

From: [lance.young](#)
To: [Parkboard](#); [City Council](#)
Subject: Urban Forest Strategic Plan
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To: Shoreline City Council, and tree board
5/19/14
parkboard@shorelinewa.gov,
council@shorelinewa.gov,
Subject: Urban Forest Strategic Plan

Dear Tree Board

I am sorry that I have not been able to participate more in the development of the "Urban Forest Strategic Plan". The open house and comment deadline were during my busiest work/travel season so I was unavailable. It sounds like the plan is mostly a working outline for future potential forest canopy projects, so below are a few thoughts on the current plan.

* The tree board did a great job on Appendix A "Urban Tree Benefits" outlining the many advantages of forest canopy in the city, listing a few things that I had not heard of yet. This outline will be a good tool in developing community education programs and possible funding sources/justification for projects.

* The plan spoke primarily to public (Shoreline owned) trees and not so much to privately owned forest canopy. "Private trees are a public resource" Michael Oxman ISA Arborist. Though many are sensitive to anyone asking them not to cut down all the trees in their back yard, these trees benefit not only them but the whole neighborhood. We do have building codes that are required for public health and safety that apply to our houses. Perhaps some future thought can be put toward standards for enhancing this majority of our forest canopy. Lake Forest Park has done some great work on this subject.

* The 2011 "Urban Tree Canopy Assessment" of shorelines trees suggested that we currently have an average forest canopy for a city in our region of 31%, with the ideal being 40% (American Forests standards). It suggested a reasonable goal for us might be 35% forest canopy and said that adding even just 1% to our existing trees would save us about \$500,000 in storm water runoff management costs, and additional health and air quality savings. Seattle's Urban Forest Plan is to increase their forest canopy by about 7% in the next 20 years. Yet our Strategic Plan suggests maintenance of existing coverage not expansion as our goal.

* The Strategic Plan does a good job of outlining priorities and provides a rough ballpark for project costs. It might be worthwhile to also develop some innovative funding ideas for the goals outlined. Things such as perhaps neighborhood tree planting or pruning events, or classes. Crowd sourced hazard tree reporting et-cetera. With the trees we had planted on the Interurban Trail we got a nearby volunteer to water them for the first couple years. A neighborhood adopt a tree program especially for new plantings might be a possibility.

Sincerely
Lance Young
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