

PROTECT SEATTLE TREES!

Dear Mayor Durkan and Seattle City Council Members,

We urge you to take action now to strengthen significantly Seattle's tree ordinance to protect our trees and urban forest. Seattle's urban forest is an integral and vital part of Seattle. The urban forest provides many benefits to those living in our city, including: helping to clean our air, reducing stormwater runoff, countering climate change, decreasing heat, cold and wind impacts, increasing property values, providing habitat for birds and wildlife, and providing a connection with nature in our neighborhoods. Seattle's rapid growth is diminishing these beneficial effects as trees are removed, particularly during development.

We urge you to take action now by updating our current tree ordinance and regulations as follows:

1. **Adopt a policy of no net loss of tree canopy, with the goal of increasing tree canopy** – including maintaining and strengthening current protections for exceptional trees, trees groves, Heritage Trees, critical areas and natural areas.
2. **Expand the existing tree removal and replacement permit, notice and posting system used by SDOT** to cover all public and private trees 6" DBH and larger on both public and private property in all land use zones, and to allow removal of no more than 3 significant non-exceptional trees every 4 years.
3. **Require replacement of all trees removed that are 6" DBH and larger with equivalent sized trees (e.g. small, medium or large)** – on site, or pay replacement and mitigation costs into a City Tree Replacement and Maintenance Fund. Allow this Fund to accept fines, donations and grants, and allow the fund also to be used for acquiring land and easements and to set up Tree Protection Trusts.
4. **Establish one city-wide database to use in applying for tree removal and replacement permits.** Post online all permit requests and permit approvals for public viewing. Expand SDOT's existing tree map to include all trees that are removed and replaced.
5. **Require a detailed Urban Forestry Canopy Impact Assessment for all development projects** – This detailed tree inventory, prior to development, should be entered into a public database, including data on replacement trees using equivalent tree size at maturity.
6. **Expand SDOT's existing tree service providers' registration, and certification to include ALL tree service providers working on trees in Seattle.**
7. **Consolidate tree oversight into one city entity: The Office of Sustainability and Environment, as was recommended by the Seattle City Auditor in 2009.** Give OSE the additional authority to insure that trees have advocacy for their protection, with the necessary independence to avoid conflicting goals inherent in other city departments.
8. **Emphasize native trees and vegetation, particularly conifers, to maximize sustainability and environmental effects, such as reducing stormwater runoff, protecting wildlife habitat and minimizing climate impacts.** Require the removal of invasive plants during development. Increase incentives for protecting trees, and provide financial assistance for property owners who need help complying with the city ordinance. For non-compliance, and to increase compliance, increase the current penalties, fines and enforcement.

Please see the second page for additional personal comments and my contact information:

PROTECT SEATTLE TREES!

Additional Personal Comments: _____

Thank you!

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Affiliations/Groups _____

Please email this document to jenny.durkan@seattle.gov and council@seattle.gov after saving your changes.