

# Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan

PREPARED BY:

**WORTHY AND ASSOCIATES, LLC**

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
PARK AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

RENTON. AHEAD OF THE CURVE.

City of  
**Renton**





CITY OF RENTON

# Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan

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August 2009

**Prepared by:**

WORTHY AND ASSOCIATES, LLC  
Landscape Architecture, Park, and Environmental Design  
1932 First Avenue, Suite 606  
Seattle, WA 98101

With assistance from:  
MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design  
Sound Tree Solutions, Inc.



City of  
**Renton**





# Acknowledgements

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## **Mayor**

Denis Law

## **Councilmembers**

Randy Corman, Council President  
Don Persson, Council President Pro-Tem  
Terri Briere  
Marcie Palmer  
King Parker  
Greg Taylor  
Rich Zwicker

## **Chief Administrative Officer**

Jay Covington

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Al Dieckman (Chair)  
Cynthia Burns  
Mike O'Donin  
Ron Regis  
Larry Reymann  
Tim Searing  
Troy Wigestrund

## **Administrative and Judicial Services**

Marty Wine, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer  
Preeti Shridhar, Communication Director  
Bonnie Walton, City Clerk

## **City Attorney**

Larry Warren

## **Community & Economic Development**

Alex Pietsch, Administrator  
Suzanne Dale Estey, Economic Development Director  
Neil Watts, Development Services Director  
Chip Vincent, Planning Director

## **Community Services**

Terry Higashiyama, Administrator  
Leslie Betlach, Parks Director

## **Finance & Information Services**

Iwen Wang, Administrator

## **Fire & Emergency Services**

I. David Daniels, Chief

## **Human Resources and Risk Management**

Nancy Carlson, Administrator

## **Police**

Kevin Milosevich, Chief

## **Public Works**

Gregg Zimmerman, Administrator  
Peter Hahn, Deputy PW Administrator  
Lys Hornsby, Utility Systems Director  
Mike Stenhouse, Maintenance Services Director





# CITY OF RENTON Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan

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## Urban Forestry

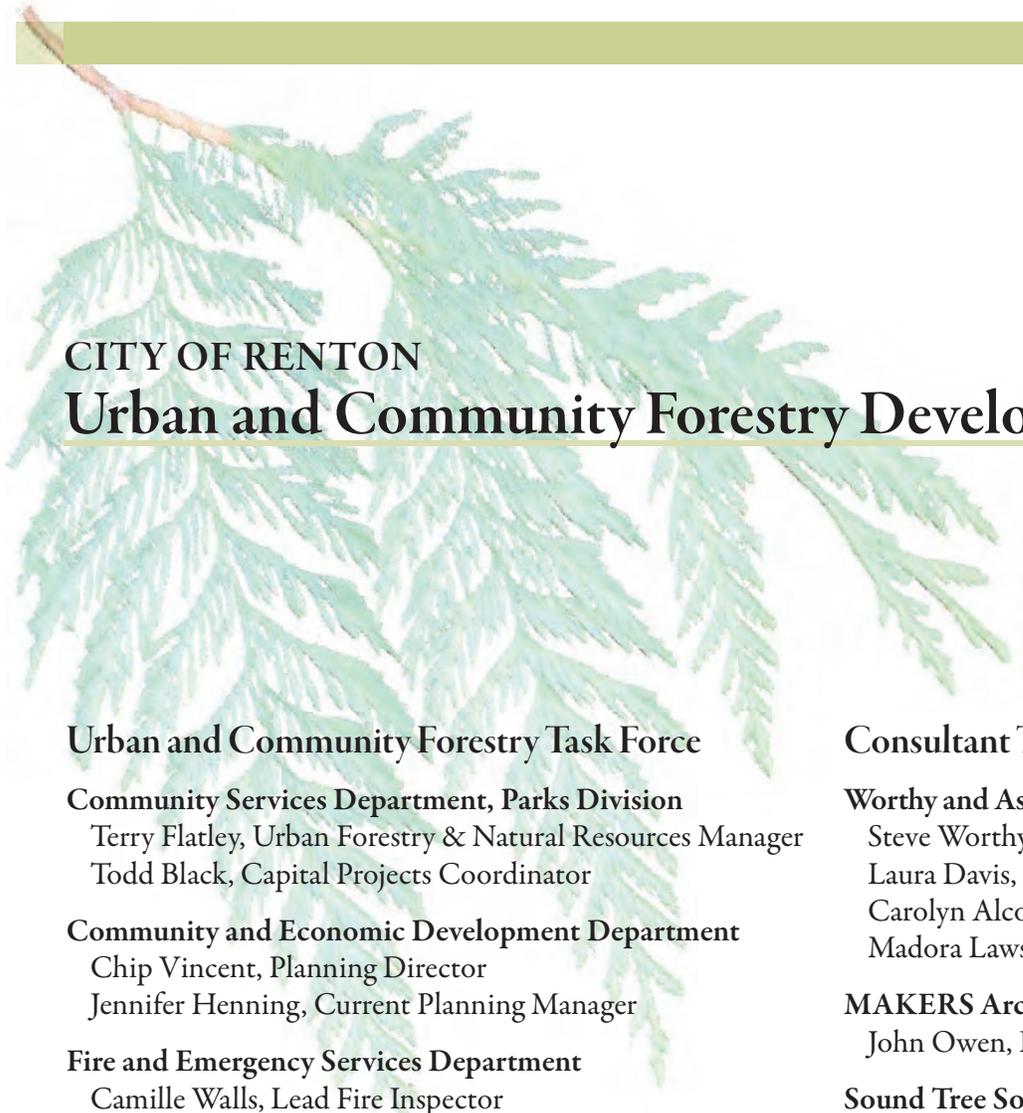
**The art, science and technology of managing trees, forests and natural systems in and around cities, suburbs and towns for the health and well-being of all people.**

