

**The following residents have reached out to OSE and the Urban Forestry Commission with emails about the City's update to the tree ordinance.  
Emails through 11/7/19**

**From:** Gina Massoni <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 30, 2019 4:55 PM  
**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Please Protect Seattle's Trees

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

As Green Seattle Partnership Forest Steward, I urge you to update our tree ordinance. Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise a vital green infrastructure. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

Seattle's rapid growth and an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed and not replaced. It is urgent to act now to stop this continued loss of trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity as trees are replaced.

Please update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance as recommended in the latest draft by the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission.

Here are the key provisions that need to be in the updated tree ordinance:

1. Expand the existing Tree Removal and Replacement Permit Program, including 2-week public notice and posting on-site, as used by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) – to cover all Significant Trees (6" and larger diameter at breast height (DBH)) on private property in all land use zones, both during development and outside development.
2. Require the replacement of all Significant Trees removed with trees that in 25 years will reach equivalent canopy volume – either on site or pay a replacement fee into a City Tree Replacement and Preservation Fund. Allow the Fund to also accept fines, donations, grants and set up easements.

3. Retain current protections for Exceptional Trees and reduce the upper threshold for Exceptional Trees to 24" DBH, protect tree groves and prohibit Significant Trees being removed on undeveloped lots.
4. Allow removal of no more than 2 Significant non-Exceptional Trees in 3 years per lot outside development
5. Establish one citywide database for applying for Tree Removal and Replacement Permits and to track changes in the tree canopy.
6. Post online all permit requests and permit approvals for public viewing.
7. Expand SDOT's existing tree service provider's registration and certification to register all Tree Service Providers (arborists) working on trees in Seattle.
8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Gina Massoni

[rivergirl@massoni.net](mailto:rivergirl@massoni.net)

4734 38th Ave NE

Seattle , Washington 98105

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**From:** Celia Landis <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>

**Sent:** Friday, November 01, 2019 2:06 PM

**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>

**Subject:** Please Strengthen Seattle's Tree Ordinance

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

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runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

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8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Celia Landis

[cbjod@aol.com](mailto:cbjod@aol.com)

28th Ave NE  
Seattle, Washington 98125

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**From:** Annie Thoe <neighborhoodtreekeepers@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 01, 2019 4:22 PM  
**To:** Bagshaw, Sally <Sally.Bagshaw@seattle.gov>  
**Cc:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>; Finn Coven, Jessica <Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov>; Durkan, Jenny <Jenny.Durkan@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Budget needed for added tree protection and writing of new tree protection ordinance

**CAUTION: External Email**

Dear Councilwoman Bagshaw,

Thank you so much for all your work with tree protection and your community service on the Seattle City Council. I am writing to ask Seattle City Council to ensure the Seattle City 2020 budget allocates funding for added tree protection and funding to update our tree protection ordinance with enforcement within DCI.

Here's a list of questions and concerns that we, Neighborhood Treekeepers of Seattle feel need to be addressed by the city with 2020 budget ahead:

**1. What is the chain of command within city staff that is working on updating the tree ordinance (outside of Urban Forestry Commission)?** Currently Seattle has 2-3 arborists which is wholly insufficient and overwhelmed for a city of this size and the rapid loss of mature trees and canopy. Permit review, follow-up for penalties/fines for tree protection enforcement is lacking. In addition to additional Arborists, we need staff allocated with experience in Tree Policy, GIS. and qualifications to enforce the new tree protection ordinance.

**2. How can we speed up our tree protection before we lose more of our mature trees and canopy?** — Why has it taken 10 years for the City Council and Mayor to update our tree ordinance?

With anticipation of “fast-tracking” for development permits, the danger to our tree canopy and environmental resources could be a disaster without more safeguards to track tree protection and replanting with necessary tree protection staff.

**3. How many building permits are not reviewed for trees on-site by city arborists? Can we audit this process to learn to do this better?**

Seattle currently has a mostly "complaint-based" system for protecting trees which is not an effective tree protection ordinance as shown by the recent Tree Regulations Research Project

Report. Developers can ask the homeowner to remove the tree before they purchase the property so they don't have to justify cutting down a tree as a hazard. Nor do developers have to replace a tree because it is exceptional. Many homeowners are removing trees before applying for a building permit. We need to set up a tracking system for tree loss.

#### **4. How is the city tracking and enforcing tree replacement when trees are removed?**

There is no record that the city is enforcing the SMC25.11.090 provision of replacing trees—the city isn't getting money from developers to replace trees that they can't replace on site. We need city employees tracking tree loss and making sure trees are replaced. Budget and staffing is needed to track our tree-loss replacement and retention, permits, fines. The current enforcement and ordinance is overwhelmed with only 2-3 FTE arborists to handle cases. How many staff people will be needed to enter tree loss data, complaints and phone calls regarding tracking tree loss and replacement?

#### **5. What can we citizens do to help speed up this process of tree protection?**

Cutting our mature trees and groves at this time of climate crisis when we need trees most feels insane. When I asked the foreman who managed a recent clearcut of over 45 exceptional trees what I could do to save our trees told me "I don't like it either. The only way you can stop this and save these trees is by getting a better tree ordinance."

