

Keep the Emerald City Green

Urban Forest Stewardship Plan

2014 Progress Report

Greening Rainier Beach

In 2014, the City of Seattle focused on engaging Rainier Beach neighborhoods in tree planting and care as well as increasing residents' understanding about the benefits of Seattle's urban forest. Seattle reLeaf (reLeaf), Seattle City Light (SCL), Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks), the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), and the Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) coordinated their urban forestry work including tree planting, caring for young street trees, pruning, and clearing trees away from power lines to reduce power outages. City staff attended community meetings, held a number of urban forestry events including Tree Walks, street tree care work parties, Arbor Day, Green Seattle Day, and the first ever Park(ing) Day display in Rainier Beach.

reLeaf, SCL, and OSE piloted a door-to-door outreach strategy in Rainier Beach to engage residents in SCL's fall street tree planting project. reLeaf also focused its Trees for Neighborhoods (T4N) outreach in Rainier Beach, including canvassing target neighborhoods and attending several community meetings and events. Parks made the Rainier Beach Community Center this year's hub for Green Seattle Day and offered childcare and transportation to surrounding parks. These coordinated efforts brought more attention to the City's urban forestry work around the area and increased community awareness of volunteer opportunities, tree plantings, and in general, the importance of trees.

Tree Ambassador

2014 was a big year for the Tree Ambassador project, which started by welcoming 50 new Tree Ambassadors (TAs) in the spring. The new TAs attended trainings in three project tracks: Tree Walks, Landscape Renewal, and Street Tree Stewardship. TAs are trained to nurture Seattle's trees while building community and creating a culture of tree stewardship within their neighborhoods. With the help of volunteer TAs, reLeaf engaged over 600 people in 35 community events (compared to 18 events in 2013). Events included 13 guided Tree Walks and 12 community work parties in neighborhoods including Ballard, Rainier Beach, North Delridge, Lake City, and Beacon Hill.

For more information about upcoming Tree Ambassador events and opportunities, visit www.seattle.gov/trees/treeambassador.htm.



Trees for Neighborhoods

Seattle reLeaf completed the sixth season of its Trees for Neighborhoods (T4N) project, distributing nearly 1,000 trees to 427 households in neighborhoods across Seattle. Tree species included evergreens, Pacific Northwest natives, fruit, and power line friendly trees. SDOT approved approximately 20 percent of these trees for planting in the right-of-way. All participants attended a tree planting and care workshop before picking up their new trees—80 percent reported learning something new about tree planting and 100 percent said that they would recommend the program to others. One participant commented, "Didn't know the proper technique for planting trees prior to participating in this awesome program. Feel much more empowered to plant trees now!"



For the first time reLeaf offered planting assistance to residents physically unable to plant trees. T4N also launched its Planting Map in 2014. This interactive map displays trees planted through the project in past years and gives an opportunity to explore factors like location of evergreen vs. deciduous trees and density of tree plantings per neighborhood. You can find the map on the T4N website at www.seattle.gov/trees/treesforneighborhoods.htm.

Since 2009, T4N has helped residents plant over 5,300 trees across the city. Applications for trees will open again in August 2015—find out more at www.seattle.gov/trees.

Park(ing) Day

On September 19, the City of Seattle's Urban Forestry Inter-departmental Team (IDT) became the first organization to host a Park(ing) Day display in Rainier Beach. The IDT collaborated to create a miniature urban forest, complete with mini power lines, houses, businesses, and trucks on the corner of S Henderson and Renton Ave S. Residents who stopped by participated in a Tree Walk through the miniature urban forest. City and Forterra staff spoke to visitors throughout the day about the benefits of the urban forest.



