

IDT:

RE: City of Seattle Urban Forest IDT and Urban Forestry Commission Partnership and Coordination

Dear Urban Forest IDT:

Thank you for your commitment to Seattle's urban forest. As you know better than most, balancing the need for high quality delivery of services in an urban environment while protecting trees can be a daunting challenge. Hazard trees need to be removed, power lines cleared, and trenches dug, to name a few. I am also sure you are well versed in the politics of tree removal and the powerful emotions that can surface when tree removal is proposed.

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC), formed in 2010 to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle, has jumped into the urban forest issue with both feet. We have taken our lead from the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) and seek to help move Seattle toward the UFMP vision:

“Seattle's urban forest is a thriving and sustainable mix of tree species and ages that creates a contiguous and healthy ecosystem that is valued and cared for by the city and all of its citizens as an essential environmental, economic and community asset.”

The UFC feels it is important to open and maintain as many communication channels and partnerships as possible. We already work closely with the Office of Sustainability and Environment and have had numerous discussions with other City Departments on key urban forest issues. We feel it is important to try and coordinate efforts and understand each other's workload and more importantly where we can leverage each other's activities for a stronger urban forest. We are asking the Urban Forest IDT to join us in a strong partnership to ensure a comprehensive and effective approach to urban forest protection and enhancement in Seattle. One thought is to try and meet quarterly as a group to allow us to brief one another on key issues and ways we can help each other move our issues forward. Also, we might consider an annual meeting to brainstorm strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing Seattle and its urban forest. This annual meeting could also involve discussing the previous year's accomplishments and strategic directions for the coming year. .

Thank you for considering our request.