The City Council and Mayor need to act now to save our trees for future generations. We have been writing, calling, attending meetings and working with our neighbors to speed up this process of tree protection. We must address our serious climate problem—the city is getting smoggier, louder without our mature trees to help us. No air filters can replace a living tree that helps us breathe, provides shade, filters water and essential wildlife habitat. The birds, other animal and insects populations are going fast and depend on us for advocating for them, too. If we don't do something now, we can't replace these exceptional trees and habitat in our lifetimes nor will have a healthy, livable city.

Thank you so much for your service to Seattle and stewarding our land.

Sincerely,

Annie Thoe  
206-271-4270  
Neighborhood Treekeepers  
[www.dontclearcutseattle.org](http://www.dontclearcutseattle.org)

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**From:** Stuart Niven <panorarbor@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Saturday, November 02, 2019 6:40 AM

**To:** Annie Thoe <neighborhoodtreekeepers@gmail.com>

**Cc:** Bagshaw, Sally <Sally.Bagshaw@seattle.gov>; Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>; Finn Coven, Jessica <Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov>; Durkan,

Jenny <Jenny.Durkan@seattle.gov>

**Subject:** Re: Budget needed for added tree protection and writing of new tree protection ordinance

**CAUTION: External Email**

Thank you Annie, I second this.

Stuart of PanorArbor

(Please excuse the postcard type sentences. My arborist fingers are not phone faeries!)

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**From:** heidi calyxsite.com <heidi@calyxsite.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, November 03, 2019 9:11 AM

**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>

**Subject:** FW: FW: Tree Code Amendments Update

**CAUTION: External Email**

Hi Sandra

I am submitting this into the record to encourage OSE to look at how other cities address tree RETENTION during development.

Many thanks,

Heidi

Heidi Siegelbaum

(206) 784-4265

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/heidisiegelbaum>

**From:** Siegelbaum, Heidi <[heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu](mailto:heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu)>

**Sent:** Saturday, November 02, 2019 6:11 PM

**To:** heidi calyxsite.com <[heidi@calyxsite.com](mailto:heidi@calyxsite.com)>

**Subject:** Fw: Tree Code Amendments Update

Heidi Siegelbaum  
Washington Stormwater Center

Stormwater Strategic Initiative Lead Team

Stormwater Program Analyst

(253) 445-4502  
[heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu](mailto:heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu)

Washington Stormwater Center  
Washington State University  
2606 West Pioneer  
Puyallup, WA. 98371

[www.wastormwatercenter.org](http://www.wastormwatercenter.org)

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**From:** City of Kirkland <[kirkland@service.govdelivery.com](mailto:kirkland@service.govdelivery.com)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 2, 2019 5:13 PM  
**To:** Siegelbaum, Heidi <[heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu](mailto:heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu)>  
**Subject:** Tree Code Amendments Update



## CITY OF KIRKLAND UPDATE: TREE CODE AMENDMENTS UPDATE

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You are subscribed to the **Tree Code Amendments List-Serv** for the City of Kirkland. The [Tree Code Amendments web page](#) has recently been updated and is now available online.

REMINDER: The Planning Commission and Houghton Community Council will hold a joint public hearing on Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 7:00 pm at City Hall Council Chambers to receive public comment on the proposed amendments to Kirkland Zoning Code Chapter 95. You are encouraged to attend this hearing to express your views on proposed amendments that will affect city-wide tree removal and tree retention related to development. City staff will be available to answer questions about the code amendments prior to the hearing from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers lobby.

Written comments may be submitted directly to the Planning Commission and/or Houghton Community Council up to 5:00 pm before the hearing in care of Deb Powers, Urban Forester, Kirkland Planning and Building Department. Please refer to Case No. CAM18-00408 and include your name, mailing address and email address.

During the meeting, anyone may speak or submit written comments.

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This email was sent to [heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu](mailto:heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu) using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of the City of Kirkland  
Washington · 123 Fifth Avenue · Kirkland, WA 98033 · 425-587-3000



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**From:** Graydon Newman <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 03, 2019 1:08 PM  
**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Please Strengthen Seattle's Tree Ordinance

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise a vital green infrastructure. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

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trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity as trees are replaced.

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7. Expand SDOT's existing tree service provider's registration and certification to register all Tree Service Providers (arborists) working on trees in Seattle.
8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Graydon Newman

[graydon.newman@gmail.com](mailto:graydon.newman@gmail.com)

3166 SW Genesee St

Seattle, Washington 98126

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**From:** David Moehring <dmoehring@consultant.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, November 03, 2019 4:06 PM

**To:** Bagshaw, Sally <Sally.Bagshaw@seattle.gov>; Gonzalez, Lorena <Lorena.Gonzalez@seattle.gov>; Pacheco, Abel <Abel.Pacheco@seattle.gov>; O'Brien, Mike <Mike.O'Brien@seattle.gov>; Herbold, Lisa <Lisa.Herbold@seattle.gov>; Harrell, Bruce <Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov>; kshama.sewant@seattle.gov; Juarez, Debora <Debora.Juarez@seattle.gov>; Mosqueda, Teresa <Teresa.Mosqueda@seattle.gov>; DOT\_SeattleTrees <Seattle.Trees@seattle.gov>; DOT\_LA <DOT\_LA@seattle.gov>

**Cc:** Strauss, Daniel <Daniel.Strauss@seattle.gov>; Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>; Chu, Brian <Brian.Chu@seattle.gov>

**Subject:** Will Seattle try to match Kirkland's Tree Code Amendments ?

**CAUTION: External Email**

Looking closer, we see that the resolution of the Seattle City Council is a good leap forward - especially when tree removal is being considered. But what about large and Exceptional tree retention?

