



**King County**

Department of  
Natural Resources and Parks

**Solid Waste Division**

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VISUAL QUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
FACTORIA RECYCLING AND TRANSFER STATION  
REPLACEMENT PROJECT

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Final  
**January 2012**

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# VISUAL QUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FACTORIA RECYCLING AND TRANSFER STATION REPLACEMENT PROJECT

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**Final  
January 2012**

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## Exhibits

- Exhibit A: Excerpt from Bellevue City Code
  
- Exhibit B: Visual Quality Matrix -Sites with Visual Quality Change

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# Executive Summary

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A Visual Quality Impact Assessment was performed for the Factoria Recycling and Transfer Station (RTS) Replacement Project. It has been determined that of the 27 views investigated 11 will be visually impacted by the new building and site improvements and 16 will have no visual impact (see aerial map).

Of the 11 visually impacted locations, the most impacted areas will be the C and D; having visual impacts to the foreground, mid-ground and background, including removal of vegetation and structures, re-grading, construction of new structures, construction of site elements and planting of new vegetation. Locations B, E and G will be also be visually impacted, but less so, including direct views of the site and the new facility and impact from the removal and replacement of vegetation. The remainder of the impacted views will have minimal visual impact, including distant views of the site and new facility. The 16 views determined to have no visual impact were found to have topography, structures and vegetation blocking all views of the site.

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# General Information, Definitions and Methods

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The following is a report of the Visual Quality Impact Assessment for the Factoria Recycling and Transfer Station (RTS) located at 13800 SE 32<sup>nd</sup> St, Bellevue, WA 98005.

Under City of Bellevue Municipal Code, section 20.20.520 Landscape development, the site is subject to landscape requirements (see Excerpt from Bellevue City Code, Exhibit A).

The report analyzes the impact from 27 views points.

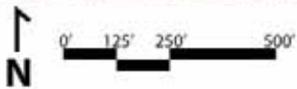
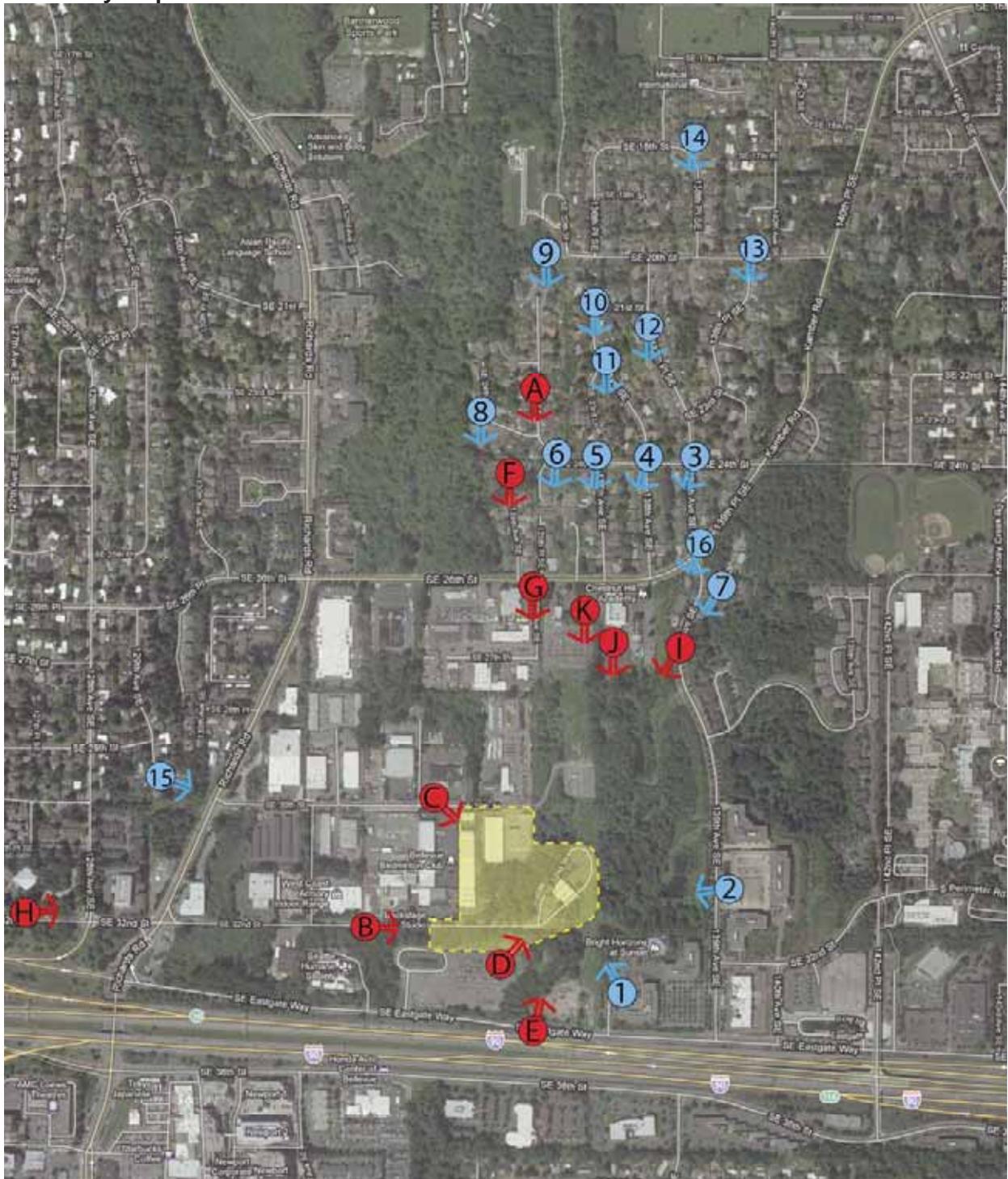
- a. The following criteria were used for the selection of viewpoints:
  - i. Public comments gathered at the Open House held on May 12, 2010 (areas receiving greater public comment were given priority). Public comments regarding visual quality fell into the following categories:
    1. Volume of traffic to and from the Factoria RTS
    2. Size of the Factoria RTS building
  - ii. In-person observation of visual impact during exploration of the surrounding area.
  - iii. Viewpoints were selected to provide varying distances from the facility.
  - iv. All viewpoints were confined to publically accessible locations.
- b. The following methods were utilized in accessing the viewpoints:
  - i. In-person assessment of the site and its surrounding areas.
  - ii. Photography of the site location from its surrounding areas.
  - iii. Notation of potential impacts.
  - iv. Graphic representations of before and after conditions.

