



**SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

**Julia Michalak** (Position #1 – Wildlife Biologist), Co-chair  
**Joshua Morris** (Position #7 – NGO), Co-Chair  
**Elby Jones** (Position #2 – Urban Ecologist - ISA) • **Weston Brinkley** (Position #3 – University)  
**Stuart Niven** (Position #5 – Arborist – ISA) • **David Moehring** (Position # 8 – Development)  
**Blake Voorhees** (Position # 9 – Realtor) • **Jessica Hernandez** (Position #11 – Environmental Justice)  
**Jessica Jones** (Position # 12 – Public Health)

*The Urban Forestry Commission was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle*

**Meeting notes**

January 5, 2022, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Via Webex call  
(206) 207-1700  
Meeting number: 2485 086 0870  
Meeting password: 1234

*In-person meeting are not being held at this time due to the pandemic. Meeting participation is limited to access by joining the meeting through a computer or telephone conference line.*

**Attending**

Commissioners

Josh Morris – Co-Chair  
Julia Michalak – Co-Chair  
David Moehring  
Weston Brinkley  
Blake Voorhees

Staff

Patti Bakker – OSE

Guests

Toby Thaler

Public

Steve Zemke  
Michael Oxman  
Heidi Siegelbaum

Absent- Excused

Stuart Niven  
Jessica Hernandez  
Elby Jones  
Jessica Jones

**NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details, listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>**

**Call to order:** Josh called the meeting to order and offered a land acknowledgement.

**Public comment:**

Steve Zemke – regarding the draft Comprehensive Plan letter, it’s good to look at what was in the last plan, but should also look at what was in the previous two plans, to inform what should be updated. Also, the Land

Use and Neighborhoods Committee's schedule has changed so that meetings are now on Wednesday afternoons, and the members of the Committee have changed.

### **Chair, Committees, and Coordinator report:**

Josh thanked Weston for his service as Commission Chair for the last two years, and is looking forward now to serving as Co-Chair along with Julia. He provided the news that Commissioner Shari Selch let us know that she will no longer be able to serve on the Commission, effective immediately. He noted that anyone who might be interested in taking on the third Co-Chair role can let Patti know. He also noted changes in membership and schedule of Council committees; the Commission will need to stay tuned to those.

Patti provided the following updates:

- Laura Keil will be the new Get Engaged member on the Commission. Her appointment is being finalized and she is not yet a voting member, but is here at this meeting to start to get acquainted with the Commission. Laura expressed her excitement in being on the Commission and is looking forward to working with the Commissioners.
- The changeover in Mayor administrations has meant a pause on some ongoing things:
  - Recruitments for Commission positions – processing of the applicants received for positions 4 and 6, and posting the announcements for positions 2, 3 and 13 – position 2 being Elby's position, position 3 being Weston's position which term ends in March this year, and position 13 being Shari's position that now also needs to be filled.
  - Tree protection updates – outgoing Mayor Durkan put a pause on issuing the proposed updates in December, in order to give incoming Mayor Harrell time to get up to speed on this effort and provide direction for moving it forward. In the meantime, SDCI staff have heard concerns from folks over proposed updates to how Environmentally Critical Areas are handled, and these updates have implications for trees and other vegetation, so they are offering a briefing and discussion with the Commission on this, so will be on next week's agenda.

### **Approval of December 1 and 8 meeting notes**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the December 1 meeting notes as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

**ACTION: A motion to approve the December 8 meeting notes as written was made, seconded, and approved.**

### **New Mayor Letter**

Josh drafted this letter, and provided background on the intent of the letter, noting that it would be beneficial for the Commission to do whatever it can to build relationships with Mayor's Office, including identifying appropriate staff with whom the Commission can work to effectively move things forward, and clearly identifying Commission goals. Importance of investments in the urban forest and how it overlaps with other stated goals. There is much agreement between the Commission's goals and Mayor Harrell's stated goals and important issues. The letter includes background on the ongoing, drawn-out effort to update tree protections, noting the current code doesn't adequately protect trees and urging Executive support for this effort. There is language from the Commission's establishing legislation, as well as what the Commission and Commissioners can offer as a resource to the Mayor and an outline of current priorities.

Commissioners discussed the letter and the needs for communicating and developing constructive relationships with the Mayor. Commissioners made edits to the letter to improve content and effectiveness, and discussed Co-Chair Josh Morris also making a phone call to the new Mayor in addition to sending this letter.

