

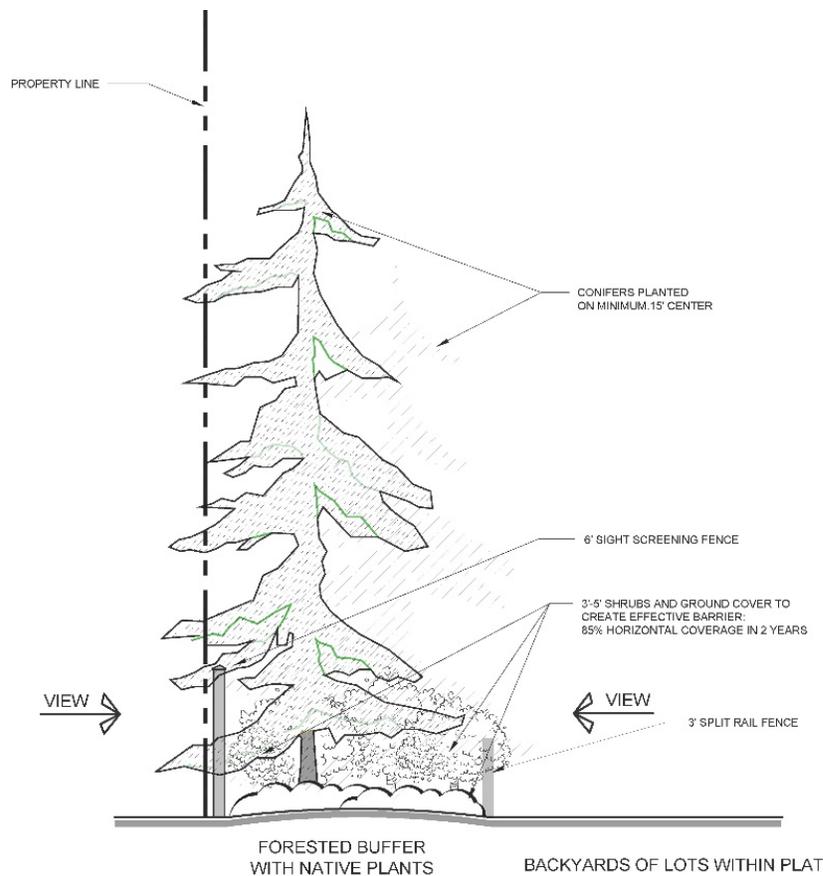
## FORESTED BUFFERS – MAINTENANCE AND RESTORATION

### WHAT IS A FORESTED BUFFER?

The City's development regulations require the creation of forested buffers when certain developments are created with lots that are smaller than the lots they will abut. The forested buffer is intended to buffer higher intensity development from lower intensity development it is next to.

The trees, shrubs, and fencing that comprise forested buffers are a condition that allowed new, smaller lots to be created and are required to remain in perpetuity. When forested buffers are created the City requires note(s) to be placed on the plat because it serves as notice to future purchasers of property that they are required to comply with the forested buffer conditions.

The City is not responsible for, and will not, maintain forested buffer areas. Homeowner Associations and/or the property owner abutting a forested buffer are responsible for monitoring, maintaining, and leaving the forested buffer in its intended state. Following is an illustration of what a forested buffer is required to consist of:



### NOTES:

- Trees need to be planted as close to the fence as possible and larger shrubs need to be planted on the fence half of the buffer.
- Groundcover and shorter shrubs need to be planted along the front edge and in gaps between the 25" OC shrubs

### CAN A FORESTED BUFFER BE MAINTAINED?

- The trees, shrubs, and non-invasive ground-cover within the forested buffer can be trimmed and maintained, but can only be removed with permission from the City of Mount Vernon (City). *Proper plant selection and placement should reduce the need for trimming.*
- The City will authorize the removal of trees and shrubs within the forested buffer only if a professional arborist (or other similarly qualified professional) demonstrates to the City that the trees, shrubs, or ground-cover poses a danger and/or are dead or dying.
- If the City authorizes the removal of trees, shrubs, or ground-cover within the forested buffer new trees, shrubs, or non-invasive ground-cover shall be replanted in a timeframe and density established, and pre-approved, by the City.
- The owners of the lots that abut forested buffers and the HOA are not allowed to disturb the trees, shrubs, or ground cover within the forested buffer unless it is for maintenance such as minor weed removal.

### HOW SHOULD A FORESTED BUFFER THAT HAS BEEN DISTURBED BE RESTORED?

Should a forested buffer be disturbed property owners and/or the Home Owner’s Association (HOA) needs to complete the following steps:

- ① Contact the City’s Development Services Department at (360) 336-6214. Before calling it would be helpful to take pictures of the area that has been disturbed so that staff can determine the appropriate next steps.
- ② City staff will assist you in determining the number, type, and spacing of trees, shrubs, and groundcover that will need to be replanted; or the type and size of fencing that needs to be replaced.
- ③ Once a replanting/re-installation plan has been created City staff will provide written approval to proceed with replanting the area or re-installing fences. Re-installation of fencing can occur at any time of the year. However, the City generally recommends that re-planting occur during times when more precipitation occurs (generally October to April).
- ④ After the replanting and/or re-installation of fences occurs the property owner or HOA needs to submit pictures to the City documenting the restoration of the disturbed forested buffer areas.

