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February 9, 2022

Mayor Bruce Harrell and Seattle City Council Members
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Ave
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) 2021 Annual Report and 2022 Work Plan (as required by Ordinance 123052)

Dear Mayor Harrell and Councilmembers,

Happy New Year. The UFC hopes you have taken time to celebrate what you accomplished in 2021 and are looking forward to what can be accomplished in 2022.

The UFC is pleased to share a summary of its activities over the last year and its goals for the next in its 2021 Annual Report and 2022 Work Plan.

In 2021, the UFC held 24 public meetings, participated in several small group deliberative sessions with City departments, and issued 17 letters of recommendation. Strengthening tree protections and improving urban forest management occupied a central space in the UFC's correspondence to the City.

Since its establishment 12 years ago, the UFC has called for a revised tree protection ordinance. The current code is not supporting tree protection.ⁱ Worse, it is supporting a system that tends to overserve white people and people with higher incomes while underserving people of color and people with lower incomes.ⁱⁱ

In 2022, the City must fix the inequities and inadequacies of its urban forestry governance. The UFC will continue to serve that effort, as it has since 2009. The UFC will also advocate for appropriate funding to implement urban forestry policies and programs, improve its outreach and engagement with City leaders and community members, and participate in the City's Comprehensive Plan update process.

As always, the UFC is grateful to the [Office of Sustainability & Environment](#) for providing staff time to support the commission's work.

Sincerely,

Julia Michalak, PhD, Co-chair

Joshua Morris, Co-chair

ⁱ Tree Regulations Research Project. Phase II, Final Report. Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections and Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment. 31 March 2017. Available at <https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/Resources/TreeRegsResearchProjectPhaseIIFinalReport033117.pdf>

ⁱⁱ O'Neil-Dunne, Jarlath. "2016 Seattle Tree Canopy Assessment." University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab. 2017. See page 10 for relationship between tree canopy and environmental equity. Available at <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Trees/Mangement/Canopy/Seattle2016CCAFinalReportFINAL.pdf>