

UFMP Community Connections Engagement Feedback Summary Table

Prior to drafting the Urban Forest Management Plan Update, the Urban Forestry Core Team prioritized engagement of communities of color identified by the City of Seattle’s [Equity and the Environment Initiative](#). To this end the team partnered with SPU’s Environmental Justice and Service Equity Division (EJSE) to apply a modified racial equity toolkit for public engagement on this plan. The purpose was to include communities of color in a meaningful way given these communities have experienced disproportionately negative impacts as a result of municipal urban planning processes. Their input adds new voices to help shape the plan’s goals, implementation, and dissemination practices.

The Core Team also worked with EJSE’s Community Connections program and the Department of Neighborhood’s Community Liaisons program to engage Native American, African-American, East African, Chinese, and Latinx communities living in and around the Greater Seattle region. The available budget and a pre-established timeline limited the scope of engagement to these communities. The table below summarizes common issues and themes identified via a combination of methods including surveys, one-one-one conversations, community gatherings and door-to-door outreach.

Community	Trees and the Environment	Access and Awareness	Affordability	Economic Development	Tree Concerns
Native American 39 participants 21 tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of trees in protecting the ecosystem (including animals and people) Role of trees in beautifying the environment Deep care and concern for trees Strategize to keep trees and have them thinned or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historically access to trees has been limited Promote awareness and respect for trees via public K-12 education Youth and children are very open to learning about and getting involved with trees; engage them Raise visibility of trees: name streets after trees, host public events beyond Arbor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make transportation available to urban living Native people to go to forests, reservations and wooded areas for learning about trees Native First Peoples are one of the most underserved community groups; lack of resources and historical experiences have contributed greatly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many Native communities work with the Forest and Park Service agencies in other states Firefighting in Northwest states is done by many tribal individuals Continue relationship with Native Community Liaisons and other tribal peoples living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach to tribes is complex; requires more time for relationship building, note-takers, and awareness of context around Native peoples and government initiatives Lack of cultural understanding

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	<p>relocate them as needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native trees are regarded as living beings that are sacred and have strong cultural, environmental and spiritual significance to tribes • Plant more trees indigenous to Seattle, particularly western red cedar 	<p>Day (annual march); Talking Circles to help build trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote opportunities for donations and volunteer work around trees • Coordinate and share about trees via stories, traditions and uses among Native peoples • Connect Native Elders, medicine people, artists, carvers and knowledge keepers with urban forestry research staff • Continue to invite Native peoples to be involved in planning; share results 	<p>to a lack of proactive relationship with trees, particularly in urban settings like Seattle</p>	<p>in the Northwest to strengthen this work to increase awareness, knowledge, and breadth of reach</p>	<p>about trees; especially for urban living Native peoples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Elders and medicine people in urban areas to teach about trees • Lack of understanding by non-First Nations peoples about the Sacred nature of trees, medicines, and traditional uses by diverse tribal peoples. Strengthen relationships to build collaborative understanding.

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<p>African-American (40%) + Latinx (60%) 18 participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees improve our quality of life, represent vitality and abundance • Plant more trees to meet multiple goals: native, medicinal, fruit-bearing, habitat, communal use • Plant more trees where needed for communities of color (air quality, crime reduction) • Protect and maintain trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage communities of color • Provide education around benefits of trees and related equity issues • Promote community planting activities that include children and elders • Build relationships with community-based organizations and school districts; hold weekly activities/meetings • Ask native communities what they think of our urban forest plan; prioritize their voices and share their input with us 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide tax breaks for property owners • Provide more support to renters to plant trees • Provide education and support to homeowners to preserve and plan for trees • Contact homeowners of color and provide education and incentives for trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require businesses to plant trees based on square footage • Charge developers for any tree displacement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports and policies are from a Euro-centric perspective • If there is food scarcity, fruit trees should not be labeled hazardous • Time constraints limited outreach

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<p>Horn of Africa (East African immigrant community)</p> <p>50 participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees provide oxygen, shade, beauty and adventure City should provide maintenance, esp. on old trees City should limit tree heights except in parks City should protect and plant more trees, i.e., limit removal on construction sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build public awareness of the importance of trees Build public awareness of the rules and regulations governing trees (including ROW and private property) Build awareness on resources for reporting tree issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support property owners in keeping their trees Educate on property owners' liability for damage to trees or caused by trees Create incentives (i.e., tax deductions) for keeping and planting more trees on private property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees can grow food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned trees can cause damage that creates liability for property owners
<p>Chinese Information and Service Center</p> <p>54 participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging to make trees a topic of interest outside basic needs such as housing, food, employment and health. After meetings, most agreed trees have multiple benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a stronger presence in the community; no participants had heard of the UFMP before More investments in education of children on urban trees; youth are more open to data/science on trees Teach the public how to care for trees and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give out free trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees can be used to farm silk worms in Chinatown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned that trees can: damage underground pipes, and sidewalks, be windstorm hazards, slippery fallen leaves, take space in lieu of housing and block street signs

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant more trees in greater variety • Plant trees where most needed to mitigate pollution, erosion • Plant more trees in parks to beautify • Plant trees to provide shade • Ensure health of the trees 	<p>how the City cares for trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults relate in day-to-day stories on trees vs through data/science • Build awareness on resources for reporting tree issues • Promote opportunities to volunteer in tree plantings in Seattle • Majority of people wanted to hear back on the new plan • Provide plan summary in different languages 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that trees are treated with harmful pesticides • Concern tall trees can damage power lines

UFMP Community Outreach Summary – Ranked Results

General trends in perspectives:

1. Trees represent beauty, vitality & PNW identity; promote a sense of calm, relaxation, healing
2. Trees provide clean air
3. Trees provide wildlife habitat
4. Trees have cultural, sacred, and medicinal connections to human communities
 - Native peoples' connection to trees is most prominent
5. Trees reduce crime *however* can also lead to feeling unsafe if a tree-dense area is not well lit
6. Other “ecosystem services” mentioned, though less often: erosion control, carbon sequestration, temperature control, water filtration

Common Concerns:

1. New development is cutting down too many trees
2. Property damage, safety hazard, and associated liability from falling trees/branches causes hesitation to plant trees
3. Trees can make an area feel unsafe if not properly lit
4. Communities of color want very much to participate in urban forestry but are weary of engaging w/gov't agency due to historic trauma and injustices; must first work to establish trust
5. Maintenance – pruning, watering, clearing fallen debris; who is responsible?

Key Recommendations:

1. Plant more trees
 - Prioritize planting in underserved/communities of color; both private and public property
 - Interest in trees with ethnobotanical uses, fruit trees, and native species
 - Build into BMPs (species and location decisions) cultural considerations of indigenous peoples – Where are sacred places in Seattle? Besides cedars, which species are most culturally important?
 - Provide free trees, seeds, education on tree care
2. Stop unnecessary tree cutting
 - Stricter rules & enforcement for both developers and private land owners
3. Engage communities of color
 - Providing education (on both tree importance and tree care) came up more often than volunteer tree planting as engagement priorities
 - Bring people together to plant trees, especially youth
 - Reach out via social media; use multi-lingual materials
4. Continue to hold community meetings & talking circles
 - Each group expressed interest in learning more and continuing these conversations; communities want to participate in the urban forestry effort
5. Provide draft for participants to review; final plan (and/or summary in different languages) once completed