

MEMORANDUM



Date: July 31, 2023

To: City Council

From: Alyssa Jones Wood, Sustainability Coordinator

Heritage Tree Nomination at 330 Schmidt Place.

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Background

The Tumwater City Council adopted the Urban Forestry Management Plan on March 2, 2021 by Ordinance No. 2020-004. Among the Urban Forestry Management Plan actions to be implemented, two addressed heritage trees:

Action 2.1.J. Designate, register, and promote heritage trees.

Priority	Leads [Primary (P) & Secondary (S)]	Timing	Monitoring Action
#2	Community Development (P) Tree Board (S)	Start in Spring 2023 based on Peninsula Environmental Group work and update every five years thereafter	Track number of trees considered heritage trees on an ongoing basis

Action 8.1.B. Identify tree specimens, including heritage trees, on City property that illustrate proper tree care and discuss in articles on the City website and social media.

Priority	Leads [Primary (P) & Secondary (S)]	Timing	Monitoring Action
#2	Community Development (P) Parks and Recreation (S) Public Works (S) Tree Board (S)	Start in Spring 2023 and evaluate every five years thereafter	Evaluate program as compared to the Goals, Objectives, and Actions of the Plan

Definition and Resources

From the City’s Heritage Trees website, heritage trees are:

“Trees that have historical significance, by virtue of age, association to a historical structure, district, person or event, rare or unique species, or significant stand (grove) of trees can be designated as Heritage Trees, and therefore provided with special protections.”

You can find out more about heritage trees on our website here:

[Heritage Trees | City of Tumwater, WA](#)

And in TMC 16.08.075 Heritage trees are designated here:

<https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Tumwater/#!/Tumwater16/Tumwater1608.html#16.08.075>

Appendix 1 contains the definitions section of TMC 16.08 *Protection of Trees and Vegetation* as well as TMC 16.08.075 Heritage trees designated.

“Heritage trees” and “historic trees” are defined in TMC 16.08.030 as follows:

M. “Heritage tree(s)” means tree(s) designated by the city and their owners as historical, specimen, rare, or a significant grove of trees.

N. “Historic tree” means any tree designated as an historic object in accordance with the provisions of TMC Chapter 2.62.

Proposed Heritage Tree Nomination

Board Member Jim Sedore filed a nomination for a Japanese Bigleaf Magnolia tree at 330 Schmidt Place. Board Member Sedore asserted in his nomination that this tree is considered rare and very large for its species. The City's contracted Urban Forester visited the tree on June 29, 2023 and estimates the tree is 83 years old. On July 11, 2023 the Tree Board unanimously voted to recommend City Council approve this Heritage Tree nomination.

Maps and Photo of Nominated Tree









Next Steps

Staff recommends Council formally designate the Japanese Bigleaf Magnolia at the Schmidt House (330 Schmidt Place) as a Heritage Tree.

Staff Contact

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Appendix 1 – TMC 16.08 Protection of Trees and Vegetation

[...]

16.08.030 Definitions.

- A. “Buildable area” is that portion of a parcel of land wherein a building, parking and other improvements may be located and where construction activity may take place. Buildable area shall not include streams, flood hazard areas, geological hazard areas or wetlands and their buffers as defined in TMC Chapter 18.04. For the purpose of calculating required tree protection open space area, existing and newly dedicated city rights-of-way shall not be included.
- B. “City” means the city of Tumwater, Washington.
- C. “Code administrator” means the director of the community development department or the director’s designated representative.
- D. “Conversion option harvest plan (COHP)” means a voluntary plan developed by the landowner and approved by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the city of Tumwater, indicating the limits and types of harvest areas, road locations, and open space. This approved plan, when submitted to the Department of Natural Resources as part of the forest practice application and followed by the landowner, maintains the landowner’s option to convert to a use other than commercial forest product production (releases the landowner from the six-year moratorium on future development).

E. Critical Root Zone or CRZ. Unless determined otherwise by the tree protection professional, the root protection zone for trees means an area contained inside an area on the ground having a radius of one foot for every inch of tree diameter, measured from four and one-half feet above ground level, but in no event shall the root protection zone be less than a six-foot radius.

F. “Drip line” of a tree means an imaginary line on the ground created by the vertical projections of the foliage at its circumference.

G. “Environmentally sensitive area” means any lands with the following characteristics:

1. “Geologically hazardous areas” as defined in TMC Chapter 16.20;
2. Lakes, ponds, stream corridors, and creeks as defined in TMC Chapter 16.32;
3. Identified habitats with which endangered, threatened, or sensitive species have a primary association as defined in TMC Chapter 16.32;
4. Wetlands as defined in TMC Chapter 16.28.

H. “Grading” means excavation, filling, or any combination thereof. Excavation and grading is governed by the International Building Code (IBC).

I. “Greenbelt” means certain designated areas of a project or development that are intended to remain in a natural condition, and/or private permanent open space, or serve as a buffer between properties or developments.

J. “Greenbelt zone” means any area so designated on the official zoning map of the city and subject to the provisions of TMC Chapter 18.30.

K. “Ground cover” means vegetation that is naturally terrestrial excluding noxious or poisonous plants and shall include trees that are less than six inches in diameter measured at four and one-half feet above ground level.

