

Tree Protections Update

Photo by John Skelton



Seattle Department of
Construction & Inspections



Seattle
Office of Sustainability
& Environment

Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee

February 12, 2020

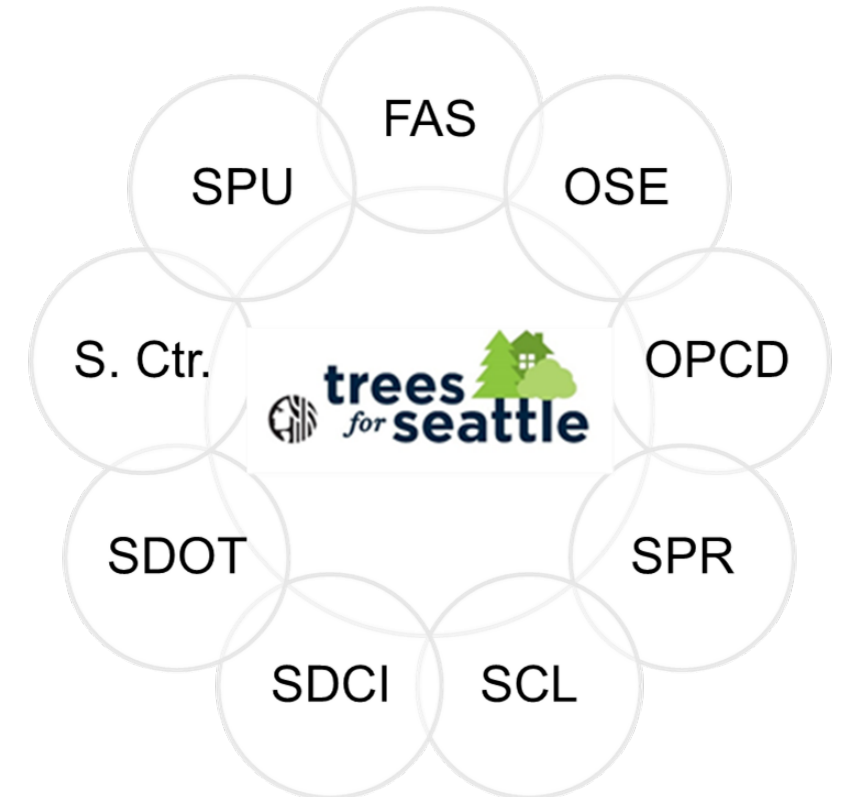
Today's Presentation

- Introduction
- Urban Forest Management Plan update
- Resolution 31902
- Tree protection progress
 - Work completed
 - Work underway
 - Scope, schedule, and budget



