearance and/or ecology of the wooded area. This work includes regular hedge maintenance where a hedge has been planted on District land or Boulevard.

Low impact removal	Means the removal of small trees and shrubs up to five (5) meters in height and less than twenty (20) centimetres <i>dbh</i> that only affects the adjacent neighbours and will have little or no detrimental impact on the appearance and/or ecology of the wooded area. This work includes the removal of hedges less than 5 metres tall which are located on the District land or boulevard.
Moderate impact pruning	Means tree work that includes standard pruning practices that affect the general neighbourhood and includes significant pruning work and recognizes that the proposed work may affect the appearance and/or ecology of the wooded area.
Moderate impact removal	Means the removal of a single or multiple trees greater than five (5) meters in height and greater than or equal to twenty (20) centimetres <i>dbh</i> and recognizes that the proposed work may affect the appearance and/or ecology of the wooded area.
High impact pruning	Means significant <i>standard pruning practices</i> that would impact the general neighbourhood and includes park and trail users and recognizes that the proposed work may affect the appearance and/or ecology of the wooded area. This could include significant pruning along major travel routes, pruning in recreation areas, pruning of large numbers of trees, and pruning of <i>large trees</i> or <i>unique specimen trees</i> .
High impact removal	Means the removal of a single or multiple trees that would impact the general neighbourhood and includes park and trail users and recognizes that the proposed work may affect the appearance and ecology of the wooded area. This could include removals along major travel routes, removals in recreation areas, removals of large numbers of trees, and removals of <i>large trees</i> or <i>unique specimen trees</i> .
Manager Environment	Means the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver, Manager Environment, appropriate staff or their authorized designates.
Manager of Parks	Means the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver, Manager of Parks, or authorized designates.
Minor encroachment	Minor encroachment may exist where a tree overhangs a property line, or where roots extend over the property line these encroachments are considered incidental in nature.
Moderate encroachment	Moderate encroachment may exist where a tree overhangs a property line, or where roots may be incurring some form of damage to boulevards or private property.
Mulched trails	Trails that do not have a maintained base. These trails are usually in natural areas and green belts. No specific width standards are noted but sometimes boardwalks and steps are incorporated. These trails usually have a moderate to low use rate.
Natural parklands	Means District owned land that remains in a natural state that has passive uses such as nature viewing and hiking as the primary attraction or is inaccessible or undeveloped. These lands are often associated with watercourses or create part of the sea to sky linkages involving wooded corridors.
Neighbourhood consent form	Means the prescribed form, used to seek consent for the proposed tree work. The form is to be distributed by the applicant to the affected owners as determined by District Arborist or appropriate staff as per Section 6.0.
Permit plan	Means the District computer program to generate the data base for the requests for service system.
Phototropic trees	A condition where competition between trees or trees and structures, causes them to grow with a lean towards available sunlight.

Prime Contractor	A contractor that meets the requirements to conduct tree work on District property, as defined in the Contractor Coordination Program, a copy of the program documents are available at the District's website or can be obtained from the Purchasing Department located at Municipal Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver.
Qualified arborists	Certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) or equivalent professional association, qualified arborists must in addition be certified tree risk assessors, (CTRA) all certification must be current and in good standing with ISA.
Standard Pruning Practices (ANSI A300)	Means the pruning practices as defined by the American National Standards Institute for Arboriculture Operations ANSI A300.
Severe damage	Where the bole of a tree has suffered damage which is so severe that the structural integrity of the tree has become compromised, this can include but will not be limited to the following: Fire, extreme weather, wildlife or mechanical damage has affected greater than 30% cross sectional area of the stem or greater than 40% of the critical root zone.
Sustainable forest management	The stewardship and use of District of North Vancouver forests and forest lands in a way, that maintains biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, for present and future generations, relevant ecological, economic, social and cultural functions.
Large trees	Means trees having a diameter greater than 0.75m measured 1.3 metre above the natural ground level.
Topping	Means the cutting of the stem of a tree resulting in the complete removal of the upper stem and branches of a tree resulting in an abrupt truncated stem.
Unique specimen tree	Means a tree that has historical significance, or is of unusual character, or is a prominent feature of the landscape, or in the opinion of the District Arborist or appropriate staff, has other unique qualities.
Urban parklands	Parklands that have developed attractions such as play grounds, sports fields, beaches, and flower/shrub beds as the primary attraction. These parklands also often have natural features associated with them such as greenbelts, water features, and trails.
Volunteer tree	Means a tree that was seeded naturally and not planted by humans.
Wildlife tree	Means the remainder of a tree that has been cut and modified to stimulate natural decay and simulate cavities for the benefit of wildlife.

Appendix I
Tree Rating Procedure
for Trees on District Property

INSPECTION REQUESTS

“Requests for Service” (inspections) will be processed as follows:

- 1) All requests originating from the public, outside agencies or internal sources will be received and processed by the District call centre
- 2) The request will be logged onto Permit Plan.
- 3) The District Arborist or appropriate staff will carry out an initial inspection and will complete a “Tree Inspection” form substantially in the form of the attachment to this policy, or complete the electronic version which forms the data collection basis for the GIS based tree risk management system (FMS).
- 4) Trees will be assessed and rated as per the procedures below.
- 5) The Parks Department will administer the work orders and contracts for tree work.
- 6) Requests for contractor bids are sent to the prime contractors on an as needs basis.

