



Keep the Emerald City Green

Urban Forest Management Plan

2012 Progress Report

Growing Seattle's Urban Forest: 2012 Comprehensive Planning and Regulatory Updates

Trees are viewed as an important infrastructure element within the City of Seattle due to their role in promoting social, economic, and environmental health. In particular, trees manage storm-water by capturing and slowing rain; filter air pollution; provide food and habitat; and contribute to the character and aesthetic beauty of our neighborhoods and business districts.

In order to maximize the benefits of trees in Seattle, the City engaged in an effort led by the Urban Forest Interdepartmental Team to update city-wide policies and regulations.

Urban Forest Management Plan:

The Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) was created in 2007 to identify goals and strategies to help maintain, preserve, restore, and enhance Seattle's urban forest, making our city a healthier, more beautiful place to live and work. The UFMP is an effort of all the departments that impact trees, coordinated by the Office of Sustainability and Environment.

Important elements of the updated Plan include:

- City-wide canopy cover goals and key indicators of progress
- Current data on the state of the urban forest including trees on public property, in parks, and along rights-of-way
- Action strategies to improve our knowledge, strengthening the City's management practices, and supporting community stewardship of the urban forest
- Summary of existing urban forestry programs in the City

The update is not expected to change the original plan goals and strategies to accomplish the 30 percent canopy cover goal. The new document will incorporate the findings of the Seattle's Forest Ecosystems Values study produced by the Green Cities Research Alliance.

The draft plan was available for public comment and is currently being revised based on City Council input. The updated plan is expected to be adopted by Council in the second quarter of 2013. More information is available at: www.seattle.gov/trees/management.htm

Street Tree Ordinance and Street Tree Manual Standards and Specifications:

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Urban Forestry section began updating the Street Tree Ordinance (last revised in

1961). The updated ordinance was drafted with input from an advisory panel consisting of citizens, commercial arborists, and City staff from several departments. The intent of the ordinance update is to provide greater protection to street trees and to codify current practices and procedures.

SDOT worked closely with Council staff to review the ordinance that is expected to be submitted for City Council adoption in March 2013. More information is available at:

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/treordinance.htm>



Private Property Tree Regulations Update:

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is undertaking a comprehensive update of the tree regulations governing private property. The intent of the update is to improve existing tree regulations to make them easier to understand, implement, and enforce as well as to implement a number of new measures that would expand or improve development standards to better mitigate the impacts of development.

After receiving extensive public comment on a draft proposal in 2010, DPD developed a new iteration of the legislation. The document was available for public comment in 2012. The draft update is undergoing another revision based on Council input. More information is available at:

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/planning/SeattlesTreeRegulationUpdate/Overview/>