We need only look across the Lake to Kirkland. Please consider attending their program on November 5th.

Here's a quick list of amendments Kirkland is considering that recognizes that an urban area stripped of mature trees and sufficient space to grow trees does not advance our common cause :

- Limiting tree removals *prior to development* permit application submittal;
- Tree removal allowances that *consider property size*;
- A condition rating system for *trees required to be retained* on development sites;
- Making tree retention decisions early in the *short plat/subdivision design process*;
- A new *Landmark tree designation* with a higher level of protection;
- Specific rules on how trees can be *retained on development sites*.

[https://www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/planning/Code\\_Updates/Projects/Tree\\_Code\\_Updates.htm](https://www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/planning/Code_Updates/Projects/Tree_Code_Updates.htm)

Kindly, in the interests of local heat islands and natural habitats with increased density,

David Moehring

**From:** City of Kirkland <[kirkland@service.govdelivery.com](mailto:kirkland@service.govdelivery.com)>

**Subject:** Tree Code Amendments Update



CITY OF KIRKLAND UPDATE:  
TREE CODE AMENDMENTS UPDATE

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**From:** Abbie Watts <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 03, 2019 4:28 PM  
**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Protect Seattle's trees please - Seattle's Tree Ordinance

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Trees are vital to our planet and our city. I just finished reading this years Pulitzer prize winning novel, *The Overstory* and it's about protecting trees and climate change. Trees fulfill so many roles and are essential in cityscapes. In Seattle, poor areas don't have trees. That's sad but more importantly bad for factors as diverse as airquality and human happiness.

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Abbie Watts

[abigail.kp.watts@gmail.com](mailto:abigail.kp.watts@gmail.com)

413 Garfield St

Seattle, Washington 98109

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**From:** Nicole Corrado <[info@sg.actionnetwork.org](mailto:info@sg.actionnetwork.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 04, 2019 6:48 AM  
**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <[Sandra.Pinto\\_de\\_Bader@Seattle.gov](mailto:Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@Seattle.gov)>  
**Subject:** Please Strengthen Seattle's Tree Ordinance

**CAUTION: External Email**

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Nicole Corrado

[ntcorrado@rogers.com](mailto:ntcorrado@rogers.com)

1 Bluejay Way

Toronto, Ontario M5V 2T6

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From: David Moehring <dmoehring@consultant.com>  
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2019 8:27 AM  
To: Humphries, Paul <Paul.Humphries@seattle.gov>; PRC <PRC@seattle.gov>  
Cc: Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>; Bagshaw, Sally <Sally.Bagshaw@seattle.gov>; Naomi Zurcher <treerap@sprintmail.com>; Finn Coven, Jessica <Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov>; Annie Thoe <neighborhoodtreekeepers@gmail.com>; Pederson, Art <Art.Pederson@seattle.gov>  
Subject: Enforcing tree protections at 3406 and 3412 34th

CAUTION: External Email

Mr. Humphries,

Thank you for practicing what SDCI preaches - that being the Department is the 'steward of Seattle's environment'.

Your comments on the townhouses with row houses development\* at 3406 and 3412 34th Ave W are astute relative to the protection of existing Exceptional trees and tree groves. Too often the city planners do not establish at the onset that designs must work around protected trees.



You have appropriately asked for the retaining existing group of trees at the south end and trees which primarily grow on the property to the south.

Astonishingly, there is no evidence that a Design has been provided here that considered retaining exceptional and protected trees. There is plenty of space on this functionally-related site to do so. The attached pdf from a similar (and smaller) LR1-zoned lot in Ballard demonstrates that architects and arborists have indeed successfully collaborated on retaining nature trees when the Department requires them to do so.

As the former councilperson Rob Johnson once suggested, Seattle needs to stand up for mature trees while accommodating increased density.

<http://archive.kuow.org/post/seattle-says-no-more-willy-nilly-cutting-down-trees-private-property>

The message below is a good testament to why this issue is so important in within Seattle urban environment.

David Moehring  
Magnolia Tree Keepers   
TreePAC 

\* Code note: Seattle prohibits development of land with both Rowhouses and townhouses. SMC 23.84A.032.R(20); yet no one objects to the practice of non-authorized contract rezoning from LR1(M) to LR2(M1).

Sent: Friday, November 01, 2019 at 2:22 AM

>> From: "Naomi"

>> To: "Finn Coven, Jessica" <[Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov](mailto:Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov)>

>> Cc: "David Moehring" <[dmoehring@consultant.com](mailto:dmoehring@consultant.com)>

>> Subject: Re: Keep Seattle Livable!

>> Dear Jessica:

>>

>> Thank you for your summary analysis of Seattle's Tree Protection.

>>

>> My biggest issue, from what I can see and the number of trees that are being compromised in various ways, is that not enough is being done to prevent trees from becoming hazard trees in the first place.

>>

>> Putting a management focus on hazard trees can very easily play into the hands of developers and agreeable arborists who need the income being offered to evaluate in a certain direction.

>>

>> What is missing here is the planning and site preparation requisite to a tree or trees being planted, how we select a tree for that site, how we plant it and facilitate its establishment and then how we protect, preserve and maintain it so that it can actually grow into maturity. There are many proven strategies which can facilitate GROWING a tree into maturity, all of which cost much less than having to come along later and deal with the result of all of the requisite parts and pieces either not being done or being done incorrectly.

