

Urban Forest Management Plan Update Listening Session
Tree Service Providers
9/19/18

1. Background presentation
2. Questions on process / timeline for plan update
 - a. Q: Is this plan replacing something existing? A: Yes, the previous plan was adopted in 2013
 - b. Q: What departments are involved? A: OSE, SDOT, SPU, SCL, SDCI, OPCD, Parks
3. Listening session for future UFMP content
 - a. The values below are meant to help guide the development of the new Urban Forest Management Plan. How would you add to / strengthen these values?
 - i. Consider the landscape / ecosystem beyond trees only; provide information that's comprehensive for the whole yard and not just one tree.
 - ii. Consider adding need for outreach to values; people are confused about tree rules / regulations / policies.
 - iii. Add "understanding relevant regulations & policies" to "community stewardship" value.
 - b. How can the City and Tree Service Providers work together to improve and grow Seattle's urban forest? Where do you see alignment in shared values between the City and Tree Service Provider businesses? What specific goals or actions would you/your organization like to see included in the new UFMP?
 - i. Trees for Neighborhoods discussion:
 1. This is the last year the City will offer fruit trees as part of Trees for Neighborhoods; discussion around reasons for that
 2. Challenges of convincing people to plant where they are views
 - ii. Regulations discussion:
 1. People are more aware and understand regulations around street trees – there is mass confusion around private property regulations. This is in part because SDOT is relatively easy to reach and work with; SDCI is not. SDCI needs more people to answer questions and enforce regulations.
 2. You cannot predict when a tree will fail, and the regulations don't take that into account. The current regulations are very hard for arborists to work with.
 3. New regulations should require replacement with like species of removed trees.
 4. Worker safety is impacted when you can only remove a tree when it is considered high risk.
 5. The City needs to be more prepared for large windstorms and make sure permits are processed quickly to allow for necessary removals prior to windstorm season.
 6. Regulations need to allow for removals when the tree is the wrong species for the site but not a hazard.
 7. One person is concerned with the approach of protecting every tree over a certain diameter; the protected diameter classification by species for exceptional trees is clunky and hard to figure out.
 8. It's hard for a tree to obtain a high-risk level due to recent ISA changes to TRAQ standards.

9. An equity lens should consider that neighborhoods with a lot of trees are more impacted by regulations because they have less freedom to do what they want with their yard; people without any existing trees have more options.
 10. The permitting system is broken – takes way too long to get a permit.
 - a. City of Redmond does a good job.
 - b. If it is too burdensome, lengthy, and complicated to get a permit people will skip them.
 - c. Permitting needs staff and a simpler system.
 11. It's confusing for arborists, most of whom work across multiple cities, to have different requirements in each place.
 12. Would like to have a system for outreach to notify arborists when rules change.
 13. Would like to see a licensing / registration requirement for arborists who work in Seattle to eliminate unskilled companies spreading false information and engaging in unsafe practices.
 - a. Something similar to what Massachusetts and Connecticut do.
 - b. Would want this to include technical skills and safety requirements.
 - c. The science of arboriculture is changing quickly; ISA certification is a low bar and by itself it is not enough.
 - d. The City should provide information for homeowners on what to look for when hiring an arborist; Seattle needs more outreach on what quality arboriculture is.
 - e. Bad pruning or other work can easily lead to tree death.
- c. Are there common tree issues (pests / diseases, planting practices, pruning needs, etc.) that you see in your daily work that you think should be addressed in the new Urban Forest Management Plan?
- i. Birch borer – needs a pest response plan.
 - ii. Phytophthora – spreads easily but could be alleviated through cultural / site practices such as spreading more mulch.
 - iii. Tree decay.
 - iv. Residential fear of large trees & myth that smaller trees are easier to maintain.
 - v. Would be interested in the City producing outreach materials that arborists could have and use when working with clients.
 1. Want to help residents see themselves as part of a community and their trees as part of a greater, valuable forest.
 - vi. Would like to see outreach to inspectors to have trees evaluated at the time of home purchase.