**ACTION: A motion to adopt the letter to Mayor Harrell as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

### **Ordinance 123052**

The Commission sent a letter to outgoing City Attorney Pete Holmes last month, requesting consultation on questions around this enabling legislation. No response was received and we now have a new City Attorney. The Commission discussed sending a similar letter to the new City Attorney, which can also include a welcome. A letter can also be sent welcoming the new City Councilmember. Those two letters can be developed for next week's meeting. Weston volunteered to draft a letter to the new City Attorney, and Josh volunteered to draft a letter to the new City Councilmember.

### **Seattle Comprehensive Plan follow-up letter**

David outlined the draft letter that he and Stuart prepared. The letter provides a recap and a thank you for the staff providing the presentation. They included visuals from the 2016 Canopy Cover Assessment report, as it covers equity as an important issue for the city and its tree canopy, ensuring all communities have adequate canopy coverage. The table of canopy cover goals for each management unit is included, to show that there are canopy targets for each; it's important that the Comprehensive Plan include this type of data to avoid considering that some areas don't need canopy coverage because other areas have it.

Josh had made some additions to acknowledge OPCD's comments that this update effort would not be a usual plan update due to the ongoing crises, and also pointing out that urban forest considerations overlap with Comprehensive Plan goals in many ways. Commissioners noted that this update effort is on the work plan for the year, and discussed ways to make sure that the Commission is engaged as much as possible and as appropriate throughout the process; edits were made to the letter to cover this. Commissioners discussed having a subcommittee to commit to working with OPCD on this process; Josh and David expressed interest in participating on this subcommittee. Commissioners further edited the letter to emphasize the reciprocal nature of the relationship between the Comprehensive Plan values and the urban forest (they are each relevant to and important to the other), as well as other clarifying and emphasizing edits.

**Action: A motion to adopt the letter regarding the Comprehensive Plan as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

### **Sooty Bark Disease follow-up letter**

The draft letter for this was prepared by Commissioner Selch, and Josh provided edits and additional content for it. Commissioners discussed the content and structure of the letter, and made some edits to it. Patti responded to a question as to any updates on the sooty bark disease since the October presentation, by providing the update that messaging has been drafted regarding the effect to trees in the city, and city staff are working with appropriate local and state agencies to develop messaging regarding potential effects to the public. Those sets of messaging should be available soon; meetings are scheduled on them in the near future.

**Action: A motion to adopt the letter regarding the Comprehensive Plan as amended was made, seconded, and approved.**

### **Additional discussion**

With extra time remaining the meeting, Commissioners discussed other updates, including some upcoming potential legislation, and the process for the Commission to weigh in on legislation. The processes for work planning and annual report preparation, consideration and adoption were discussed, and will be coming up on future agendas.

**NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details, listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>**

**Public comment:**

Steve Zemke – it would help to speed up the meetings if a Commissioner was assigned to review the meeting notes ahead of time. Also, the Commission can make comments ahead of time on the Comprehensive Plan; don't need to wait to be asked about it. Regarding HB1099, it is complex; other groups are also reviewing it also. TreePAC conducted a second poll, again showing the public very strongly behind the tree protection proposals; reviewing that would be helpful for the Commission's future planning.

Michael Oxman noted that Sara Nelson is the only new City Councilmember and provided some background on her. He discussed open space policies – the history of them and the new Mayor's thoughts on them. Several polls have been done regarding trees and the public's sentiments. There is a large community of folks/organizations focused on tree and climate change.

Heidi Siegelbaum shared some research she discovered recently, which pointed out that here as well as nationally, there is much press on tree planting but virtually nothing on tree retention. So she recommends the Commission promote attention on tree retention and urge that development incorporates increased tree retention. She included links in the chat for more on this.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 PM.

**Meeting Chat:**

from Weston to everyone: 3:11 PM

You're doing great!

from Julia Michalak She/Her to everyone: 3:14 PM

Welcome Laura!!

from Weston to everyone: 3:15 PM

Welcome!

from D. Moehring Pos 8 to everyone: 3:18 PM

Thank you Patti

from Heidi Siegelbaum to everyone: 3:18 PM

Here is a useful set of docs related to CAOs from Commerce: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/critical-areas/>

from Michael Oxman to everyone: 3:46 PM

The new councilmember was on Councilmember Richard Conlin's staff, and should be very conversant on urban forestry policy.

