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From: [Nancy Morris](#)

Sent: Thursday, March 3, 2022 2:42:54 PM

To: [City Council](#)

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment to City Council for Strategic Planning for 2022

Importance: High

Sensitivity: Normal

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Attention City Council:

RE: Strategic Planning Workshop March 4-March 5: The need for a **stand-alone** URBAN FORESTRY ADVISORY PANEL (UFAP) and the need to immediately vote for the Tree Preservation Code Team (TPCT) new protective tree code amendments as previously presented by the TPCT.

Please consider the information from the **IPCC Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaption and Vulnerability** (Feb 22, 2022) during your workshop this weekend. *“This report recognizes the interdependence of climate, biodiversity and people and integrates natural, social and economic sciences more strongly than earlier IPCC assessments,”* said Hoesung Lee. *“It emphasizes the urgency of immediate and more ambitious action to address climate risks. Half measures are no longer an option:”* <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/resources/press/press-release/> . . . *“There is increasing evidence of adaptation that has caused unintended consequences, for example destroying nature, putting peoples’ lives at risk or increasing greenhouse gas emissions. This can be avoided by involving everyone in planning, attention to equity and justice, and drawing on Indigenous and local knowledge,”* quoted from the **‘IPCC Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaption and Vulnerability.’**

With climate change impacts clearly increasing the need for more robust oversight by the city of Shoreline, having a professionally based, stand-alone Urban Forestry Advisory Panel (UFAP) to focus on our community tree canopy and guide the way to preserve our significant and mature trees is long overdue. We need a UFAP to provide protective oversights to new tree preservation codes the city so desperately needs. Not just more protection for trees, but greater accountability from the city, developers, and private property owners. The climate emergencies facing all of us are not going away, they will be getting worse and the best science indicates that mature trees in our urban areas are so important for mitigating the effects of climate change that include heat-islands and deadly heatwave effects that will happen to us again. Our urban mature tree canopy can provide a more livable habitat for us, future residents, and our wildlife in the years ahead. Two major actions the council can take is to establish the UFAP and to vote now for the TPCT new protective tree code amendments.

The substantial loss of a mature tree canopy in our urban areas is fast becoming a social justice issue. It is quite obvious in Shoreline that affluent neighborhoods have more green space and tree canopy than neighborhoods where apartments, townhouses, and condominium complexes are rapidly being built with no consideration to preserving existing mature tree canopy for future residents or habitat for our northwest bird populations that are quickly becoming endangered due to loss of habitat. Bellevue, WA tree code mandates designing and building around mature trees whenever possible (See references at end of this letter).

Other nearby cities are already ahead of the curve on these issues and Shoreline needs to catch up with these local jurisdictions attempting to balance tree protections with increased pressures from development. Sadly this is now known as the “green squeeze” — where protecting trees along with allowing fast paced urban development creates a stressful urgency to find balance. It can be done in Shoreline with thoughtful and knowledgeable oversight by a dedicated UFAP made up of caring citizen scientists and working/retired professionals from urban planning, environmental ecology, and/or other science or professional disciplines. Given the opportunity to apply for a position on the UFAP, citizens who recognize the need for such an advisory panel will apply and serve to protect the urban forest canopy before it is too late.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Morris (resident of Shoreline)

References including Environmental Justice references further down on the list:

Trees and Tree Retention in City of Bellevue, WA <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/development/zoning-and-land-use/zoning-requirements/trees> . Bellevue codes mandate designing building around existing mature trees in the landscape.

Urban Forests and Birds That Need Them” |Seattle Audubon Program Meeting July 15, 2021
<https://vimeo.com/575918179>

“What Technology Could Reduce Heat Deaths? Trees.” <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/climate/trees-cities-heat-waves.html>, from the New York Times July 2, 2021

“Learn About Heat Islands,” EPA report <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/learn-about-heat-islands>

“Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect,” EPA Report <https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/reduce-urban-heat-island-effect> .

Environmental Justice References:

KUOW, (June 23, 2021) “Heat wave could hit Seattle area neighborhoods differently – possible 20 degrees difference”:
<https://www.kuow.org/stories/heat-wave-could-hit-seattle-area-neighborhoods-differently-possible-20-degrees-difference-e15e>

Seattle Times (June 23, 2021): New maps of King County, Seattle show that some communities are harder hit by heat waves: <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/new-maps-of-king-county-seattle-show-how-some-communities-are-harder-hit-by-heat-waves/>

Seattle Times, (July 5, 2021) “Communities of color are the ‘first and worst’ hurt by climate change; urgent action needed to change course”:
<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/communities-of-color-are-the-first-and-worst-hurt-by-climate-change-urgent-action-needed-to-change-course/>

New York Times, (Opinion, June 30, 2021) “Since When Have Trees Existed Only for Rich Americans?”:
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/30/opinion/environmental-inequity-trees-critical-infrastructure.html>

National Geographic, (June 17, 2021) “Los Angeles confronts its shady divide”:
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/article/los-angeles-confronts-its-shady-divide-feature>