**Seattle Urban Forest Management Plan
2014 Progress Report**

Strategy	2014 Actions (Lead Department)	Accomplishments
COMMUNITY APPROACH		
Inspire, inform, and engage the community in active stewardship of Seattle's urban forest	Strengthen public outreach, education, and engagement, building on efforts already underway. (reLeaf)	reLeaf led a coordinated outreach approach with OSE, SDOT, Parks, and SCL with a focus on planting and stewarding trees in Rainier Beach.
	Develop and implement Urban Forest Interdepartmental (IDT) communications toolkit. (reLeaf, OSE)	Communications consultant developed communications toolkit and delivered training sessions to staff.
	Create a brand to encompass all interdepartmental urban forestry work to replace reLeaf. (reLeaf)	On hold until 2015.
	Leverage Bridging the Gap planting program to educate public about tree benefits. (SDOT)	SDOT improved outreach brochures to better market the program.
	Overhaul City urban forestry websites through IDT effort to ensure work is coordinated and ensures public usability. (reLeaf, SDOT, SCL, Parks, OSE)	SDOT and OSE updated their urban forestry website. Other departments will continue this effort in 2015.
	Expand and enhance outreach and education programs provided by Green Seattle Partnership (Parks, SPU, OSE)	Enhanced outreach resulted in close to 70,000 volunteer hours logged at GSP sites.
	Expand volunteer stewardship opportunities through the GSP, "Friends of" groups, Tree Ambassador, and other programs. (Parks, reLeaf, OSE)	Recruited and trained 50 new Tree Ambassadors (TA); held 35 TA events, and engaged over 600 people. (reLeaf) Held 1,328 GSP volunteer events. (Parks)
	Work closely with the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) on development of policies and programs to implement and achieve UFSP goals. (OSE, IDT)	The IDT worked closely with the UFC throughout 2014.
	Coordinate departmental participation in 2014 Arbor Day. (SDOT/SPU/Parks/SCL/OSE)	SDOT hosted a street tree planting in Rainier Beach for Arbor Day with IDT support.
ECOLOGICAL APPROACH		
Understand the character and complexity of the urban forest resource	Work with local universities and research institutions to pursue the Research Agenda. (reLeaf, OSE, SPU)	SCL sponsored a team from the UW's Master of GIS for Sustainability Management Program to estimate canopy volumes removed by SCL's Power Line Clearance program. This is a beginning step in understanding SCL's impact on the urban forest.
	Analyze Seattle i-Tree survey data to better understand existing conditions of our urban forest. (Parks, IDT)	i-Tree analysis on hold. Parks is using GIS mapping to monitor restoration sites.
	Analyze tree planting potential data for all management units. Undertake pilot to ground-truth information. (OSE, IDT)	On hold until funding allows for a new canopy cover assessment.
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT APPROACH		
Coordinate inter-departmental and inter-agency communication, cooperation, and decision-making	Convene Urban Forest Interdepartmental Team (IDT) as the group primarily responsible for implementing the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan (UFSP) through the work of the represented departments. (OSE)	The IDT met monthly.
	Explore options for dedicated funding sources to provide alternative funding to supplement General Fund revenues for all departments (OSE, IDT)	Staff explored grant opportunities.
	Explore the concept of eco-hoods to complement UFSP management units. (IDT)	The IDT adopted a coordinated approach and focused activities by selecting Rainier Beach as the priority neighborhood for the 2014-2015 planting season.