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 3:47 PM

Sara Nelson is the only new City Council member. She was elected citywide am.

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 3:59 PM

In the Legislature this session is HB 1099 which would add climate resiliency as a goal in developing Comprehensive Plans.

from Weston to everyone: 4:15 PM

(feeling a little self conscious the reason we never got done before 5:00pm had something to do with the Chair...)

from D. Moehring Pos 8 to everyone: 4:17 PM

Ha, chuckle to that comment

from Heidi Siegelbaum to everyone: 4:19 PM

<https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/FinalIssuedDocuments/BylawsProtocols/ADOPTEDUFCommissionUpdatedBylaws030321.pdf>

from Steve Zemke to everyone: 4:19 PM

Commissioners can always get information and respond on their own to legislative and other issues

from Heidi Siegelbaum to everyone: 4:19 PM

There is nothing in your bylaws which would prevent you from commenting on state legislation, particularly since it's focused on urban forestry

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 4:20 PM

Depending on the details, HB 1099 could cause harm to urban forest.

from Mary Manous to everyone: 4:23 PM

Cascadia Climate Action works on community outreach on climate change in the area of urban forests. If there is a way we could be of any help or collaboration opportunity, please get in touch. [mmanous@me.com](mailto:mmanous@me.com) 206/261-2155.

from Julia Michalak She/Her to everyone: 4:23 PM

Thank you Mary

from D. Moehring Pos 8 to everyone: 4:25 PM

Agreed. Enjoyed the Cascadia Climate Action event in December 2021.

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 4:27 PM

I'm not an expert. It might be worth contacting City's Office of Intergovernment Relations. I'll look for link to the City's Leg agenda

from Heidi Siegelbaum to everyone: 4:28 PM

This might provide some insights:<https://mrsc.org/getmedia/1e641718-94a0-408b-b9d9-42b2e1d8180d/Knowing-The-Territory.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf>

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 4:28 PM

City's 2022 Legislative Agenda:

<https://seattle.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5349842&GUID=2488E207-D945-4921-8CAE-8B727D262C45&Options=ID|Text|&Search=legislative+agenda>

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 4:30 PM

If you want to talk politics, call me outside of an official meeting. 206 640-6982. Legislative lobbying is nothing if not "politics."

from Tina Cohen to everyone: 4:32 PM

In the future, could you post the letters etc on line or provide a link? I certainly couldn't see them on the screen.

from Heidi Siegelbaum to everyone: 4:34 PM

Published: 08 April 2021

Citation:

Pataki DE, Alberti M,  
Cadenasso ML, Felson AJ,  
McDonnell MJ, Pincetl S, Pouyat RV,  
Setälä H and Whitlow TH (2021) The  
Benefits and Limits of Urban Tree  
Planting for Environmental  
and Human Health.

Front. Ecol. Evol. 9:603757.

doi: 10.3389/fevo.2021.603757- this document concludes that tree planting is CC adaptation not mitigation- would love to see the UFC promote tree retention as a superordinate priority along with tree planting- the latter seems to be the city's worthwhile feel-good strategy but alone is insufficient

from Bakker, Patricia to everyone: 4:34 PM

Tina, the letters are posted online when available before the meeting; today's letters were posted. Links to them are provided in the Bulletin if you are signed up to receive those.

from Heidi Siegelbaum to everyone: 4:38 PM

Hi Mary--yes would love to talk with your interns! (206) 784-4265

from Julia Michalak She/Her to everyone: 4:40 PM

Heidi - thank you for sharing that paper.

from Toby Thaler to everyone: 4:41 PM

Thank you!

**Public input: (see next page and posted notes):**

**From:** Siegelbaum, Heidi <heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu>

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 14, 2021 10:32 AM

**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>; Weston Brinkley <weston@streetsoundsecology.com>

**Cc:** David Moehring <dmoehring@consultant.com>; Stuart Niven <panorarbor@gmail.com>; Emery, Chanda <Chanda.Emery@Seattle.gov>

**Subject:** White House guidance on heat- includes forestry

**CAUTION: External Email**

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/09/20/fact-sheet-biden-administration-mobilizes-to-protect-workers-and-communities-from-extreme-heat/>

Please see the forest section and share with the UFC and SDCI.