### HELPFUL DETAILS WHEN RESTORING A FORESTED BUFFER

The following page contains a list of trees, shrubs and groundcover that have been chosen as preferred forested buffer plantings because they grow well, they have longer lifespans and are less likely to become hazard trees over time. *The City discourages replanting of alders, cottonwoods, birches, and willows due to their short lifespans and increased likelihood of becoming hazard trees.*

To achieve the greatest potential for survival, select planting stock that is high quality and native. Commonly, good quality seedlings are labeled as 2/1 or “Jumbo” 2-0 bare root. Potted or containerized trees are also acceptable, but tend to be more expensive than bare root stock and will require supplemental irrigation until established.

#### PLACES TO FIND THE TREES, SHRUBS & GROUNDCOVER YOU NEED TO PLANT

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Conservation District</b><br>16564 Bradley Road<br>Bow, WA 98232<br>360-757-1094<br><a href="http://www.wacdpmc.org">www.wacdpmc.org</a> | <b>Fourth Corner Nursery</b><br>5652 Sand Road<br>Bellingham, WA 98226<br>360-734-0079<br><a href="http://www.fourthcornernurseries.com/">www.fourthcornernurseries.com/</a> | <b>Northfork Nursery</b><br>15751 Polson Road<br>Mount Vernon, WA 98273<br>360-445-4741 | <b>Lopez Valley Nursery</b><br>10624 Collins Road<br>Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284<br>360-854-0210<br><a href="http://www.lopezvalleynurserylandscaping.com/">www.lopezvalleynurserylandscaping.com/</a> |
|---|--|---|--|

**APPROVED FORESTED BUFFER TREES**

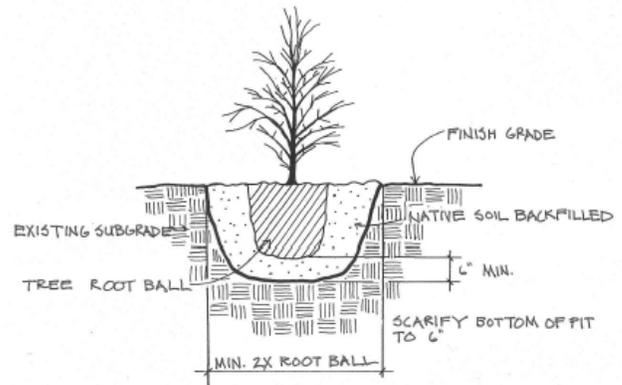
| LATIN NAME                   | ENGLISH COMMON NAME      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Abies grandis</i>         | Grand fir                |
| <i>Acer macrophyllum</i>     | Big leaf maple           |
| <i>Acer circinatum</i>       | Vine maple               |
| <i>Arbutus menziesii</i>     | Pacific Madrone          |
| <i>Picea sitchensis</i>      | Sitka spruce             |
| <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> | Douglas-fir              |
| <i>Frangula purshiana</i>    | Cascara                  |
| <i>Thuja plicata</i>         | Western red cedar        |
| <i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>    | Western hemlock          |
| <i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i> | (Saskatoon) Serviceberry |
| <i>Crataegus douglasii</i>   | Hawthorn                 |

**APPROVED FORESTED BUFFER SHRUBS & GROUND COVER**

| LATIN NAME                          | ENGLISH COMMON NAME WITH MATURE HEIGHT |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Lonicera involucrata</i>         | Black twinberry (S) 6-10'              |
| <i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>        | Pacific ninebark (S) 8-12'             |
| <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>         | Snowberry (S) 4-5'                     |
| <i>Rubus spectabilis</i>            | Salmonberry (S) 8-10'                  |
| <i>Sambucus racemosa</i>            | Red elderberry (S) 10-15'              |
| <i>Vaccinium parvifolium</i>        | Red huckleberry (S) 5-6'               |
| <i>Rosa pisocarpa</i>               | (Clustered Wild) Baldhip rose (S) 5-6' |
| <i>Rosa nutkana</i>                 | Nootka rose (S) 8-10'                  |
| <i>Omelaria cerasiformis</i>        | Indian plum (S) 12-15'                 |
| <i>Ribes sanguineum</i>             | Red Flowering currant (S) 8-10'        |
| <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>           | Salal (G) 3-4'                         |
| <i>Polystichum munitum</i>          | Sword fern (G)                         |
| <i>Mahonia nervosa</i>              | Cascade (Dull) Oregon-grape (G) 2'     |
| <i>Arctostaphylosuva-ursi</i>       | Kinnikinnick (G) 2-3'                  |
| <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>           | Tall Oregon grape (S) 5'               |
| <i>Corylus cornuta var. cornuta</i> | Beaked Hazelnut (S) 12'                |
| <i>Cornus stolonifera</i>           | Red-Osier Dogwood (S) 10-12'           |
| <i>Symphoricarpos mollis</i>        | Trailing snowberry (G) 2'              |

(S) = Shrub  
(G) = Groundcover

After a re-planting plan is approved by the City, and the trees, shrubs and groundcover have been purchased it's time to install these plants. Following the instructions below will greatly increase the survival of the vegetation being planted.



**TREE PLANTING DETAIL**

Dig a hole that is twice the size of the root ball of the tree you are planting, scarify the bottom of the pit, and backfill with native soil – see the illustration above.

**IMPORTANT POINTERS**

1. Cut, spread and disturb all circling or bound root systems.
2. Plant at same level plant was grown in the nursery right at or slightly above the existing grade.
3. Water all new plantings immediately even if during dormant season or if rain is predicted. Larger plants will need supplemental watering through summer.
4. Cover all bare soil in buffer with 3" of arborist woodchips but pull chips 3" away from plant stem.
5. Control invasive plants early.