>>

>> A sustainable urban forest ecosystem is front loaded in terms of Standards, Procedures and Best Practices and their resulting costs. But, that investment not only results in a healthy, resilient and viable urban forest resource, it affords an extraordinary quality of life for all residents as a result of the enhanced Ecosystem Services such an Urban Forest is able to deliver.

>>

>> That should be the goal of managing the resource, rather than a sole focus on the hazards that, all too often, bad judgment and grossly inadequate planning, management and protection instigate.

>>

>> Kind regards

>> Naomi

>>

>> On Oct 31, 2019, at 6:45 PM, Finn Coven, Jessica <[Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov](mailto:Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov)> <<mailto:Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov>>> wrote:

>>

>> Dear Naomi,

>>

>> Thank you for your email.

>>

>> Over the past couple of years, the City of Seattle has been taking steps to improve tree protection.

>>

>> In 2016, my office partnered up with the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) to undertake the Tree Regulations Research Project to assess the effectiveness of the interim tree protection regulations and get critical data for us to better understand the issues surrounding tree



protection. The project's final report

<[http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/Resources/Final%20Report\\_Tree%20Regulation%20Research%20ProjectPahsell\\_31MAR2017\\_final.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/Resources/Final%20Report_Tree%20Regulation%20Research%20ProjectPahsell_31MAR2017_final.pdf)> provided the basis for Mayor Burgess' Executive Order 2017-11

<<http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/2018/2018docs/TreeExecOrder2017-11FINAL.pdf>> on Tree Protection (EO).

>>

>> The EO directed City departments to implement measures to increase tree protection. Progress on EO implementation includes:

>> In 2017, SDCI began a series of updates to their website <[http://www.seattle.gov/sdci/codes/codes-we-enforce-\(a-z\)/tree-protection-code](http://www.seattle.gov/sdci/codes/codes-we-enforce-(a-z)/tree-protection-code)> including tree protection details and signage specifications to help educate the public and permit applicants about the value of trees and tree protection regulations.

>> In 2018, SDCI updated Tip 331B - Hazard Tree

<<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Publications/CAM/cam331b.pdf>>, to more clearly determine what trees are to be classified as hazardous; and Tip 242 -Tree Protections in Seattle

<<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Publications/CAM/cam242.pdf>>, to detail the process for evaluating a tree's risk and the process of completing and submitting a Hazard Tree Removal Application. SDCI also adopted Director's Rule 17-2018 <<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/codes/dr/17-2018%20tree.pdf>> -

Calculating Tree Valuations and Civil Penalties for Tree Protection Code Violations

<<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/codes/dr/17-2018%20tree.pdf>>. This new rule clarifies the methodology of the cost approach used by code enforcement.

>> This year, SDCI hired two arborists to assist in the review of permit applications for tree removal and enforcement of tree protection violations. SDCI is working with staff from the City's IT department to update the online permit system to include a tree tracking mechanism that will better assist staff to track tree removal and replanting during different stages of development.

>>

>> My office, as part of our role staffing the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC), has worked to facilitate visits from City Councilmembers Johnson, Bagshaw, and Herbold, to discuss the Commission's recommendations for updates to the tree protection ordinance that was brought forward by Councilmember Johnson in 2018.

>>

>> Earlier this year, City Council expressed their commitment to protect our urban trees as our city continues to grow by adopting a companion resolution (Resolution 3870

<<http://clerk.seattle.gov/search/results?s6=mandatory+housing+affordability&l=200&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESON&Sect3=PLURON&Sect4=AND&Sect5=RESNY&Sect6=HITOFF&d=RESF&p=1&u=%2Fsearch%2Fresolutions&r=1&f=G>> – Section 6) to the Mandatory House Affordability legislation. The resolution is in alignment with UFC recommendations.

>>

>> The Mayor and Council are currently working with the UFC on a timeline to continue this work and produce legislation to update current tree regulations.

>>

>> Thank you again for reaching out.

>>

>> Sincerely,

>> Jessica Finn Coven, Director

>> Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment

>>

>>

>> From: Naomi Zurcher <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
>> <<mailto:info@sg.actionnetwork.org>>>  
>> Sent: Saturday, October 05, 2019 6:40 AM  
>> To: Finn Coven, Jessica <Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov>  
>> <<mailto:Jessica.FinnCoven@seattle.gov>>>  
>> Subject: Keep Seattle Livable!  
>>  
>> CAUTION: External Email  
>> OSE Director Jessica Finn Coven,  
>>  
>> As an Urban Forester and a Consulting Arborist, I am concerned with the well-being of the public's trees, regardless of where they are - all trees matter.  
>>  
>> It has come to my attention that although Seattle has a Tree Protection Ordinance in place, the public's urban trees are being decimated through a lack of enforcement combined with inadequate Best Management Practices and development that does not respect the existing tree resource.  
>>  
>> None of this is acceptable and all of it is avoidable and preventable.  
>>  
>> Seattle's Urban Forest is comprised of trees and all their associates including human residents, living together in the built environment. Seattle's trees are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.  
>>  
>> BUT, trees can only provide these critical services IF their needs are respected and accommodated.  
>>  
>> Seattle's rapid growth and an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are not protected during development and are removed and not replaced. It is urgent to act now to stop this continued loss of trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity as trees are replaced.  
>>  
>> Please update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance as recommended in the latest draft by the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission.  
>> Here are the key provisions that need to be in the updated tree ordinance:  
>>  
>> 1. Expand the existing Tree Removal and Replacement Permit Program, including 2-week public notice and posting on-site, as used by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) – to cover all Significant Trees (6" and larger diameter at breast height (DBH)) on private property in all land use zones, both during development and outside development.  
>> 2. Require the replacement of all Significant Trees removed with trees that in 25 years will reach equivalent canopy volume – either on site or pay a replacement fee into a City Tree Replacement and Preservation Fund. Allow the Fund to also accept fines, donations, grants and set up easements.  
>> 3. Retain current protections for Exceptional Trees and reduce the upper threshold for Exceptional Trees to 24" DBH, protect tree groves and prohibit Significant Trees being removed on undeveloped lots.  
>> 4. Allow removal of no more than 2 Significant non-Exceptional Trees  
>> in 3 years per lot outside development 5. Establish one citywide database for applying for Tree Removal and Replacement Permits and to track changes in the tree canopy.

