

Proposed Urban Forestry Goals, Policies for the Natural Environment Chapter

The following goals are an expansion of the existing goals and policies in Chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Plan: See Goal 1.3 and Policies 1.3.1, 1.3.2; Goal 1.4 and policies 1.4.1 and 1.4.2; Goal 1.6, second bullet; Policy 1.6.4; Goal 1.7 and policy 1.7.4; Goal 1.8, policy 1.8.3 and 1.8.6; Goal 1.10, Policy 1.10.12

Goal 1: Trees are recognized by Tukwila citizens, businesses, City staff and decision-makers for their benefits to the environment (air quality, habitat, climate change), urban infrastructure (stormwater attenuation, slope stability, temperature) and their aesthetic value (economic benefits, safety/crime reduction, visual and recreational benefits, etc.) *Note: a discussion of the benefits of trees will be included in a narrative section that introduces the goal, so they won't need to be in the goal itself).*

Policies for Goal 1:

1. Develop a formal urban forest management plan to promote and guide preservation, restoration and maintenance of a sustainable urban forest, using the goals and policies of this chapter (as a basis) for guidance.
2. Ensure that the benefits of trees are factored into site design and permit decisions.
3. Ensure that regulations recognize that larger trees provide more benefits than small trees.
4. Seek to create and fund an urban forester/municipal arborist position within the City, or contract for such services, to provide expertise for urban forest management planning, oversight of tree planting and maintenance, and assistance to all City departments that have responsibilities for tree management.
5. Educate the public, elected officials and City staff about the importance of and benefits provided by trees in Tukwila.
6. Develop tree valuation methods to reflect the value trees provide, for use in assessing fines, determining damages or estimating loss of tree benefits.
7. Identify funding sources to support urban forestry planning and management and establish an urban forestry budget and account.
8. Consider developing an "exceptional" or "heritage" tree program to foster tree appreciation in the community.
9. Encourage public involvement in urban forest stewardship through volunteer events, free training workshops, and other means.

Note: the following goal will be preceded by narrative that summarizes the results of the tree canopy study and explains current percent canopy coverage and the acreage of each land use category.

Goal 2. Tree Canopy Goal: Overall city-wide tree canopy increased to a total of 28% by 2034 by achieving the following City-wide goals for different land use categories:

Goals for Increasing Canopy

Industrial zones: 1 % increase to achieve 14% cover

Tukwila Urban Center and Tukwila South: 5% increase to achieve 18% cover

Office and Commercial: 3% increase to achieve 32% cover

Goals for No Net Loss of Canopy

Low Density Residential: Maintain current City-wide canopy coverage of 47%

Medium and High Residential Density zones: Maintain current City-wide coverage of 40%

Policies for Goal 2:

1. Promote tree retention throughout the City by:
 - a. implementing educational programs for property owners and managers regarding tree selection and care, applicable regulations, selecting a qualified arborist, and other issues;
 - b. prohibiting tree removal on all undeveloped property without an approved development or other land use permit, except for hazard trees; (Note: this language to be discussed further at 4/10/13 mtg.)
 - c. promoting the mutual goals of tree protection and urban development, through the implementation of incentive programs and flexible site development regulations especially to retain tree groves. Through the implementation of incentive programs and the adoption of flexible site development regulations, enable property owners and developers to coordinate with the City to achieve mutual goals of encouraging development while protecting healthy stands of trees or groves on property proposed for development, through changes in regulations, including incentives.
 - d. requiring financial assurances for required tree replanting and maintenance.
2. Improve retention of trees on steep slopes through modifications in regulations, ensuring the evaluation of the role that trees play in slope stability during geotechnical reviews, and by providing incentives.
3. Continue to protect trees in sensitive areas and the shoreline through relevant regulations.
4. Ensure that required replacement trees at maturity will have similar canopies to that of the removed tree(s), except where existing or future infrastructure impedes the planting of large trees.
5. Develop mechanisms for protecting tree roots for public and private surface and underground infrastructure installation, including such mechanisms as requiring the presence of a certified arborist when working in the critical root zone, replacement of trees where damage is unavoidable; and either requiring replanting or payment into a tree replacement fund as compensation if planting on-site is not feasible. Establish reasonable procedures to ensure consideration of tree root protection during routine or emergency maintenance of existing

utilities and provide training to City and other public utility maintenance staff on root protection techniques.

6. Establish criteria for requiring professional assessment and corrective actions by **property** owners who damage of landscape trees, street trees, or other required trees by topping, poor pruning practices, or root disturbance.
7. Where trees are regulated, establish procedures for off-site planting of replacement trees, or payment into a dedicated tree replacement fund when all required replacement trees cannot be accommodated on a site.
8. Identify potential tree planting locations on publicly owned properties and develop tree planting and urban forest rehabilitation programs for City parks and other publicly owned lands. Collaborate with other agencies, such as Washington Department of Transportation to promote planting in highway interchanges and other locations.
9. Collaborate with other government, non-profit organizations and private sector entities to promote urban forest management and restoration.
10. Modify street tree and front, side and rear yard landscape codes to promote increased tree planting and/or planting of large canopy trees, where planting space and site conditions allow.
11. Evaluate current parking lot landscape requirements to identify opportunities to increase tree canopy.

Goal 3. Tukwila's streetscapes and landscaped areas are sustainable and attractive and its urban forest is healthy, diverse, and safe.

Policies for Goal 3:

1. Develop tree/urban forest inventories and assess the health of trees and forests in Tukwila's public spaces.
2. Develop maintenance plans and programs for trees on City property or rights-of-way to ensure that maintenance pruning is properly carried out, diseases and pest infestations are managed, hazardous trees are identified and managed in a timely manner to reduce risks, and invasive vegetation is managed.
3. Modify codes and educate property owners, property managers, landscape maintenance companies and tree companies to promote best practices for soil preparation, planting techniques, pruning, trenching, and general tree care.
4. Ensure that landscaping and replacement trees in new development or re-development are properly cared for and thrive in perpetuity, through such means as maintenance agreements, monitoring and enforcement.
5. Develop a mechanism to ensure that tree removal and maintenance companies have the necessary qualifications and liability insurance for work in Tukwila.
6. [Modify landscape code and public right-of-way code requirements to require diversity of tree species in landscape plantings and consideration of species already present in the vicinity.](#)
7. [Establish minimum standards and landscape manuals to ensure long-term tree health for street trees, required landscape trees and required replacement trees, including: minimum soil volume, soil quality, plant quality, planting techniques, irrigation, mulching, tree pruning, and prohibition of topping.](#)
8. [Develop an approved/recommended tree list for street trees, landscape perimeter planting and parking lots that takes into account available planting space and infrastructure conflicts, climate conditions, canopy coverage goals, allergy issues and species tolerant of urban conditions.](#)