A quantitative assessment of Visual Quality was performed (see included Visual Quality Matrix, Exhibit B):

- a. *Visual Quality* is described as the value of the viewer's visual experience by analyzing the vividness, intactness, and unity of the landscape. It is measured through the use of three categories:
  - v. *Vividness* is described as the memorability of the viewer's visual impression. Distinctive patterns and contrasting elements contribute to high levels of vividness
  - vi. *Intactness* is the integrity of visual order in both the natural and man-made landscape. Visual encroachment (conflicting visual elements or "eye-sores") of the landscape would reduce the level of intactness.
  - vii. *Unity* is defined as the harmonious patterns and relationships between all elements in the landscape. The blending of man-made elements and natural elements increases the level of unity.
- b. Each of the three categories is subdivided into distance zones:
  - viii. Foreground is described as the area that is most prominent, nearest to and in front of the spectator and having greatest visual prominence.

- ix. Mid-ground is described as the area that is in the middle distance range from the spectator having less visual prominence than foreground and more than background.
- x. Background is described as the area that is least prominent, furthest from and in considerable distance from the spectator and having the least visual prominence.
- c. Each distance zone was evaluated for alterations to the view from that viewpoint.
- d. Each distance zone was evaluated to determine a visual quality rating. The rating was based on:
  - xi. Landform: features of the earth's topography, created by man-made or natural conditions
  - xii. Vegetation: plant life, including trees, shrubs, groundcover and grasses.
  - xiii. Man-made elements: site features including structures, paving, and site furnishings.
- e. The ratings range from 0 (very low) to 7 (very high).
- f. The Change in visual quality is an average of the existing visual quality ratings, compared to the proposed visual quality.
  - xiv. Significant: A change in visual quality equal to or greater than .5
  - xv. Non-significant: A change in visual quality less than .5
  - xvi. An improvement in visual quality is indicated with a positive (+) number.
  - xvii. A reduction in visual quality is indicated with a negative (-) number.

# Aerial Key Map



-  Views determined to have no visual impact
-  Views determined to have potential visual impact
-  Project site

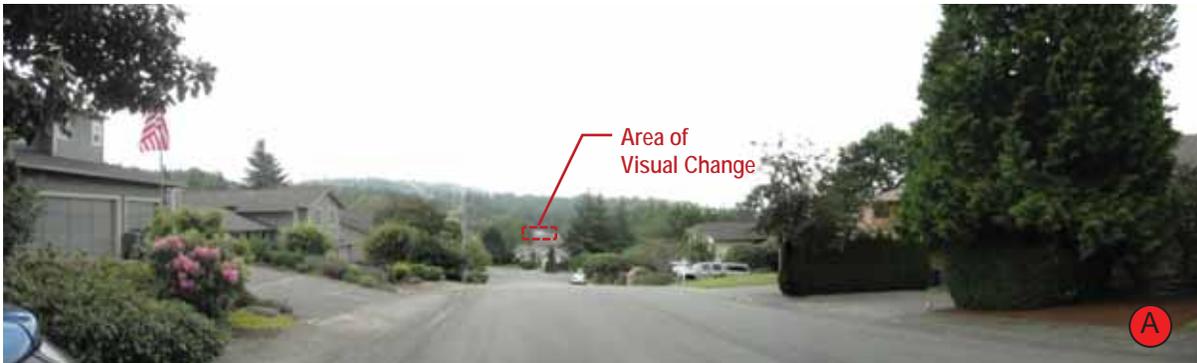
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# Visually Impacted Locations

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After an investigation of numerous views surrounding the Factoria RTS site the following describes and analyzes the known visual impact on the surrounding businesses and neighborhoods. Locations where a potential impact has been found have been assigned a letter on the key map and is described below (see aerial key map on prior page):

- A. 135<sup>th</sup> Place SE between SE 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street looking south
  - a. Alterations to View
    - i. Foreground:
      - 1. None.
    - ii. Mid-ground:
      - 1. None.
    - iii. Background:
      - 1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.
      - 2. The top of the new Factoria RTS building may be minimally visible from this vantage point.
      - 3. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.
      - 4. Visual impact may be greater from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.
  - b. Change in visual quality
    - i. -0.04
    - ii. Non-significant



B. SE 32<sup>nd</sup> St. looking at Transfer Station weigh station and entry gate.

a. Alterations to View:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. Existing weigh station and entry gate will be removed and replaced.
2. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.

iii. Background:

1. Extensive re-grading of the site will occur.
2. Existing mature vegetation will be removed from view during construction and replaced with vegetation that will grow to similar heights over time.
3. Existing on-site road will be replaced in roughly the same alignment.
4. An increase in vehicular traffic will take place during construction, however after construction the vehicular traffic should return to pre-construction levels or below.

b. Change in visual quality

- i. +1.04

- ii. Significant



C. SE 30<sup>th</sup> St. at approx. 13410 SE 30<sup>th</sup> Street

a. Alterations to View:

i. Foreground:

1. Warehouse building, driveway, adjacent parking, and adjacent street-side planting will be removed.
2. Retaining wall will be constructed running the width of the site.
3. New curb and gutter will be constructed.
4. New planting will be added at the street level and in front of the retaining wall.
5. An increase in vehicular traffic will take place during construction, however after construction the vehicular traffic should return to pre-construction levels or below.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. Warehouse building and adjacent parking will be removed and replaced with new facility.
2. The top of the Factoria RTS building will be visible from this vantage point.

iii. Background:

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.

b. Change in visual quality

- i. +2.41
- ii. Significant



BEFORE



AFTER

D. Eastgate Park and Ride overflow parking area, NE side of stormwater pond

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.
2. Re-grading of the site will relocate topographic ridge to east of existing stormwater pond (not visible).
3. Existing mature vegetation will be removed from view during construction and replaced with vegetation that will grow to similar heights over time.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. The Factoria RTS access road will be removed and relocated.
2. The new Factoria RTS building will replace the existing building.
3. Additional parking will be added.
4. Landscape planting will be added near building entry consisting of rain gardens, accent trees and pedestrian scale plants.
5. New pedestrian walkways will be constructed on the north side of the access road, between the parking and the new facility.
6. An increase in vehicular traffic will take place during construction, however after construction the vehicular traffic should return to pre-construction levels or below.

iii. Background

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.

b. Change in visual quality

- i. +0.52
- ii. Non-significant



BEFORE



AFTER

E. Eastgate Way shoulder

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. Re-grading will remove the existing stormwater pond.
2. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.

