

## **SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

**Weston Brinkley** (Position #3 – University), Chair • **Sarah Rehder** (Position #4 – Hydrologist), Vice-chair  
**Steve Zemke** (Position #1 – Wildlife Biologist) • **Elby Jones** (Position #2 – Urban Ecologist - ISA)  
**Stuart Niven** (Position #5 – Arborist – ISA) • **Michael Walton** (Position #6 – Landscape Architect – ISA)  
**Joshua Morris** (Position #7 – NGO) • **Blake Voorhees** (Position # 9 – Realtor)  
**Neeiyati Johnson** (Position #10 – Get Engaged) • **Whit Bouton** (Position #11 – Environmental Justice - ISA)  
**Jessica Jones** (Position # 12 – Public Health) • **Shari Selch** (Position # 13 – Community/Neighborhood)

September 9, 2020.

Sam Zimbabwe, Director  
Seattle Department of Transportation  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: SDOT ‘s pest readiness efforts

Dear Sam,

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) would like to extend its gratitude to the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) for its work to help Seattle be pest ready, and specifically to Stephanie Helms for her presentation on pest readiness efforts to the UFC.

Based on the discussion during Stephanie’s presentation, the UFC understands that preliminary conversations to include the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection (SDCI) in the pest readiness plan have started. The UFC urges that SDCI be brought into this effort as soon as possible as the majority, over 70 percent, of the Seattle’s trees are found on private property. The magnitude of the effort to address potential risks to the urban forest and responses to those risks must include SDCI.

The pest readiness plan calls for all City departments to coordinate with the newly created Seattle Committee for Invasive Pests (SCIP). The UFC recommends that the powers given to this committee include authority to direct staff to go onto public and private properties to inspect trees for potential threats.

The UFC acknowledges the need to place important work on hold as the City continues to pivot to re-deploy staff and re-allocate resources to respond to this unprecedented crisis and serve Seattle's most vulnerable populations. Given this, the UFC appreciates SDOT's continued work on urban forestry items, especially as Seattle faces the multiple challenges that climate change poses to Seattle's urban forest. Seattle's urban trees' air cleaning service comes to the forefront given the link between air pollution and COVID-19 vulnerability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is stylized and appears to read 'Weston Brinkley'.

Weston Brinkley, Chair

cc: Mayor Jenny A. Durkan, Council President Lorena González, CM Lisa Herbold, CM Debora Juarez, CM Andrew Lewis, CM Tammy Morales, CM Teresa Mosqueda, CM Alex Pedersen, CM Kshama Sawant, CM Dan Strauss, Jessica Finn Coven, Christina Ghan, Chase Kitchen, Michelle Caulfield, Rodney Maxie, Urban Forestry Management Team, Urban Forestry Core Team, Stephanie Helms, Yolanda Ho, Austin Miller

Sandra Pinto de Bader, Urban Forestry Commission Coordinator  
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