



# Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

## Fact Sheet



### **Background**

The City of Seattle set the bold goal of achieving 30% tree canopy cover by 2037 to increase the environmental, social, and economic benefits trees bring to Seattle residents. The Seattle Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), adopted in 2007, is a comprehensive strategy for increasing Seattle's tree canopy cover to meet the 30% target. The UFMP lays out goals and a broad range of actions to be implemented over time to preserve, maintain, and plant trees as well as restore the public forested areas remaining in the city. The City is now drafting an Implementation Strategy for the UFMP setting out our priorities for action over the next five years.

To create a baseline for measuring progress and support planning efforts, a high resolution satellite study was conducted in 2009 to map the extent of tree canopy cover across Seattle. The satellite study revealed that after decades of tree loss, canopy cover increased slightly between 2002 and 2007 to 23%. While these are encouraging findings, the research also shows that we need to double the pace of canopy gain in order to meet the 30% goal by 2037. Results of the canopy study have helped identify neighborhoods where tree cover is low and areas where there is significant potential for tree planting. This information will be used to inform urban forest outreach messages and program priorities. More information about Seattle's urban forest program can be found at [www.seattle.gov/trees](http://www.seattle.gov/trees)

### **Urban Forestry Commission**

The Urban Forestry Commission established by Ordinance 123052 serves an advisory role to the Mayor and City Council. The Commission will provide recommendations on and monitor implementation of plans, policies, and legislation related to the protection, management, and conservation of trees in Seattle. Commission meetings will be held monthly and Commission members generally must commit approximately 10 hours per month to Commission business and serve without compensation.

### Timeline and Process

The City is currently accepting applications for the Commission. Those interested in being considered should send a letter of interest and resume by September 18, 2009. The commission is expected to start meeting in November.

E-mail your letter and resume to [tracy.morgenstern@seattle.gov](mailto:tracy.morgenstern@seattle.gov) or mail to:

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## Membership

The Commission is comprised of nine members:

*Position 1:* A wildlife biologist, preferably with expertise in ornithology

*Position 2:* An urban ecologist, preferably with expertise in the field of restoration ecology

*Position 3:* A representative of a local, state, or federal natural resource agency or an accredited university

*Position 4:* A hydrologist or similar professional, preferably with expertise in the study of natural drainage, climate or air quality, or a combination thereof

*Position 5:* An arborist, with one or more of the following qualifications:

- Board Certification as a Master Arborist or Municipal Specialist from the International Society of Arboriculture; or
- Certification by the American Society of Consulting Arborists; or
- Background and experience in Tree Risk Assessment from a credentializing agency or a professional organization.

*Position 6:* A landscape architect, with certification from the International Society of Arboriculture

*Position 7:* A representative of a non-profit or non-governmental organization whose mission is to advocate for preservation or enhancement of urban forests, wildlife habitat or similar natural systems

*Position 8:* A representative of either the development community, including developers, builders, architects, or realtors, with experience in projects developed under Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), or a representative from a non-city utility

*Position 9:* An economist, financial analyst, Washington State licensed real estate broker, or any other similar professional, with expertise preferred in land use planning, environmental planning, or either residential or commercial development.

## Appointments

Members in odd numbered positions from position one to position seven will be appointed by a majority vote of City Council. Individuals in even numbered positions from position two to position eight will be appointed by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the City Council. Position nine will be appointed by a majority vote of the eight appointed members.

## Terms

For the initial round of appointments the positions will be staggered: positions one, two and nine shall serve one-year terms, positions four, five and six shall serve two-year terms and positions three, seven, eight shall serve three-year terms. At the conclusion of the initial term of each appointment, all subsequent terms of each position shall be for three years and the term of 1/3 of the positions shall expire each year.

Additional information about the Urban Forestry Commission can be found at [www.seattle.gov/trees](http://www.seattle.gov/trees)