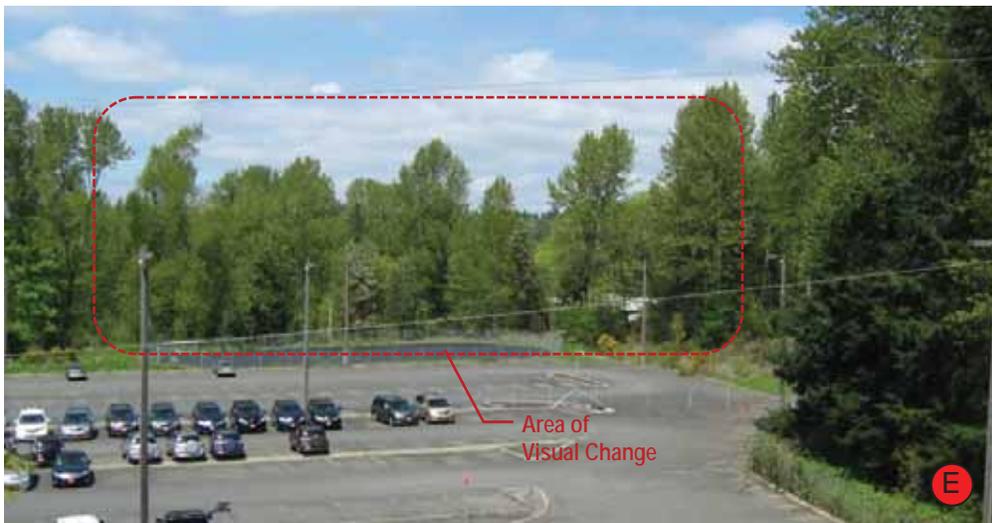
iii. Background

1. Existing mature vegetation will be removed from view during construction and replaced with vegetation that will grow to similar heights over time.

b. Change in visual quality

i. +0.22

ii. Non-significant



F. 134<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE roundabout

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. None.

iii. Background

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.
2. The top of the new Factoria RTS building may be minimally visible from this vantage point.
3. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.
4. Visual impact may be greater from upper floors of private homes; however assessment was not possible without entering private residences.

b. Change in visual quality

i. +0.04

ii. Non-significant



G. SE 26<sup>th</sup> Street and 138<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. None.

iii. Background

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.
2. The new Factoria RTS building may be minimally visible from this vantage point.
3. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.

b. Change in visual quality

- i. -0.07

ii. Non-significant



H. SE 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, West of Richards Road

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. None.

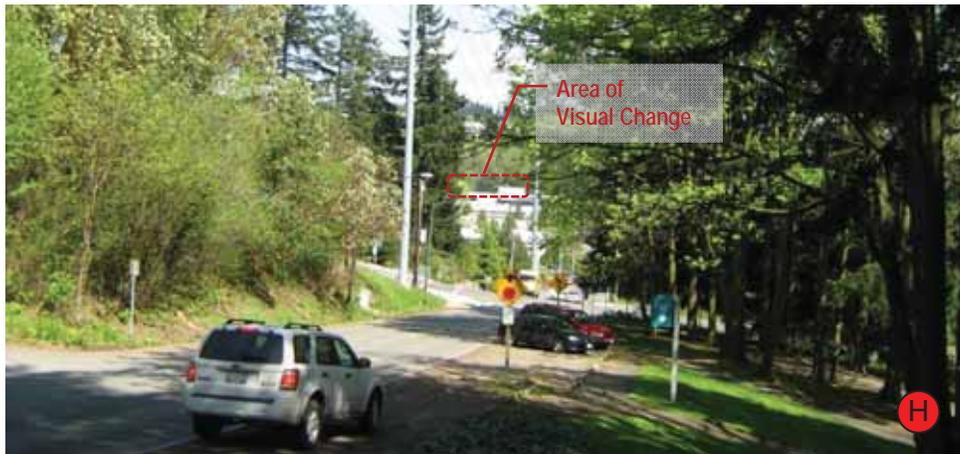
iii. Background

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.
2. The new Factoria RTS building may be minimally visible from this vantage point.
3. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.

b. Change in visual quality

i. +0.07

ii. Non-significant



I. Sunset Park

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. None.

iii. Background:

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.
2. The top of the new Factoria RTS building may be minimally visible from this vantage point.
3. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.

b. Change in visual quality

- i. -0.04

ii. Non-significant



J. Chestnut Hill Academy Field

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. None.

iii. Background:

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from during construction view and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.

2. The new Factoria RTS building may be visible from this vantage point during winter months when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.

b. Change in visual quality

i. -0.04

ii. Non-significant



K. View from Chestnut Hill Academy Parking lot overlooking power substation

a. Alterations to view:

i. Foreground:

1. None.

ii. Mid-ground:

1. None.

iii. Background:

1. Existing mature trees will be removed from view during construction and replaced with trees that will grow to similar heights over time.
2. The new Factoria RTS building will be visible from this vantage point.
3. Visual impact may be greater in winter months, when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.

b. Change in visual quality

- i. +0.15

- ii. Non-significant



BEFORE



AFTER

The following locations have been assessed for visual quality impact and no potential change in visual quality has been found. Images were taken from these locations and assigned a number for documentation purposes. (See aerial key map on page 3.)

1. HCL America/ Bright Horizons Family Solutions parking lot (NW corner)
  - a. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.



2. 139<sup>th</sup> Ave SE at Amica Mutual Insurance Company/ American Family Insurance parking structure roof
  - a. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.



3. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street and 139<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE
  - a. No impact from ROW.
  - b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
  - c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



4. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street and 139<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE
  - a. No impact from ROW.
  - b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
  - c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



5. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street and 137<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE
  - a. No impact from ROW.
  - b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
  - c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



6. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street at northward bend in street
  - a. No impact from ROW.
  - b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
  - c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



7. 2680 139th AVE SE townhomes

- d. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
- e. Topography prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.



8. SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street at northward bend towards dead-end

- a. No impact from ROW.
- b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
- c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



9. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, Skyridge Park
  - a. No impact from ROW.
  - b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
  - c. Topography prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.



10. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 21<sup>st</sup> Street and 138<sup>th</sup> Ave SE
  - a. No impact from ROW.
  - b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
  - c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



11. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 23<sup>rd</sup> Lane and 138<sup>th</sup> Ave SE

- a. No impact from ROW.
- b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
- c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



12. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, View from Approximately 2108 137<sup>th</sup> Ave SE

- a. No impact from ROW.
- b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
- c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



13. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 20<sup>th</sup> Street and 139<sup>th</sup> Place SE

- a. No impact from ROW.
- b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
- c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



14. Sunset Hills Neighborhood, SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street

- a. No impact from ROW.
- b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
- c. Housing and topography prevent views of the Factoria RTS site. Visual impact may be present from upper floors of private homes or businesses; however assessment was not possible without entering private property.



15. Woodridge Neighborhood, SE 29<sup>th</sup> Place east of intersection with 129<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE
- a. No impact from ROW.
  - b. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.



16. 139<sup>th</sup> Place SE and 139<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE
- c. No impact from ROW.
  - a. A mixture of existing deciduous and evergreen trees prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.
  - b. Topography prevents views of the Factoria RTS site.



# General Mitigation Measures

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All efforts will be made to minimize the visual quality impact of the facility. The following is a non-exhaustive list of ways in-which the design and implementation of the Factoria Recycling and Transfer Station Replacement Project will address the visual impact from the above viewpoints:

- a. The facility will meet all requirements of the local zoning code, including screening requirements, and setbacks.
- b. Mature vegetation will be replaced with vegetation that will grow to similar heights over time.
- c. The facility will be designed to a visual character in fitting with its surrounding area.
- d. Offsite mature plant material will be protected during construction to maintain maximum screening of the site.
- e. The facility will be designed to include on-site and off-site mitigation for the removal of mature plant material including reforestation in select areas.
- f. The project team is in close coordination with the City of Bellevue design review process to ensure aesthetic compatibility with adjacent development.

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## **EXHIBIT A**

### **Excerpt from Bellevue City Code**

(Source: <http://www.codepublishing.com/wa/bellevue/>)

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20.20.520 Landscape Development.

A. Purpose.

Landscape development, including retention of significant trees, as required by this section is necessary to maintain and protect property values, to enhance the visual appearance of the City, to preserve the natural wooded character of the Pacific Northwest, to promote utilization of natural systems, to reduce the impacts of development on the storm drainage system and water resources, and to provide a better transition between the various land uses permitted in the City.

B. Applicability.

The requirements of this section shall be imposed any time a permit, approval, or review including land alteration or land development including subdivisions, short subdivisions or planned unit developments, a change in lot coverage or impervious surface, or a change in the area devoted to parking and circulation is required by this Code, or by the International Building Code, as adopted and amended by the City of Bellevue. However, this section does not apply to a permit for a single-family dwelling, unless restrictions on the removal of significant trees on individual single-family lots have been imposed through prior City approval.

C. Required Review.

1. The Department of Planning and Community Development shall review the proposed landscape development with each application within the applicability of this section.
2. The Utility Department shall review all landscape and irrigation system designs for compliance with BCC [24.02.205](#) et seq., regarding landscape irrigation water budget requirements of the City Water Utility Code.

D. Minimum Design Qualification.

If the landscaped area on the subject property which is irrigated exceeds 500 square feet or if the applicant requests Alternative Landscaping Option pursuant to subsection J of this section, the Director shall require approval of the proposed landscape plan by a privately retained registered Landscape Architect, Washington Certified Nurseryman or Washington Certified Landscaper.

E. Preservation of Significant Trees.

See Tree Retention. LUC [20.20.900](#).

F. Site Landscaping.

1. Perimeter Landscaping Requirements for Use Districts. The applicant shall provide site perimeter landscaping either according to the following chart and subject to paragraphs F.2 and F.6 of this section; or in conformance with subsection J of this section.

Perimeter Landscaping Requirements for Use Districts

Land Use District in Which the Subject Property is Located <sup>3</sup>	Street Frontage (Type and Minimum Depth)	Interior Property Lines (Type and Minimum Depth) <sup>1</sup>
R-10, 15, 20, 30	Type III, 10' but if located in a Transition Area, and directly abutting S/F <sup>2</sup> , see Part <a href="#">20.25B</a> LUC for requirements.	Type III, 8' but if located in a Transition Area, and directly abutting S/F <sup>2</sup> , see Part <a href="#">20.25B</a> LUC for requirements.
NB, PO, O, OLB, OLB-OS	Type III, 10' but if located in a Transition Area, and directly abutting S/F <sup>2</sup> , R-10, 15, 20 or 30, see Part <a href="#">20.25B</a> LUC for requirements. <sup>4</sup>	Type III, 10' but if located in a Transition Area, and directly abutting S/F <sup>2</sup> , R-10, 15, 20 or 30, see Part <a href="#">20.25B</a> LUC for requirements. <sup>4</sup>
LI, GC, CB	Type III, 10' but if located in a Transition Area, and directly abutting S/F <sup>2</sup> , R-10, 15, 20 or 30, see Part <a href="#">20.25B</a> LUC for requirements.	Type III, 8' but if located in a Transition Area, and directly abutting S/F <sup>2</sup> , R-10, 15, 20 or 30, see Part <a href="#">20.25B</a> LUC for requirements.

(1) If approved by the Directors of the Planning and Community Development and Utilities Departments, such landscape area may be used for biofiltration swales. If used for biofiltration swales, this area shall be landscaped with quantities and species of plant materials that are compatible with the functional intent of the biofiltration swale. If the property which abuts the subject property is in the same or a more intensive land use district than the subject property, the landscaping required along that common interior property line may be relocated.

(2) S/F includes the R-1, R-1.8, R-2.5, R-3.5, R-4, R-5, and R-7.5 Land Use Districts.

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of this paragraph, landscape development requirements for specific uses are listed in paragraph F.2 of this section.

(4) Landscape development requirements for the OLB-OS District may be modified pursuant to Part [20.25L](#) LUC.

