

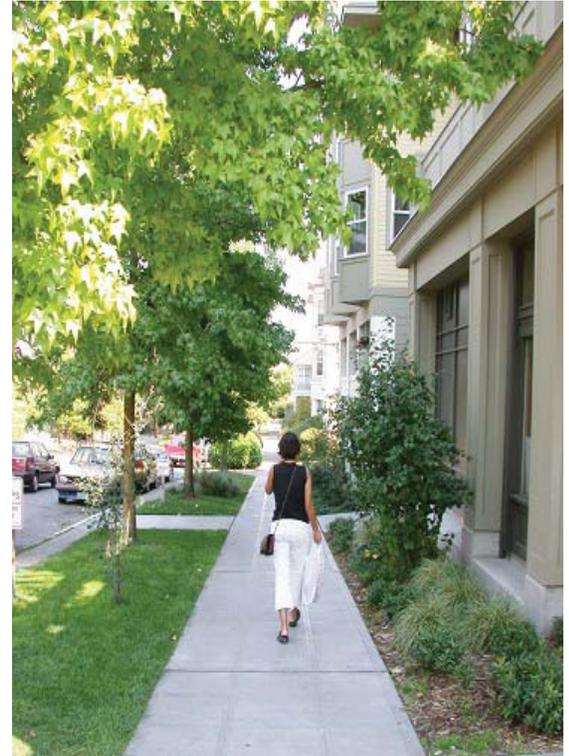
Keep the Emerald City Green

More Than a Slogan

Urban forests - all of the trees in urban areas - offer much more than a welcome green relief from concrete gray. Seattle's urban forest provides residents with many environmental, social, and economic benefits, including increased property values, calmer traffic, improved air and water quality, storm water retention, and greenhouse gas pollution absorption. Our trees are found in our parks and yards, along our streets, in shopping areas and even in the city's industrial areas. Keeping the Emerald City Green is a vision which can only be realized through commitment from city government and from Seattle's residents.

The adoption of the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) in 2007 marked the beginning of a watershed year for urban forestry in Seattle. The UFMP established the goal of increasing the city's tree canopy by 2/3rds from a current level of about 18 percent to 30 percent. Counteracting the loss over the past decades of about half our tree cover and with it all the associated benefits requires a concerted effort. Based on the UFMP assessment, the greatest potential for tree preservation and planting is on private property, most notably in residential areas which make up over 60 percent of the city. This creates significant challenges, and we must rely on a mix of incentives, outreach, and regulations to increase canopy in these areas.

Opportunities and challenges for increasing trees across Seattle were considered and short-, medium-, and long-term actions identified. This report tells the story of our progress in 2007. These results tell us that it was a great year for trees. Implementation of the plan was jump-started through increased city funding for tree planting, maintenance, and forested parkland restoration. We met or exceeded our objectives in almost all cases and are committed to improving in the areas where we fell short. The table on the next two pages provides a detailed summary of our goals and progress to date.



Vision for the Future

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.



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keep the emerald city green

Seattle Urban Forest Management Plan

2007 Performance Monitoring

Objective	Results	
TREE RESOURCE		
Maintain trees to promote health and longevity	Continue restoration on 162 acres of forested parkland	Complete
	Enroll 100 new acres into the Green Seattle Partnership restoration program	100 acres enrolled
	Begin restoration on 10 new acres of forested parklands along creeks	Complete
	Prune trees on developed parkland on an 18-year cycle - 3,600 trees/year maintained	2,600 trees maintained
	Prune Dept. of Transportation-managed trees on a 12-year cycle - 2,100 trees/year maintained	2,530 trees maintained
	Clear trees away from power lines along 157 miles of arterial streets for electrical safety and reliability	162 miles cleared
	Increase canopy cover and environmental benefits	Department of Parks & Recreation
Meet 2 for 1 Tree Replacement Policy		Policy not met
Dept. of Transportation - Plant 500 trees through Bridging the Gap funding		1,461 trees planted 135 trees removed
Meet 2 for 1 Tree Replacement Policy		Policy met
Seattle City Light – Assist community members to plant 800 trees through the Urban Tree Replacement Program		546 trees planted 870 trees removed
Implement Seattle Center Tree Replacement Program - Multi-year project		39 trees planted 34 trees removed
Meet 2 for 1 Tree Replacement Policy		On track to meet policy
Assist community members to plant 500 trees through the Dept. of Neighborhood's Matching Fund		427 trees planted
		3,196 trees planted (net increase: 1,707 trees)
MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK		
Improve management of trees on private property through incentives & regulations	Convene Emerald City Task Force (ECTF) to recommend incentives/regulations to improve canopy cover on private property	Task Force convened and recommendations provided to City
	Identify and analyze potential regulatory changes based on ECTF input (2007-2008)	Underway