>> 6. Post online all permit requests and permit approvals for public viewing.  
>> 7. Expand SDOT's existing tree service provider's registration and certification to register all Tree Service Providers (arborists) working on trees in Seattle.  
>> 8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.  
>>  
>> Naomi Zurcher  
>> [treerap@sprintmail.com](mailto:treerap@sprintmail.com) <<mailto:treerap@sprintmail.com>>  
>> 161 Columbia Hts  
>> Brooklyn, 11201-2154  
>>  
>>

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**From:** Christie Cave <[info@sg.actionnetwork.org](mailto:info@sg.actionnetwork.org)>

**Sent:** Monday, November 04, 2019 12:12 PM

**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <[Sandra.Pinto\\_de\\_Bader@Seattle.gov](mailto:Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@Seattle.gov)>

**Subject:** Save our Trees!

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise a vital green infrastructure. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

Seattle's rapid growth and an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed and not replaced. It is urgent to act now to stop this continued loss of trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity as trees are replaced.

Please update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance as recommended in the latest draft by the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission.

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1. Expand the existing Tree Removal and Replacement Permit Program, including 2-week public notice and posting on-site, as used by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) – to cover all Significant Trees (6" and larger diameter at breast height (DBH)) on private property in all land use zones, both during development and outside development.

2. Require the replacement of all Significant trees removed with trees that in 25 years will reach equivalent canopy volume – either on site or pay a replacement fee into a City Tree Replacement and Preservation Fund. Allow the Fund to also accept fines, donations, grants and set up easements.
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6. Post online all permit requests and permit approvals for public viewing.
7. Expand SDOT’s existing tree service provider’s registration and certification to register all Tree Service Providers (arborists) working on trees in Seattle.
8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Christie Cave

[cmcave@aol.com](mailto:cmcave@aol.com)

735 N 72nd

Seattle, Washington 98103

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**From:** David Moehring <dmoehring@consultant.com>

**Sent:** Monday, November 04, 2019 5:03 PM

**To:** Bagshaw, Sally <Sally.Bagshaw@seattle.gov>; Herbold, Lisa <Lisa.Herbold@seattle.gov>; Sawant, Kshama <Kshama.Sawant@seattle.gov>; Gonzalez, Lorena <Lorena.Gonzalez@seattle.gov>; O'Brien, Mike <Mike.O'Brien@seattle.gov>; Pacheco, Abel <Abel.Pacheco@seattle.gov>; Mosqueda, Teresa <Teresa.Mosqueda@seattle.gov>

**Cc:** Steve Zemke <stevezemke@msn.com>; Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>; Strauss, Daniel <Daniel.Strauss@seattle.gov>

**Subject:** Hazard tree director rule

**CAUTION: External Email**

**A better tree protection ordinance is needed in Seattle.**

City Arborist or Building Inspectors evaluations of **violations in tree cuttings:**

A March 27, 2017 tree regulation report "*Tree Regulations Research Project - Phase II*" have revealed (chart below, spreadsheet and chart attached) that there are significantly more reporting of violations, yet the number of violations remains low. In 2015, of the 158 reports on tree cuttings, only 32 (or 25%) were considered to be violations. Most of the prior years were about 50% in violation. [This information chart and excel spreadsheet with address locations was recently made available from a public records request.]

**This attached May 12, 2011 "Tip 242 - Tree Protection Regulations in Seattle" document needs to be updated.**

 Updates are needed for '**Developed Land**' on page 2 to enact better tree protections:

"...limited in all lowrise, midrise, and commercial zones and on single-family lots 5,000 square feet in area or larger..."

(is this now "lots 4,000 square feet in area or larger"?)

"No more than three non-exceptional trees six inches in diameter or greater may be removed on a lot in any one-year period."

"No permits are required for removal of trees within these limits."

 Clarification is needed for **HAZARD TREES** on page 2:

"Hazard trees are trees designated by a qualified professional that have a combination of structural defects and/or disease which makes it subject to a high probability of failure and are located near potential targets." "If a hazard tree is located in an environmentally critical area, replanting will also be required for removal of a hazard tree."

More and more reports are indicating a tree will likely fall on a potential target AFTER a nearby building is demolished or a foundation for a new building is excavated. A healthy tree becoming a hazard after excavating around it? That is reverse thinking, isn't it?