2. Planting Requirements for Specific Uses. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph F.1 of this section, the uses listed in this paragraph require specific landscaping as follows:

a. Subject to paragraph F.6 of this section, the following uses require 15 feet of Type I landscaping on all sides when located above ground and not housed within a building or accessory to another use; and if located outside of a public right-of-way:

- i. Electrical utility facility, provided transmission lines are excluded from the requirements of this section;
- ii. Sewage pumping station;
- iii. Water distribution facility.

Alternative landscaping may be approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development if the requirements of subsection J of this section are met, and if visibility is essential to safety, security, or maintenance access.

b. Subject to paragraph F.6 of this section, the following uses require 10 feet of Type II landscaping along the street frontage, and 10 feet of Type III landscaping along interior property lines unless a more stringent requirement is specified in paragraph F.1 of this section:

- i. Church;
- ii. Commercial or public parking lot not serving a primary use;
- iii. Mobile home park;
- iv. Government service building;
- v. Community club;
- vi. Charitable or fraternal organization;
- vii. Hospital not located in the Medical Institution District;
- viii. Solid waste disposal facility.

Alternative landscaping may be approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development if the requirements of subsection J of this section are met.

c. Subject to paragraph F.6 of this section, equipment and vehicle storage yards require 15 feet of Type I landscaping on all sides if in a Transition Area, or visible from a public right-of-way. Alternative landscaping may be approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development if the requirements of subsection J of this section are met.

d. Subject to paragraph F.6 of this section, the perimeter landscaping requirements for schools are set forth in LUC [20.20.740](#). Alternative landscaping may be approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development if the requirements of subsection J of this section are met.

3. Parking Area Landscaping. Parking areas require landscaping as follows in addition to any site perimeter landscaping required by paragraph F.1 or F.2 of this section:
  - a. Type V landscaping is required within a parking area.
  - b. A curb or other physical separation is required around each landscape area to separate that area from the parking and circulation area.
4. Except for site perimeter landscaping areas required under paragraph F.6 of this section, landscape features such as decorative paving, sculptures, rock features or fountains are permitted in the required site perimeter landscaping area so long as such features are made of pervious materials, or are specifically exempt from impervious surface limits under LUC 20.20.460.D. The area devoted to such a feature may not exceed 50 percent of the required area. Rockeries over 30 inches in height are not rock features for the purpose of this section, and may not be counted toward the required area for landscaping.
5. All plantings and fences required by this section are subject to the street intersection sight obstruction requirements, BCC [14.60.240](#). All plant materials must be pruned as necessary to comply with BCC [14.60.240](#).
6. Existing Vegetation in Lieu of Landscape Development. If the proposal is located within the Critical Areas Overlay District, the Director shall waive the planting requirements of paragraphs F.1 and F.2 of this section and shall require the use of native vegetation that exists within a critical area or within a critical area buffer in lieu of landscape development if the width of that existing vegetated area equals at least twice the dimension required by paragraph F.1 or F.2 of this section. Supplemental landscaping may be added adjacent to a setback to create the necessary width.
7. The Director will allow the planting requirements of paragraphs F.1 and F.2 of this section to be satisfied within a critical area buffer where landscaping is added pursuant to a habitat improvement plan meeting the requirements of LUC [20.25H.055](#).
8. Site Landscaping Design Standards.
  - a. Landscaping plans shall show locations of retained trees, initial size, location and name of plant materials to be installed. For landscaping plans submitted with Building Permits or Clearing and Grading Permits, detailed irrigation plans are required.
  - b. Landscaping shall not include irrigated turf strips which are less than five feet in width. Soils within any irrigated turf strip used to satisfy the requirements of this section shall be amended as required by soil amendment standards established by the Director.
  - c. Irrigated turf shall not be included on slopes with finished grades in excess of 33 percent.
  - d. Landscaping areas which are irrigated shall be designed so that plants are grouped according to distinct hydrozones for irrigation of plants with similar water needs at a good efficiency.
  - e. In all newly landscaped areas, soils shall be amended as required by soil amendment standards established by the Director.

- f. Newly landscaped areas, except turf, shall be covered and maintained with at least two inches of organic mulch to minimize evaporation.

G. Types of Landscaping.

- 1. Type I. Purpose. Type I landscaping is intended to provide a very dense sight barrier to significantly separate uses and land use districts.

Description.

- a. Two rows of evergreen trees, a minimum of six feet in height and planted at intervals of no greater than 20 feet on center. The trees must be backed by a sight-obscuring fence, a minimum of five feet high or the required width of the planting area must be increased by 10 feet; and
- b. Shrubs a minimum of three and one-half feet in height planted in an area at least five feet in width, and other plant materials, planted so that the ground will be covered within three years;
- c. Alternatively, the trees and shrubs may be planted on an earthen berm at least 15 feet in width and an average of five feet high along its midline.

- 2. Type II. Purpose. Type II landscaping is intended to create a visual separation between uses and land use districts.

Description.

- a. Evergreen and deciduous trees, with no more than 30 percent being deciduous, a minimum of six feet in height, and planted at intervals no greater than 20 feet on center; and
- b. Shrubs, a minimum of three and one-half feet in height and other plant materials, planted so that the ground will be covered within three years.

- 3. Type III. Purpose. Type III landscaping is intended to provide visual separation of uses from streets, and visual separation of compatible uses so as to soften the appearance of streets, parking areas and building elevations.

Description.

- a. Evergreen and deciduous trees, with no more than 50 percent being deciduous, a minimum of six feet in height, and planted at intervals no greater than 30 feet on center; and
- b. If planted to buffer a building elevation, shrubs, a minimum of three and one-half feet in height, and living ground cover planted so that the ground will be covered within three years; or
- c. If planted to buffer a parking area, access, or site development other than a building, any of the following alternatives may be used unless otherwise noted:

- i. Shrubs, a minimum of three and one-half feet in height and living ground cover must be planted so that the ground will be covered within three years.
- ii. Earth-mounding, an average of three and one-half feet in height, planted with shrubs or living ground cover so that the ground will be covered within three years. This alternative may not be used in a Downtown Land Use District.
- iii. A combination of earth-mounding and shrubs to produce a visual barrier at least three and one-half feet in height.

4. Type IV. Purpose. Type IV landscaping is intended to provide visual relief where clear sight is desired.

Description.

Plant materials which will cover the ground within three years, and which will not exceed three and one-half feet in height. Trees are also permitted if the trunk is free of branches below six feet in height.