*National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council*



Sugar maples in Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park





**CITY OF RENTON**

# **Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan**

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## **Urban and Community Forestry Task Force**

### **Community Services Department, Parks Division**

Terry Flatley, Urban Forestry & Natural Resources Manager  
Todd Black, Capital Projects Coordinator

### **Community and Economic Development Department**

Chip Vincent, Planning Director  
Jennifer Henning, Current Planning Manager

### **Fire and Emergency Services Department**

Camille Walls, Lead Fire Inspector  
Cory Cappalletti, Fire Inspector

### **Police Department**

Kent Curry, Commander

### **Public Works Department**

Richard Marshall, Maintenance Services Manager  
Jim Seitz, Design and Planning Program Supervisor  
Ronald Straka, Utility Engineering Supervisor  
Patrick Zellner, Street Maintenance Services Supervisor

### **Human Resources and Risk Management Department**

Pauletta Sulky, Risk Management Analyst

## **Consultant Team**

### **Worthy and Associates, LLC, Landscape Architecture**

Steve Worthy, ASLA, Manager  
Laura Davis, ASLA  
Carolyn Alcorn, ASLA  
Madora Lawson, Manager

### **MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design**

John Owen, Planner

### **Sound Tree Solutions, Inc.**

Elizabeth Walker, Community Forester



## Executive Summary

The Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan is a new document that summarizes the historic and current conditions of the City's forest, and outlines steps to safely and efficiently manage and develop City forest resources. The plan builds upon the City's existing urban forestry programs in a formalized way. The Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan is a collaborative effort between the Community Services, Community and Economic Development, Police, Public Works, Human Resources and Risk Management, and Fire and Emergency Services Departments. Urban Forestry Task Force (the Task Force) members, representing varied backgrounds came together to prepare this forward thinking plan which provides mission and vision statements, goals and objectives, and builds upon foundations in the current Renton Comprehensive Plan and Business Plan, ensuring protection of the safety and economic future of Renton's citizens.

short term, mid term and long term time frames.

Renton's "Ahead of the Curve" theme leads us to proactively engage in planning for rebuilding and maintaining a healthy forest and other vegetation. The City of Renton Urban Forestry Task Force invites you to read further to gain insights into why we are excited to present the Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan.

***Renton's Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan.*** In the following chapters you will find the process that the Task Force followed in developing the Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan (the Plan). The Task Force developed four major goals for the Plan that are linked to the City's Business Goals, and Comprehensive Plan. These goals are elaborated in the Plan and focus on:

- Achieving high performance standards;
- Managing a healthy urban forest and other vegetation;
- Increasing public safety; and
- Adopting supportive legislation.

Linked to a 10-year program timeline with supportive objectives, strategies, and actions, these goals can be closely monitored. We invite you to explore beyond the first few pages and introduction of this Plan to learn more in the following chapters and appendices:

***Urban Forest Benefits.*** This section includes a fascinating look at nearly two dozen ways that Renton receives environmental, economic, safety, health, quality of life, and identity benefits from our City forests.

***Historical Background.*** There has been a remarkable transformation of the forest from the time of the native Duwamish people continuing to the present day. Background information includes how Renton has been slowly expanding street tree care for over 30 years.



Urban Forestry Task Force at London plane tree site

The Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan proposes steps to protect trees, forestry assets and the health of Renton's citizens. Criteria for prioritizing resources to achieve best value have been used in the development of the listed improvements with

**Current State of the Forest.** An urban forest inventory was completed for Renton in 2007 and covered 130,000 public trees: over 4,000 street trees, 20,000 park trees, and 105,000 trees in natural areas. With City annexations since 2007, the count of the trees has grown and additional surveys are proposed to keep the inventory and health records of our forest resources up to date.

### **Current Urban Forest Management**

**Issues.** Our forest can not take care of itself. Developed by the Task Force, this section summarizes the results of a year of meetings that reviewed topics, issues, concerns and vision for the City's public urban forest and vegetation. Categories reviewed include environment, development, sustainability, public safety, risk, and responsibility.

**Goals.** Derived from Task Force workshops, field trips, and informed discussions, a list of goals, objectives, and strategies are described in this section with further detail in the appendices. A ten-year program outline has been drafted (see appendix) to map out sequential steps to success for Renton's future Urban Forestry Program.

