

2015 Urban Forest & Green Space City Council Candidate Questionnaire



Name: Sally Bagshaw

District: 7

1. Larger trees provide significantly more ecological value to Seattle's green infrastructure, by reducing storm water runoff, cleaning pollutants from the air, and providing animal habitat. **Do you support giving greater protection to large trees like Heritage Trees and exceptional trees? What measures would you propose to provide this protection?**

I support giving greater protection to large trees, such as Heritage and exceptional trees, in accordance to the tree protection code. This protects trees based off diameter, rarity of tree, and potential harm to humans. This code increases protection and preservation of trees in park areas, where trees and greenery are most abundant in Seattle.

2. Seattle's interim tree ordinance protects existing groves of trees (group of 8 or more trees 12" in diameter). The Department of Planning and Development has proposed removing this protection. **Do you support continuing the policy of protecting tree groves to conserve habitat and canopy cover?**

Yes, I support the continuation of protecting tree groves to conserve habitat and canopy cover. Trees are an important part of habitat conservation. I would suggest that the Department of Planning and Development finds an alternative to their proposal of removing this protection.

3. Deferred maintenance results in the costly loss and replacement of trees and landscapes. **Do you support funding for the maintenance of public greenspaces,** including increased funding for the Green Seattle Partnership so that the goals to restore our parklands, greenbelts, and critical areas can be met?

Yes, I support funding for the maintenance of public greenspaces as we should maintain our public greenspaces carefully and vigilantly. This protection will provide for long-term sustainability. In fact, I fought for this to be included in our new Park District Funding and millions of new \$\$ will be available every year for this purpose.

4. Seattle currently has a 23 percent tree canopy cover. Seattle's Urban Forest Stewardship Plan targets a 30 percent canopy cover goal by 2037. **To help reach this**

goal, do you support strengthening tree protection by requiring permits to remove trees on private property?

Yes, I support protecting exceptional trees and limiting the number of non-hazardous trees on developed property to 3 per year via permits. The question of private property rights make this a tricky policy to handle. However, other cities such as Portland Redmond currently have similar policies in place. I do support the concept of requiring property owners to replace trees – perhaps in parks, new greenspaces or in new developments or otherwise paying for the right of removing mature trees on their own property.

5. Seattle is one of the very few urban environments that still boasts an extensive, diverse, and impactful urban fruit tree canopy. Over the last six years, over 80,000 pounds of fruit has been gleaned from public and private property, and donated into the emergency food system. **Do you support funding to continue the maintenance of fruit trees on public land and gleaning of fruit from private property for food banks?**

Yes, maintaining fruit trees on public land and gleaning of fruit from private property for food banks is a sustainable way to feed the people in Seattle and reduces reliance on shipping produce from elsewhere. These practices also promote healthy, local eating. In addition, I promote the planting of “right tree right place”, so someone has the responsibility for oversight of the planting, maintenance and harvesting of the trees.

6. Seattle is one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. Over the last two years, there has been a 25 percent increase in apartment building, which often involves the destruction of single-family homes that provide open space and trees. In 2014, Seattle reports that it has 5,546 acres of designed parkland plus natural areas. The Trust for Public Lands 2014 report places Seattle's ranking among the 200 largest U.S. cities as 188th -- that's 12th from the bottom. **What do you propose to stop this loss of open space, and to increase open space in the city?**

I propose increased investments in neighborhood greenways and park areas in addition to parks and walkable, open spaces as a part of a dynamic, vibrant city. This use of space promotes mobile forms of transportation like walking and biking, which would decrease reliance on cars, allowing for more open spaces in the future. I have toured Vancouver BC, Portland, and NYC where they have “million tree” policies, with plans to plant AND MAINTAIN one million more trees in their cities. I am also intrigued by policies in residential areas where neighborhoods can determine whether they want to slow traffic by reclaiming parts of streets and planting trees and creating bike/ped priority crossings. Of course, this must be approved by local fire departments and SDOT.

7. The Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan calls for the addition of 1400 acres of open space by 2035 to accommodate population growth. **What is your opinion of this**

goal? What ideas do you have to achieve this goal? Do you support this goal and saving current surplus city properties to help meet this goal?

I believe this is a stretch goal for Seattle but a worthy one. To reach this goal, we must designate more available areas to open space projects, such as parks, and increase investments made in neighborhood parks and greenways. Additionally, I support saving current city surplus properties to help reach this goal and require significant green planting requirements for new housing developments. For example, in the past we allowed planting strips to be covered with St. John's Wart to qualify for green credits. This is silly and should be replaced with significant requirements for appropriately sized and placed trees.

8. Currently, the Department of Planning and Development is responsible for drafting the urban forest ordinance. **Do you support the Mayor and City Council appointing a citizens committee to prepare a draft urban forest ordinance instead, such as the Parks Legacy Committee and Parks and Green Spaces Citizens' Advisory Committee?**

I support citizen oversight in this area and would like to have citizen input in this process. The Urban Forestry Commission is an appointed resident-based body and an advisory committee could be added to it.

9. The Department of Planning and Development is proposing to reduce the current long-term tree canopy aspirational goal in the Seattle Comprehensive Plan from 40 percent to 30 percent. **Do you support maintaining the 40 percent long-term goal in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan?**

Yes, I support maintaining the 40 percent long-term goal in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

10. Trees and open space offer a number of community benefits: increased housing values; decreased rates of crime; offering protection against climate change; filtering stormwater run-off; and quality of life for communities. **Share with us your favorite tree or memory of an open space and why you support continued investment in these community resources.**

In 1982 my family and I lived in Lake Forest Park. We had a beautiful, mature cherry tree on our property. Our house was boxy and I wanted to push out a wall to expand our dining room. I researched technology and site lines for passive solar, and learned I could push the wall to the east, added triple pane windows, thereby capturing sunlight from the south and preserving the cherry tree which was on the north corner of the property.

Initially, the LFP Planning Commission urged me to extend the dining room to the NORTH, which would have defeated the objective of capturing the southern exposure and also would have required our cutting down the cherry tree. I was attached to that

tree which bore some excellent fruit and also helped with water runoff on the property. After a brief appeal, I was given the construction permit which preserved the cherry tree, and was soon asked to join the LFP City Council when a seat opened up!

Please add any clarifications or comments you would like to convey to us regarding the questions above, or on protecting trees and the urban forest and open space in general.

I am a champion of Seattle Neighborhood Greenways, and have written extensively about the importance of Greenways for every neighborhood. Here is one of the first articles about Neighborhood Greenways I penned, which provided a building block for Seattle: <http://bagshaw.seattle.gov/2011/04/11/bicycle-greenways-questions-possible-answers-and-food-for-thought/>

Are you willing to meet briefly with representatives from TreePAC, at a time and place that is mutually convenient?

Yes, happily. I would be willing to meet with representatives from TreePAC. I am a huge supporter of your work.

--Sally Bagshaw
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***Thank you for your participation!
Please return questionnaire by July 15 to info@treepac.org.***