5. Type V. Purpose. To provide visual relief and shade in parking areas.

Description.

a. Required Amount.

- i. If the parking area contains no more than 50 parking spaces, at least 17.5 square feet of landscape development must be provided as described in paragraph G.5.b of this section for each parking stall proposed.
- ii. If the parking area contains more than 99 parking spaces, at least 35 square feet of landscape development must be provided as described in paragraph G.5.b of this section for each parking stall proposed.
- iii. If the parking area contains more than 50, but less than 100 parking spaces, the Director shall determine the required amount of landscaping by interpolating between 17.5 and 35 square feet for each parking stall proposed. The area must be landscaped as described in paragraph G.5.b of this section.

b. Design.

- i. Each area of landscaping must contain at least 100 square feet of area and must be at least four feet in any direction exclusive of vehicle overhang. The area must contain at least one tree at least six feet in height and with a minimum size of one and one-half inches in caliper if deciduous. The remaining ground area must be landscaped with plant materials, decorative mulch or unit pavers.
- ii. A landscaped area must be placed at the interior end of each parking row in a multiple-lane parking area. This area must be at least four feet wide and must extend the length of the adjacent parking stall.
- iii. Up to 100 percent of the trees proposed for the parking area may be deciduous.

H. Limitation of Landscaping Requirements.

1. Except in a Transition Area, the total Buildable Area of the subject property which is required to be landscaped is limited as follows. The location of this landscaping within the Buildable Area must meet the purpose and intent of paragraphs A, F.1 and G of this section.

- a. Twenty percent of the Buildable Area in an NB, PO, O or OLB Land Use District;
- b. Fifteen percent of the Buildable Area in an LI, GC or CB Land Use District;
- c. Twenty percent of the Buildable Area of the Development Area in an OLB-OS Land Use District.

I. Species Choice.

The applicant shall utilize plant materials which complement the natural character of the Pacific Northwest, and which are adaptable to the climatic, topographic, and hydrologic characteristics of the site, and shall include at least 50 percent native species in the required plantings. If the subject property is within the Critical Areas Overlay District, the applicant shall utilize plant species as specified by the Director which enhance that critical area and critical area buffer. In selecting species, the applicant should utilize plant materials which reduce or eliminate the need for fertilizers, herbicides, or other chemical controls, especially for properties within the Critical Areas Overlay District. Plant materials may not include noxious weeds or species, as designated by the Director.

J. Alternative Landscaping Option.

1. The applicant may request a modification of the landscaping requirements set forth in subsections E through I of this section; provided, however, that modification of the provisions of paragraph F.6 of this section may not allow disturbance of a critical area or critical area buffer.

2. The Director may administratively approve a modification of the landscaping requirements of this chapter if:

- a. The proposed landscaping represents an equal or better result than that which could be achieved by strictly following the requirements of this section; and
- b. The proposed landscaping complies with the stated purpose of this section (subsection A), and with the purpose and intent of paragraphs F.1 and G of this section; and
- c. If a modification of any paragraph excluding subsection E of this section is requested, the proposed landscaping either:
  - i. Incorporates the increased retention of significant trees and naturally occurring undergrowth; or
  - ii. Better accommodates or improves the existing physical conditions of the subject property; or
  - iii. Incorporates elements to provide for wind protection or to maintain solar access; or

- iv. Incorporates elements to protect or improve water quality; or
- v. Incorporates native species in a design that better buffers a critical area and critical area buffer from uses on the site, including parking.

d. If a modification of subsection E of this section is requested, the proposal either:

- i. Incorporates the retention of significant trees equal in number to what would otherwise be required, or
- ii. Incorporates the retention of other natural vegetation in consolidated locations which promotes the natural vegetated character of the site.

3. Effect of Approval. Following approval of alternative landscaping by the Director, the applicant may meet the landscaping requirements of this Code by complying with the approved landscape development proposal. A copy of the approved landscape development proposal will be placed in the official file.

#### K. Maintenance of Plant Materials.

- 1. The property owner shall replace any unhealthy or dead plant materials in conformance with the approved landscape development proposal and shall maintain all landscape material.
- 2. The Director shall require a maintenance assurance device for a period of one year from the completion of planting in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section in conformance with LUC [20.40.490](#).

#### L. Performance Assurance.

- 1. The required landscaping must be installed prior to issuance of the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy unless the Director determines that a performance assurance device, for a period of not more than one year, will adequately protect the interests of the City. In no case may the property owner delay performance for more than one year.
- 2. If a performance assurance device is permitted under paragraph L.1 of this section, the Director shall require an assurance device in conformance with LUC [20.40.490](#). (Ord. [5805](#), 3-3-08, § 6; Ord. [5683](#), 6-26-06, §§ 10 – 13; Ord. [5662](#), 3-20-06, § 1; Ord. [5587](#), 3-7-05, § 6; Ord. [5571](#), 12-6-04, § 5; Ord. [5480](#), 10-20-03, § 9; Ord. [5457](#), 7-21-03, § 5; Ord. [5431](#), 1-21-03, § 1; Ord. [5403](#), 8-5-02, §§ 6, 7; Ord. [5232](#), 7-17-00, § 5; Ord. [5089](#), 8-3-98, §§ 17, 18; Ord. [5086](#), 8-3-98, § 3; Ord. [4979](#), 3-17-97, § 6; Ord. [4973](#), 3-3-97, § 601; Ord. [4816](#), 12-4-95, § 701; Ord. [4302](#), 11-18-91, §§ 3 – 5; Ord. [4255](#), 6-3-91, § 3; Ord. [4130](#), 3-12-90, § 2; Ord. [3775](#), 5-26-87, §§ 12 – 15; Ord. [3690](#), 8-4-86, §§ 6, 7; Ord. [3530](#), 8-12-85, §§ 23 – 25; Ord. [3498](#), 5-27-85, § 16; Ord. [3145](#), 9-27-82, § 37)

## 20.20.900 Tree retention and replacement.

### A. Purpose.

Retention of significant trees as required by this section is necessary to maintain and protect property values, to enhance the visual appearance of the City, to preserve the natural wooded character of the Pacific Northwest, to promote utilization of natural systems, to reduce the impacts of development on the storm drainage system and water resources, and to provide a better transition between the various land uses permitted in the City.

