

# Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

Tom Early, Chair • Steve Zemke, Vice-Chair

Weston Brinkley • Leif Fixen • Reid Haefer • Donna Kostka • Richard Martin • Joanna Nelson de Flores  
Erik Rundell • Andrew Zellers

December 14, 2016

Tracy Morgenstern  
Office of Sustainability and Environment  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 1868  
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Draft Climate Preparedness Strategy

Dear Tracy,

The Urban Forestry Commission appreciated the briefing on the City's Draft Climate Preparedness Strategy and agrees that the urban forest is a critical component of such an effort. Given that the most significant changes expected in Seattle will affect temperature, precipitation, and sea level, urban trees will most likely be heavily impacted. Below are recommendations the Commission would like to make.

- The draft Strategy mentions street trees as part of the most vulnerable transportation infrastructure that will be impacted by climate change. The Transportation Sector-specific Actions section (page 30) addresses potential climate change impacts on trees and their implications. The Commission would like to see language to address increased pest and disease damage to trees as part of the list of Implications for Operations and Maintenance. The same language would be appropriate for the Implications for Operations and Maintenance of the Parks Sector (page 43) for Trees and Vegetation.
- In the Transportation Sector Adaptation Strategies, Tree Actions section (page 32) add an action to encourage planting of diverse tree species to create a more pest/disease resilient urban forest. The same language would be appropriate for the Parks Sector Adaptation strategies, Trees and Vegetation section (page 46).
- In the Electricity System Section Adaptation Strategies, Implications for Operations and Maintenance (page 55), the Commission would like to see language addressing the impacts of potential increased tree failure due to climate change.
- In the Community Preparedness section (page 61) adding tree planting as a strategy to combat extreme heat event impacts on vulnerable communities

would present an opportunity to increase our canopy cover and educate the public on the many benefits of trees. This would provide a logical link to the tree planting recommendation in the What you can do Section (page 65).

The Commission would encourage the City to scrutinize the current emphasis on native tree species, because with changing climate, the introduction and use of more variety of tree species that might not be native but might be more adaptable, would improve the resiliency of our urban forest and its ecosystem.

Lastly, the Commission would like to commend the City for emphasizing the importance of the urban forest as a critical piece of the Preparedness Strategy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Early". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tom" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Early".

Tom Early, Chair

cc: Mayor Edward B. Murray, Council President Harrell, Councilmember Bagshaw, Councilmember Burgess, Councilmember Gonzalez, Councilmember Herbold, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Juarez, Councilmember O'Brien, Councilmember Sawant, Jessica Finn Coven, Michelle Caulfield, Dionne Foster, Aaron Blumenthal, Eric McConaghy.

Sandra Pinto de Bader, Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator  
City of Seattle, Office of Sustainability & Environment  
PO Box 94729 Seattle, WA 98124-4729 Tel: 206-684-3194 Fax: 206-684-3013  
[www.seattle.gov/UrbanForestryCommission](http://www.seattle.gov/UrbanForestryCommission)