

12.08.040 - Heritage Trees

A. Purpose.

Certain trees, because of their age, species, natural resource value, ecological or historical association, are of special importance to the city. These trees may grow on private or public property.

1. The purpose of this chapter is to recognize, foster appreciation and provide for voluntary protection of Heritage Trees.
2. In particular, the following trees are considered significant, and therefore will be eligible for heritage tree nomination in Oregon City, if they meet the minimum size requirements of the table below:

Tree Eligibility based on Size

Species	Common Name	Size (d.b.h)
Quercus garryana	Oregon white oak	8"
Pseudotsuga menziesii	Douglas-fir	18
Thuja plicata	Western red cedar	12"
Pinus ponderosa	Ponderosa pine	12"
Taxus brevifolia	Western yew	6"
Cornus nuttallii	Pacific dogwood	5"

Other broadleaf tree species, 20"

Other conifer trees 18

B. Nomination.

1. Any citizen may nominate a tree or stand of trees (s) to be designated as a Heritage Tree or Stand.

a. Private Property. If the nomination is for a tree or stand of trees located on private property or other than city property or public right-of-way under city jurisdiction, the recommendation shall be submitted to the Community Development Director by the property owner or accompanied by the property owner's written consent.

b. Public Property. If the nomination is for a tree or stand of trees located on city property or public right-of-way under city jurisdiction, the recommendation shall be submitted to the Community Development Director. If the nominated public tree is a street tree, the Community Development Director shall notify the abutting property owner responsible for the care and maintenance of the nominated tree pursuant to OCMC 12.08.025 - General tree maintenance.

2. Individual trees may be submitted for nomination by completing a form provided by the Community Development Director and attaching the required information. If the nomination is for a stand of trees, the nomination shall be accompanied by sufficient information, such as a

Comment [1]:
Bryon Boyce Jun 18, '12, 5:06 AM
The word 'Grove' is incorrect in this document. Grove implies a tree-covered area without shrubby undergrowth, like a manicured park or orchard. Better would be 'wood' or 'woodland'. 'Stand' or 'Tree Group' are both used in the City Definitions page (17.04.1355) and may also work here, along with 'Tree Stand'.
The word 'holt' actually has the correct implications but survives in our language primarily in place names throughout Germanic language areas.

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Bryon Boyce Jun 18, '12, 5:40 AM

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stand health report, to adequately assess how the stand of trees meets the designation criteria in section (D). The Community Development Director may request further information from the applicant to support the nomination request.

3. Nomination shall be made on such form as required by the community development director. The nomination form shall include a narrative explaining how the tree or trees meets the review criteria for Heritage Tree or Stand status pursuant to the section D - Criteria, and the written consent of the property owner as described in subsection 1 of this section.

C. Review Process.

1. Completeness Review by Staff

a. Within thirty days of receipt of the application, the community development director shall complete an initial review and issue to the applicant a written statement indicating whether the application is complete enough to process, and if not, what information must be submitted to make the application complete for review by the Natural Resource Committee.

b. The applicant has one hundred eighty days from the date the application was made to submit the missing information or, on the one hundred eighty-first-day, the application shall be rejected and all materials (except one copy of the application) returned to the applicant. If the applicant submits the requested information within the one hundred eighty-day period, the community development director shall again verify whether the application, as augmented, is complete. Each such review and verification shall follow the procedure in subsection b. of this section.

The application will be deemed complete for the purpose of this section upon receipt by the community development director of:

- i. All the missing information;
- ii. Some of the missing information and written notice from the applicant that no other information will be provided; or
- iii. Written notice from the applicant that none of the missing information will be provided.

2. Natural Resource Committee Review and Recommendation

a. Within 60 days of deeming the application complete, the Community Development Director shall schedule the nomination for review by the Natural Resource Committee (NRC) at a regularly scheduled meeting, with regular notice to the general public, applicant and the property owner.

b. If the nominated tree or stand is located on public right-of-way or property under city jurisdiction notice of the NRC shall be provided to the Community Development Director, the chair of any recognized neighborhood association in which the tree or stand is located, and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC), if applicable.

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c. Staff shall prepare a report analyzing whether the tree or stand complies with the criteria for designation in section D. The staff report shall include a recommendation to support or not support the nomination.

d. The Natural Resources Committee shall review the nomination, and provide a recommendation to the City Commission for a final decision. If the Natural Resources Committee is not functioning or is inactive, the Community Development Director shall provide a recommendation directly to the City Commission.

3. City Commission Decision.

a. Within 30 days following the NRC meeting, the City Commission shall review all Heritage Tree and Stand recommendations forwarded to them by the Natural Resources Committee at a public meeting.

b. Notice of the city commission meeting shall be provided to the general public, the recommending applicant, the property owner (unless the recommended tree or stand is located on public right-of-way under city jurisdiction, in which event notice shall be given to the community development director), the chair of any recognized neighborhood association in which the tree or stand is located, and the parks and recreation advisory committee (PRAC), if applicable.

c. After considering any recommendations by city committees, the staff report and any testimony by interested persons, the city commission shall vote to approve or deny the nomination.

