

Tree Canopy Workshop

Breakout Group Questions and Comments

1 WHAT ARE SOME EFFECTIVE WAYS THAT THE COUNTY CAN PROMOTE BOTH HOUSING DIVERSITY AND TREE CANOPY AT THE SAME TIME?

- Don't do it like Seattle
- Promote groves in open areas, cluster trees
- Provide more incentives for development
- Shared open space
- Tree bank is an idea
- Biggest risk of tree loss is in sprawl development. Need to embrace going vertical
- Acknowledge striving for simplicity. However, consider different standards for sites without critical areas – this is going to be difficult and detrimental to housing need.

2 WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BENEFITS OF A TREE CANOPY CODE FOR URBAN AREAS?

- Saying that trees affect housing costs, doesn't quantify the value that trees have.
- If the county is serious about trees, it needs to go beyond subdivision. Tree habitat, snag or large dead trees, is also important and should be credited. Link for Spokane is in the chat - [Tree Benefits - City of Spokane, Washington \(spokanecity.org\)](https://www.spokanecity.org/tree-benefits). Shade from the trees preserves the concrete.
 - Staff clarification: Urban tree plan – street tree inventory, parks and opens space plan, understory.
- Important to have regulations about trees. Moved to Silverdale in 70s. Trying to find trees in the Silverdale area to walk dog and find shade but trees are very sparce.
- In Paris, there's density, transit, trees/nature, art, culture wherever you go.

3 WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE CONCERNS OF A TREE CANOPY CODE FOR URBAN AREAS?

- How can the County still meet its GMA goals, especially for housing
- We're asking a lot of the property inside the UGA, the growth that's being required, there's not a lot of opportunities. This impacts the amenities needed. 1/3 acre lots with 40% open space was ideal back in the day. Larger lots won't help this.
- Density and roots are a challenge.

- When talking about small sites; need to consider access and other infrastructure or utilities to the site that requires cutting down trees. Something to consider on a small urban site.
- Live in 2016 development. Neighbor's trees are growing into pipes. Trees that are 40-60 years old could be susceptible to windthrow. Be aware of species requiring.
 - Need to consider lots of things that effect development; all types of codes will trigger changes.
- Lives outside of Poulsbo. Project near Vinland Point near Vinland Elementary School. Very ugly. Large houses on small lots. Why do we keep doing this? To what cost of quality of life?
 - Also understand the need for housing. It is a conundrum.
 - Need to look at other models in urban planning.
 - Cottages are really nice. May be expensive but community living is important.
 - Opportunity to go to Manchester. Witnessed development of 10 streets or more through California St. Lots were 63x135. Trees are so thick in these lots now. People will change what the developer does.
- How would developers profit if one acre is subdivided into 9 plats; but because of tree requirement can only build 7 homes and use the other lots to meet tree density.
- Object to tree canopy code; lots are small in UGAs, lots do not have enough space for planting trees to meet density requirement. Tree code requirements add thousands of dollars to development cost. If we want more trees, we need bigger lots. Tree code requirements are burdensome to developer and the homeowner.
 - Staff comment – understand perspective. Have to balance many requirements including housing, development, environment, climate change. We're trying to strike a balance.

4 HOW SHOULD RETAINED TREES BE PROTECTED AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES, IF ANY, COULD THEY BE REMOVED?

- How can DCD protect trees long-term without hiring new staff?
- We do have active HOAs that ask us questions, and platting requirements.
- Trees can cause issues down the line – need to be removed for utility lines, trees pull up sidewalks.
- We need to reward people that save trees when they build one home, or remodel, etc.
- With respect to the protected part. So many different ideas about protection. American National Standards Institute requirements [ANSI A300](#) – tree care practices, etc. Professionals in the field keeping up on this topic – references this standard that already exists. The associated **best management practices** that go with them as well. Conflicts can be worked out through a process with the county. It's neutral.
- Very difficult to develop a plan that meets everybody's interest. It should not be left to the contractors to determine the tree preservation. There should be expert (designated tree professional or another objective professional) assessment of tree preservation. Need to decide that we want rather than compromise away. Not all contractors will strive to keep the tree.
- What protects the trees after the development.

- Staff comment – “Tree Canopy Protection Plan.”
- What is the consequence of taking down a tree?
 - Staff comment – need to replace with appropriate credit.
 - [ASNI A300](#) assigns values to trees. Need to pay a price for the loss and the replacement.
- Summers are getting increasingly hot; will watering plan requirement for one year be sufficient?
- Tree maintenance – under landscaping standards, there’s a timeline for tree maintenance that requires irrigation or watering to keep trees alive. Will watering plan be required? Will irrigation pipes or manual watering be required?
 - Staff comment – Landscaping code has some requirements around maintenance and irrigation. There is flexibility in how that is achieved.

