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DRAFT

RE: Ship Canal Water Quality Project

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) would like to thank Mike Wynne for his briefing on the tree preservation and mitigation planting efforts for the Ship Canal Water Quality Project. The UFC commends the Project Team's inclusion of more native tree species into the project and is glad the UFC letter Re: Comments and Recommendations for the Planting Plan for SPU Ship Canal Water Quality Program & 3rd Avenue Water Main Project dated February 14, 2018 was found to be helpful in developing the tree species selection.

The UFC has a few additional recommendations for SPU's consideration for not only this project, but future projects as well.

- 1) Trees planted as part of any project should be watered for at least 5 years after planting. The establishment period of trees is important in helping trees survive. All projects should include budgeting for this effort so that the initial investment into the tree replanting is realized by healthy trees that survive in Seattle's harsh urban environment and its increasingly hot summers. Mike shared with the UFC that depending on the location, mitigation trees installed as part of the project are cared for in different ways and not always for the full five-year establishment period.
- 2) Replacing tree canopy surface area coverage on a project site will not replace all the environmental and habitat benefits lost when existing trees are removed. Instead replacing tree canopy volume, which includes the height of the trees, is a better method maintaining the benefit of our urban forest, especially for coniferous trees that keep their needles year-around.
- 3) With the densification of Seattle, our urban trees are required to meet multiple needs as the available planting area (i.e. soil) to support healthy trees is becoming more limited. Selection of native tree and vegetation species is important while also considering climate change impacts. The UFC would also like to emphasize selecting tree and vegetation species that support habitat for our wildlife, especially our bird populations.

Again, the UFC would like to share our appreciation to the Ship Canal Water Quality Project team for keeping the UFC abreast of progress. This project is an example of the efforts Seattle needs to take to manage the runoff from our highly impervious urban environment. Preservation of our trees goes hand in hand with managing our stormwater runoff. The UFC appreciates your willingness to keep it informed and look forward to our future collaboration.