**Administration and Management.** Since the urban forest needs human help to survive and prosper, this section describes how

the Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Manager will manage trained professionals, support staff, and volunteers. The Task Force reached consensus on the need for close coordination between City departments. Success will be achieved through partnerships, communication, and acknowledgements to the many departments, staff, and citizen volunteers who will contribute time and energy to the Urban Forestry Program.

**Evaluation.** This chapter describes the way in which we will measure and evaluate our success and make adjustments to optimize results and benefits of the Plan in coming years. While some of Renton's neighboring cities have long-standing urban forestry programs that the Task Force studied, our situation and needs are in many ways unique and will evolve over time to fit Renton's forest, other vegetation and citizen needs.

**Implementation Schedule, Summary and Appendices.** This 10-year plan is represented by the Implementation Schedule with associated costs. Additional detail and access to reports and websites is provided to broaden the reader's understanding of the future opportunities of the Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan and Program.



Arbor Day volunteers



Arbor Day volunteers

# Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan

## Vision

**Renton's urban and community forest is healthy, diverse, and sustainable, contributing to Renton's identity in the region.**



## Mission

**Renton will create a sustainable and exemplary urban forest, enhancing the livability of the community through education, coordination, stewardship, and conservation.**



## Introduction

A healthy urban forest supports the City of Renton's goals of balancing economic vitality with environmental quality and social well being by enhancing the environment, increasing attractiveness and livability, and fostering civic pride. Studies consistently show that trees and other vegetation filter pollutants and increase property values, attract visitors, and promote community during events such as Arbor Day.

The Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan is the collaborative effort of Task Force members from City departments to create a pro-active work plan that guides the City's urban forestry and vegetation management programs. This plan builds upon existing programs and establishes the focus and direction over the next 10 years.

With the assistance of the consultant team, led by Worthy and Associates with support from Sound Tree Solutions and MAKERS, the Task Force reviewed the state of Renton's urban forest, from the downtown core to new and existing commercial and residential districts. Early interaction between different City departments in the development process was key to developing appropriate strategies



Arbor Day volunteers

to ensure the program's vision and mission statements. The group discussed various issues and opportunities, from public safety to current tree regulations that reflected many of the public's concerns with vegetation.

The intention of this Plan is to lay the foundation for urban forestry programming, utilizing a collaborative process involving an Interdepartmental Team as various strategies progress through the years. Through implementation of the Plan, the City of Renton will realize the maximum benefits afforded by the urban forest, making the community a great place to live, work and play.

The Plan does not provide specific information on the components of each program or strategy. These details will be developed as each program is initiated, some with direct public involvement. For example, the Task Force recognized the need for a forestry ordinance. This plan proposes a sequence of actions to accomplish the ordinance, but it does not suggest policies to be included in the ordinance. Ordinance development is left to an ordinance development team whose composition is yet to be determined.



Mayor Denis Law receives Renton's Tree City USA Award from Chuck Turley, State Forester

