

14 July 2018

Mayor Jenny Durkan / Seattle City Council
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98124

Dear Mayor Durkan & City Council Members:

Regarding: **Update to Seattle's Tree Ordinance**

Soon you will have an opportunity to positively impact the citizens of Seattle as well as generations to come.

Trees are integral to Seattle's identity. In addition to their beauty, they are essential habitat for birds and wildlife. Trees provide shade, improve air quality, lessen soil erosion, provide wind/sound buffers, filter polluted waters, and offset our energy needs. **We urge you to be a leader and prioritize preserving the trees we have, and work to increasing tree canopy for everyone.**

The Seattle Nature Alliance supports the recommendations of the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) to strengthen the city-wide tree policy, which include the following:

- Requiring all trees that are 6-inch* DBH or greater be replaced with an equivalent size tree (ideally PNW native), or that homeowner/developer be required to pay into citywide tree replacement and maintenance fund
- Strengthening penalties for the removal of both large tree groves, and/or heritage/ exceptional trees
- Establishing a transparent, public permitting process for tree both homeowner/developer tree removal, allowing for two-week comment period for any trees removed 6-inch* DBH or larger
- Requiring developers to do an urban forestry canopy assessment prior to development in an effort to more accurately track tree inventory and overall impacts
- Consolidating tree oversight into a single city entity to improve communication and efficiency
- Establishing a single, city-wide tree canopy database to improve the accuracy of urban forest data and better track challenges/progress, so as to achieve the city's 30% tree canopy goal
- Expanding SDOTs existing tree service provider's registration and certification requirements to all tree service providers working on trees in Seattle
- Promoting public education around trees inherent value; being critical to eco services which the entire community depends & establish incentives to homeowners and developers to keep existing trees
- Providing incentives for planting native plants and trees

** in honor of Cass Turnbull (1951-2017), who was unwavering in her support for a stronger tree policy, and an inspiration to us all, we propose the required measurement of 6" DPH, if adopted, be informally referred to as "Cass's Rule". She would not be happy with any diameter greater than recommended by the UFC.*

Sincerely,

Denise Dahn, Mark Ahlness, & Rebecca Watson

Seattle Nature Alliance

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It is our mission at the Seattle Nature Alliance to preserve urban natural areas for wildlife habitat, passive use, and scenic beauty.