INSPECTION PROCEDURE

Visual Inspection

- **If the ownership of the tree is in doubt, a survey may be conducted to determine ownership**, only trees on District lands will be inspected by the District Arborist or appropriate staff.
- 360 degree, walk around, visual inspection of the tree from ground level. This visual tree assessment (VTA) inspection does not include any practice that is intrusive to the tree.
- VTA are performed to manage risks associated with tree defects under normal weather conditions.

Physical Inspection

If, after the visual inspection, there is a question about the structural integrity of the tree, then the following options are available for further inspection.

- The inspector may have the tree climbed to inspect potential areas of concern.
- The tree may be bored to determine soundness of the bole, by use of an increment borer or IML Resistograph
- The root crown may be excavated to inspect the roots

After inspection, the tree will be rated according to the criteria outlined below.

TREE RATING PROCEDURE

The following table summarizes the Tree Ratings and corresponding Work Schedule.

<u>Tree Rating</u>	<u>Work Schedule</u>
Priority 1	Sent immediately to arboriculture crew or prime contractor for mitigation
Priority 2	Sent to the arboriculture crew or prime contractor to be mitigated through the next monthly tree work contract.
Priority 3	Sent to the arboriculture crew or prime contractor to be mitigated through the next or subsequent monthly tree work contract as the workload allows.
Priority 4	Sent to the Parks Department for consideration. Work may be deferred due to work load and /or budget considerations.
Priority 5	Sent to Parks Department for consideration. Work may be deferred due to work load and /or budget considerations.

Priority 1

This is a tree that has one or more of the following visible characteristics:

- Signs of ground movement, soil or slope failure or root system heaving
- Recent cracking or *severe damage* on the bole of the tree,
- Partially failed (Hung-up) tree over a *moderate to high frequency target*
- Broken limbs or broken top hanging over a *moderate to high frequency target*
- Failed tree lying on District property or public road or touching energized conductors**
- Dead tree with extensive decay visible to the inspector and a *moderate to high frequency target*.

Trees with this rating have the first priority for removal or pruning. The inspector will immediately send the required work to the district arboriculture crew or a prime contractor for mitigation. These trees shall be dealt with as soon as practical within work schedule limits. "Priority 1" trees will not invoke the requirement for Public Notification as prescribed in Section 5.0.

** **NOTE:** To be referred to BC Hydro

Priority 2

This is a tree that has one or more of the following characteristics:

- Visible fruiting bodies, signs or symptoms of known heart rot, and or root rot fungi.
- Unusual lean, (uncorrected, non-phototropic) with *externally visible stem cracks*
- Visible defect that could result in catastrophic failure of tree
- The tree is determined to be unsound after physical inspection
- Structural integrity of root system determined to be compromised after physical inspection
- Dead with minor decay visible to the inspector and a *high frequency target*.
- Obstruction of traffic signs *
- Interference with distribution or transmission lines **

Trees with this rating have second priority for removal or pruning. The inspector will include this work in the next work package for the arboriculture crew or prime contractor bid package.

* **NOTE:** To be referred to the Traffic Department.

** **NOTE:** To be referred to BC Hydro.

Trees referred to the Traffic Dept or BC Hydro will be recorded and updated on *Permit Plan*.

Priority 3

Trees in this category have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Dead tree with a target of moderate to low frequency and minimal visible decay.
- Moderate encroachment where roots may be causing some form of damage to boulevards or hardscape infrastructure such as driveways, underground utilities or foundations (excluding lawns and landscaping) on private property.
- Limbs obstructing driver visibility*
- Visible defect that could result in partial failure of tree with a *moderate to low frequency target*.

Trees with this rating have third priority for removal or pruning, but may be dealt with as the workload allows. Trees assessed as "Priority 3" will be documented for mitigation by District arboriculture crew, or for inclusion in the next or subsequent prime contractor bid package.

* **NOTE:** To be referred to the Transportation Department.

Priority 4

Trees in this category have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Moderate limb encroachment onto house or structure
- Minor root encroachment to private property or structures
- Limbs interfering with residential overhead utility services
- Trees that are growing near or beginning to encroach into private property causing no visible damage

Trees with this rating have fourth priority for removal or pruning. The annual budget allotted by Council for tree work and the work load will be the limiting factors in the determining when this work is completed. Work in this category may be administered through the tree permit process (Section 3.0)

Priority 5

Trees in this category have the lowest priority and can be attended to as the annual budget allotted by Council for tree work and as the work load allows.

Examples of Priority 5 are:

- Thinning of immature trees for stand management, including sustainable forest management objectives
- Inappropriate *volunteer trees* on boulevards, in road ends or right of ways
- Trees with none of the characteristics in the assessments for "Priority 1, 2, 3 or 4"

The annual budget allotted by Council for tree work and the work load will be the limiting factors in the determining when this work is completed.

Work in this category may be administered through the permit process (Section 3.0)

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