

**MATERIAL PREPARED FOR DISCUSSION BY THE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION.
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COMMISSION AND MAY OR MAY NOT MOVE FORWARD TO VOTE.**

DRAFTv2

**Re: Comments and Recommendations Planting Plan for SPU Ship Canal Water Quality Program & 3rd
Avenue Water Main Project**

Dear

The Seattle Urban Forestry Commission appreciates the information shared by SPU regarding the Ship Canal Water Quality Program and the Third Avenue Water Main Project and the opportunity to provide input on the planting plans.

We commend you for specifying all native shrub and groundcover species and two native tree species at the Fremont Shaft planting site, as they provide greater habitat functions than non-native plants.

Our suggestions for modifications to the preliminary planting plan follow and in general are focused on:

- using trees that will provide larger canopies;
- providing greater diversity of tree species;
- ensuring that understory plants are appropriate for site conditions; and
- increasing the number of native plants at some of the planting sites.

Regarding the tree species recommendations, we realize that some of the larger trees being suggested may not be possible to use if there are overhead or underground utilities that preclude them due to their eventual size. The recommended street tree substitutions are all from the SDOT approved street tree list.

11th Avenue Shaft:

1. Because SDOT has reported an overuse of maples throughout the City, we recommend substituting the Acer rubrum Frank's Red with a non-maple species such as Quercus coccinea (if fall color is one of the goals).
2. Trees that are large with wide canopies provide better "green infrastructure" services than small trees with narrow canopies. Also, diversity of species is important. Therefore we suggest substituting at least two other species that would provide more canopy cover for the Carpinus japonica, such as Fraxinus Pennsylvanica Cimzam, or similar.

Fremont Shaft:

1. Again, it is recommended that the Acer rubrum Bowhall and the Acer rubrum Frank's Red be substituted with non-maple species such as: one of the elms resistant to Dutch Elm disease, like Ulmus parvifolia 'Emer II'; Liriodendron tulipifera ; Gingko biloba Autumn Gold; or Fagus sylvatica Rohanii.
2. The ground covers/grasses and shrubs are a mix of upland and wetland species and sun and shade loving species, which may not be suitable for site conditions. For example, Glyceria grandis is an obligate wetland plant that needs wet conditions year round (it also may be hard to find in 1 gallon containers as specified). Is the area where this species is to be planted a rain garden or bioswale? If not, it is recommended to substitute a different grass species that is tolerant of drier conditions such as: Calamagrostis Canadensis or one of the native Fescues. Deschampsia cespitosa is also a wetland grass but can tolerate drier conditions if the area is to be irrigated in the summer.
3. Consider including larger native conifers, such as Thuja plicata where room allows and not just Pinus contorta contorta.

3rd Avenue Shaft:

The Commission recommends substituting native conifers in the wide planting area along the ship canal trail, instead of the Quercus ilex. Suggested species are Thuja plicata or Pseudotsuga menziesii.

East Shaft:

The Commission suggests replacing some or all Acer buergerianum with a non-maple species, such as Cornus Eddie's White Wonder; Tilia cordata De Groot, or similar sized tree from the SDOT approved street tree list.

We hope that these recommendations are useful to SPU. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the planting plans.

Sincerely,