

Summary and Fiscal Note

1. Legislation Summary

Department: Parks and Recreation

Title: An ordinance relating to Seattle Parks and Recreation; authorizing the Superintendent to identify, negotiate, and acquire real property and property rights in the Delridge neighborhood of West Seattle for the permanent preservation and expansion of the Delridge Native Forest; authorizing blanket authority for future acquisition of real property in the Delridge Native Forest including property that may have connection with Sound Transit's West Seattle Link Extension, which is expected to require park greenspace conversions; authorizing execution of purchase and sale agreements, escrow instruments, and related documents as funding is appropriated; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

Background: The primary goal of this legislation is to permanently preserve and expand the Delridge Native Forest, which is an emerging, ecologically significant forested green space in West Seattle that supports tree canopy, wildlife habitat, stormwater attenuation, and protection of the Longfellow Creek watershed.

In partnership with SPR's Green Seattle Partnership, the Delridge Neighborhood Development Association, and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, SDOT is coordinating a reforestation project on City-owned parcels in the Delridge neighborhood that began in 2024. Privately owned properties adjacent to this reforestation area are subject to

active development pressure, and SPR is pursuing acquisition opportunities in the Delridge Native Forest to prevent the development of the land which would permanently fragment restored forest lands and eliminate future conservation opportunities (see companion Conservation Futures Levy legislation authorizing funding necessary to acquire two parcels in the Delridge Native Forest).

Specifically, the legislation authorizes SPR to acquire two properties in the Delridge neighborhood (approximately two and a half acres) for park and recreation purposes, including forest preservation and provides blanket authority to the Superintendent to purchase other properties in this greenspace similar to authority provided in other greenspaces under Ordinance 125664.

As a secondary goal, SPR recognizes Sound Transit is simultaneously planning the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) and that project may require acquisition, temporary use, or permanent conversion of existing greenspace parkland in the broader area. Given acquisition opportunities in the Delridge Native Forest, this legislation may both preserve the forested area and potentially facilitate the future transportation benefits to Seattle residents through WSLE recognizing such acquisitions may later be considered for mitigation of greenspace impact by Sound Transit's WSLE.

The legislation is consistent with City policy, including Ordinance 118477 by authorizing SPR's acquisition of property in advance of potential requests by Sound Transit to acquire city owned park property for WSLE that are subject to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966¹. However, the legislation does not

¹ Section 4(f) requirements stipulate that FHWA and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites unless there is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative to the use of land; and the

determine the parcels as replacement property as defined in Ordinance 118477

(Initiative 42). Instead, it sets that City Council may, by future ordinance, determine that properties may serve as such if Sound Transit so requests and provides the acquisition funds for the properties either at the time of the conveyance or by later agreement.

It is therefore in the City's interest to both preserve this important green space and recognize these acquisitions may address greenspace replacement property required by public transit projects.

Summary Attachments: Summary Attachment 1 – Map of Delridge Native Forest Acquisition Area

2. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project?

Yes

No

3. Summary of Financial Implications

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City?

Yes

No

action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use or the Administration determines that the use of the property will have a de minimis impact.

3d. Other Financial Impacts

a. Does this legislation create any other financial impacts for The City of Seattle, such as direct or indirect costs, one-time or ongoing, that aren't mentioned above? If yes, please explain these impacts.

This ordinance authorizes purchase of two properties that have funding through the Conservation Futures Levy program and is requesting authorization of potential future acquisitions, neither of which have immediate financial impacts.

b. If the legislation has costs that can be covered within the current budget, explain how. Does the department have extra resources in its budget to handle these costs? Or does the department need to shift resources away from other work to handle these costs?

Should SPR acquire the properties, the associated maintenance costs to maintain the green spaces within the Green Seattle Partnership (GSP) work plan are minimal.

c. What financial costs or other impacts might happen if this legislation is not implemented?

If this legislation is not implemented, the City risks losing the ability to act quickly to acquire priority properties when they become available. Delay increases acquisition costs, heightens the risk of development and Delridge Native Forest fragmentation, and constrains the City's ability to comply with Initiative 42 and Section 4(f) in a cost-effective manner regarding Sound Transit's expected and future West Seattle Line Extension.

d. How might this legislation affect other City departments besides the one that proposed it?

As previously described, this legislation will require close coordination between Sound Transit and SDOT.

4. Other Impacts

a. Does this legislation require a public hearing?

Yes

No

b. Does this legislation require a notice to be published in The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times?

Yes

No

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

Yes.

d. Race and Social Justice Initiative impacts:

1. How does this legislation affect vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you come to this conclusion? Please consider both impacts within City government (like employees and internal programs) and in the broader community.

The acquisition of green space sites will both expand the preservation of public open park space as well as ensure there will be no net loss of public open park space in an underserved area.

2. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses used to develop or assess this legislation.

There were no Racial Equity Toolkits used for the development of this legislation. SPR's Park Development Plan & Gap Analysis Update Vol. 2 analyzes the geographic service gaps for park space within communities, including a map by Racial and Social Equity Composite Index. The Gap Analysis is included in the link below:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2576566fd50747eb8a25432380b2f018>

3. What is the Language Access Plan for communicating with the public about this legislation?

This legislation requests authorization for the potential future acquisition of property. Broader and inclusive communications plans are included in the eventual restoration of acquired green space properties.

e. Climate change impacts:

1. Emissions: Will this legislation significantly increase or decrease carbon emissions? Attach any studies or materials that inform your answer.

This funding supports green space and neighborhood park land acquisitions to help maintain carbon neutrality/decrease carbon emissions at

these locations, as they will ultimately be developed or redeveloped for park and recreation uses.

2. Resiliency: Will this legislation make Seattle more or less able to adapt to climate change? If it reduces resiliency, explain what can be done to lessen the impact.

This legislation provides for the preservation of park land and open space to support Seattle's resiliency to climate change.

f. If this legislation creates a new program or expands an existing one, what are the long-term, measurable goals? How will this legislation help achieve those goals? What methods will be used to track progress?

Not applicable.

g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP that involves shared funding with a non-City partner or organization?

No.