

2021 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Council Budget Action: Agenda

Tab	Action	Option	Version
SPU	002	A	001

Budget Action Title: Request SPU to explore an expansion of the Tree Ambassador program

Ongoing: No Has Attachment: No

Primary Sponsor: Dan Strauss

Council Members: Tammy Morales, Andrew Lewis

Staff Analyst: Brian Goodnight

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

Statement of Legislative Intent:

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) manages and operates the Tree Ambassador program in partnership with the Seattle Department of Transportation and the non-profit organization Forterra. The program engages volunteers to develop and lead neighborhood tree walks and encourages tree stewardship through work parties to help care for trees and landscapes in the public right-of-way.

The Tree Ambassador program is part of the larger Trees for Seattle effort that is operated by the same partnership and also includes the Trees for Neighborhoods program that provides free trees, associated materials, and training to Seattle residents. The 2021 Proposed Budget for the Trees for Seattle program includes 1.8 FTE and approximately \$681,000 of funding, split between the General Fund, SPU funds, and Seattle City Light funds.

The Council requests that SPU, in consultation with other City departments if necessary, provide a report to the Council by March 15, 2021 that evaluates the opportunities and constraints of expanding the Tree Ambassador program. The report should address:

- Training volunteers to become resident arborists who can perform basic tree maintenance, such as pruning;
- Educating volunteers and the public on tree protection policies;
- Enlisting volunteers to help inventory trees in their neighborhoods;
- Increasing the number of sites that can be supported by the Tree Ambassador program;
- Prioritizing racial equity and environmental justice in program expansion efforts;
- Other expansion opportunities to enhance Seattle's urban forest, such as expanding the Trees for Neighborhoods program; and
- Staff and funding necessary to implement proposed expansion efforts.

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Responsible Council Committee(s):

Land Use & Neighborhoods

Date Due to Council:

March 15, 2021