

Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

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May 11, 2016.

Susan McLaughlin
Seattle Department of Transportation
700 5th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98124

Re: Recommendations on Right-of-Way Improvements Manual update

Dear Ms. McLaughlin,

The Urban Forestry Commission has the following suggestion for the current update to the Seattle Right-of-way Improvements Manual. Our recommendation will support the goals of the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan. We suggest the following change to improve newly planted street trees by developers. We would like you to make these specific changes:

Insert the following new section into the document (currently at page 41):

6.1.7d Tree Soil Volume and Canopy Space

Proposed street trees require an appropriate soil volume to provide for a healthy root zone for each tree at maturity. Space to develop vertically is also necessary for street trees to remain healthy. Each street tree species selected shall be supported with the appropriate accommodation of soil volume and air space to allow it to reach and maintain its health into maturity. Refer to the City of Seattle's Street Tree Manual. New utility infrastructure should be located in a way that it doesn't impinge on soil volume or air space to be dedicated to street trees.

[This addition is intended to call attention to the specific needs of healthy long-lived street trees.]

We believe that this change would allow for development review to require appropriate soil volume for new street tree plantings. It would also increase consideration for the needs of street trees and lead to a healthier and longer-lived urban forest. Please let us know if questions or concerns arise when exploring the following suggestions. Thank you

The Commission appreciates this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Tom Early, Chair

cc: Mayor Edward B. Murray, Council President Harrell, Councilmember Bagshaw, Councilmember Burgess, Councilmember Gonzalez, Councilmember Herbold, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Juarez, Councilmember O'Brien, Councilmember Sawant, Jessica Finn Coven, Scott Kubly, Barbara Gray, Eric McConaghy.

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