



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL  
**CENTRAL STAFF**

# **Tree Protection Updates (Council Bills 120534 and 120535)**

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LAND USE COMMITTEE

APRIL 7, 2023

# Presentation Overview

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- Background
- Preliminary Issue Identification
- Next Steps

# Background

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- Tree canopy cover goal – 30 percent by 2037
- Tree canopy assessment
- Resolution 31902
- Executive Order (EO) 2023-03

# Preliminary Issue Identification (1/5)

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## 1. Tree Removal Permit Outside of Development

- Requested in Resolution 31902
- Permit fee costs
- Tree data to be tracked via tree service provider notices and development permits

## 2. Tree Removal Limits Outside of Development

- Increases restrictions on number and size of trees that may be removed outside of development
- Unintended consequences – removing smaller trees, not planting new trees

# Preliminary Issue Identification (2/5)

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3. Cost to Low-income Residents for Hazardous Tree Removal Requirements
  - Expenses – hazardous tree permit and tree service provider work
  - Required replacement for hazardous Tier 3 trees
4. Tree Retention Requirements During Development
  - Increases mitigation by requiring replacement of Tier 2 and Tier 3 trees removed during development
  - Tier 1 trees must be retained during development (unless hazardous)
  - Minimal changes expected for tree retention and removal decisions in NR zones

# Preliminary Issue Identification (3/5)

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5. Capacity Test – Types of Development and Zones
  - Tier 2 trees may be removed if allowable development area of 85 percent cannot be achieved (appropriate standard for townhouse development)
  - Could result in less dense development in denser zones
6. Capacity Test – Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs)
  - Unclear how capacity test interacts with ECA regulations (Chapter 25.09)
  - Could result in more tree removal if ECA area is not excluded from calculation

# Preliminary Issue Identification (4/5)

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## 7. Modifications to Landscaping Development Standards

- Incentives for tree preservation during development include a 25 percent reduction to landscaping and screening requirements
- Seattle Green Factor applies to most zones (excluding NR)
- Unclear how modification will operate with Green Factor

## 8. Delegation of Authority

- In-lieu fees, Tier 2 tree designation, and penalties promulgated by Director's Rule
- Provides department with flexibility to administer code provisions
- Council forgoes opportunity to engage in policymaking

# Preliminary Issue Identification (5/5)

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## 9. Implementation

- Provides additional permit fee-funded staff to implement regulations
- Does not include additional code enforcement staff
- Additional funding may be needed for program administration, planning and design for trees funded by in-lieu fees

## 10. Other Budget-related Issues (EO 2023-03)

- Anticipate legislation to establish a new fund to receive revenues from in-lieu fees
- Increased replacement requirements for tree removal on City property



# Next Steps

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- April 11 – deadline for amendments to Central Staff
- April 21 – amendment discussion and possible vote
- April 23 – public hearing
- April 26 – possible Committee vote

# Questions?