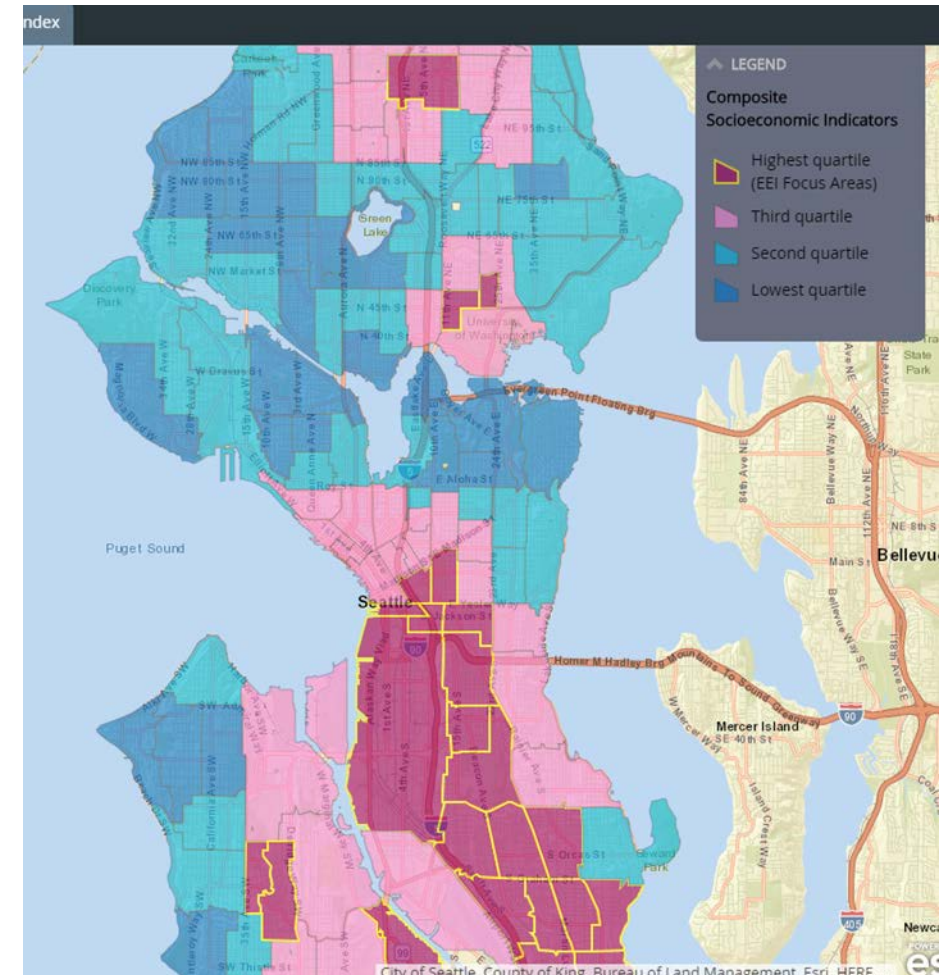
Seattle's Urban Forest

- Trees are fundamental to Seattle's character and our quality of life as we continue to grow
- The City's urban forestry team is currently updating Seattle's Urban Forest Management Plan
- SDCI and OSE have been working on tree protection



Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) Update

- Goals and framework for policies and programs
- Urban Forestry Core Team working on update
- 30% canopy cover goal by 2037
 - Assessment showed we are at 28%
 - Fewer trees in lower income communities and where people of color tend to live: 20%
 - 72% of our canopy is in residential areas
- Update's focus on inclusive engagement of underrepresented communities



Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) Work

Completed:

- Engagement Phase I
 - Community Connections
 - Listening Sessions
 - Initial Assessment
- First plan draft

Underway:

- Community report-backs
- Departmental input

Next Steps:

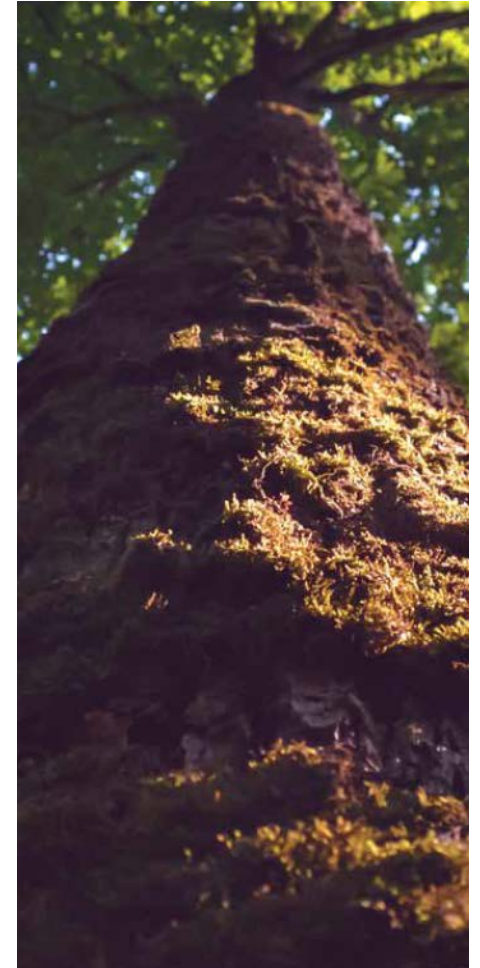
- Engagement Phase II
- Final draft plan
- SEPA
- Bring to Council in late 2020



