Saanich's Replacement Tree Process: Planting tips and how to get your money back!

Identify, prepare and protect the tree planting areas:

Depending on your project and permit, the planting sites may need to be protected or remediated during construction to be able to accommodate new trees. Depending on the project scope, this will be determined via your landscape plan or the tree permit. Saanich requires adequate soil volume to support tree establishment and long-term growth. On-site trees are to meet the Canadian Landscape Standards for tree planting. If you have any questions about this, please check with your consulting arborist, or for residential tree permits, Saanich arborists are happy to help.

For required replacement trees on boulevards, Saanich Parks requires a minimum available soil volume: 8 m^3 for small class trees, 12 m^3 for medium class trees and 16 m^3 for large class trees. If sufficient soil volume cannot be provided, soil cells under the adjacent hardscape is the preferred method of providing soil volume

Step One: Select and Purchase a Tree

For building permits, please ensure the selected tree is suitable for its location. For boulevard tree replacements, please refer to your approved plan, or contact Saanich Parks. For Development Permits, refer to the approved landscape plan for species and locations.

The tree(s) must meet the Tree Protection Bylaw No. 9272 (Bylaw) requirements:

- Deciduous
  - Not less than 4 centimeters in diameter
- Coniferous
  - Not less than 3 meters in height

Trees native to the region have reduced size requirements due to limited commercial availability and to encourage their use, where appropriate. Please note, cultivar species are not included in the reduced size requirement.

Tree Species	Minimum acceptable size
Arbutus (*Arbutus menziesii*) Big Leaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) Bitter Cherry (*Prunus emarginata*) Black Hawthorne (*Crataegus douglasii*) Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*) Pacific Dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*) Pacific Yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) Trembling Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) Western Yew (*Taxus brevifolia*)	2.5 cm caliper or 1.8 m height
Douglas-Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*) Shore Pine (*Pinus contorta*) Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*) Western White Pine (*Pinus monticola*)	2.2 m in height

The following are not accepted as replacement trees:

- Tree species planted as a hedge, or hedging species (ex. Smarag'd cedar or equivalent)
- Weeping variety (ex. weeping cherry or equivalent)
- Shrub species (ex. Juniper or laurel)
- Palm trees
- "Dwarf" variety of any tree species

All replacement trees shall be of good health, vigor and structure with no visible signs of disease, insect pests, damage, or other disfigurements. The trees' condition, planting and staking shall comply with the current version of the Canadian Landscape Standards.

Step Two: Plant a Tree

Choosing the right place for your replacement tree is an important step in the process. These are the Bylaw requirements for siting your replacement tree:

1. Trees with a mature height of eight meters or less must be planted at least two meters from building foundation walls.

2. Trees with a mature height over eight meters must be planted at least three meters from building foundation walls.

3. All trees must be planted at least one meter from property lines, regardless of their mature size.

Tree Planting Process:

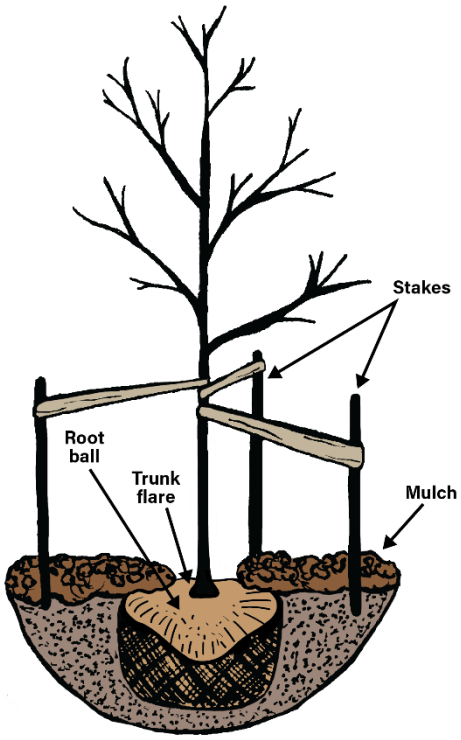
1. Prior to digging, ensure there are no underground utilities or potential above-ground conflicts (i.e., electrical wires).

2. Ideally, plant the tree in the fall or early spring when the weather conditions are cool. If this is not possible, ensure the tree is consistently watered during warm temperatures.

3. Dig a planting hole that is 2-3 times wider than the root ball of the tree but only as deep as the root ball or pot.

4. Remove any materials surrounding the root ball (fabric, wire, etc...) and lightly massage the root ball to loosen the roots.

5. Place the tree at the proper height and angle. The trunk flare should be 2.5 – 5.0 cm above grade after the tree is planted. Examine the tree from several angles and make sure the tree is sitting straight in the planting hole.



6. Gently but firmly fill the hole with soil. Ensure the soil is packed around the root ball to stabilize the tree.

7. If possible, add a 5-10cm layer of mulch around the tree. Mulching helps suppress weeds and retain moisture. Avoid ‘mulch volcanoes’ by spreading the mulch evenly and avoid piling mulch directly against the trunk of the tree.

8. Deer often feed on young shoots and rub their antlers against the base of small trees. Installing tree guards or deer fencing is recommended to protect the trees from damage.

9. If necessary, use 2-3 stakes to provide optimal support (see photo for reference). Studies have shown that trees develop stronger trunks and roots if they are not staked. However, stakes may be necessary in windy, exposed sites or for certain packaging styles (bare root or ball and burlap). Remove stakes after the first year of growth or when trees have rooted and are stable.

Step Three: Getting Your Deposit Back

To get your deposit returned, the tree must be in good health with no visible signs of disease, insect pests, damage, or other disfigurements.

For Building Permits and residential tree permits:

Once you have planted a replacement tree(s) that meet the criteria in your permit and stated above, contact Saanich Parks at (250) 475–5522 or parks@saanich.ca to schedule a tree inspection. Upon inspection and approval, 50% of your deposit will be released. After one year or more from the first inspection, contact Saanich Parks to schedule your second inspection. The second half of the security deposit will be returned following the second inspection if the inspector finds the replacement tree(s) to be in good health.

For Development Permits with Landscape Bonds:

Your landscape architect is required to submit a signed Schedule C to the Saanich Planning Department to initiate the landscape bond release process. Saanich Planning will contact Parks to arrange the landscape inspection. After the landscape has been inspected and approved, 90% of the landscape bond can be returned with a standard 10% hold back for one year for tree survival. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact Planning for the final bond release. Please note that Saanich collects only the higher of the Servicing or Landscape Bonds. If there are outstanding Engineering requirements, the bond may not be released.