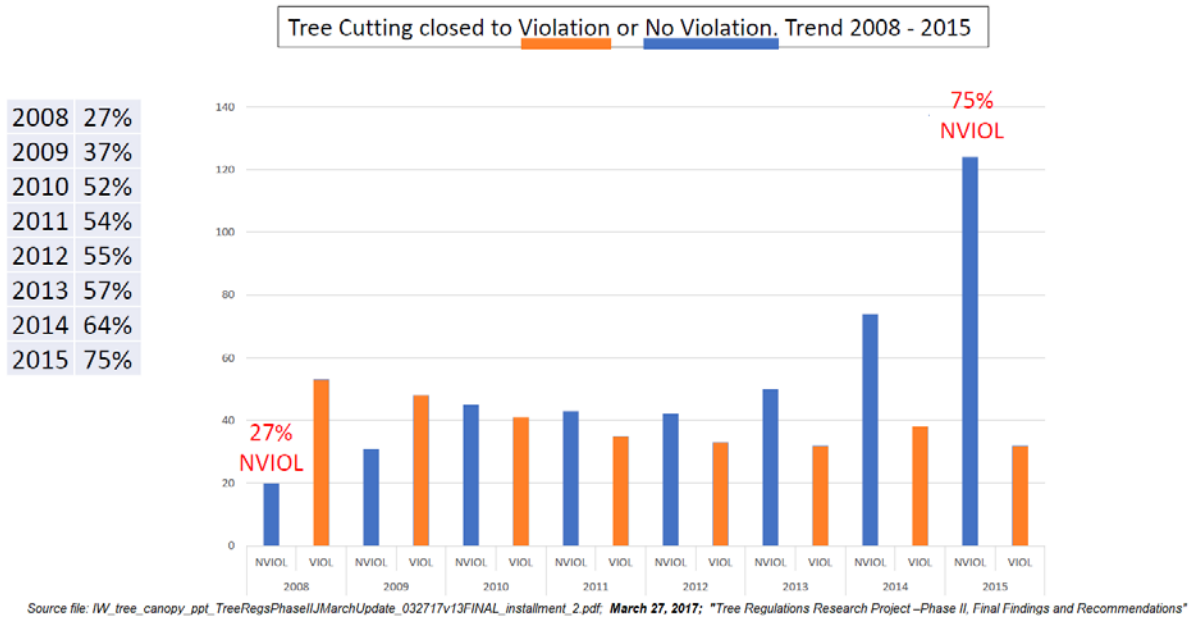
 Increased enforcement is needed for "**Tree Protection during Development**" on page 2:

How often are departures enforced (reduced setbacks, reduced on-site parking, increased height)?

"In general, exceptional trees must be retained unless doing so would prevent a project from meeting the development

potential of the zone even after available departures from development standards are considered."

and on page 3: "Protection of other non-exceptional trees over two feet in diameter is optional, but encouraged."



David Moehring  
312-965-0634

**Sent:** Monday, December 03, 2018 at 1:26 PM

**From:** "David Moehring" <[dmoehring@consultant.com](mailto:dmoehring@consultant.com)>

**Cc:** "[seattle-tree-ordinance-working-group@lists.riseup.net](mailto:seattle-tree-ordinance-working-group@lists.riseup.net)" <[seattle-tree-ordinance-working-group@lists.riseup.net](mailto:seattle-tree-ordinance-working-group@lists.riseup.net)>

**Subject:** Hazard tree director rule

FYI -SDCI updated Tip 331B, Hazard Trees, was updated to correct the application process.

Date Revised: 11/06/2018

Removal of a hazard tree is allowed in environmentally critical areas (ECAs) when an applicant demonstrates a significant risk exists. This Tip details the process for assessing whether a hazard exists and submitting a Hazard Tree Removal Application.

<http://web6.seattle.gov/DPD/CAMS/CamDetail.aspx?cn=331B>

Also See Tip 331, ECAs: Tree and Vegetation Overview, for more general information about trees in ECAs.

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**From:** Kelliann Lafferty <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 04, 2019 9:08 PM  
**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Please Protect Seattle's Trees

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise a vital green infrastructure. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

Seattle's rapid growth and an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed and not replaced. It is urgent to act now to stop this continued loss of trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity as trees are replaced.

Please update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance as recommended in the latest draft by the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission.

Here are the key provisions that need to be in the updated tree ordinance:

1. Expand the existing Tree Removal and Replacement Permit Program, including 2-week public notice and posting on-site, as used by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) – to cover all Significant Trees (6" and larger diameter at breast height (DBH)) on private property in all land use zones, both during development and outside development.
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3. Retain current protections for Exceptional Trees and reduce the upper threshold for

Exceptional Trees to 24" DBH, protect tree groves and prohibit Significant Trees being removed on undeveloped lots.

4. Allow removal of no more than 2 Significant non-Exceptional Trees in 3 years per lot outside development
5. Establish one citywide database for applying for Tree Removal and Replacement Permits and to track changes in the tree canopy.
6. Post online all permit requests and permit approvals for public viewing.
7. Expand SDOT's existing tree service provider's registration and certification to register all Tree Service Providers (arborists) working on trees in Seattle.
8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Kelliann Lafferty

[kell10192@gmail.com](mailto:kell10192@gmail.com)

5508 22nd Ave NW, 5

Seattle, Washington 98107

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From: David Moehring <dmoehring@consultant.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, November 05, 2019 7:51 AM  
To: Houston, Michael <Michael.Houston@seattle.gov>  
Cc: PRC <PRC@seattle.gov>; Torgelson, Nathan <Nathan.Torgelson@seattle.gov>; Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>; mbeutjer@msn.com  
Subject: Tree grove removal at City of Seattle DCI Notice #3033703-LU - November 4, 2019

CAUTION: External Email

Please provide the arborist report for 3452 14th Ave W 3033703-LU.

