

A panoramic view of the Seattle skyline featuring the Space Needle, various skyscrapers, and green trees in the foreground under a clear blue sky.

SDCI Enforcement: Tree Preservation

Photo by John Skelton



Seattle Department of
Construction & Inspections

Presentation to Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

Faith Lumsden

| December 13, 2017

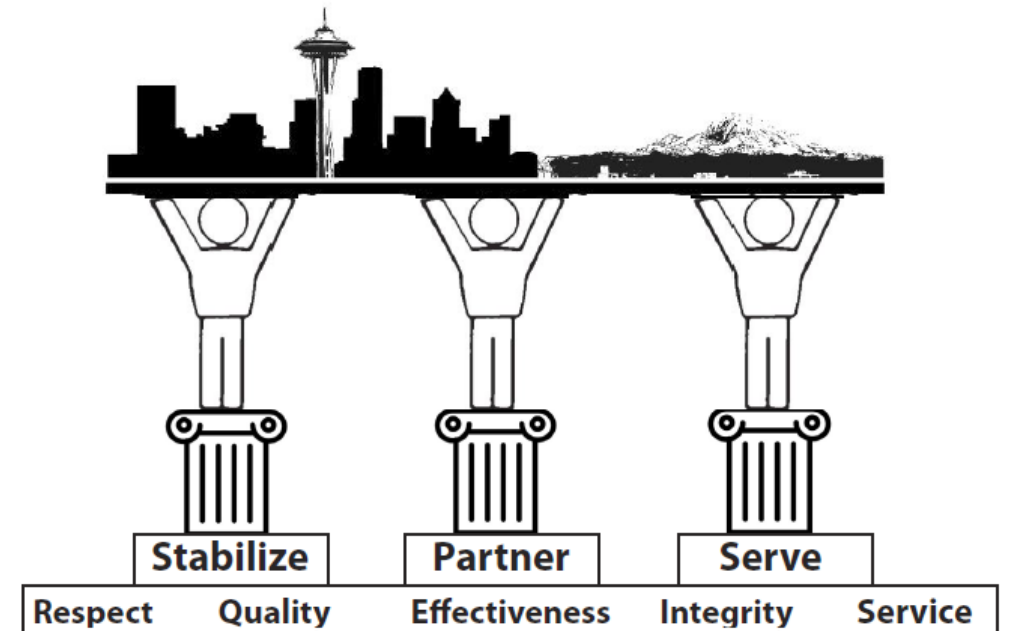
SDCI PURPOSE AND VALUES

Our Purpose

As stewards and regulators of land and buildings, we preserve and enhance equity, livability, safety, and health of our communities.

Our Values

- Respect
- Quality of work
- Effectiveness
- Integrity
- Service



Tree Protection Ordinance - 2009

SMC 25.11

Lofty goals

- Protect the urban forest
- Prevent indiscriminate removal and destruction of trees
- Trade off development flexibility for tree protection
- Especially protect exceptional trees



Enforcement Challenges

- No permit required
- The rules are a little complicated
- Must rely on complaints
- Must respond quickly
- Can't always access the property



Enforcement Tools

- Stop Work Orders
- Notices of Violation
- Civil Penalties

*You might need a note at the bottom: Calibri 18 point font



Penalties for illegal tree cutting

- Penalty = appraised value of the tree(s) affected in accordance with the Guide for Plant Appraisal, 9th Edition
- Value (penalty amount) =
(Basic Tree Cost) x (Species Rating %)
x (Condition Rating %) x
(Location Rating %)



Hard to calculate value when the tree is gone

SDCI is developing a Director's Rule to help with enforcement

Rule was published in draft form on Thursday December 7, 2017

Comments requested by January 15, 2018



Draft Director's Rule Overview

- Trunk formula
Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
- Conifer or Deciduous
- Species
- Condition
- Location
- Grove



Images by LMN



QUESTIONS?

Faith Lumsden
Code Compliance Director

Faith.Lumsden@seattle.gov

206-615-0097

www.seattle.gov/sdci

