

# Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

Peg Staeheli, Chair • Tom Early, Vice-Chair

Gordon Bradley • Leif Fixen • Donna Kostka • Joanna Nelson • Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell • Steve Zemke

DRAFT

September 5, 2014.

Mayor Ed Murray and Councilmember Sally Bagshaw  
Seattle City Hall  
600 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Mayor's Executive Order 9-07-2005 "2 for 1" Tree Replacement

Dear Mayor Murray and Councilmember Bagshaw,

Nine years ago, Mayor Nickels issued an order *"directing City departments to replace every tree removed from city property with two new trees, a step that will help ensure Seattle remains a truly "green" city."*

Our City departments have done a very good job addressing this requirement; however we observe mature tree removal often being replaced with smaller canopy species which, while meeting the stated requirements of the 2:1 order, has a negative effect in our overall canopy cover level. We recommend two relatively simple modifications that we believe would better support the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan goals:

- 1) Tree removals required to be replaced with 2:1 of medium to large canopy trees at maturity or if small trees are required due to space constraints then the replacement should be 4:1.
- 2) Conifers should be replaced with conifers at the 2:1 ratio.
- 3) Minimum Tree Planting Size should be reduced to 1 inch caliper. This size has several benefits including survivability, ease of placement, and ease of handling, adaptation and cost. Generally the smaller caliper trees will grow more quickly and surpass the trees planted at a larger size.

These modifications are consistent with the original as the *"mayor's order requires replacement within two years with appropriate trees at least two inches in caliper, and as close to the removed tree as possible."*

Seattle's Urban Forest Stewardship Plan has a 30% Canopy Goal by 2037. The Commission is reviewing progress made on our tree canopy while new tree policies such as the DPD Tree Ordinance are on hold. Updating the 2005 Executive Order with the above small improvements will move the City forward in achieving the stated 30% city wide canopy goal.

Sincerely,

Peg Staeheli, Chair  
Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

9/7/2005 12:00:00 PM

Mayor Orders City to Replace Trees Two-for-One

Executive order ensures Seattle will remain The Emerald City

SEATTLE -- Mayor Greg Nickels issued an Executive Order today directing City departments to replace every tree removed from city property with two new trees, a step that will help ensure Seattle remains a truly "green" city.

"Trees are fundamental to the quality of our lives in the city," Nickels said. "They clean our air and water, cool our streets and homes, reduce noise in our neighborhoods and enhance beauty and nature in our city."

The Mayor's proposed 2006 budget, which he will submit to the City Council on Sept. 26, includes an additional \$170,000 for tree plantings.

The City must occasionally remove trees for safety reasons or as part of public projects and other developments. The mayor's order requires replacement within two years with appropriate trees at least two inches in caliper, and as close to the removed tree as possible.

The new order will apply primarily to Seattle Parks and Recreation, which manages 2,500 acres of forest and 1.2 million trees, and the Seattle Department of Transportation, which manages the city's 130,000 street trees.

Nickels also ordered City departments to develop or amend tree policies to comply with the order, and to apply the policy to all contracts with private vendors for development on city-owned land. The order applies to trees within the city limits.

Today's announcement follows the effort Nickels launched last year with the Cascade Land Conservancy to restore Seattle's public forest and stop the spread of ivy and other invasive species.

The Green Seattle Partnership will restore 2,500 acres of public forest by 2024.

With help from the Cascade Land Conservancy, the state's leading land conservation organization, the program plans to save 150 acres of public forest per year. That's 15 times the number of acres the city has restored in years past. In addition, the Partnership will improve trails through greenbelts and natural areas, provide youth training and employment opportunities, and increase public stewardship of Seattle's forests.

Some of the advantages of trees:

- One acre of trees provides enough oxygen for 18 people and absorbs as much carbon dioxide as a car produces in 26,000 miles;
- Trees reduce peak runoff of stormwater by 10 to 20 percent, and hold soil in place to prevent erosion;
- Trees reduce noise pollution by acting as a buffer and absorbing noise;
- Trees attract many species of wild birds into urban areas;
- Trees shade and cool streams, improving conditions for fish and other aquatic wildlife; and
- Trees add economic value by reducing energy use, attracting tourists, and increasing property values.

### Office of the Mayor

cc: Mayor Ed Murray, Council President Burgess, Councilmember Clark, Councilmember Godden, Councilmember Harrell, Councilmember Licata, Councilmember Rasmussen, Councilmember O'Brien, Councilmember Sawant, Jill Simmons, OSE.

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