

## Retaining Wall Design Guidelines - May 11, 2023

### INTENT

These provisions are intended to mitigate the impact of large, monotonous retaining walls in the right-of-way by requiring architectural and landscaping treatments that reduce the harshness of such walls and reflect the community identity.

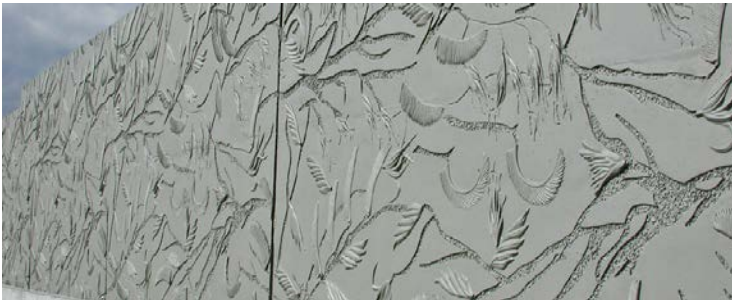
### PROVISIONS

1. The architectural finish of retaining walls shall depict artistic images having a strong relationship to the Pacific Northwest and the surrounding natural environment including native trees, flora, and fauna of the region. (see examples in Figures A and B)

FIGURE A



FIGURE B



**Commented [SB1]:** Council may wish to consider adding the something similar to the language below to these guidelines to clarify the meaning of 'shall' and 'should'. This is taken from the Town Center Design Guidelines:

The terms used in the guidelines indicate whether provisions are required or whether they are discretionary, but highly recommended and desirable.

**SHALL**—The use of the term “shall” (or “shall not” in the negative) represents a requirement of the design to meet the intent of the guideline. This provision must be followed as part of planning, design, and implementation of the project.

**SHOULD**—The use of the term “should” (or “should not” in the negative) indicates a provision that is strongly encouraged, but that is not an absolute requirement. Compliance with this provision is voluntary, but highly desirable to the community.

2. In addition to the architectural finish requirements of Provision 1, landscaping and vegetation such as that found in Figures C and D below shall be installed. The plantings shall be native, drought tolerant species that do not require permanent irrigation and should reach coverage of 30% of the wall front surface within 36 months. If there is not a shoulder or sidewalk adjacent to the wall, landscaping that requires regular maintenance shall be minimized.

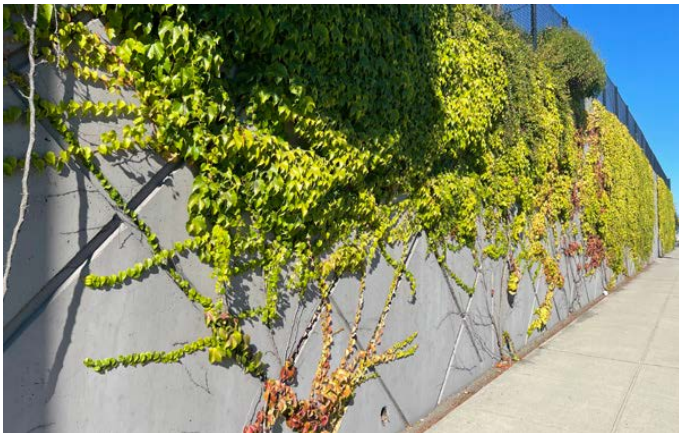
**Commented [SB2]:** Sound Transit has indicated that the only species of vines capable of climbing vertical surfaces without a trellis are not native. See comments in Attachment 3. Deleting 'native' is an action that could be taken to address this issue

**Commented [SB3]:** Sound Transit notes that maintenance will be required to achieve coverage. See comments in Attachment 3. Changing 'shall' to 'should' is an action that could be taken to address this issue.

FIGURE C



FIGURE D



3. The wall construction type for an independent wall segment can deviate from the requirements of Provisions 1 and 2 if it can be demonstrated to the Public Works Director's satisfaction that

vegetation will grow directly from the wall face as shown in Figures E and F and will reach a coverage of 80% of the wall front surface within 36 months. The plantings shall be native, drought tolerant species that do not require permanent irrigation.

FIGURE E



FIGURE F