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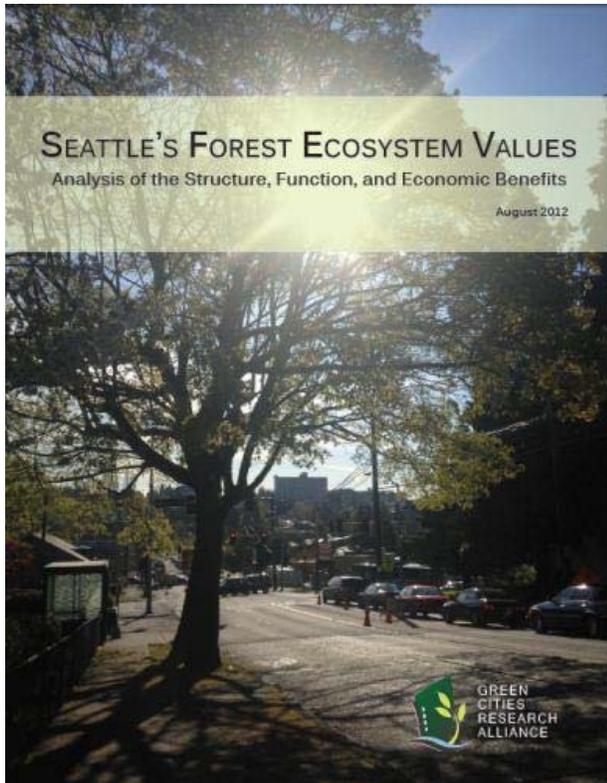
Goal	Objective (Lead Department)	Accomplishments
TREE RESOURCE		
Manage trees to promote health and longevity	Continue restoration on 590 acres of forested parkland. Begin restoration on an additional 70 acres. (Parks)	Continued restoration on 865 acres of forested parkland. Began restoration on 74 acres.
	Maintain 1,800 trees on developed parkland on an 18-year cycle. Inspect 300 trees for risk. (Parks)	Maintained 2,056 trees. Evaluated 421 trees for health and safety.
	Maintain 3,000 Seattle Department of Transportation-managed trees on a 14-year cycle. (SDOT)	Maintained 3,099 trees.
	Prune trees away from 600 miles of electrical distribution lines for electrical safety and reliability. (SCL)	Pruned trees away from 692 miles of electrical distribution lines for electrical safety and reliability.
Increase canopy cover and environmental benefits	<u>Trees planted and maintained by the City:</u> Plant 400 trees in developed parks. Meet 2 for 1 tree replacement policy. (Parks)	Planted 500 trees. Removed 350 unsafe trees. 2 for 1 replacement policy met through inter-departmental planting.
	Plant 800 street trees with Bridging the Gap levy funding. Plant trees as component of capital projects and preserve and protect existing trees. Meet 2 for 1 tree replacement policy. (SDOT)	Planted 1,634 trees (738 with BTG funding and 373 as part of capital projects). Removed 82 trees. 2 for 1 replacement policy directly met.
	Plant 90 trees at Chihuly Garden and Glass project. (Plantings will fulfill 2011 2 for 1 replacement policy) Plant 11 trees and remove 18 at Mural Landscape renovation Project. Meet 2 for 1 tree replacement policy. (Seattle Center)	Planted 95 trees (36 to fulfill 2011 2 for 1 replacement policy). Removed 20 trees. 2 for 1 replacement policy directly met.
	Remove two significant trees at Asian Tigers and Bears project. Planting for 2 for 1 replacement policy will take place in 2013. (Zoo)	Planted 21 trees. Removed two trees. 2 for 1 replacement policy directly met.
	<u>Trees planted and maintained by residents:</u> <u>Trees for Neighborhoods</u> Assist community members in residential areas with low canopy cover to plant and care for 1,000 trees. (reLeaf-SPU)	SPU and reLeaf planted 1,413 trees. Removed six trees. SCL removed 41 trees and planted 96 trees. 2 for 1 replacement policy directly met.
	City-wide tree planting total: 3,759 City-wide tree removals total: 501 Net gain (loss): 3,258	
MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK		
Improve management of trees on private property and ROW through incentives & regulations	<u>Right-of-Way:</u> Adopt updated street tree codes to strengthen regulations related to maintenance of privately maintained trees in the right-of-way. (SDOT)	SDOT finished the update of the Street Tree Ordinance with expected City Council adoption in Q2 2013.
	<u>Private Property:</u> Work with City Council and Mayor to determine preferred private property tree regulations approach and adoption timeline. (DPD)	DPD drafted a regulation update proposal which received public comment in 2012. A final draft is being developed in 2013.
Track Urban Forest Management Plan Implementation	Monitor Urban Forest Management Plan performance and issue an annual progress report. (OSE)	OSE staff monitored plan performance and produced the 2012 annual report.
Implement resource management tools	Incorporate i-Tree survey data into 2012 Urban Forest Management Plan update. (OSE/SPU)	Staff incorporated results from the Seattle's Forest Ecosystems Values study into the UFMP update.

