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February 15, 2023

Mayor Bruce Harrell and Seattle City Council Members
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Ave
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) 2022 Annual Report and 2023 Work Plan (as required by Ordinance 123052)

Dear Mayor Harrell and Councilmembers,

The UFC hopes that the new year is treating you well, that you have taken time to celebrate what you accomplished in 2022 and that you are looking forward to what can be accomplished in 2023.

The UFC is pleased to share a summary of its activities over the last year and its goals for the next in its 2022 Annual Report and 2023 Work Plan.

In 2022, the UFC held 26 public meetings, issued 17 letters of recommendation, and advanced its community engagement objectives with development of the vision and goals for this work. Strengthening tree protections, updating the Comprehensive Plan, and urban forestry budget recommendations occupied a central space in the UFC's correspondence to the City.

Since its establishment 13 years ago, the UFC has called for a revised tree protection ordinance. The current code is not supporting tree protection.ⁱ Worse, it is supporting a system that tends to overserve white people and people with higher incomes while underserving people of color and people with lower incomes.ⁱⁱ

In 2023, the UFC hopes to continue to serve the effort to improve the city's urban forestry governance through participation in the process to hire the city's first City Urban Forester. The UFC will also advocate for appropriate funding to implement urban forestry policies and programs, improve its outreach and engagement with City leaders and community members, continue participating in the City's Comprehensive Plan update process, and work with the City in the development of the Tree Canopy Equity and Resilience Plan.

As always, the UFC is grateful to the [Office of Sustainability & Environment](#) for providing staff time to support the commission's work.

Sincerely,

Joshua Morris, Co-chair

Becca Neumann

Laura Keil

ⁱ Tree Regulations Research Project. Phase II, Final Report. Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections and Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment. 31 March 2017. Available at <https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/Resources/TreeRegsResearchProjectPhaseIIFinalReport033117.pdf>

ⁱⁱ O'Neil-Dunne, Jarlath. "2016 Seattle Tree Canopy Assessment." University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab. 2017. See page 10 for relationship between tree canopy and environmental equity. Available at <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Trees/Mangement/Canopy/Seattle2016CCAFinalReportFINAL.pdf>