

April 28, 2022

TO: City of Shoreline City Council
FROM: PRCS/Tree Board

RE: A new Urban Forestry Advisory Board

Dear City of Shoreline Council Members:

The Shoreline Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services/Tree Board enjoys our role advising on Public Trees, but also recognizes the potential benefit of creating a new citizen advisory board that would provide dedicated guidance and support regarding the City's urban forest. Shoreline's citizens have made it heard that they consider our trees and the protection they provide from climate change to be priority for the City to address. An Urban Forestry Advisory Board may help achieve Council's stated goal of improving the City's ability to fulfill the community's vision.

In an era of climate change, a unified urban forestry plan that covers both public and private trees, such as Shoreline's own 2014 Urban Forest Strategic Plan, is imperative. Many of our neighboring communities have further responded to the challenges of climate change by establishing a Tree Board, Environmental Sustainability Commission, or other advisory body to oversee their respective urban forestry plans while also guiding the advancement and success of environmental stewardship and sustainability goals. The PRCS/Tree Board believes our City may benefit from such an advisory body and recommends that Council consider and study the feasibility of its establishment.

PRCS/Tree Board's Recommendation for Urban Forestry Advisory Board with potential alternatives

The PRCS/Tree Board recommends that City Council consider the creation of an Urban Forestry Advisory Board and recommends that Council consider directing staff to study one or both of the following alternatives:

- A. Council may choose to establish a stand-alone Urban Forestry Advisory Board, removing public trees from the jurisdiction of the PRCS Board.
- B. Council may choose to establish an Urban Forestry Advisory Board in addition to the PRCS/Tree Board. Public trees would remain under the jurisdiction of the PRCS/Tree Board.

For each of the above alternatives, we recommend studying how a new Urban Forestry Advisory Board would work with and support related City departments. To meet the challenges facing our urban forest, it is important that the Advisory Board bridge both public and private jurisdictions.

Shoreline is currently updating its Urban Forestry Plan, Climate Action Plan, Transportation Master Plan, and PROS Plan and will soon be implementing the new Parks bond. Now may be an ideal time to create a new advisory body that could provide linkage and continuity among these various important projects, all of which impact the environment. Many neighboring cities of comparable size (or even smaller) have harnessed their citizens' expertise and engagement by establishing multiple advisory bodies. Shoreline's citizens have the interest and capability to aid the City in furthering its goals through additional citizen advisory committees.

Council has acknowledged that the PRCS/Tree Board has a very broad scope of responsibilities, which is limited strictly to publicly owned facilities and programs and has broached the idea of expanding the size of the Board or even splitting the Board into two separate boards. We recommend that Council direct staff to study the Urban Forestry Advisory Board alternatives outlined above to determine if one of the options may better assist the City in meeting its goals.

Thank you, Councilmembers, for your time and attention. As always, the PRCS/Tree Board thanks you for your hard work and commitment to our City.

/s/

Shoreline Parks, Recreation, Cultural Services & Tree Board

Attachments:

~ PRCS/T Board Background Paper re: Proposal for Urban Forestry Advisory Board

~ List of neighboring cities with Tree Boards and/or Environmental Sustainability Boards

~ Tree Code Protection Team's Proposed Amendment for Urban Forestry Advisory Board

~ Tree Code Protection Team's scenarios for Urban Forestry Advisory Board vs. Tree Board