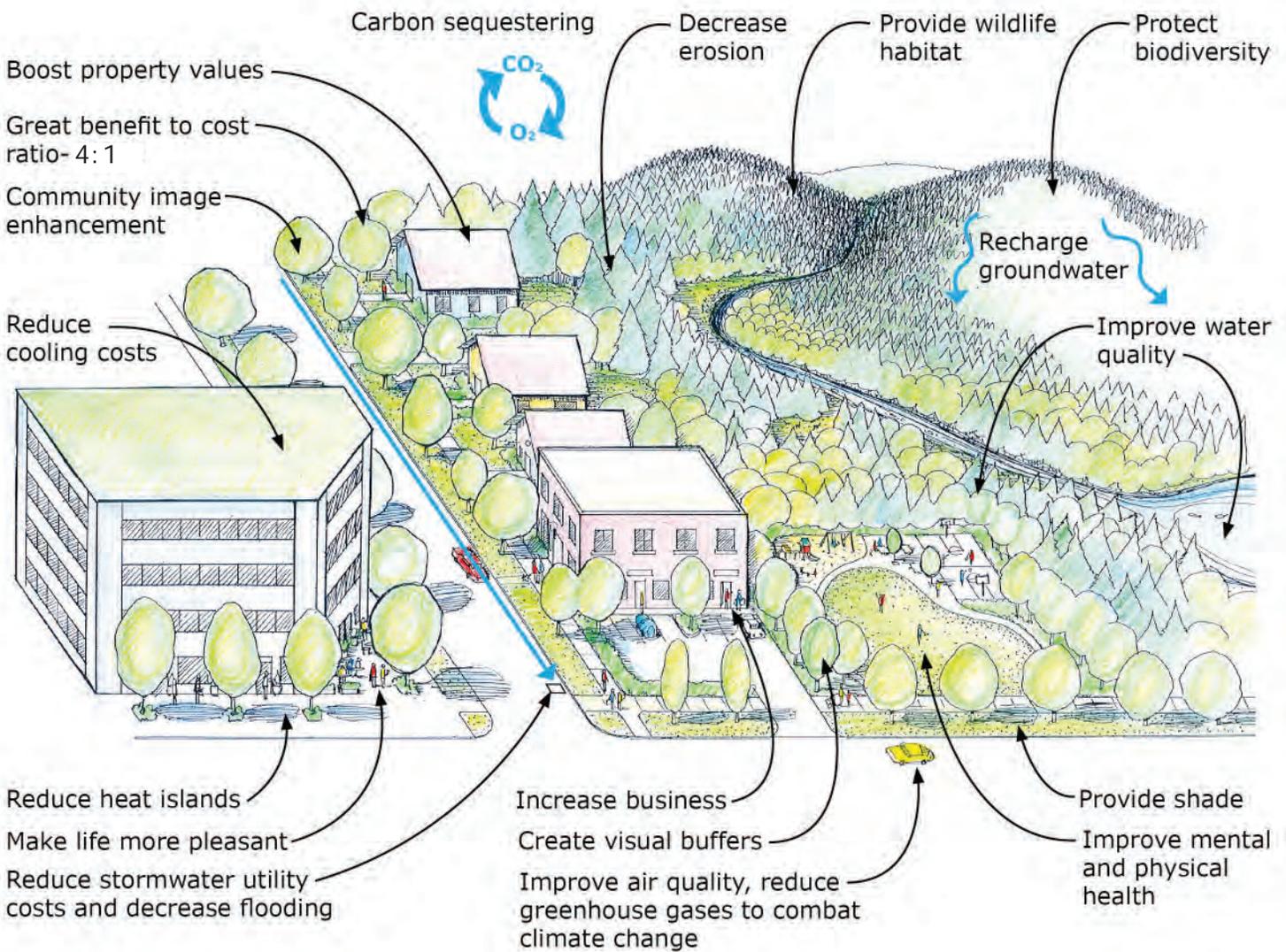


## Urban Forest Benefits

Though the urban forest provides a broad range of ecosystem services—direct and indirect benefits provided to the City, its citizens, the region, and the planet—we tend to take the benefits for granted because they are not assigned a dollar value. Local cities, state, and national sources have found great value in urban forests. (Please refer to the resources and websites on page 40.)

As a result, these green assets are often overlooked in the land development process and destroyed for a fraction of their larger economic and ecosystem values. Long-term management of natural assets brings a higher return than their short-term elimination. The benefits and value of Renton's urban and community forest are summarized in Figure #1 and further described on the following pages.

**Figure #1:**  
**Urban Forest Benefits** (Figure by Worthy and Associates, 2009)



## Benefits to Our Environment

As humans we need clean air and water to survive. Our urban forests and other vegetation help provide and protect these key environmental resources.

### *Protect water quality and quantity, and decrease erosion and flooding.*

- Vegetated landscapes intercept and absorb rainwater, reducing erosion and recharging aquifers.
- Trees stabilize slopes by absorbing water and binding soil with their roots.
- Trees and soils absorb and filter sediment and pollutants, reducing the amount reaching aquatic habitats.

### *Enhance wildlife habitat and protect biodiversity.*

- Diverse and interconnected urban forests create habitat for birds, mammals, insects, reptiles, fish and amphibians.
- Along shorelines, the urban forest plays an important role in salmon recovery by cooling water, stabilizing the bank, providing food and habitat.

### *Improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gases.*

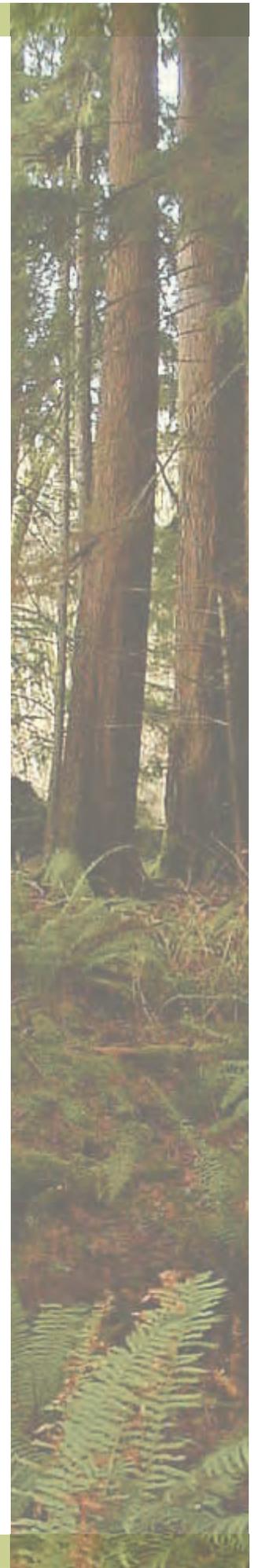
- Through photosynthesis, urban forests take in the most prevalent “greenhouse gas,” carbon dioxide, while releasing the oxygen we need to breathe.
- Mature trees absorb and filter large amounts of nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulfur dioxide, ozone and particulates, which cleans the air to improve human health and meet clean-air standards.