There does not appear to be any report on the Electronic Document Management System. This development site has apparently not been considered for protected trees and the protected tree grove per SMC 25.11.

There is no record of consolidating the allowed FAR into one building rather than 4 separate dwellings. There is no record of design compromises in terms of setbacks and heights to retain existing trees.

David Moehring  
3444B 23rd ave W



Sent using the mail.com mail app

Forwarded email

> From: "Gonzales Cunneutubby, Reta" <[Reta.Gonzales@Seattle.Gov](mailto:Reta.Gonzales@Seattle.Gov)>  
> Date: November 4, 2019 at 9:03 AM  
> To: "Gonzales Cunneutubby, Reta" <[Reta.Gonzales@Seattle.Gov](mailto:Reta.Gonzales@Seattle.Gov)>  
> Subject: City of Seattle DCI Notice #3033703-LU - November 4, 2019  
>  
> Please see attached Notice published on November 4, 2019.  
>  
> DO NOT REPLY TO THIS MESSAGE.  
>  
> Please contact the planner listed on the attached notice, for any issues, questions, or comments regarding this project.  
>  
> This notice is being sent as you are: an applicant; a board member; a SEPA agency; or a party of record (you attended and signed in at a meeting or emailed/mailed in comments) for this project.  
>  
> Thanks,  
> [[cid:image001.png@01D2DF73.141B6B20](#)]  
> City of Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections<<http://www.seattle.gov/sdci/>>  
> Public Resource Center  
> 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000  
> PO Box 34019, Seattle, WA 98124-4019  
> [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)<<mailto:PRC@seattle.gov>>  
>  
> [[cid:image002.png@01D2DF73.141B6B20](#)]<<https://www.facebook.com/seattledci>>[[cid:image003.png@01D2DF73.141B6B20](#)]<<https://twitter.com/seattledci>>[[cid:image004.png@01D2DF73.141B6B20](#)]<<http://buildingconnections.seattle.gov/>>  
>  
> "As stewards and regulators of land and buildings, we preserve and enhance the----

---

**From:** Bard Horton <[info@sg.actionnetwork.org](mailto:info@sg.actionnetwork.org)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 05, 2019 6:17 PM

**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <[Sandra.Pinto\\_de\\_Bader@Seattle.gov](mailto:Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@Seattle.gov)>

**Subject:** Save Our Trees!

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise a vital green infrastructure. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

Seattle's rapid growth and an outdated tree ordinance are reducing these beneficial effects as trees are removed and not replaced. It is urgent to act now to stop this continued loss of trees, particularly large mature trees and tree groves. It is important to promote environmental equity as trees are replaced.

Please update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance as recommended in the latest draft by the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission.

Here are the key provisions that need to be in the updated tree ordinance:

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3. Retain current protections for Exceptional Trees and reduce the upper threshold for Exceptional Trees to 24" DBH, protect tree groves and prohibit Significant Trees being removed on undeveloped lots.
4. Allow removal of no more than 2 Significant non-Exceptional Trees in 3 years per lot outside development
5. Establish one citywide database for applying for Tree Removal and Replacement Permits and to track changes in the tree canopy.
6. Post online all permit requests and permit approvals for public viewing.
7. Expand SDOT's existing tree service provider's registration and certification to register all

Tree Service Providers (arborists) working on trees in Seattle.

8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Bard Horton

[bardjess@msn.com](mailto:bardjess@msn.com)

328 N 71st St

Seattle, Washington 98103

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**From:** Kawamura, Jon <Jon.Kawamura@seattle.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 07, 2019 10:45 AM  
**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Exceptional Tree Experience

Thanks Sandra,

Sorry about it being 2 pages, I tried to keep it short. We really appreciate you taking the time to read about our experience and hope it somehow gives you a little more information about a homeowners perspective on the exceptional tree law.

- Jon

**From:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <[Sandra.Pinto\\_de\\_Bader@Seattle.gov](mailto:Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@Seattle.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 07, 2019 10:37 AM  
**To:** Kawamura, Jon <[Jon.Kawamura@seattle.gov](mailto:Jon.Kawamura@seattle.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Exceptional Tree Experience

Hi Jon,

I staff the Urban Forestry Commission, so, feel free to send me anything you'd like to share with them.

Thanks,



**Sandra Pinto de Bader**

She/her/hers

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator

City of Seattle, [Office of Sustainability & Environment](#)

206.684.3194 | [Sandra.Pinto\\_de\\_Bader@seattle.gov](mailto:Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@seattle.gov)

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Blog](#)



[FAQS](#) | [BLOG](#)

**From:** Kawamura, Jon <[Jon.Kawamura@seattle.gov](mailto:Jon.Kawamura@seattle.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 07, 2019 10:06 AM  
**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <[Sandra.Pinto\\_de\\_Bader@Seattle.gov](mailto:Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@Seattle.gov)>  
**Subject:** Exceptional Tree Experience

Sandra,

I have been in communication concerning our experience with the current Exceptional Tree laws with Chandra Emery (Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections) and Art Peterson who is an arborist working in the same group. Art strongly recommended that we share our experiences with the Exceptional Tree laws with the Urban Forestry Commission and City Council. Do you have a contact I could send our story to?

