



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

June 8, 2016; revised November 16, 2016

Rocky Butte View Clearing – Tree Review (33.853) Application Materials - Revised

Procedure Description and Other Information

Tree Removal

Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) is proposing to clear “window” views at Rocky Butte Natural Area to comply with the City of Portland’s *Scenic Views, Sites and Drives Inventory (Scenic Views 1988)*. According to the description in the inventory (VP 19-06), “The Rocky Butte panorama allows views in nearly all directions with particularly spectacular views of Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens.” The views have not been maintained, and to re-establish them a number of large trees will need to be removed. The area where tree removal is proposed is overlaid with an environmental zone (e-zone), and within the Rocky Butte Plan District (Figure 1: Rocky Butte Scenic Viewshed Existing Conditions). The proposed tree removal is exempt from Environmental Zone regulations (Chapter 33.430) because it is considered maintenance of an existing view point (33.430.080.C.1). Tree removal is subject to 33.570 Rocky Butte Plan District and the tree permit requirements of Title 11 (33.570.040.D).

PP&R is proposing to remove trees to create window views, instead of clearing the panoramic view as shown in Scenic View 1988. During a May 2016 site reconnaissance, staff from the City of Portland Urban Forestry Department determined which trees need to be removed to create window views of Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens and downtown. The geotechnical memorandum completed by PBS Engineering + Environmental (March 1, 2016, Attached) recommended leaving some trees to ensure the slopes remain stable. Selected removal reduces the number of trees that need to be removed, maintains the forested aspect of the site, and does not destabilize the steeply sloped butte.

Rick Farber, Urban Forestry Tree Inspector, and Larry Maginnis, Urban Forestry Supervisor, marked and determined the condition of the trees to be removed. Emily Roth, PP&R Senior Planner, measured the diameter at breast height (dbh), tagged and recorded tree locations using a hand-held GPS (Figure 2: Rocky Butte Tree Removal). 46 trees will need to be removed. Urban Forestry determined that 31 trees are healthy, and 15 trees are exempt because they are dead, dying, dangerous or nuisance. (Rocky Butte Tree Inventory). The summary of tree removal and mitigation is shown in the table below.

Table: Summary of Tree removal and Required Mitigation

Type of Tree Removal	Regulatory Code	Number of Trees to Remove	Mitigation Trees Required
Dead, Dying, dangerous, Nuisance	Title 11 Table 40-2	15	15
Healthy Trees Between 6" and 12"	Title 33.570.040 C.6	2	4
Healthy Trees greater than 12"	Title 33.853, Tree Review	29	58

The trees will be removed by an Urban Forestry Crew in winter 2017/2018, before bird nesting season or late summer 2018 after bird nesting season. Most felled trees will be left in the natural area for habitat structure, and some trees may be left as snags for use by a variety of wildlife and insects. In areas where trees cannot be left in place, Urban Forestry will remove them or chip them on-site.

Mitigation

As shown in the Summary table above, PP&R is required to plant a total of 77 native trees at Rocky Butte. Under 11.60.020.B. Tree Planting Specification, the 15 trees required may be ½" caliper since they will be planted within an environmental zone. Title 33.248.030 Plant Materials states that 1.5" caliper for broadleaf trees and a minimum height of 5 feet for conifers. PP&R is proposing to plant 400 native bareroot trees – conifers and broadleaf, in 1.7 acres. Through this review, PP&R is requesting an exemption to the size requirements for broadleaf and conifers regulated under Title 33. There are many reasons to use bareroot stock at Rocky Butte:

- The trees will be carried on steep slopes. Hauling bareroot plants to specific planting location will be much more efficient than carrying heavier, containerized trees.
- Bareroot trees are easier to plant because additional native soil does not need to be excavated to accommodate the container soil. This allows for planting bareroot tree in more locations.
- When rocks or roots from other plants partially obstruct the specific planting location, containerized plants are often moved to another location or have the container soil removed in order to fit into the designed planting location, thus effectively making it a bareroot tree.
- Bareroot stock will adapt to native soils much quicker than containerized stock. Containerized stock takes time to transition from the container soil which can be very different from the soils at the project site.
- Bareroot seedlings have more balanced shoot to root ratios.

- Bareroot Douglas firs from local seed source are readily available. It is difficult to find three gallon Doug firs that can be confirm came from local seed.

At Rocky Butte the large number of bareroot trees will have a greater chance of success, and the total caliber inches far exceeds the requirements.

The ovals shown on the attached mitigation figure represent the 1.7 acres proposed for mitigation plantings (Figure 3: Mitigation Plan). The approximate mitigation area and proposed tree size are:

- Mitigation Area A: 0.3 acres; small trees with a few scattered large trees
- Mitigation Area B: 0.2 acres; mix of large and small trees
- Mitigation Area C: 0.5 acres; small trees
- Mitigation Area D: 0.2 acres; small trees with a few scattered large trees
- Mitigation Area E: 0.2 acres; large trees
- Mitigation Area F: 0.3 acres; mix of large and small trees

Also attached is the Rocky Butte Mitigation Typical Planting Diagram that shows a 20-foot by 20-foot planting scheme for the mitigation areas (Figure 4). In addition to the trees, PP&R will plant 5,200 shrubs throughout the 9.8 acres of forest understory on the butte. PP&R's Eastside Natural Areas will oversee the required tree mitigation and the additional native plantings. Mitigation will take place on site with native shrubs, a diversity of small trees that will not block the view as they mature, and larger trees in areas that are not within the view windows. To meet the restoration goals for Rocky Butte Natural Area, PP&R will also remove blackberries and other invasive species throughout the site to enhance the ecological health of the forest.

