

Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

Matt Mega, Chair • John Small, Vice-Chair • Nancy Bird • Gordon Bradley
Tom Early • Leif Fixen • John Floberg • Jeff Reibman • Peg Staeheli

August 7, 2012

Mayor Michael McGinn and Councilmember Richard Conlin
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Seattle's Forest Ecosystems Values report

Dear Mayor McGinn and Councilmember Conlin,

The Green Cities Research Alliance (GCRA) is in the process of finalizing the Seattle's Forest Ecosystems Values report (Seattle Report). The GCRA was initiated with federal funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) by the Pacific Northwest Research Station of the US Forest Service in 2009 to build a program of research about urban ecosystems in the Puget Sound region. The Seattle Report was the result of the collaborative effort of King County, University of Washington, City of Seattle, and the local conservation and community building non-profit organization Forterra.

The Seattle Report is based on a sampling survey of Seattle's urban forest using the US Forest Service's i-Tree Eco tool. Data was collected from 223 plots randomly selected across Seattle's management units as defined by the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP). This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the current extent and condition of Seattle's urban forest and produced information on ecosystem services provided.

GCRA staff presented the draft Seattle Report to the Urban Forestry Commission on July 18 seeking input. The Commission believes that this type of study allows us to better understand our urban forest structure, function, and value and can support management decisions that will

improve human health and environmental quality, and help Seattle reach its 30% canopy cover goal.

The Commission believes this type of survey paired with aerial canopy cover assessments are important tools that give us a better understanding of Seattle's urban forest. The Commission recommends periodic updates, every five years, of both i-Tree survey and canopy cover assessments, to inform future Urban Forest Management Plan updates and City actions in support of the 30% canopy cover goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Mega", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matt Mega, Chair
Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

cc: Council President Clark, Councilmember Bagshaw, Councilmember Burgess, Councilmember Godden, Councilmember Harrell, Councilmember Licata, Councilmember Rasmussen, Councilmember O'Brien, Jill Simmons, Diane Sugimura, Marshall Foster, Michael Jenkins, Christa Valles, Brennon Staley, Lisa Ciecko

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