### B. Applicability.

The requirements of this section shall be imposed any time a permit, approval, or review including land alteration or land development including subdivisions, short subdivisions or planned unit developments, a change in lot coverage, or a change in the area devoted to parking and circulation is required by the Bellevue City Code or Land Use Code. Subsection F of this section shall apply to permits for new single-family structures and for additions to impervious surface areas that exceed 20 percent when located on a single-family lot developed with a residential use. Subsection E of this section applies to the removal of any significant trees in the R-1 Land Use District located in the Bridle Trails Subarea.

### C. Required Review.

The Department of Planning and Community Development shall review the proposed removal of significant trees with each application within the applicability of this section.

### D. Retention of Significant Trees for Subdivisions, Short Subdivisions, Planned Unit Development, Change in Lot Coverage, or Change in the Area Devoted to Parking and Circulation, Excluding Areas Located in the R-1 Land Use District in the Bridle Trails Subarea and for New or Expanding Single-Family Structures.

1. **Perimeter Landscaping Area.** In the required perimeter landscaping area, as set forth in LUC 20.20.520.F.1, the applicant shall retain all significant trees which will not constitute a safety hazard. For properties located in Bel-Red Land Use Districts, refer to perimeter landscape development at LUC [20.25D.110](#). Area devoted to access and sight areas as defined in the Transportation Code (Chapter [14.06](#) BCC) and area to be cleared for required roads, utilities, sidewalks, trails, or storm drainage improvements are exempt from this requirement.

#### 2. Site Interior.

a. In areas of the site other than the required perimeter landscaping area, the applicant must retain at least 15 percent of the diameter inches of the significant trees existing in this area; provided that alder and cottonwood trees' diameter inches shall be discounted by a factor of 0.5. In applying the requirement for retention of significant trees, the Director shall consider the preservation of the following types of significant trees a priority:

- i. Healthy significant trees over 60 feet in height;
- ii. Significant trees which form a continuous canopy;
- iii. Significant trees which contribute to the character of the environment, and do not constitute a safety hazard;

- iv. Significant trees which provide winter wind protection or summer shade;
- v. Groups of significant trees which create a distinctive skyline feature; and
- vi. Significant trees in areas of steep slopes or adjacent to watercourses or wetlands.

b. The Director may approve retention of trees which do not meet the definition of significant trees as a contribution toward the sum of the diameter inches required under subsection D.2.a of this section if a group of trees and its associated undergrowth can be preserved.

3. For subdivisions, short subdivisions, and planned unit developments, the applicant shall retain a minimum of 30 percent of the diameter inches of significant trees existing on the total site area of the development; provided that alder and cottonwood trees' diameter inches shall be discounted by a factor of 0.5.

4. Exemption. The provisions of this subsection which require retention of significant trees are not applicable in any Downtown Land Use District.

5. The applicant shall utilize tree protection techniques approved by the Director during land alteration and construction in order to provide for the continual healthy life of retained significant trees.

6. Reduced Parking Bonus. If the proposed landscape plan incorporates the retention of significant trees above that required by this section, the Director may approve a reduction of up to 10 percent of the required number of parking spaces if adequate parking will remain on the subject property, and if land area for the required number of spaces remains available for future development on the subject property.

E. Retention of Significant Trees in the R-1 Land Use District in the Bridle Trails Subarea for any Type of Land Alteration or Development.

1. Permit Required. As required by BCC 23.76.025.A.7, a clearing and grading permit must be obtained from the City prior to the removal of any significant tree from any lot in the R-1 Land Use District in the Bridle Trails Subarea. The applicant may request a vegetation management plan to cover all proposed tree removal activities within a three-year period. In addition, for the removal of more than two significant trees within any three-year period, the requirements of subsections E.2 and E.3 below apply.

2. Perimeter Tree Retention Requirement. For all lots in the R-1 Land Use District in the Bridle Trails Subarea, all significant trees which do not constitute a safety hazard within the first 20 feet adjacent to all property lines shall be retained. Area devoted to access and sight areas as defined in the Transportation Code (Chapter [14.06](#) BCC), and area to be cleared for required roads, utilities, sidewalks, trails, or storm drainage improvements is exempt from this requirement. In the event this requirement conflicts with minimum setback requirements for structures (LUC 20.20.010), the Alternative Tree Retention Option (subsection G of this section) may be used to allow development consistent with the setbacks established under LUC [20.20.010](#).

3. Site Interior Tree Retention Requirement.

- a. In addition to the required perimeter tree retention area, at least 25 percent of the cumulative diameter inches of existing significant trees must be retained; provided, that alder and cottonwood trees' diameter inches shall be discounted by a factor of 0.5.

b. The Director may approve retention of trees which do not meet the definition of significant trees as a contribution toward the sum of the diameter inches required under subsection E.3.a of this section if a group of trees and its associated undergrowth can be preserved.

4. Tree Replacement Requirement. On any lot with eight or less significant trees, a planting plan showing a one-to-one ratio of replacement trees is required. Trees must be a minimum of six feet in height at planting.

F. Retention of Significant Trees for New or Expanding Single-Family Structures Excluding Single-Family Structures Located in the R-1 Land Use District in the Bridle Trails Subarea.

1. Site Area. For new single-family structures or additions to impervious surface areas that exceed 20 percent when located on a single-family lot developed with a residential use, the applicant shall retain a minimum of 30 percent of the diameter inches of significant trees existing in the site area; provided, that alder and cottonwood trees' diameter inches shall be discounted by a factor of 0.5. In applying the requirement for retention of significant trees, the Director shall consider the preservation of the following types of significant trees a priority:

- a. Healthy significant trees over 60 feet in height;
- b. Significant trees which form a continuous canopy;
- c. Significant trees which contribute to the character of the environment, and do not constitute a safety hazard;
- d. Significant trees which provide winter wind protection or summer shade;
- e. Groups of significant trees which create a distinctive skyline feature;
- f. Significant trees in areas of steep slopes or adjacent to watercourses or wetlands; and
- g. Significant trees located within the first 20 feet adjacent to a property line.

2. The Director may approve retention of trees which do not meet the definition of significant trees as a contribution toward the sum of the diameter inches required under LUC 20.20.900.F.1 if a group of trees and its associated undergrowth can be preserved.

3. The applicant shall utilize tree protection techniques approved by the Director during land alteration and construction in order to provide for the continual healthy life of retained significant trees.