Best,

Heidi

Heidi Siegelbaum

Stormwater Strategic Initiative Lead

Washington Stormwater Center at Washington State University

[Heidi.Siegelbaum@wsu.edu](mailto:Heidi.Siegelbaum@wsu.edu)

(253) 445-4502

Home office: (206) 784-4265

<https://wastormwatercenter.org>

<https://pugetsoundestuary.wa.gov>

**From:** Siegelbaum, Heidi <heidi.siegelbaum@wsu.edu>

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 15, 2021 1:03 PM

**To:** steve@friends.urbanforests.org; katygrmsn.com <katygr@msn.com>; kwolf@uw.edu; Nancy Rottle (nrottle@uw.edu) <nrottle@uw.edu>; RICHARD ELLISON <climbwall@msn.com>; David Moehring <dmoehring@consultant.com>; Kevin Orme <ovaltinelatte@hotmail.com>; Sandy Shettler <sshettler@msn.com>; Anne Siems <annesiemsart@gmail.com>; Suzanne@grantharper.net; Stuart Niven <panorarbor@gmail.com>

**Cc:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>; Weston Brinkley <weston@streetsoundsecology.com>; Emery, Chanda <Chanda.Emery@Seattle.gov>

**Subject:** Urban forestry report- please share widely

Hi all

Please share the attached urban tree canopy handbook and share publicly through the Urban Forestry Commission. This work is funded in part via our Puget Sound investments.

Best,  
Heidi

Heidi Siegelbaum  
Stormwater Strategic Initiative Lead  
Washington Stormwater Center at Washington State University  
[Heidi.Siegelbaum@wsu.edu](mailto:Heidi.Siegelbaum@wsu.edu)  
(253) 445-4502  
Home office: (206) 784-4265  
<https://wastormwatercenter.org>  
<https://pugetsoundestuary.wa.gov>

**From:** Shambhavi Taylor <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 17, 2021 7:45 PM  
**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** End the delay! Adopt, with amendments, SDCI's Director's Rule 13-2020

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Patti Bakker,

As recent record temperatures have demonstrated, the climate crisis is real. Trees are a buffer to help reduce extreme temperature impacts in urban areas.

Please adopt, with the amendments recommended by the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission, SDCI's Director's Rule 13-2020 (Designation of Exceptional and Significant Trees, Tree Protection, Retention, and Tree Removal during land division, including tree service provider requirements).

Seattle must move forward now, without the delay urged by some, in adopting this updated Director's Rule with the amendments proposed below. This process of increasing protection for our urban forest was first proposed by the Seattle City Council 12 years ago and is long overdue.

The following updates as proposed in the draft Director's Rule are great steps forward:

- Reducing the upper threshold on exceptional trees to 24 inches in diameter at standard height (DSH) from 30 inches
- Designating trees 6 inches DSH and larger as protected trees, starting in the platting and short platting process
- Requiring Tree Care Providers to register with the City as the Seattle Dept. of Transportation already requires
- Continuing protection of tree groves as exceptional trees, even if a tree is removed from the grove
- Making clear that all exceptional trees removed during development must be replaced per SMC 25.11.090
- Tightening tree removal requirements for exceptional trees as hazard trees

The following changes to the draft Director's Rule are needed:

