

2021 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Council Budget Action: Agenda

| Tab | Action | Option | Version |
|-----|--------|--------|---------|
| MO | 001 | A | 001 |

Budget Action Title: Request that the Executive recommend strategies for consolidating urban forestry functions

Ongoing: No Has Attachment: No

Primary Sponsor: Alex Pedersen

Council Members: Lisa Herbold, Kshama Sawant, Debora Juarez, Dan Strauss, Andrew Lewis

Staff Analyst: Yolanda Ho

| Date | | Total | LH | TM | KS | AP | DJ | DS | AL | TM | LG |
|------|---------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| | Yes | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| | No | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| | Abstain | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| | Absent | 0 | | | | | | | | | |

Statement of Legislative Intent:

This Statement of Legislative Intent requests that the Executive, Urban Forestry Commission (UFC), and Urban Forestry Interdepartmental Team evaluate models for consolidating the City's urban forest management functions and, based on this evaluation, make recommendations on how changes could be implemented. Currently, there are nine City departments that have a role in managing Seattle's urban forest:

- OSE coordinates citywide policy development, updates the Urban Forest Management Plan and monitors its implementation, and provides administrative support for the UFC;
- Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) manages trees in the public right-of-way.
- Department of Finance and Administrative Services, Seattle Center, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) manage trees on their property;
- SPU engages community in urban forest stewardship on both private property and in the right-of-way;
- Seattle City Light maintains trees near power lines;
- Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) and the Office of Planning and Community Development develop policies and plans; and
- SDCI enforces regulations for trees on private property.

Specifically, the evaluation should consider whether to transfer staff and regulatory authority from SDCI and SDOT to another department or office in order to improve Seattle's urban forest, particularly in regards to the removal of trees. The recommendations should: (1) include a potential timeline for implementation; (2) consider staff involved in policy development, permitting and inspections, maintenance, community engagement, and stewardship; (3) identify code amendments needed to effectuate any changes; and (4) provide an estimate of costs, including potential savings, for implementing the proposed reorganization.

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The Executive should submit the report to the Land Use & Neighborhoods Committee and the Central Staff Director by September 15, 2021.

Responsible Council Committee(s):

Land Use & Neighborhoods

Date Due to Council:

September 15, 2021