	Objective	Results
Track implementation of the Urban Forest Plan	Develop and implement performance monitoring system	Complete
Implement resource management tools	Update and maintain the street tree inventory of 35,000 City-owned trees (4 year process)	26,000 trees inventoried on site – data entry will follow
Facilitate interdepartmental cooperation	Convene Urban Forest interdepartmental team bi-monthly and brief Sustainability & Environment sub-cabinet as needed	On-going
COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK		
Enhance awareness of the urban forest as a community resource	Develop key messages and speaking points	Complete
	Develop communications plan	Complete
	Modify city tree websites – strengthen connections between sites and improve access to information	Complete
	Create a brochure addressing tree benefits and tree selection, planting and care information	Complete
	Provide information to City Light customers who will be impacted by tree trimming with information about line clearance pruning	Complete
	Provide tree benefit/tree replacement information to anyone who receives a permit to remove a street tree or as part of a DPD permit	Materials complete, distribution beginning in 2008
	Partner with a nursery or a non-profit to present two tree information sessions (do 1st as a pilot and evaluate success and approach)	Deferred to 2008
	Partner with non-profit on a wide-reaching or replicable kid-oriented tree/arts project	Nature Consortium student documentary film complete
Increase community engagement in urban forest management	Mayor appoints tree professionals/ advocates to Sustainability & Environment Advisory Panel	Not complete.
	Identify opportunities for ongoing stakeholder involvement	Stakeholder survey complete
	Recruit and manage 51,000 hours of volunteer support through the Green Seattle Partnership	60,000 volunteer hours

“Seattle must grow thoughtfully, focused on how livable the City is for today’s residents as well as what it will offer future generations. A city without trees would be a poor legacy indeed and I am committed to a bright and very green future for Seattle.”

Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels

Seattle's Tree Regulation Update

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) began a project in the summer of 2007 to review and revise its current tree regulations in order to better foster tree preservation and planting. The first step in the project was convening the Emerald City Task Force (ECTF) - a ten member citizen advisory panel made up of representatives from the development, architecture, landscape architecture, building, and tree care professions. The group met five times to critique the City's existing regulations, review other communities' tree regulations, and provide a set of recommendations to DPD staff. The ECTF issued their recommendations in December.

The next step was to convene tree advocates in the spring of 2008 to gather their perspectives on revising the City's tree regulations. Informed by the input of these two groups, benchmarking research, and the expertise of a consulting arborist, DPD is developing policy proposals to share with the public for their feedback in the first half of 2008. Based on all the community input, legislation will be developed and forwarded to the City Council by the end of the year. To follow the process, check out www.seattle.gov/dpd/planning/SeattlesTreeRegulationUpdate/Overview/default.asp



Evergreen & Deciduous Trees

While a healthy mix of tree types is important, in the Northwest evergreen trees like cedars and hemlocks provide greater environmental benefits than deciduous trees that lose their leaves, such as maples and flowering trees.

During our rainy fall and winter, evergreen trees continue to take up water and produce oxygen. When deciduous trees lose their leaves in the fall their ability to take up water is reduced and as the leaves decay they produce carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas.



Neighborhood Tree Fund

The Department of Neighborhoods' Tree Fund provides free trees to groups of neighbors to beautify their block while enhancing the city's urban forest. Neighborhood trees help reduce stormwater flow, clean the air and water, provide valuable habitat for wildlife, and make our neighborhoods lovelier and more walkable. Planting trees also provides a great opportunity to visit with your neighbors and get your hands dirty.

The City delivers the trees, and neighbors share the work of planting, watering and maintenance. Groups of at least 5 households are eligible to receive trees for planting strips (the space between the sidewalk and the curb) on residential streets. The city arborist will visit each site and help determine which trees will be best suited for which location.

In 2007, 29 groups of neighbors planted 427 trees equally distributed across the city: 14 groups north of the Ship canal, 14 in the south and one right in the middle. In 2008, we hope to plant more than 800. To reach that goal, we need you to gather at least four neighbors and apply for your free trees. Look for the Tree Fund application at your local Neighborhood Service Center and Community Center as well as online (www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf/treefund.htm). Feel free to call the Department of Neighborhoods at 206-684-0464 or Eden Trenor at 206-684-4520 with questions.