

Spring 2020 Research Update

Fee-in-lieu Considerations for the City of Seattle Tree Protection Updates

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Presentation Outline

1. Research Recap
2. Findings
3. Recommended Best Practices
4. Questions & Feedback

Fee-in-lieu Research Objectives

- **Case studies from other municipalities**
 - Tree replacement criteria
 - Fee schedules
 - Administration
 - Challenges and opportunities
- **Resources**
 - Published policies, regulations, ordinances, etc.
 - Input from various City representatives
 - Articles and academic literature

Fee Structure – Large City Examples

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Los Angeles | \$2,612/tree (development tree) |
| | \$1,945/tree (public works tree) |
| | \$267/tree (property <4 dwellings) |

| | | |
|---------------------|----------|--------------|
| Portland, OR | 12 - 20" | \$1,800/tree |
| | 21 - 36" | \$3,600/tree |
| | ≥36" | \$450/inch |

| | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------------|
| Vancouver, BC | N/A | \$1,000/tree |
|----------------------|-----|--------------|

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|------------|
| Tacoma, WA | N/A | \$700/tree |
|-------------------|-----|------------|

Fee Structure – Small City Examples

| | | |
|------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|
| Oregon City, OR | <6" | 1 tree equivalent @ \$322 (322) |
| | 6-12" | 2 trees @ \$322 (\$644) |
| | 13-18" | 3 trees @ \$322 (966) |
| | 19-24" | 4 trees @ \$322 (\$1,288) |
| | 25-30" | 5 trees @ \$322 (\$1,610) |
| | >31" | 6 trees @ \$322 (\$1,932) |

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------|------------|
| Homewood, AL | Protected Tree | \$500/tree |
| | Heritage Tree | \$750/Tree |

| | | |
|----------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Sunnyvale, CA | 12 - 18" | \$400/tree (24" box container) |
| | 19 - 24" | \$800/tree (36" box container) |
| | ≥24" | \$1,600/tree (48" box container) |

Fee Structure – Other Examples

Cedar Park, TX

- 3:1 – Three replacement trees for each Heritage Tree removed
- Cost - \$450 per caliper inch of each replacement tree

Glenview, IL

- Fee based on cross section of tree removed, found by converting DBH using table provided. Class A: \$15/sq in. Class B: \$12.50/sq in. Class C: \$7.50/sq in
- Using chart, example
 - 6" class A tree fee = \$420
 - 12" class B tree fee = \$1,412

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**Average Fee Per Replacement Tree:
\$1,250**

Number of Trees? Money Raised?

- **Los Angeles** – 2018 estimate \$620,000
 - “Large” developers/owners w/5+ dwelling units = \$1,945/tree (roughly 300 trees)
 - “Small” developers/owners = \$267/tree (roughly 500 trees)
- **Portland** – 2019 reported \$1,444,430

| Program | Number of Trees |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Learning Landscapes | 87 |
| Parks Natural Areas | 3,998 |
| Seedling Giveaway | 400 |
| Yard/Street Tree Giveaway | 500 |
| Total | 4,985 |

Fee-in-lieu Challenges

- **Fate of replacement trees** – What happens after initial maintenance period?

Lake Forest Park, WA (MC 16.14):

- Permit required for removal of a replacement tree from previously approved development plan/permit
- Permitted off-site replacement trees assume “Protected” status regardless of species, size, or other thresholds

Miscellaneous Code Components

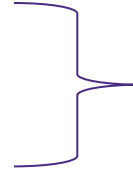
- **Chapel Hill, NC:** *“Mitigation funds will not be used in lieu of general fund support for the existing urban forest management program.”* (MC 5.7). Funds can be used for urban forest inventory and research.
- **Cambridge, MA:** Discounts for qualifying low-income property owners
 - **90% fee reduction:** If qualified for the City’s Residential Real Property Tax Exemptions
 - **\$0 fee:** If receiving “qualified forms of financial assistance” (Veteran benefits, Food Stamps/SNAP, WIC, Social Security Supplemental Income, etc.)

Recommendations

- Employ all regulatory tools possible to **prioritize tree retention**, on-site replacement
- Invest needed resources in code compliance (pays off in ecosystem services provided by trees retained and/or replanted?) – eliminate “slipped through the cracks”
- Allow flexibility in fee schedule
 - Accommodate unknowns (climate impacts, pests, cost of materials, etc.)