Goal	Objective (Lead Department)	Accomplishments
MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK		
	Develop citywide tree care metrics: Continue to refine tree care metrics and reports on the long-term impact on trees. Prune new and mature street trees. Target resources to prevent deterioration over time. (SDOT) Integrate tree crew work into Parks work load management system. (Parks)	SDOT captured diameter, size class, and reason for all trees removed. Parks integrated tree crew work into work load management system to derive cost of care for all Parks facilities.
	Assess current vegetation management conditions across SCL electrical grid to identify opportunities to improve tree management for safety and reliability. (SCL) Continue to work with SCL on annual revisions to the street tree list; update ROW vegetation management plan to add best management practices. (SDOT)	The Vegetation Management Plan was updated. SDOT and SCL created a review process to update the street tree list and continued to work together to address issues around streetlight illumination and safe working distances.
Facilitate inter-departmental cooperation	Urban Forest interdepartmental team to update the City's reLeaf website. (SPU lead)	SPU worked on updating and revising the reLeaf website to reflect the needs of the IDT.
	Convene Urban Forest Interdepartmental team monthly. (OSE)	Urban Forest IDT met monthly.
	Identify opportunities for better coordination and efficiencies in managing ROW trees. (SDOT/SCL)	SDOT and SCL continued to collaborate to improve street tree management.
COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK		
Enhance awareness of the urban forest as a community resource	Engage 100 youth in Summer Youth Program with Green Seattle Partnership and Trails; deliver three clusters of the K-12 (9 schools) program; deliver program in two SE schools (two Nexus sites); evaluate K-12 program; train five Forest Stewards in native plant identification in partnership with Washington Native Plant Society. (Parks)	Engaged 85 youth in Summer Youth Program; delivered one cluster of K-12 program at four schools; delivered program in two SE schools (Nexus sites); evaluated K-12 program; trained 13 Forest Stewards in native plant ID; held a two-day training for 15 teachers.
	Support community awareness and engagement foundation necessary to meet canopy goal (reLeaf - SPU) <u>Urban Orchard Stewards</u> : support City Fruit in efforts to maintain and stabilize orchard stewardship program. (SPU/Parks) <u>Tree Ambassador</u> : recruit and train ten new volunteers in five neighborhoods, focusing on south Seattle. Support existing volunteers in project implementation. (SPU/SDOT)	22 Urban Orchards Stewards are active in ten parks and have contributed 1,100 hours to restoring urban orchards . SPU and SDOT recruited and trained 26 new Tree Ambassadors and supported project implementation.
Increase community engagement in urban forest management	Recruit and manage 95,000 volunteer hours with 500 GSP volunteer events; support over 20,000 hours of youth employment programs to work at restoration sites; expand volunteer outreach programs to ensure 50,000 volunteer hours total; maintain paid youth employment program with non-profits; develop four new volunteer Forest Stewards and hold eight trainings with expansion into monitoring protocols as well as new forest certification program; pursue grants for over \$100,000; integrate work plans with Planning and Development at seven targeted parks: Kinnear, Lewis, Thornton Creek #6, Capehart, West Seattle Reservoir, Jefferson, and Soundway properties in the West Duwamish. (Parks)	Parks held 800 volunteer events with 50,000 adult and 25,000 youth volunteer hours; Parks funded 10 youth for nine months in partnership with Goodwill; developed 20 new Forest Stewards through eight training sessions; GSP developed and leveraged grant funding in excess of \$250,000; provided oversight for forest and wetland restoration at Lewis, Thornton Creek #6, Capehart, and Soundway properties in the West Duwamish; received International Forest Stewardship Council certification for Park's forested parkland.
	Continue to support neighborhood groups applying for grants to plant trees or install landscapes. (SDOT)	SDOT reviewed DON grant proposals for landscapes and supported Tree Ambassadors.
	reLeaf program to coordinate participation in Arbor Day. (SPU/SDOT/SCL)	SCL hosted a fall Arbor Day event with support from SPU, SDOT, OSE, and Parks.
	Staff the Urban Forest Commission. (OSE)	OSE staffed the Urban Forestry Commission.

Seattle's Forest Ecosystem Values (iTree) Report

The Green Cities Research Alliance (GCRA) was initiated by the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station in 2009 to build a program of research about urban ecosystems in the Puget Sound region. GCRA is an integrated social-ecological research program that engages the social and biophysical sciences to meet the practical needs and concerns of local organizations and agencies. Start-up funding for GCRA was provided by the 2009 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

- Estimate monetary values for the ecosystem services provided by Seattle's trees;
- Compare results to two similar studies in King County parklands, and an urban-to-wildland gradient along the Green-Duwamish River; and
- Improve forest assessment tools for use in King County and other Pacific Northwest communities.



Tree and shrub size and species information was used to quantify associated ecosystem functions and their resulting public benefits and economic values. This research produced findings about the number of trees and tree-like shrubs, the most common species, and the replacement value of Seattle's urban forest. The report also assessed ecosystems functions and values as well as threats to our urban forest.

Sound science provides a basis for long-term management decisions. This study provided baseline data that is being used in the updating of the UFMP. Assessments such as this one also help demonstrate the public value that urban forests offer. Seattle's urban forest is an important resource and a component of the city's infrastructure that offers significant benefits. A better understanding of the values that these trees have on urban livability will encourage and support ongoing resource management, decision making, and funding priorities. For more information about the report go to:

<http://www.seattle.gov/trees/ecoservices.htm>



The Forest Ecosystem Values Project goal was to improve knowledge about the structure, function, and value of Seattle's urban forest. The research team began field data collection in Seattle during the summer of 2010 and was completed in the summer of 2011. Data was collected from 223 plots that were randomly selected within each of the City of Seattle's urban forest management units that are used in the 2007 Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP). Data was analyzed using the USDA Forest Service i-Tree Eco tool, also known as the UFORE model. This approach best allowed the results to be used in conjunction with the UFMP.

Other study goals were to:

- Understand the function and structure of Seattle's urban forest;

Seattle Parks and Recreation received certification from the International Forest Stewardship Council for its forested parkland.

