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From: Barbara Johnstone <barbaraj98103@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 11, 2022 9:44 PM
To: City Council
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Save Trees in MUR-70' Zones; Council agenda item on 9/12/22

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Dear Mayor Scully and Councilmembers,

Developers have raised legitimate concerns about the proposed tree retention amendment for MUR-70 properties. I would like to respond to some of these and urge Council to adopt the amendment (without the Staff's proposed changes). Specifically, I'd like to address the developers concerns about the safety of Douglas firs.

In Spring 2022, Council passed SMC 20.50.370 Tree protection standards. These requirements were not standard practice before this amendment and directly address what is needed to make trees safer during and after construction is done around the trees. The protection of tree roots is assured by this code.

Also, when trees are saved in multiples, ideally groves, they are safer because they are protected by the neighboring roots, trunks and canopies, so hopefully that will drive design choices.

All large trees require regular maintenance to check for any limb damage or disease that could be a hazard. The lack of this maintenance is a big contributor to unfortunate incidents.

It is difficult to grow new Douglas firs in redevelopment ROWs because of space, water needs for many years, the changes in climate, and the lack of surrounding trees that exchange nutrients and also chemically alert their neighboring trees to mobilize their chemical defenses when one of them is attacked by insects. This difficulty and potential lack of safety of new Douglas fir ROW plantings is not a reason to consider mature Douglas firs unsafe.

This proposed amendment for tree retention is a compromise that not only reflects the Transit Oriented Density and vision of the city but also the City's value of preserving and maintaining our urban tree canopy. It will take compromise, creativity and commitment for builders to work within the proposed tree retention requirements to create the density of dwellings and to preserve the tree canopy—both necessary to maximize the use of tools available to address the Climate Crisis and to save the nature of Shoreline we love and can thrive in.

Sincerely,

Barbara Johnstone
Shoreline resident