- Change Subject Title to remove words “land division” and replace with “Development”
- PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND. add “SMC 23 requires that all trees 6 inches DSH and larger must be indicated on all site plans throughout the platting and sub-platting process, and that projects must be designed to maximize the retention of existing trees. This requirement continues throughout any subsequent development on all lots in all zones in the city.”
- SECTION 1. Reduce the number of trees and sizes required to be a tree grove. Kirkland, Woodinville, and Duvall all define a tree grove as “a group of 3 or more significant trees with overlapping or touching crowns.” Include street trees in groves.
- Add “Significant trees may become exceptional as they grow in size. They are future replacements in the urban forest for exceptional trees when they die. Development projects must be designed to maximize the retention of both exceptional and significant trees to maintain a diversity of tree species and ages.”
- Add “All replacement trees regardless of size are protected trees and can’t be removed.”
- SECTION 2. Change the heading to “TREE PROTECTION”. Remove references to “Exceptional Trees” only and change to “Trees”. e.g., change “Exceptional Tree Protection Areas” to “Tree Protection Areas”.
- SECTION 4. Add “The Director shall have the authority to allow replacement trees on both public and private property to meet the goals and objectives of race and social justice under Seattle’s Equity and Environment Initiative.”
- Under SMC 25.11.090 the Director has the authority to require “one or more trees” to be planted as replacement trees for removed exceptional trees during development. The number of trees required should increase with the size of the tree removed, with a goal to achieve equivalent canopy area and volume in 25 years. Any in-lieu fee must also rise as the size of the removed tree increases. The city can not wait 80 years to replace an 80-year-old western red cedar tree and expect to maintain its canopy goals as large exceptional trees are removed during development.
- SECTION 5. SEPA requirements under SMC 25.05.675 N are for protecting special habitats and need to be considered at the beginning of the development process. The language of this SEPA code section should be included in the Director’s Rule to be certain that the code is complied with.
- SECTION 6. SDCl should adopt SDOT’s registration process and requirements to assist Tree Care Providers in complying with city code and regulations. Reduce the number of citations that will remove a Tree Care Provider from being registered with the city to no more than 2 per year. Require annual registration same as Seattle business licenses require. Require that Tree Care Provider companies have a WA State contractor’s license to ensure they have workers’ compensation. Require they have a certificate of insurance that lists the city as an additional insured so the city cannot be sued. Require that all jobs either have a certified arborist on the work site or that they have visited the site and officially sign off on the specific work being done.

Thank you for protecting our urban forest.

Shambhavi Taylor  
[om.shambhavi@gmail.com](mailto:om.shambhavi@gmail.com)  
10742 Lakeside Ave. NE  
Seattle, Washington 98125

**From:** Chris Covert-Bowlds <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 18, 2021 3:43 PM  
**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Save Our Trees!

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Patti Bakker,

It's time to end the delay by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) on presenting the Seattle City Council with an updated draft Tree and Urban Forest Protection Ordinance. Over the last 12 years, the City Council has repeatedly asked SDCI for an updated workable and effective ordinance draft to consider and it is obvious SDCI is not responding as requested. In its recent Resolution 31902, the Council gave specific issues for SDCI to address.

If SDCI cannot respond in a timely manner, please remove tree and urban forestry protection from their Department. As the City Auditor proposed in 2009, transfer tree and urban forestry oversight and authority to the Office of Sustainability and the Environment. SDCI has a conflict of interest in tree oversight – their priority mission has been to help developers build, not protect trees. Years of inaction on effective oversight and protection of trees by SDCI demands that a separate entity like OSE take over the city's responsibility to protect and enhance our urban forest.

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.

Chris Covert-Bowlds  
[c.covertbowlds@gmail.com](mailto:c.covertbowlds@gmail.com)  
523 N 84th St  
Seattle, Washington 98103

**From:** Rebecca Hood <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 19, 2021 9:20 PM  
**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Save Our Trees!

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Patti Bakker,

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

Rebecca Hood  
[rebeccahood450@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccahood450@gmail.com)  
16705 10th Ave NE  
Shoreline, Washington 98155

**From:** Suzanne Grant <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 29, 2021 5:15 PM  
**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Please Protect Seattle's Trees

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Patti Bakker,

It's WAY PAST time to end the delay by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) on presenting the Seattle City Council with an updated draft Tree and Urban Forest Protection Ordinance. Over the last 12 years, the City Council has repeatedly asked SDCI for an updated workable and effective ordinance draft to consider and it is obvious SDCI is not responding as requested. In its recent Resolution 31902, the Council gave specific issues for SDCI to address.

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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.

Suzanne Grant  
[suzgrant206@gmail.com](mailto:suzgrant206@gmail.com)  
2723 4th Ave W  
Seattle, Washington 98119

**From:** Max Cerami <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 1, 2022 1:19 PM  
**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Tree removal laws seem ineffective and are not representative of our ecological goals.

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Patti Bakker,

Hi Mayor Harrell, Seattle City Council,

Happy new year!

I write you in support of updating the Seattle Tree Protection Ordinance. Right on 32nd ave S. by me a huge 60+ year old cedar was illegally removed in order to make way for a large development - this thing was 3-4 stories tall - massive. The house they will build there will likely sell for over 2.5 million and the penalty for removing that tree is so small comparatively, making me feel that the penalty is hardly discouraging. The tree when cut was just made into wood chip, also a large waste for rare prime wood since the developers wanted to fly by night and remove it super quickly.