Strategy	2014 Actions (Lead Department)	Accomplishments
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT APPROACH		
	Develop a monitoring framework and robust set of indicators to track progress on achieving UFSP goals. (OSE)	Work began in 2014 and will be completed in 2015.
	Develop decision-making tools related to tree retention or removal decisions where infrastructure conflicts exist, including solar installations. Develop methods to allow removal and replacement with appropriate species in appropriate locations. (SDOT, OSE, SCL, SPU, DPD)	SDOT began this effort with the Trees and Sidewalks Operational Plan. SDOT and DPD clarified policies relating to solar installations.
	Monitor UFSP performance and issue an annual report. (OSE)	The UFSP annual progress report was issued.
Coordinate, restore, and enhance the urban forest	Develop policy to prioritize expenditures (outreach and education; maintenance, preservation, and restoration; and planting). (OSE, IDT)	On hold until monitoring framework is developed.
	Produce Trees and Sidewalks Operational Plan. (SDOT)	Draft document produced.
	Produce the Street Tree Master Maintenance Plan. (SDOT)	Plan in development.
	Develop methodology & decision-making tool to determine appropriate replacement of functional benefits lost over time due to mid—large sized tree removal. (IDT)	On hold until funding is available.
	<p><u>Trees planted and maintained by the City:</u> Plant two trees for each tree removed across all departments. (UF IDT) Plant 250 trees in Developed Parks (Parks) Plant 600+ trees with BTG and Capital Projects (SDOT)</p>	<p>The Zoo removed 5 and planted no trees. Seattle Center removed 7 and planted no trees. Planting will take place in 2015. SPU removed 123 and planted 901 trees (+695 with T4N). SDOT removed 351 and planted 1,248 trees (502 BTG, 746 Capital Projects). Parks removed 626 and planted 99 trees. FAS removed 57 and planted 138 trees. SCL removed 151 and planted 324 (+300 with T4N).</p>
	<p><u>Trees funded by the City, planted and maintained by residents:</u> Assist community members in residential areas with low canopy cover to plant and care for 1,000 trees through the Trees for Neighborhoods (T4N) program. (reLeaf)</p>	Residents planted 995 trees at 427 addresses through the Trees for Neighborhoods Program (300 trees were funded by SCL).
	City-wide tree planting total: 3,705 City-wide tree removals total: <u>1,320</u> Net gain (loss): 2,385	
	Train staff in tree protection practices. (SDOT, SPU, SCL, Parks, DPD)	Secured funding to update website. Work to continue in 2014.
	Continue restoration of 1,000 acres of forested parkland. Begin restoration on 50 new acres. (Parks)	Continued restoration on 1,000 acres and brought 40 new acres into restoration.
	Maintain 2,000 trees. Inspect 300 trees for risk. (Parks) Maintain 3,000 trees. (SDOT)	Parks maintained 1,754 trees and recorded inspection of 150 trees Staffing changes reduced productivity. SDOT pruned 3,149 trees.
	Prune trees away from 600 miles of electrical distribution for electrical safety and reliability. (SCL)	Trimmed 502 miles on goal of 480 miles (goal changed due to extension of trim cycle from 3 to 4 years).
Regulate private property to ensure minimum standards for care of the urban forest	Develop third draft proposal of the tree protection on private property ordinance for discussion with the public. Transmit legislation for Council to consider. (DPD)	Project on hold. DPD will evaluate including in the 2016 work plan.
	Work on 10-year update of the Right-of-way Improvements Manual. (SDOT)	Draft update underway.

PARK(ing) Day is an annual worldwide event where artists, designers, and citizens transform metered parking spots into temporary public parks. 2014 was the second year the City's urban forestry team has participated.



Arbor Day

The City of Seattle's 2014 Arbor Day Celebration in the Rainier Beach was a great success. Staff from the IDT planted, staked, and mulched 13 street trees with the help of 21 volunteers. The plantings took place along S Fletcher St, 57th Ave S and 58th Ave S. Volunteers included students from University of Washington, Girl Scouts, Seattle Audubon, and Tree Ambassadors. Councilmember Tom Rasmussen started the day off with an official proclamation.

Seattle, in contrast to Washington State, celebrates Arbor Day in October because it's the best time for planting new trees in Seattle. Trees planted in the fall get plenty of moisture during the rainy months ahead to help them grow and thrive.



Green Seattle Partnership

On September 24, the Green Seattle Partnership (GSP) hosted its fourth annual Shareholders' Meeting. Volunteers, Forest Stewards, Implementation Partners, and City staff came together at the South Seattle College campus to celebrate accomplishments for the first 10 years of the program and to launch the 10-year update of the GSP's Strategic Plan.

The GSP is a public/private partnership between the City of Seattle, Seattle residents, and the non-profit Forterra. The GSP was formed in 2005 with a goal of restoring 2,500 acres of forested parkland by 2025. Parks, OSE, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) are the three key City departments serving in this project. To date, the program has over 1,000 acres in restoration and Seattle residents have volunteered over 700,000 hours.

On November 8, Green Seattle Day was a success thanks to a city-wide team effort. In all, 845 volunteers helped plant over 4,600 plants at 21 parks all over Seattle. The main event site was at the Rainier Beach Community Center, where Deputy Mayor Hyeok Kim welcomed close to 180 volunteers. Councilmember Sally Bagshaw kicked off the Cheasty Greenbelt site and Councilmember Mike O'Brian supported the day at Kiwanis Ravine.

The team tried several new things this year, including locating the main event site at a community center, and providing a warm, hardy, community-cooked lunch. The changes were significant in creating a meaningful community event that people really enjoyed.



Growing Trees in the Right of Way

As a substantial percentage of land within the right-of-way (ROW) continues to be developed to improve our transportation system, SDOT is in a strong position to grow the canopy cover in the ROW. SDOT holds City contractors to the same two-for-one tree replacement standard that City departments follow. The 2005 policy directs City departments to plant two trees to replace each tree they remove from public property. This ongoing work contributes to increased canopy cover in the most highly urbanized neighborhoods in Seattle.