Recommendations – Receiving sites

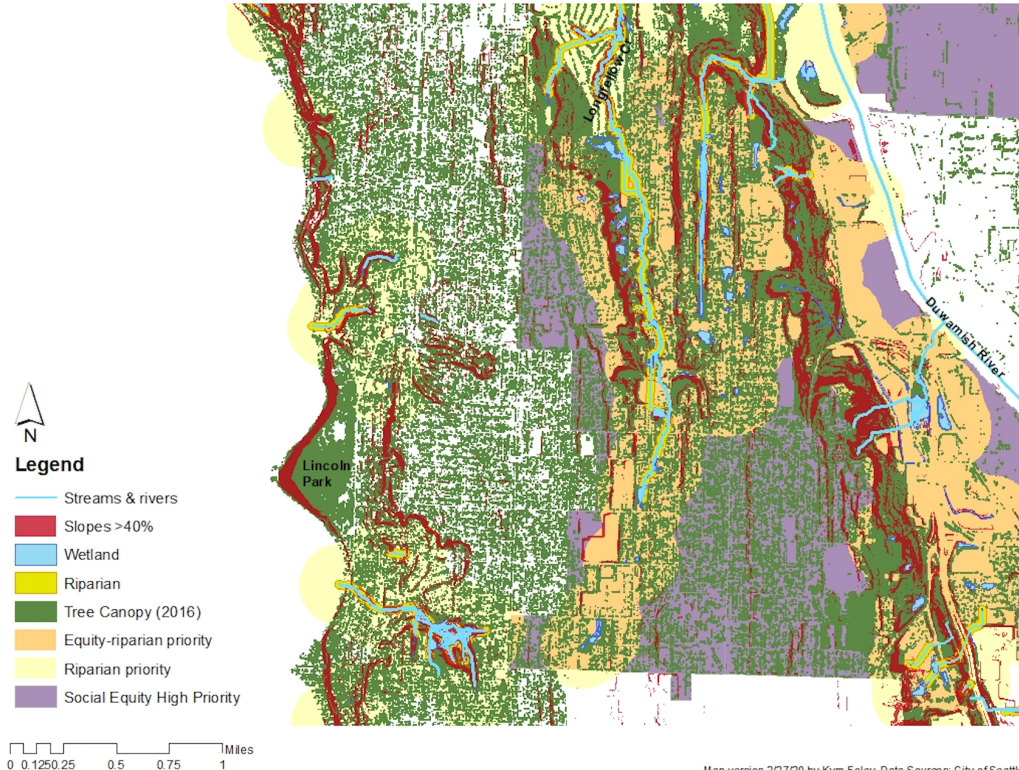
- Include private property when Tree Planting program exists to help administer
- Formalize priority receiving sites
 1. Environmentally Critical Areas
 2. City-owned, non-Parks property
 3. Private property