I can see an argument that some of these large trees may be in the way of our other noble goal of building more housing in order to keep rent prices relatively stable, but in single family areas, the cost of this new construction appears to just serve the wealthiest folks - as recouping building and land costs of new construction, will result in higher rent prices than an older residence since there is a limit on unit density. In Leschi especially, the value of the "view" is a huge motivation to tear these trees down and build expensive palaces. The tree's removal resulted in 2 units. a single family home and an ADU. taking up 70% of the available lot. I would think that prioritizing our natural greenspace and canopy while allowing for more density in structures would have provided a future that would have encouraged mixed income people to live in Leschi as it once had and result in a visually and ecologically more significant city - which on paper are our cities goals.

I have 2 such "exceptional trees" on my property and am happy to have them. I see them support ecologies of eagles and their needles and leaf drops in fall build the soils fertility and support other ground ecosystems. They clean our air and keep temperatures cooler as the planet warms. these Trees are true community members.

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 an 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 lost – 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, purchase land and set up easements.
3. Expand current protections for Exceptional Trees and reduce the upper threshold for Exceptional Trees to 24" DBH, protect tree groves and heritage trees 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 for 2 weeks prior to removal and all permit approvals for public viewing. Establish and maintain a city-wide database and inventory of existing trees, trees removed, and trees planted. Post on-line quarterly reports.
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. Require developers throughout the development process to maximize the retention of existing trees with adequate space for trees to grow and survive.
9. Require a Tree Inventory and Tree Landscaping Plan prior to any development permits being approved.
10. Provide adequate funding in the budget to implement and enforce the updated ordinance.

Thank you!

Max Cerami

Max Cerami  
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**From:** Martha Pruitt <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 3, 2022 12:11 AM  
**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Save our Trees!

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Patti Bakker,

South Park trees and green space is desperately needed but developers are planning on cutting them down for unaffordable housing. We are in a liquid faction zone and next to the river. We need the trees roots to prevent earth erosion.

Lots of birds make the trees thier homes. Some of these birds are predator birds such as hawks and eagles which help keep the rat population down.

Most of all, we need them for the air quality. Due to being surrounded by factories and planes flying in all day ave night, South Park is known for large amount of citizens with asthma.

It is very short sighted to cut down large, established indigenou trees for unaffordable housing. On top of the damage from cutting the trees they are pricing out the current residents which are mid to low income.

I hope you will look into this.

Thank you,

Martha Pruitt  
[Harleyquin206@gmail.com](mailto:Harleyquin206@gmail.com)  
814 S Rose St  
Seattle, Washington 98108

**From:** Shannon Hunt <smmarriott@gmal.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 3, 2022 8:28 PM  
**To:** Bakker, Patricia <Patricia.Bakker@seattle.gov>  
**Subject:** Save our Trees!

Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator Patti Bakker,

It's time to end the delay by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) on presenting the Seattle City Council with an updated draft Tree and Urban Forest Protection Ordinance. Over the last 12 years, the Seattle City Council has repeatedly asked successive Seattle Mayors and SDCI for an

updated workable and effective ordinance draft to consider and it is obvious SDCI is not responding as requested. In its most recent 2019 Resolution 31902, the Council gave specific issues for SDCI to address.

SDCI, once again, has not responded in a timely manner with a comprehensive tree protection ordinance update. It's been delay after delay. Please remove tree and urban forestry protection from their Department. In 2009 the Seattle City Auditor proposed transferring tree and urban forestry oversight and authority to an independent entity that does not have a conflict of interest. The Auditor proposed oversight be moved to the Office of Sustainability and the Environment.

Much has changed since 2009 and it is time to create an independent Department with authority over environment, urban forestry, and climate issues. SDCI has a conflict of interest in tree oversight – their priority mission has been to help developers build, not protect trees. Years of inaction on effective oversight and protection of trees by SDCI demands that a separate independent entity take over the city's responsibility to protect and enhance our urban forest. We propose that an Urban Forestry Division be created within a new Department of the Environment and Climate.

Seattle's trees and urban forest are vital to keeping our city healthy and livable. Trees and the urban forest comprise vital green infrastructure needed to keep our city and people healthy. 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. A robust urban forest is critical for climate resilience and tree equity.

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

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

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and Preservation Fund. Allow the Fund to also accept fines, donations, grants, purchase land and set up easements.

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9. Require a Tree Inventory and Tree Landscaping Plan prior to any development permits being approved.

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

Shannon Hunt

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