Thanks,

- Jon

Jon and Nora  
3669 Interlake Ave N.  
Seattle, WA 98103

I am writing to share our experiences as the owners of a single-family home getting ready to sell our house with what has been labeled as an exceptional tree in our backyard. We are hoping that you take our experience with the exceptional tree laws into consideration if the current laws are under discussion for change.

I'd like to give you a little background information on our experience with developers, the cities rezoning to promote greater density on our bloc and the exceptional tree law.

Last year I made the decision to plan on retiring from the City of Seattle (early 2020) so we could move back home to take care of our parents (92, 94 years old). Our neighbors had similar issues and had decided to move as well. Both of our lots are adjacent (3669, 3665) with similar trees. The developer agreed to buy each of our lots for 1.2 million.

Even though my neighbor had more tree coverage, the diameter or species of our tree was deemed to be exceptional by an arborist, so the developer terminated our agreement stating that they didn't want to absorb the risk of investing time going through the city design processes.

Once our 1.2 million agreement was terminated, we were willing to try and work around the tree, so we entered another agreement at 1.05 million (\$150,000 less) with a developer who had a site plan design keeping the tree in place. The tree ended up eliminating an additional unit which made the design financially less desirable, so the developer decided to terminate the deal after a 3-month feasibility period. Now we are faced with trying to sell the house as a private residence with the next-door neighbor's house and the house across the street being torn down (might be tough, not many single-family houses remain on block). We are being quoted a price of \$850k to 900k for a private sale which is \$300k - \$350k less than we would have received initially without the tree.

We did do our due diligence in pursuing options where we kept the tree and were even willing to take \$150k less. One of the problems is that the market in Seattle is in a slight downturn so developers need all the square footage to reduce risk, the rezoning also is a factor. Our street was zoned for high density housing.

#### Observations:

- With such a huge difference in property value due to the exceptional tree, it would make sense for most homeowners to just cut the tree down and face any fine especially if their life circumstances put them in a tough situation. But why make the City of Seattle and the homeowners' adversaries?
- Comparing our lot with our neighbors, cutting down their trees would have a greater environmental impact, but diameter/species rule of a single tree on our lot was the determining factor in our house sale as it was tagged as exceptional. This really is saying that the environmental impact of clearing trees is not as important as an arbitrary ruling based on diameter size and species.
- A house down the street was just torn down and they posted a sign saying that several exceptional trees were taken down. All this is confusing to us because in one case more tree coverage was allowed to be taken down and in the other case several exceptional trees were allowed to be removed. There might be some rule that justified the removal of these trees, but it is confusing to the homeowner.
- Our tree isn't native to the area and was planted by the previous owner of the house. This is not an issue of deforesting; it is an issue of removing a tree that was planted by the homeowner on their own land.
- The way the exceptional tree is written now, if the homeowner makes the mistake of planting a certain species of tree and lets it grow to a certain diameter then the

city takes control of the tree but not of any of the ownership maintenance costs and risk. Our tree has had 2 of the 3 main canopy branches break off and land on our deck and carport over the years. The city exceptional tree rule is basically saying that once the tree grows to a certain diameter, control of the tree is handed over to the city, but the city will not absorb any of the maintenance costs or hazardous risks. The arborist can recommend trimming but that incurs cost and doesn't guarantee safety.

Recommendations to revise exceptional tree laws.

The current exceptional tree law appears to have a hard threshold based on species/diameter. This only encourages homeowners to cut their trees down before they reach the threshold or illegally cut the trees down if the financial impact is large enough. The homeowners negatively impacted by the rule are the ones that didn't know the rule existed. Depending on ignorance of a rule isn't a good way to govern an initiative. It would make more sense to apply a sliding scale cost of removing all trees based on diameter. For instance, removal of a medium size tree would incur a \$2000 fee, a large tree might cost \$10000. Having a lower cost scale for high density zoning should also be considered. This type of tree removal enforcement would have the advantages:

1. The revenue generated from tree removal fees could then fund replanting initiatives.
2. Homeowners would be less apt to become adversaries of the city and illegally cut down exceptional trees.
3. The city would not be liable or responsible for maintaining trees they claim as exceptional.
4. The tree removal policy would be straightforward and easy for homeowners, developers and neighbors to understand.

If there are no changes to the current exceptional tree laws I do think there should be an appeal process for exception tree exemptions in cases where there is severe financial impact and the homeowner has done their due diligence to pursue design options keeping the tree.

Thanks your consideration,

Jon Kawamura

E-Mail: [Jon.Kawamura@Seattle.Gov](mailto:Jon.Kawamura@Seattle.Gov)

Phone: (206) 310-9984

---

**From:** Charna Klein <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>

**Sent:** Thursday, November 07, 2019 9:10 AM

**To:** Pinto de Bader, Sandra <Sandra.Pinto\_de\_Bader@Seattle.gov>

**Subject:** Keep Seattle Livable!

**CAUTION: External Email**

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise a vital green infrastructure. Trees reduce air pollution, storm water runoff and climate impacts like heat island effects, while providing essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They are important for the physical and mental health of our residents.

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8. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Charna Klein

[charnaklein@msn.com](mailto:charnaklein@msn.com)

6521 36 Ave NE

Seattle , Washington 98115

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