



Street Tree Ordinance Outreach Summary

SDOT’s Urban Forestry section has proposed a revision to the street tree section of Title 15 of the existing Street Use Code to strengthen the requirements for protecting and preserving trees to increase the tree canopy for the City of Seattle. The proposed changes will not affect the permitting process; the permits which are required remain free of charge unless associated with other street improvements.

Public Meetings

Date	Location or group	Attendees
12/12/11	High Point Community Center – public meeting	6
12/14/11	Van Asselt Community Center– public meeting	0
12/15/11	Miller Community Center - public meeting	8
1/4/12	SouthWest Community Council– community associations	15
1/9/12	Meadowbrook Community Center – public meeting	10
1/11/12	Ballard Community Center – public meeting	9
1/11/12	Ballard District Council presentation – community associations	40
1/24/12	North Seattle Industrial Association	20-25
2/1/12	Feet First Board meeting	8
2/1/12	North District Council	32
2/6/12	Mt Baker Community Club	31
2/21/12	Magnolia Community Club	12

Announcements/Correspondence

- Public meeting announcements were sent to 100 individuals.
- Mailing to Business Owners -2250 letters in English and Spanish, from business license database and the Office of Economic Development were sent. (Of these letters, 150 were returned as not deliverable.) The business license holders we sent letters to included:
 - Landscaping Services,
 - Lessors of Residential Buildings/Dwellings,
 - Lessors of Non Residential Buildings
 - Real Estate Offices,
 - Residential Property Managers, and
 - Nonresidential Property Managers.

Public Comment Summary

Overall, in the public meetings we received good support for the direction of this proposed ordinance. We did receive a couple of comments in the public comment website as well as nice letters of support from the community groups who invited us to give them a presentation regarding this draft ordinance.

Through this outreach, we have not reached the conclusion that we will need to make any substantive changes to the draft ordinance. We may consider a delayed implementation for the certification



requirement to ensure that there is good outreach and opportunities for education to support the certification process for the small business owners to become certified and registered with the SDOT.

Maintenance responsibilities per sections 15.43.040: Many (13) of the comments worried about the obligation for the adjacent property owners to have to maintain the trees in the planting strip. Although this is not a new requirement, the public's awareness of this responsibility is scant. The proposed ordinance does not change the adjacent property owner's responsibility but it does clarify it. Other comments about maintenance responsibilities included concern about the costs to be incurred by the homeowner, particularly if the tree is at risk and determined to be a hazard. Urban Forestry is committed to working closely with the homeowner to address those specific concerns.

New Regulation requirements for tree service providers per sections 15.43.050: The (6) comments we received about the proposed certification requirement for the most part were neutral in our public meetings where we were able to explain the impacts of the draft ordinance. After we did our mailing we received a few comments concerning how this regulation will impact a small business owner (all were landscape maintenance contractors) requiring a certified arborist supervise the work on site. Ironically, we had one written and two comments at the public meetings asking if homeowners would be required to become certified arborists before being allowed to prune trees in their planting strip. It may be of interest to note that there have been no concerns brought forward that the sanctions were too steep if a tree were to be damaged or killed through the actions of a homeowner or tree service operating outside the permitted work.

Media

We have met with and have been covered by: KING TV, KOMO radio, KPLU and the WestSeattleBlog and the Ballard Tribune. Our public comment period as well as our public meetings has been posted on not less than 30 community blogs.

Interagency communications

- There have been three SDOT blog posts on this topic.
- We met with King County - METRO.
- We met with OED.
- We briefed the Freight Advisory Board.
- We will be briefing the Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Board.

SEPA

The SEPA announcement and comment period was published and opened from January 5, 2012 to January 26, 2012. It was determined by SDOT Capital Projects and Roadway Structures -Environmental that there was a determination of non significance (DNS). There were no questions that questioned the DNS determination.

Tools

New Street Tree mapping [tool](#) for the public.