### *Moderate extremes in local climate.*

- Trees provide shade and release cooling water vapor through their leaves to reduce areas of higher temperature (“heat islands”) caused by heat-absorbing pavement and building materials.
- Stands of trees provide buffering from strong winds.
- Due to cooling, trees reduce fuel tank emissions of parked cars.



Urban forests aid salmon recovery



## Benefits to Our Economy

Studies of the ecosystem services provided by trees in Northwest cities have shown a benefit of three to four times the initial investment (Re-Leaf for Stormwater Management, 2008). Some benefits are directly measurable when compared to the short and long-term costs of engineered solutions.



Urban forests increase property values

### *Increase property values.*

- Studies show that yard trees increase property values by as much as 25%. The property-value benefits alone can cover investment debt and maintenance expenses of trees.
- In new developments, the increase in property values can offset the extra costs of retaining trees (Wolf 2007).
- Trees reduce the amount of time houses take to sell (Wolf 2007).

### *Reduce energy costs.*

- Deciduous trees can protect small buildings from the heat of solar radiation in summer while allowing the sun's rays to pass through in winter, decreasing cooling and heating needs and potential carbon dioxide emissions.

### *Increase economic stability.*

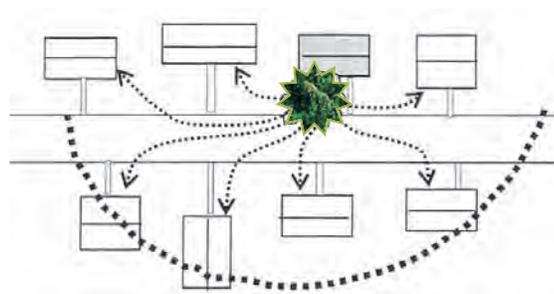
- Urban forests increase economic stability by attracting new businesses, customers, tourists, and residents to cities and encouraging shoppers to spend more for goods in business districts (Wolf 2007).
- Views of green landscapes increase work productivity and job satisfaction for office workers.

### *Reduce the demand on engineered infrastructure.*

- The urban forest is a recommended best-management practice for managing stormwater. The interception, absorption, and filtration of water by trees and soils greatly reduces the costs of constructing and maintaining stormwater detention and water-treatment systems.
- Tree shade extends the life of asphalt surfaces by up to 20 years, reducing costs of repair and replacement.

Figure #2:

## Increased Property Values



The street tree pictured above adds \$7,593 to the price of the house it fronts and \$7,098 to the seven houses within 100 feet, giving a total value of \$14,691. The dotted line represents the tree's 100-ft radius sphere of influence. (Donovan & Butry, 2008)

## Benefits to Our Safety, Health, Quality of Life, and Identity

A properly managed, healthy urban forest is an indicator of a healthy community life; and an aggressive urban forestry program would place Renton “Ahead of the Curve” compared to other leading high-quality communities in the Puget Sound Region.

### *Improve safety.*

- Studies show that street trees lead to reduced and more appropriate urban traffic speeds, with reduced road rage.
- Street trees create safer walking environments.
- Urban areas with trees and a green growing environment have dramatically lower rates of crime including domestic violence. People come together under the shade of trees, which increases community connection and reduces opportunities for crime (Kuo et al, 1998).

### *Improve personal health and enjoyment.*

- Trees provide rain, sun, heat and skin protection.
- Urban forests reduce health issues associated with poor air quality and tailpipe emissions.



Urban forests increase aesthetic value



Contact with green spaces reduces stress

- Trees create opportunities for outdoor recreation and daily contact with nature and are fundamental to physical health and well being, reducing stress-related illnesses.
- Contact with green spaces reduces blood pressure and improves overall emotional and psychological health.
- Trees buffer the impacts of transportation and commercial activities.

### *Enhance community and neighborhood.*

- By improving the sense of place and community pride, urban forestry programs strengthen ties among neighbors.
- Participants in tree planting demonstrate an interest in the future, care, and commitment to the places they live and stimulate further investment for the betterment of their communities. In turn, this helps reduce crime, graffiti, and litter (MacPherson et al, 2002).

### *Increase aesthetic value.*

- Planting street trees is a cost effective approach for a community to upgrade the visual quality of its downtown (McPherson et al, 2002).
- Trees can block or soften undesirable views, such as large parking lots or industrial areas.

## Quantifying Benefits & Costs

Studies by municipalities in the Pacific Northwest and scientific research show that urban forestry is a good investment. *The Urban Ecosystem Analysis* for the City of Bellevue by American Forests states that, for the year 2007:

- Bellevue's assessed tree canopy provided 62 million cubic feet of stormwater detention services, conservatively valued at \$123 million;
- Removed 687,000 lbs of pollutants from the air, valued at \$1.55 million; and
- Stored 331,702 tons of carbon and sequestered 2,582 tons of carbon.

The 21% loss of Bellevue's trees from 1986 to 2006 resulted in over a \$7 million reduction in stormwater benefits.