G. Alternative Tree Retention or Replacement Option.

1. An applicant may request a modification of the tree retention requirements set forth in subsections D, E, and F of this section.

2. The Director may administratively approve a modification of the perimeter or interior tree retention requirements if:

- a. The modification is consistent with the stated purpose of this section; and
- b. The modification proposal either:

- i. Incorporates the retention or replacement of significant trees equal in equivalent diameter inches or incorporates the increased retention or replacement of significant trees and naturally occurring undergrowth to what would otherwise be required; or
- ii. Incorporates the retention or replacement of other natural vegetation in consolidated locations which promotes the natural vegetated character of the site and neighborhood including use as pasture land or for agricultural uses.
- iii. Where a modification proposal includes supplemental or replacement trees in lieu of retention, the applicant shall utilize plant materials which complement the natural character of the Pacific Northwest, and which are adaptable to the climatic, topographic, and hydrologic characteristics of the site. (Ord. [5896](#), 8-3-09, § 3; Ord. [5876](#), 5-18-09, § 22; Ord. [5791](#), 12-3-07, § 14; Ord. [5662](#), 3-20-06, § 2)

## **EXHIBIT B**

### **Visual Quality Matrix -Sites with Visual Quality Change**

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Prepared by: Hough Beck & Baird Inc.																			
VIEW POINT		A	A	B	B	C	C	D	D	E	E	F	F	G	G	H	H	I	I
(Ex=existing, Pr=proposed)		Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr	Ex	Pr
FOREGROUND	LANDFORM	2	2	1	1	5	7	7	7	5	5	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	4
	VEGETATION	4	4	2	2	3	7	7	6	1	1	3	3	2	2	4	4	5	5
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	4	4	3	3	3	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
	AVERAGE	3.33	3.33	2.00	2.00	3.67	6.67	5.00	4.67	2.33	2.33	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00
MIDDLEGROUND	LANDFORM	2	2	2	2	1	1	4	4	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
	VEGETATION	5	5	3	5	1	6	4	5	1	3	5	5	2	2	3	4	4	4
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	4	4	4	6	5	7	2	7	1	1	5	5	3	3	2	2	2	2
	AVERAGE	3.67	3.67	3.00	4.33	2.33	4.67	3.33	5.33	1.00	2.33	4.00	4.00	2.67	2.67	2.67	2.67	3.00	3.00
BACKGROUND	LANDFORM	3	3	4	6	1	1	1	1	3	5	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
	VEGETATION	4	4	3	5	2	2	4	3	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	2
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	1	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	1	4	2	2	2	2
	AVERAGE	2.67	3.00	3.33	4.67	1.33	1.33	2.00	1.67	2.67	3.33	3.33	3.33	2.33	3.00	2.33	2.33	2.00	2.00
FOREGROUND	LANDFORM	5	5	5	5	1	5	5	5	1	1	5	5	4	4	4	6	6	6
	VEGETATION	5	5	3	3	3	7	3	5	1	1	5	5	1	1	3	4	4	4
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	7	7	3	3	2	5	2	3	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	4	4	4
	AVERAGE	5.67	5.67	3.67	3.67	2.00	5.67	3.33	4.33	1.00	1.00	3.67	3.67	2.67	2.67	3.33	3.33	4.67	4.67
MIDDLEGROUND	LANDFORM	5	5	4	4	1	5	4	4	4	3	5	5	3	3	4	5	5	5
	VEGETATION	5	5	4	3	3	7	3	5	2	2	6	6	3	3	2	5	5	5
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	7	7	2	6	2	5	1	7	1	1	7	7	3	3	2	6	6	6
	AVERAGE	5.67	5.67	3.33	4.33	2.00	5.67	2.67	5.33	2.33	2.00	6.00	6.00	3.00	3.00	2.67	2.67	5.33	5.33
BACKGROUND	LANDFORM	7	7	6	5	5	5	1	1	3	4	7	7	4	3	4	6	6	6
	VEGETATION	5	4	3	6	5	5	5	3	4	4	6	5	5	4	4	4	4	4
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	4	4	3	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	2	2	3	4	4	4
	AVERAGE	5.33	5.00	4.00	5.33	3.67	3.67	2.33	1.67	2.67	3.00	6.00	6.00	3.67	3.00	3.67	4.00	4.67	4.67
FOREGROUND	LANDFORM	3	3	4	4	1	5	4	4	1	1	4	4	1	1	3	4	4	4
	VEGETATION	3	3	3	3	2	7	3	4	1	1	3	3	1	1	3	4	4	4
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	3	3	2	2	2	7	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	4	4
	AVERAGE	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.67	6.33	3.00	3.67	1.00	1.00	2.67	2.67	1.00	1.00	2.67	2.67	4.00	4.00
MIDDLEGROUND	LANDFORM	3	3	3	3	3	5	4	3	1	1	4	4	1	1	3	4	4	4
	VEGETATION	3	3	3	5	1	7	5	3	1	1	5	5	2	2	2	3	3	3
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	3	3	2	6	2	7	1	5	1	1	6	6	1	1	2	3	3	3
	AVERAGE	3.00	3.00	2.67	4.67	2.00	6.33	3.33	3.67	1.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	1.33	1.33	2.33	2.33	3.33	3.33
BACKGROUND	LANDFORM	6	6	3	5	5	5	1	1	2	2	7	7	4	4	5	5	5	5
	VEGETATION	6	5	3	6	5	5	5	3	3	6	5	3	3	2	4	4	4	4
	MAN-MADE ELEMENTS	3	3	3	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	5	4	4	4	3	3
	AVERAGE	4.15	4.11	3.11	4.15	2.48	4.89	3.04	3.56	1.78	2.00	4.19	4.15	2.52	2.44	3.00	3.07	3.93	3.89
<b>TOTAL VISUAL QUALITY</b>																			
<b>CHANGE IN VISUAL QUALITY</b>																			
<b>Scale</b>		<b>INTACTNESS</b>																	
GE IN VISUAL QUALITY = SIGNIFICANT CHANGE		7 VERY HIGH																	
VISUAL QUALITY = NON-SIGNIFICANT CHANGE		6 HIGH																	
VISUAL QUALITY = IMPROVEMENT IN VISUAL QUALITY		5 MODERATELY HIGH																	
VISUAL QUALITY = REDUCTION IN VISUAL QUALITY		4 AVERAGE																	
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