L. “Hazardous tree” means any tree that, due to its health or structural defect, presents a risk to people or property.

M. “Heritage tree(s)” means tree(s) designated by the city and their owners as historical, specimen, rare, or a significant grove of trees.

N. “Historic tree” means any tree designated as an historic object in accordance with the provisions of TMC Chapter 2.62.

O. “Land clearing” or “clearing” means any activity which removes or substantially alters by topping or other methods the vegetative ground cover and/or trees.

P. “Open space” means unoccupied land that is open to the sky and which may or may not contain vegetation and landscaping features, subject to the provisions in TMC 17.04.325 and 17.12.210.

Q. “Parcel” means a tract or plot of land of any size which may or may not be subdivided or improved.

R. “Qualified professional forester” is a professional with academic and field experience that makes them an expert in urban forestry. This may include arborists certified by the International Society of Arboriculture, foresters with a degree in forestry from a Society of American Foresters accredited forestry school, foresters certified by SAF, or urban foresters with a degree in urban forestry. A qualified professional forester must possess the ability to evaluate the health and hazard potential of existing trees, and the ability to prescribe appropriate measures necessary for the preservation of trees during land development. Additionally, the qualified professional forester shall have the necessary training and experience to use and apply the International Society of Arboriculture’s Guide for Plant Appraisal and to successfully provide the necessary expertise relating to management of trees specified in this chapter.

S. “Topping” is the removal of the upper crown of the tree with no consideration of proper cuts as per the current ANSI A300 Standard. Cuts created by topping create unsightly stubs that promote decay within the parent branch and can cause premature mortality of a tree. Topping a tree is considered to be a removal, and may require a tree removal permit.

T. “Tree” means any healthy living woody plant characterized by one or more main stems or trunks and many branches, and having a diameter of six inches or more measured four and one-half feet above ground level. Healthy in the context of this definition shall mean a tree that is rated by a professional with expertise in the field of forestry or arbor culture as fair or better using recognized forestry or arbor cultural practices. If a tree exhibits multiple stems and the split(s) or separation(s) between stems is above grade, then that is considered a single tree. If a tree exhibits multiple stems emerging from grade and there is visible soil separating the stems, then each soil-separated stem is considered an individual tree. Appropriate tree species under six inches may be considered with approval of the city tree protection professional.

U. “Tree plan” is a plan that contains specific information pertaining to the protection, preservation, and planting of trees pursuant to this chapter.

V. “Tree protection open space” is a separate dedicated area of land, specifically set aside for the protection and planting of trees.

W. “Tree protection professional” is a certified professional with academic and field experience that makes him or her a recognized expert in urban tree preservation and management. The tree protection professional shall be either a member of the International Society of Arboriculture or the Society of American Foresters or the Association of Consulting Foresters, and shall have specific experience with urban tree management in the Pacific Northwest. Additionally, the tree protection professional shall have the necessary training and experience to use and apply the International Society of Arboriculture’s Guide for Plant Appraisal and to successfully provide the necessary expertise relating to management of trees specified in this chapter.

(Ord. O2013-017, Amended, 08/19/2014; Ord. O2013-025, Amended, 01/07/2014; Ord. O2011-002, Amended, 03/01/2011; Ord. O2006-014, Amended, 04/17/2007; Ord. O2002-012, Amended, 07/16/2002; Ord. O97-029, Amended, 03/17/1998; Ord. O94-029, Amended, 09/20/1994; Ord. 1311, Amended, 04/07/1992; Ord. 1190, Added, 05/16/1989)

[...]

16.08.075 Heritage trees designated.

A. Trees can be nominated for designation by citizens, the Tumwater tree board, or city staff.

1. Application for heritage tree designation must be submitted to the community development department. The application must include a short description of the trees, including address or location, and landowner’s name and phone number. The application must be signed by both the landowner and nominator.

2. The tree board reviews the application and makes a recommendation to the city council.

3. All heritage trees will be added to city tree inventory and public works maps.

B. Trees that are designated as heritage trees shall be classified as follows:

1. Historical – A tree which by virtue of its age, its association with or contribution to a historical structure or district, or its association with a noted citizen or historical event.

2. Specimen – Age, size, health, and quality factors combine to qualify the tree as unique among the species in Tumwater and Washington State.

3. Rare – One or very few of a kind, or is unusual in some form of growth or species.

4. Significant Grove – Outstanding rows or groups of trees that impact the city’s landscape.

C. The city will provide an evaluation and recommendation for tree health and care and will provide up to one inspection annually upon request of the landowner. The city may, at its discretion, provide a plaque listing the owner’s name and/or tree species/location.

D. Heritage Tree Removal.

1. A tree removal permit is required for removal of any heritage tree(s).
2. The city tree protection professional shall evaluate any heritage trees prior to a decision on the removal permit. Recommendations for care, other than removal, will be considered.
3. Dead or hazardous trees are exempt from a tree removal permit after verification by the city tree protection professional.

E. Heritage Tree Declassification. Any heritage tree may, at any time, be removed from heritage tree status at the request of the landowner after providing two weeks' written notice to the community development department. Unless an agreement can be reached to preserve the tree, the tree will be removed from the heritage tree inventory list and the plaque, if any, will be removed.

(Amended during 2011 reformat; O2006-014, Amended, 04/17/2007; Ord. O2002-012, Amended, 07/16/2002; Ord. O2000-012, Added, 07/18/2000)