Public Outreach

PP&R will outreach to neighbors by having an on-site meeting, sending postcards when the work is scheduled, and informational signs at the site. There will also be outreach to environmental and tree organizations.

Rocky Butte Plan District, 33.570.040 Tree Removal

A. Purpose

Even with the removal of the trees for the required scenic view, Rocky Butte will remain heavily forested and contribute to the beauty of the area. The butte will remain heavily treed, managed as a natural area upland forest, and provide a natural setting for those entering and leaving Portland. The trees proposed for removal are scattered below NE Rocky Butte Road. The removal will not be noticeable from a distance or at the base of the butte. From the top of the butte, the views of Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens, and downtown will be cleared and complimented by the remaining heavily forested slopes. PP&R proposes to plant two trees for every healthy tree greater than 12 inches removed to preserve and enhance the forested area of the butte.

Approval Criteria for Tree Review 33.853.040 (Conditional Use Review)

A. Trees in the Scenic Overlay Zone, Johnson Creek Basin plan district, or Rocky Butte plan district.

1. Not applicable – no development at the site.
2. For sites within the Scenic overlay zone or Rocky Butte plan district, the removal is to create or enhance a public view from public property or from right-of-way. Consultation with the City Forester is required; and

The proposed removal of trees is to enhance the public, views from the designated view point on Rocky Butte. The views have overgrown as maintenance has not been performed in many years. In order to re-establish the view, a total of 46 trees will be removed. This includes 31 healthy native trees, 13 native dead, dying and dangerous trees, and two non-native, nuisance trees. All tree removal is on public property and within the designated scenic viewshed. PP&R worked with Urban Forestry to determine the trees that need to be removed and consulted with the City Forester about the tree removal.

3. The proposal will continue to meet the purpose of the relevant tree preservation or removal standards. Replacement plantings within the Scenic overlay zone must consist of approved vegetation listed in the Scenic Resources Protection Plan appendix.

The purpose of the tree removal within the Rocky Butte Plan District (33.570.040 Tree Removal) is “to allow trees to be removed only when they meet the purpose of the Rocky Butte plan district and this Section.” The plan district protects important natural resources and provides for scenic views from the roadway and the top of the butte. The regulations are “intended to preserve and enhance the forested areas of the butte, views from the butte, historic architectural elements, and natural scenic qualities of the butte” (33.570.010 Purpose). The actions proposed by PP&R will continue to protect the natural resources through removal of selected trees and planting of native trees and shrubs. The removal of selected trees will restore views of downtown Portland, Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens. PP&R proposes to clear trees to establish “window” views, and not create a panoramic view. This will require a minimum number of trees to be removed, and preserve the stability of the slope, especially on the west side of Rocky Butte. Removal of invasive species, and native shrub and tree plantings will enhance the natural area functions. Plantings of large trees on the butte will be outside of the scenic view windows. Within the viewshed, small trees and shrub will be planted to increase the biodiversity at the site.

The proposed mitigation plantings include:

Trees	Number
Cascara (small tree) <i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>	125
Douglas fir <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	25
Big leaf maple <i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	25
Bitter cherry (small tree) <i>Prunus emarginata</i>	125
Pacific madrone (small tree) <i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	50
Pacific crab apple (small tree) <i>Malus fusca</i>	50
Total	400
Shrubs	
Vine maple <i>Acer circinatum</i>	400
Red elderberry <i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	400
Western hazel <i>Corylus cornuta</i>	200
Indian plum <i>Oemlaria cerasiformis</i>	600
Oceanspray <i>Holodiscus discolor</i>	400
Common snowberry* <i>Symphoricarpus albus</i>	1000
Mock orange <i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>	200
Thimbleberry* <i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	600
Baldhip rose* <i>Rosa gymnocarpa</i>	400
Dull Oregon grape* <i>Mahonia nervosa</i>	1000
Total	5200

*not currently on list of approved trees and other vegetation as shown in Scenic Resources Protection Plan (1991), Appendix D: Approved Trees and Other Vegetation. Listed on the June 2016 Native Plant List for the City of Portland.

Attachments:

- PBS Engineering + Environmental Geotechnical Memo; March 1, 2016
- Figure 1: Rocky Butte Scenic Viewshed Existing Conditions
- Rocky Butte Tree Inventory
- Figure 2: Rocky Butte Tree Removal
- Figure 3: Rocky Butte Tree Mitigation
- Figure 4: Typical Planting Diagram (20'X20')