4. Following approval by the city commission:

a. If the tree or stand of trees is located on private property, the designation shall be complete upon the property owner's execution of a covenant running with the land suitable for recordation by the city. The covenant shall describe the subject property, generally describe the location of the heritage tree or stand of trees, and covenant that the tree or stand of trees is protected as a "Heritage Tree" or "Heritage Stand" by the City of Oregon City and is therefore subject to special protection as provided in this Title.

b. If the tree or stand of trees is located on public right-of-way, the designation shall be complete upon the Staff's listing of the tree or stand of trees on the City of Oregon City Heritage Tree and Stand records.

c. If the heritage tree or stand of trees is located on the public right-of-way, the city shall condition any future property owner-requested vacation of the public right-of-way upon the execution of a protective covenant in accordance with subsection a., above, which shall be recorded by the city upon the vacation of the right-of-way.

D. Criteria for Designation.

Deleted: 1. The Natural Resources Committee (Tree Sub-Committee) shall review all Heritage Tree and Grove nominations at a regularly scheduled meeting, with regular notice to the general public, applicant and the property owner. Staff shall prepare a report analyzing whether the tree or grove complies with the review criteria. The staff report shall include a recommendation to support or not support the nomination.¶

2. The Natural Resources Committee shall review the staff report and make a recommendation to the City Commission whether to support or not support the nomination.

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1. The city commission may designate a tree or stand of trees as a Heritage Tree or Heritage Stand if the commission determines that the Heritage Criteria (a through d) and Site and Condition Criteria (e) through (g), are met, as far as applicable:

a. Heritage Criteria (at least one criterion i-iv must be met)

- i. The tree (or stand of trees) is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of Oregon City's history; or
- ii. The tree (or stand of trees) is associated with the life of a person or group of historic significance to Oregon City; or
- iii. The tree (or stand of trees) represents a significant and distinguishable entity within Oregon City; or
- iv. The tree (or stand of trees) has age, size, or species significance (horticultural or ecological), which contributes to Oregon City's heritage status;

b. Site and Condition Criteria (Criteria i-iii must all be satisfied)

- i. A certified arborist, forester, or ecologist has determined in a written report that the tree or stand trees is not irreparably damaged, diseased, hazardous or unsafe or the applicant is willing to have the tree or stand of trees treated by a certified arborist, forester or ecologist and the treatment will alleviate the damage, disease or hazard;
- ii. The tree species is not listed as invasive on any local or regional plant list.
- iii. The property owner or (if a street tree) abutting property owner consents to the designation and agrees to sign the protective covenant.

~~a. The tree or grove is of landmark importance to the City of Oregon City due to age, size, species, horticultural or ecological quality, or historic importance; or~~

~~b. It is listed as a State Heritage Tree, as designated by the state division of forest resources; or~~

~~c. It is a rare, threatened or endangered species as defined in the document "2010 rte book.pdf", available at orbic.pdx.edu/documents/2010_rte_book.pdf, or provides a habitat for rare threatened or endangered species as defined in the document "2010 rte book.pdf" of plants, animals or birds; and~~

E. Protection of Heritage Trees and Stands.

1. No Heritage Tree or Stand may be removed, topped, or otherwise altered unless permitted by this section.

2. An application to remove a Heritage Tree or Stand shall demonstrate that the burden imposed on the property owner, or, if the tree is located within the public right-of-way under city

See heritage criteria above

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jurisdiction, then the burden imposed on the city by the continued presence of the tree outweighs the public benefit provided by the tree. For the purposes of making this determination, the following tree impacts shall not be considered unreasonable burdens on the property owner, or if appropriate, the city:

- a. View obstruction;
- b. Routine pruning, leaf raking and other maintenance activities; and
- c. Infrastructure impacts or tree hazards that can be controlled or avoided by appropriate pruning or maintenance.

3. Unless the tree is permitted to be removed due to poor health or hazard pursuant to Section 12.08.042, the applicant shall be required to mitigate for the loss of the tree pursuant to Table 12.08.035.

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4. Any person who removes a Heritage Tree or Stand in violation of this chapter shall be subject to the penalties provided in this chapter.

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F. Recognition of Heritage Trees and Stands.

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1. A Heritage Tree plaque may be designed and furnished by the city to the property owner, or if the tree is in the public right-of-way, to the appropriate city official, of a designated Heritage Tree or Stand. The city may charge a fee to cover the costs of providing the plaque. The plaque shall be posted at a location at or near the heritage tree or stand and, if feasible, visible from a public right-of-way.

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2. The community development director shall maintain a list and map of designated Heritage Trees and Stands.

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G. Removal of Heritage Tree or Stand Designation.

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1. A Heritage Tree or Stand may be removed from designation if it dies or is removed pursuant to this chapter. If removed from private property, the city shall record a document extinguishing the covenant.