Overlay w/Race & Social
Equity Index and areas of
low canopy cover

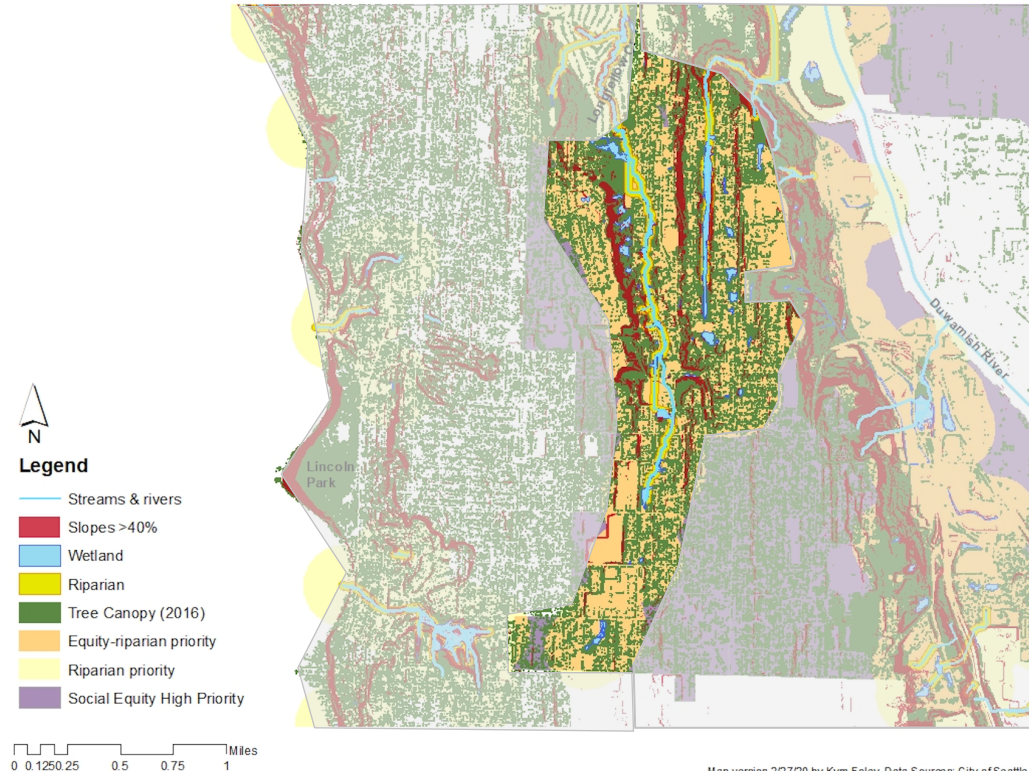
Recommendations – Receiving sites

West Seattle - Priority Areas for Compensatory Tree Installations



Recommendations – Receiving sites

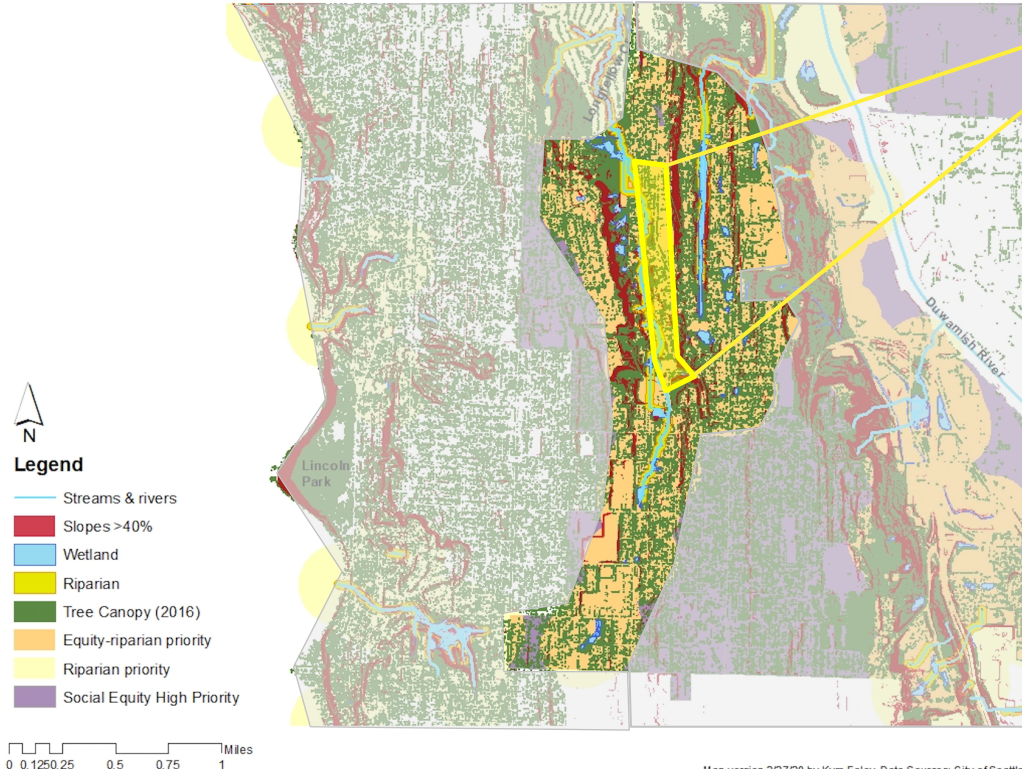
West Seattle - Priority Areas for Compensatory Tree Installations



Map version 2/27/20 by Kym Foley. Data Sources: City of Seattle, King County

Recommendations – Receiving sites

West Seattle - Priority Areas for Compensatory Tree Installations



- Census Tract 107.01
- Race & Social Justice Index High Priority
- Environmentally Critical Area (wetland, riparian)
- Urban Forestry Mgmt Unit #4 (25-30% canopy cover)

Recommendations – Receiving sites

Seattle existing code:

25.11.090 - Tree replacement and site restoration.



- A. Each exceptional tree and tree over two (2) feet in diameter that is removed in association with development in all zones shall be replaced by one or more new trees, the size and species of which shall be determined by the Director; the tree replacement required shall be designed to result, upon maturity, in a canopy cover that is at least equal to the canopy cover prior to tree removal. Preference shall be given to on-site replacement. When on-site replacement cannot be achieved, or is not appropriate as determined by the Director, **preference for off-site replacement shall be on public property.**

Recommendation: *Add language which enables:*

- Replacement plantings on private property
- Protected status for replacement trees

Recommendations – Programmatic

Outreach & Education

- **Development Community:** Benefits beyond Green Factor compliance; curb appeal, shifting environmental values driving demand
- **Public:** “Failure to comply often due to lack of awareness” – City of Portland
- **Tree Service Professionals:** Contractor trainings (RainWise model)

*= Increased tree retention & onsite replacement,
reduce need for fee-in-lieu*

Recommendations – Programmatic

Value-add – *Moving % of replacement tree plantings from private to public realm creates opportunity*

- **Help fund Seattle's Green New Deal**
 - Just transition: Training & living wage jobs in environmental sector
 - Clean air & water
 - Build climate resilience (in conjunction w/2018 **Climate Action Plan**)
 - Environmental justice: Increase ecosystem services in historically underserved communities
- **Leverage & enhance existing activities**
 - Trees for Seattle, Trees for Neighborhoods
 - Duwamish Valley Action Plan (2018)
 - Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan (2018)

Feedback? Questions?

Thank you!

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