Quantifying these benefits varies depending on the local climate, species, amount of leaf area on the tree, tree age, and structure of the stand of vegetation. Larger-stature trees maximize urban benefits, many times that of smaller trees (Center for Urban Forest Research). The benefits are realized more directly where the forest originates but the benefits have an effect across City limits and across the nation for the common good. This resource must be cared for and managed properly to ensure that current and future residents will enjoy its benefits.



City of Renton

## Historical Background

**First was the Forest.** The Duwamish were the first people known to inhabit the present-day location of the City of Renton. At that time, dense stands of old-growth trees, including Douglas fir, western red cedar, and western hemlock, blanketed the hills above fertile river valleys. The land was abundant with natural resources. Trees were harvested in limited quantities to build longhouses and large dugout canoes.

**Lumber and Coal Harvesting.** Renton's first white settler, Henry Tobin, came to this area in 1853 with business interests in lumber. After his neighbor discovered coal the following year, Tobin, Dr. R.H. Bigelow, and two other early settlers formed the Duwamish Coal Company and built a sawmill at the junction of the Cedar and Black Rivers. Timber from the mill was used to shore up coal-mine tunnels. The mill burned during the Indian War of 1855, temporarily halting mining operations.

More white settlers arrived in the 1860s and began clearing trees, often by burning, to open land for farming and dairy. New coal seams were discovered in outlying areas and Renton's rivers provided important shipping connections from Lake Washington to Seattle



Captain William Renton (R.H.S. #41.063)



Renton loggers, 1908-1909 (Renton Historical Society #2749)

and beyond. The small settlement near the lake became an important stopover for lodging, food, and supplies.

Significant coal discoveries in Renton in the 1870s changed the farming community into a rugged mining town. Active logging operations resumed with the opening of the Parker sawmill. The timber was again used to support mine shafts, but also to construct homes and businesses.

**The City of Renton is Born.** Erasmus Smithers filed the first square-mile plat of the town of Renton in 1875. The town was named in honor of Captain William Renton, the most successful lumber merchant of the time who heavily financed Renton's early coal industry.

The City of Renton incorporated in 1901 with a population of approximately 1,300. Additional transportation improvements and industrial establishments spurred growth throughout the 20th century. The most dramatic growth period occurred with the influx of wartime industry workers at Boeing and PACCAR between 1940 and 1950, when the population rose from 4,500 to over 16,000. Forest clearing continued to make way for the airport, industrial areas, commercial centers, and housing.

### *Urban Forestry's Early Beginnings in*

***Renton.*** Early urban forestry in Renton included tree planting funded by various federal grants and maintained by the Public Works Department. No formal maintenance program was in place during the years prior to 1980. Trees were managed and maintained on a reactive, emergency basis.

During the early 1980s a Street Tree Committee was formed to address many urban tree issues. They offered recommendations to City Council and developed regulations for planting and maintaining trees. Mature trees in the downtown business district growing in small sidewalk cut-outs resulted in damage to the sidewalks. A street tree ordinance was drafted but never adopted.

In 1982, Renton's Parks Department took over responsibility for trees in the downtown area from Public Works. The Parks Department spearheaded and established a routine vegetation management program that included improved standards for evaluations, street tree pruning, removals, and replacements.

In the 1980s and 1990s, tree maintenance reverted to the improper practice of round-ing-over trees (a form of topping) to keep large-maturing sizes in scale with buildings

and overhangs. Tree removal and sidewalk replacement was an expensive result of trees that became too large in limited planting spaces.

Unregulated tree planting in neighborhoods was customary. Residential streets, planted mainly with ornamental cherry and purple-leaf plum trees, were eventually topped by residents. Public Works struggled with the resulting "bushy" trees. Street sweeping proved difficult and both vehicles and trees were needlessly damaged. Public safety was also being compromised by trees blocking street lights.

The conflict between nature and civilization was apparent. Nearly every City department and many residents were affected by a lack of proper tree planning and design during this period, and struggled to find an effective solution to public safety issues.

In the 1990s, the City's aggressive program of acquiring additional natural areas provided important watershed and wildlife habitat. However, development pressures resulted in encroachments, unauthorized use, and trash disposal by both private residents and developers within natural areas. Besides topping in such areas, whole tree removal was occurring without City authorization. Natural area



City of Renton before 1905 (Renton Historical Society #414)

lands were being partially occupied by a few residents, mostly because they were not aware of property line locations. Discarded yard waste and house plants contributed to the establishment of invasive plants such as ivy.

**Urban Forestry Awakening During the 1990s.** In 1992, a tree ordinance was again proposed but was never brought to City Council for adoption and never resurrected again. The problems that had been occurring with trees in the built environment, the lack of good design standards and unregulated maintenance continued unabated.

Protecting the public has been a paramount concern of City departments despite some of the controversy that has ensued. It often takes an incident to occur before a hazard is recognized. In 1997, 65 mature bigleaf maples along Maple Valley Highway were removed by the City after several tree limbs fell, temporarily closing the highway and the Maplewood Golf Course main entrance. After careful assessment of their condition, it was determined that the maples posed a significant risk to public safety. While there was public outcry at their removal, many local residents praised the City for being proactive.

