



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

Tree Protection Updates (Council Bills 120534 and 120535)

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LAND USE COMMITTEE

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Presentation Overview

- Background
- Preliminary Issue Identification
- Next Steps

Background

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

Preliminary Issue Identification (1/5)

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)

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)

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)

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)

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

- 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?