# Lake Whatcom Tree Retention Regulations

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## Changes to Tree Canopy Code

-Previously, tree canopy retention was only geared towards development projects that utilized dispersion into surrounding vegetation.

-New code separates the tree canopy requirements into two categories

- removal associated with development;
- removal not associated with development

-Both codes allow for removal of up to 5,000 sq. ft. or 35% of the existing tree canopy, whichever is greater.

- Existing tree canopy is defined as that tree canopy in place as of January 1, 2017.

## Tree Removal Not Associated with Development Activity

-Tree Removal Permit is required for the removal of any Significant Tree, when not associated with a development.

- Significant Tree – Evergreen tree which is 12-inches or greater DBH or deciduous tree 8-inches or greater DBH

-The following activities do not require a Tree Removal Permit prior to tree removal:

- Removal of hazard tree(s) necessary to remedy an immediate threat to person or property
- Pruning and Maintenance of up to 25% of a trees' foliage
- Not explicitly stated, but removal of trees that do not meet the definition of "Significant Tree".

## Tree Removal Not Associated with Development Activity

-May remove up to 35% or 5,000 sq. ft. of on-site significant tree canopy area in place as of January 1, 2017.

-Hazard Trees may require a tree risk assessment from a qualified professional.

-Removal of Significant Trees without obtaining a permit may require replacement at a ratio of 3-to-1.

# Tree Removal Associated with Development Activity

-Tree removal will be reviewed through the underlying development permit.

-May remove up to 5,000 sq. ft. or 35% of the tree canopy (as of January 1, 2017), whichever is greater.

- All tree canopy counted, not just significant tree canopy.

-Tree canopy credits may be applied to individual significant trees or stands/clusters of five or more significant trees.

# Additional Code Considerations

-Standards for measuring tree canopy:

| Table 20.51.440(4). Measuring Tree Canopy | | |
|---|---|---|
| Existing Canopy | | New Canopy |
| Option 1 Tree Survey | Option 2 Aerial Estimation | 20-Year Canopy Calculation |
| • Measure average canopy radius (r) for each tree to be retained<br>• Calculate existing canopy area using the formula: Canopy Area (CA) = $\pi r^2$<br>• Total the sum of tree canopy areas and divide by gross site area to obtain canopy coverage percentage | • Obtain aerial imagery of site<br>• Measure site boundaries<br>• Measure canopies of individual trees or stand area using leading edges as the forest boundary<br>• Divide total canopy measurement by the gross site area to obtain canopy coverage percentage | For each proposed species:<br>• Calculate radius (r) of canopy at 20 years maturity<br>• Calculate canopy coverage using the formula: CA = $\pi r^2$<br>• Multiply by the proposed quantity to be planted to obtain total species canopy area<br>• Total the sum of species canopy area for all proposed species and divide by gross site area to obtain 20-year canopy coverage percentage |

-There are also standards specifying tree replacement requirements, tree protection measures, tree canopy retention modifications, and penalties and enforcement.

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