In 1998, a Beautification Program was adopted by City Council. City leaders recognized that trees were an important and integral part of the community consistent with City goals. The plan included urban forestry components such as a tree ordinance (not completed), public education and awareness, a tree inventory, a tree management policy, an adopt-a-park program, marketing plan, and a method for measuring performance.

**The 21st Century.** By 2000, the City of Renton's population grew to 50,052 and to over 80,000 in 2009. Through a series of annexations, Renton's boundaries have expanded to 22.3 square-miles (Figure #3). Rapid development has replaced the old-growth forests of the past. Subsequently, an awareness of the pace of development, loss of City trees, salmon recovery, and better water

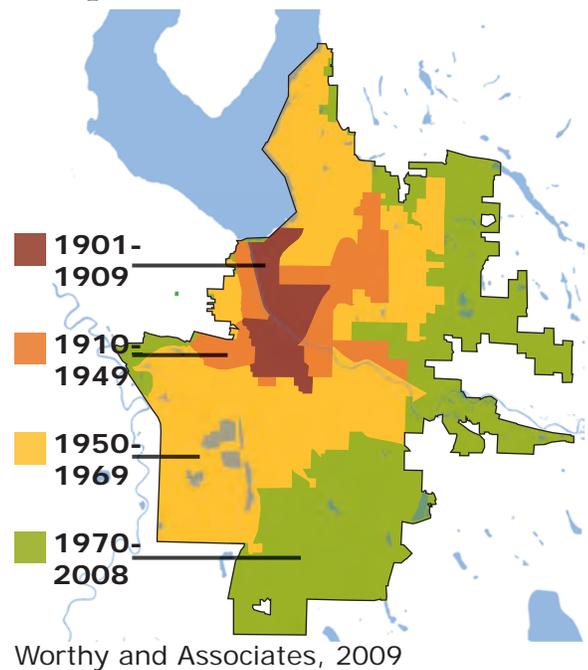
quality both locally and regionally have driven an interest in urban forest conservation, enhancement and programming.

Tree maintenance continued to be shared by Public Works and the Community Services Departments. Public Works regularly maintained trees in neighborhoods where branches interfered with sweeper trucks during the winter. Otherwise, most of the street trees were maintained by

Public Works crews on a reactive basis following calls or complaints. Community Services crews provided more frequent maintenance of trees in the downtown core, collaborating with Public Works on tree and sidewalk conflicts and tree plantings in sidewalk openings.

Storm damage to trees was coordinated city-wide by the Public Works Department with

**Figure #3:**  
**Annexations Since Renton's Inception in 1901**



Renton aerial view, 1970 (Renton Historical Society #2630A)

Community Services providing support. Tree maintenance service contracts issued by the Community Services Department required tree work performed by International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborists to assure proper maintenance to City trees.

The Beautification Program continued to move forward and in 2002 Renton's first City Forester was hired under the title, Parks Maintenance Manager, and worked in the Community Services Department.

Since 2002 progress has continued to the present:

- Staff training in arboriculture and introduction to proper tree and vegetation management to Community Services and Public Works staff. Elimination of all rounding-over (topping) of public trees.
- Cooperative partnerships with Puget Sound Energy (PSE) to reduce tree and electric wire conflicts. On Park Avenue, ash trees were removed by PSE and PSE donated "wire-friendly" trees.
- Eliminated planting large maturing trees in small sidewalk cut-out sections. Utilizing larger 4 x 8 foot cut-out sections and planting smaller-maturing trees.
- Completed a city-wide tree inventory and assessment for street trees, park trees and trees in natural areas. Street trees and park trees were located using global positioning satellite (GPS) coordinates and integrated into the City's graphic information system (GIS).
- Budgeting in the Capital Improvement Program for Forestry Program Development and Tree Maintenance.
- Adopted Tree Retention [Protection] Regulations for new development.
- Renton's first certified arborist trained in 2006 under the ISA certification program.
- Added tree-related policies to the City's Comprehensive Plan that regulated street trees along new or reconstructed streets and the landscape of new property devel-

opments.

- City staff from multiple departments met to form the Urban and Community Forest Task Force, hired consultants and initiated the process for preparation of the Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan.
- Presentations to elected officials and organizations of the Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan.



**TREE CITY USA**

**Recognition.** In 2008, for the first time, the City of Renton achieved Tree City USA status for efforts

in urban forestry programming. This award is given annually by the National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service.