5 SHOULD CERTAIN TYPES OF TREES BE ENCOURAGED OVER OTHERS? WHAT SHOULD THAT ENCOURAGEMENT LOOK LIKE?

- In favor of evergreens. Keep these trees even if they are dying and make habitat out of them.
- Are fruit trees included?
- Studied large trees. Has 700-year-old tree on property. Super old trees give nutrients to surrounding trees/vegetation. Douglas Fir will only provide nutrients after 50 years.

6 WOULD A “TREE BANK” BE HELPFUL TO EXPAND TREE CANOPY IN CLUSTERS? UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD DEVELOPMENT BE ABLE TO USE A TREE BANK?

- Tree bank is a good idea. Tree bank examples – no. City of Seattle side that has done something similar – been successful at keeping older trees that shade houses, etc. and provide habitat. And think about the salmon streams – part of our heritage.
- Tree banks. Tree committee in Poulsbo – Poulsbo is experiencing significant clear cutting. North Kitsap County – Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park. \$100K+ trees need to be purchased, could be utilized. Save those trees.
- If lots are so small and may not be appropriate to plant large scale tree. If the surrounding area includes parks, ROW, or other public facilities. Look at the community as a whole and identify areas such as neighborhood parks. Don’t look at the individual lots.
- Lots of models with cities and communities that have done this successfully. Don’t reinvent the wheel; look to Europe and other jurisdictions.
- Tree bank – could do tax credit, or different incentives for developers such as improving assets in the community. Depends on the goal, is it fresh air, shade, cool spaces. Align action with goal.

7 GENERAL QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

7.1 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

- ROW trees should count towards tree credit requirements.
- What about the animals and wildlife that rely on the trees?
 - Staff comment - Wildlife corridors addressed in the CAO
 - Could create incentive for cluster trees or groves
- Can you save a lot of trees by requiring tree protection for 1-3 homes, rather than just 4 or more?
- Can we have an FAQ on the website about tree code?
- Challenging ordinance. County could consider a pilot project in a specific UGA where tree retention is needed. Opportunity to revise with the experience.
- Concerned about codifying too quickly. Are there ways to have neighborhood conversations, so we're educating the public at the same time and understanding together the importance of trees. If people don't understand how critical this is, we won't make enough progress. Is there a way that the County can work with other organizations to facilitate a public conversation that's based in different environments (infill versus expansion, etc.). How can we get this going?
 - Staff comment - Pilot study [mentioned earlier] and that may be an opportunity for education and discussion.
- Will there be a definition section? What is the definition of tree protection?
- Something missing from the ordinance, acknowledging soil and its importance. Soil types, etc. and what's needed for trees.

7.2 CLIMATE CHANGE

- Use Best Available Science – what works well with climate change?
- What is behind all of this is climate change.

7.3 EDUCATION

- What's need is education. Maintaining mature trees is so much more important than cutting and planting. It's not the same thing. It's hard to explain to people. Public education on this topic is very much needed.
 - Staff comment – more credit to existing trees. Response – not everyone will understand this.
- Education. Clear Creek and Clean Water Kitsap have provided “Salmon in the Classroom” for over 35 years. Very valuable for the kids and their parents. Educate the public and DCD and other aspects of the county to raise awareness about the importance of this habitat.
- Should there be an education program on native plants especially for nurseries that sell invasives?
 - Staff comment – yes, Kitsap Conservation District does some of this work.

7.4 FOREST FIRES AND TREE CANOPY

- Wildlife Urban Interface Code in progress – needs to be rewritten to prevent forest fires from impacting homes and would require greater setbacks between houses and tree line. Wouldn't we want to make decisions about tree canopies with an understanding of the WUI code. Conflict anticipated between these two codes, WUI code – State, Tree code, County. May be better to wait for state code. The timing of this conversation is interesting, would be better after the WUI code.
 - Familiar with conflict - tree canopy and fire spread. Examples of vegetation surviving (green) while the dry materials burn. With that, tree canopies can help. Reducing canopy may not prevent fire spread. Contact Terri for more information.

7.5 QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- Does this include leaving trees on lots that are in the developments.
 - Staff comment – yes, it applies to new subdivisions, a certain number of trees need to be maintained or planted.

7.6 OTHER TREE RETENTION CODES

- Other tree retention codes, interesting one in Kirkland. Looking is interesting. Poulsbo – if you cut a tree, 10" diameter, but plant trees that add up to that diameter. It's worth looking at other communities and find out what troubles or successes. Bainbridge Island.
 - More examples. King County and Olympia. King County's process of how they developed the tree regulations was very interesting.
 - Counties (e.g. Whatcom and Clark) that have similar tree type distribution are ones to look at. We don't want to be King County. We want to look ahead to avoid solid concrete.
- Why did the County pick the Pierce County code as an example to follow. They have lowest tree coverage.
 - Pierce County has had tree code in place and implemented for a while. It is understandable and predictable.
 - County did look at other jurisdictions and reviewed methodologies for establishing tree canopy code.