

Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

Peg Staeheli, Chair • Tom Early, Vice-Chair

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September 10, 2014.

Mayor Ed Murray and Councilmember Sally Bagshaw
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Removal of Tree Grates choking street trees downtown

Dear Mayor Murray and Councilmember Bagshaw,

The Urban Forest Commission is requesting immediate funding and action to remove the tree grates from our downtown trees. All over the downtown the trees are being impacted by this old style of “tree protection”. Tree grates are designed to be cut out as the trunk grows but this action rarely occurs consequently our trees are strangled. Many of these grates are now imbedded so the grates will require specialty cutting and leaving the harming pieces embedded in the trunk (the portion that is embedded is left in because the removal would increase the damage.)

UFC is aware that many of these downtown trees are technically the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. These trees can no longer wait for the “complaint” process to take action. Partnering with DSA may be an options but again we strongly believe that time is of the essence as each year more trees are harmed. It is our view that the best way to achieve these is a through a center city grate removal strategy that accomplishes this action within a three month period this winter.

Please consider this special funding and intervention request as a proactive effort in retaining and growing the downtown tree canopy.

Sincerely,

Peg Staeheli, Chair
Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

cc: Mayor Ed Murray, Council President Burgess, Councilmember Clark, Councilmember Godden, Councilmember Harrell, Councilmember Licata, Councilmember Rasmussen, Councilmember O'Brien, Councilmember Sawant, Jill Simmons, Scott Kubly, Barbara Gray, Darren Morgan, Nolan Rundquist, Eric McConaghy.

Sandra Pinto de Bader, Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator
City of Seattle, Office of Sustainability & Environment
PO Box 94729 Seattle, WA 98124-4729 Tel: 206-684-3194 Fax: 206-684-3013
www.seattle.gov/UrbanForestryCommission