

2015 Urban Forest & Green Space City Council Candidate Questionnaire



Name: Jon Grant

District: Position 8

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?**

Of course. I believe our heritage trees hold a unique value for our city and need to be protected. I have not studied our tree ordinance extensively but I would love to work with you to ensure these trees are protected.

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?**

I don't agree with the DPD's proposed rule change here. I would like to see the current ordinance enforced and would work to ensure the funding is in the budget so these groves are protected.

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?**

I am always careful to promise increased revenue without working off a full budget but our city values our greenspaces and I would work with you to make restoring parklands, greenbelts and critical areas a priority in our city budget.

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.

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?

I'm not sure of the current resources but I believe this is exactly the kind of program that could help our local foodbanks. I would be happy to work with you to support this work and help ensure the funding is there to make it happen.

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 don't believe we need to make a false choice here. I believe we can provide affordable housing while maintaining our open space. We need to do a better job of ensuring developers deal with the externalities of their development. I have focused on affordability but developers shouldn't be off the hook for loss of open space. We need to replace lost parkland, trees and open space at a 1:1 ratio.

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 it's a worthy goal. As I said before, I believe developers should have to work with the city to set aside open space as they develop new buildings. I would want to work with you to put the best plan together to make this happen.

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?**

Yes.

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

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.**

My favorite thing to do is to take visitors from out of town and hike around Carkeek Park. It is always a great surprise to show folks the “hollow” tree that a fully grown person can walk inside along the trail.

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.

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

Yes

Thank you for your participation!
Please return questionnaire by July 15 to treepac@comcast.net.