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(Ord. No. 08-1014, 7-1-2009)

12.08.045 - Gifts and funding. The City of Oregon City may accept gifts, which are specifically designated for the purpose of planting or maintaining trees within the city. the community development director may allow a fee in-lieu of planting the tree(s) to be placed into a city fund dedicated to planting trees in Oregon City. The community development director may determine the type, caliper and species of the trees purchased with the fund. The cost of each tree may be adjusted annually based upon current market prices for materials and labor as calculated by the community development director. A separate fund shall be established and maintained for revenues and expenditures created by activities specified in this chapter. The Natural Resources Committee shall have authority on behalf of the city to seek grants and alternative funding for

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tree projects. Funds from such grant awards shall be administered by the city pursuant to this section.

(Ord. No. 08-1014, 7-1-2009)

12.08.050 - Violation—Penalty. The violation of any provision of this chapter shall be constitute a civil infraction, subject to code enforcement procedures of [Chapter 1.16](#) and/or [Chapter 1.20](#).

(Ord. No. 08-1014, 7-1-2009)

The following definitions are provided as background.

17.04.1355 - ~~Tree~~, Stand

"~~Tree~~/Tree Stand" means a stand of three or more trees who together create a mutual canopy continuous over eighty or more percent of the area within the boundaries of the stand.

(Ord. No. 08-1014, §§ 1—3(Exhs. 1—3), 7-1-2009)

17.04.1360 - Tree, hazardous or diseased.

"Hazardous or diseased tree" means a tree that has a naturally occurring disease that is expected to kill the tree or that presents a significant risk to life or property as determined by a certified arborist. To the extent that the community development director determines that the hazardous or diseased condition of the tree is the result of intentional action, the removal of that tree shall require mitigation pursuant to Section 17.41.060. An otherwise healthy tree that may become a hazard to a proposed future development shall not be considered a hazardous tree. Hazardous trees may include, but are not limited to dead, diseased, broken, split, cracked, leaning, and uprooted trees. A tree harboring communicable diseases or insects of a type that could infest and cause the decline of adjacent or nearby trees may also be identified as a hazardous tree.

17.04.1365 - Tree (or Stand), Heritage

"Heritage Tree" means a tree that has been designated by the city as having unique importance, and subject to the Heritage Tree Regulations of Section 12.08.050. ~~Where~~ a grouping of two or more Heritage Trees has been so designated, the term Heritage Stand may be used.

"Heritage Stand" means a group of two or more trees that have been designated by the city as having unique importance, subject to the Heritage Tree Regulations of Section 12.08.040.

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⁽⁷⁾ **Editor's note**— Ord. No. 08-1014, adopted Jul. 1, 2009, repealed Chapter 12.08 in its entirety and enacted new provisions to read as herein set out. Prior to amendment, Chapter 12.08 pertained to Community Forest and Street Trees. See Ordinance Disposition List for derivation. ([Back](#))

Comment [14]:
Bryon Boyce Jun 18, '12, 6:06 AM
Whatever is finally decided as the title to 12.08 should be reflected here.
One of the purposes of this section is to streamline the application process. A woodland of one hundred trees may meet the requirements of this process, but a hundred applications would be cumbersome. Twenty feet is an unusable requirement. An informal survey of a mature native stand in a city park showed that under natural conditions tree spacing varied from less than three to fifty-five feet with an average of twenty-five

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Bryon Boyce Jun 18, '12, 6:30 AM

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17.04.1370 - Tree, imminent hazard.

"Imminent hazard tree" means a hazardous tree, — all or more than thirty percent of which has already fallen or is estimated to fall within seventy-two hours into the public right-of-way or onto a target that cannot be protected, restricted, moved, or removed. (See also Tree, Hazard.) Determination of Imminent Hazard is made by the City of Oregon City Public Works or Emergency Personnel, a PGE forester, or a certified arborist.

(Ord. No. 08-1014, §§ 1—3(Exhs. 1—3), 7-1-2009)

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Comment [17]:
Bryon Boyce Jun 18, '12, 6:47 AM
This definition needs to be provided any arborist or other consultant used by the city in determining hazard trees.

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Deleted: as defined in [ORS] section 3.0010. (See "Arborist, Consulting".)

17.04.1380 - Tree (or Tree Stand), native.

"Native Tree" or "Native Tree Stand" refers to a regulated native tree or stand of trees that are defined as such on the Oregon City Native Plant List or Portland Native Plant List. Significant native trees are those that contribute to the landscape character of the area and include Douglas fir, cedar, redwood, sequoia, oak, ash, birch, and maple. Significant native trees are typically suitable for retention next to streets and are not of a species that would likely create a public nuisance, hazard, or maintenance problem.

(Ord. No. 08-1014, §§ 1—3(Exhs. 1—3), 7-1-2009)

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17.04.1385 - Tree (or Tree Stand), ornamental.

"Ornamental tree" means for purposes of tree removal, any tree (including shade trees) that originated as nursery stock as opposed to native trees that originated at the site prior to development. (Ord. No. 08-1014, §§ 1—3(Exhs. 1—3), 7-1-2009)

Comment [18]:
Bryon Boyce Jun 18, '12, 6:33 AM
This definition can also be used in the Heritage Tree section, as can 17.04.1380 above.