Work Completed

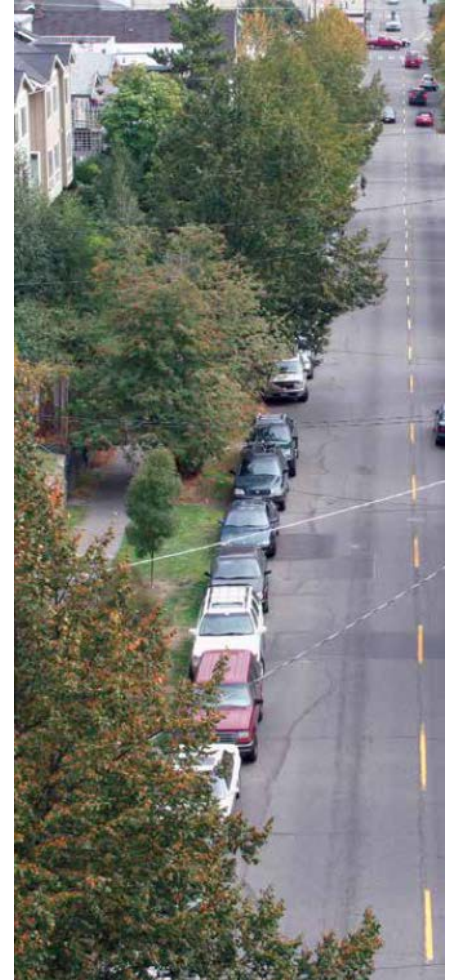
Progress

- 1. Increased Education and Information**
 - Updated SDCI website, Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - Produced Tip Sheets
- 2. Improved Enforcement**
 - Issued new Director's Rule 17-2018 clarifying how fees are calculated when trees are cut illegally
 - Increased fines as greater deterrent
- 3. Increased Resources and Staff Training**
 - SDCI hired two arborists to assist in plan review for enforcement
 - Focused training around tree protection



Work Underway

1. Updates to the Exceptional Tree Director's Rule
Exploring:
 - Increases to tree protections for significant and exceptional trees
 - Strengthening the definition of groves
 - Updated mitigation for tree removal
 - Requirements for tree service providers
2. Tree Tracking
 - SDCI working with Seattle IT to develop new technology and business practices to track tree removal and planting
3. Working sessions with Urban Forestry Commission



Public Outreach

- Committed to:
 - Dedicating resources to prioritize the needs of low-income and low-canopy neighborhoods
- Public outreach to include:
 - Homeowners, renters, developers, builders, realtors, neighborhood groups, environmental organizations, climate and environmental justice organizations



Resolution 31902 - Scope

Council requested SDCI and OSE to explore the following strategies:

Tasks

Expand exceptional tree definition and retain protections

Create significant tree (6" & >) removal permit

Require replacement for significant tree removal

Simplify tree planting/replacement requirements

Maintain tree removal limits in single-family zones

Explore in-lieu fee option for tree replacement

Track tree removal and replacement

Provide adequate funding to administer/enforce



Proposed Schedule

Task	Milestone
Complete work on Exceptional Tree DR and tree tracking	March
Develop outreach materials	April/May
Public outreach	May/June
Summarize and respond to public outreach; conduct technical analysis; Draft legislation/SEPA environmental review; prepare plans for technology and business practice updates; and assess resource needs to administer/enforce.	Sept/October
Draft recommendations to Mayor	October
Issue SEPA decision	November
Final recommendations to Mayor and Council*	December

*Assumes no appeal of SEPA decision.

Questions?

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