Renton can now place Tree City USA signs at community entrances to show visitors that Renton cares about its environment and is dedicated to preserving a quality lifestyle. The annual Tree City USA award presentation and Arbor Day celebration offer excellent publicity opportunities—reaching large numbers of people with information about tree care and conservation. Becoming a Tree City USA, Renton now qualifies to receive awards of state and federal agency grants. ([www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org))

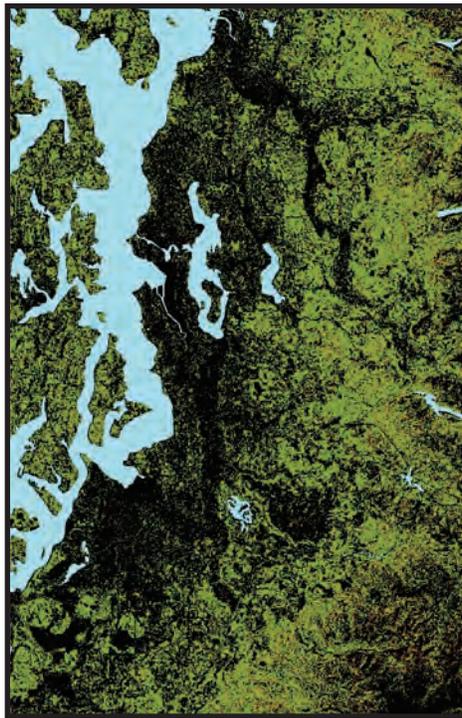
In 2009, the Maplewood Golf Course became Washington's second municipal golf course to be designated a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" by Audubon International.

**Figure #4:**

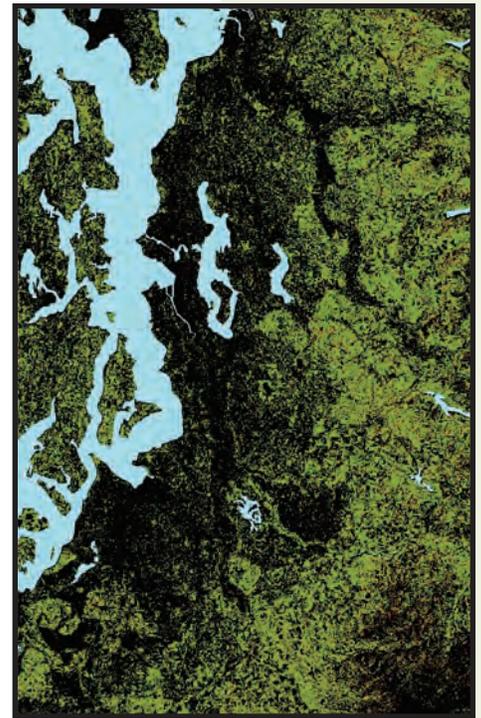
## American Forests Regional Ecosystem Analysis Puget Sound Metropolitan Area, 1998



Landsat MSS 1972



Landsat TM 1986



Landsat TM 1996

### Current State of the Forest

*Is the green going away?* These historic images are provided by American Forests, a non-profit organization that has been studying the loss of trees and canopy cover around Puget Sound and the United States. Tree cover shows as green for areas more than half vegetated. Impervious surfaces show as black. During a 24 year period from 1972 to 1996 over one third of our “green” has vanished. Fortunately, with improved planning and management of our urban forests, together we can start reversing this loss.

*What is the loss of forest costing us?* On the regional scale around the Puget Sound region:

- \$2.4 billion in lost stormwater flow benefits; and
- \$95 million in reduced air pollution controls (American Forests 1997).

*Urban Forest Inventory.* To assess tree health, inform maintenance and identify

planting opportunities, a Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report was completed for Renton in March 2007 (see appendix for Executive Summary). The report studied public trees located in parks, natural areas, and public right-of-ways, excluding assessment of trees on private and recently annexed lands. Public trees were catalogued for location, species, stem diameter, health and appraised value. The report identified nearly 130,000 public trees: 4,200 street trees, 20,000 park trees and 105,000 in natural areas. The data gathered helps determine the value of the current resource, species diversity, age distribution, health and safety issues, maintenance needs, and opportunities for planting. The report provides a key first step in improved management of public trees in Renton.

One of the more striking results of the inventory was the assessment of the real estate value contributed by Renton’s current street tree population and the potential for routine maintenance to increase that value.

The inventory report assessed the present value (2007) to be over \$6.6 million for the 4,200 street tree population. Improving the condition and increasing the size of healthy, properly pruned and maintained street trees can more than double that value. Proper maintenance for improved health also reduces potential risks a tree might have, improving public safety.

The inventory report specifically catalogued many tree-related needs and issues such as:

- The need for greater species diversity. Most of Renton's trees are maple species (about 35%), yet forestry guidelines suggest having no more than 10% of any species due to the higher risk of disease or insect outbreaks when utilizing one species (e.g. Dutch elm disease).
- The need for properly pruning younger trees early and often for structural integrity. Renton's street and park trees are young, with 75% of them planted in the last 30 years. In an urban setting, younger trees require extra maintenance to minimize structural growth problems and protect public safety as these trees become larger.
- Avoiding tree topping practices. Topping is not an acceptable practice in any situation, and makes trees less safe. The City needs to set the example for homeowners



Renton natural area

by never tree topping.

- The need for better specifications and standards of construction to allow planting the largest maturing sized trees possible. Research indicates the larger the tree the greater the benefits to the community. Large-maturing trees may require special engineering techniques to allow for their growth with a minimum of damage to surrounding infrastructure such as sidewalks.
- Optimizing the number of trees instead of maximizing the number of trees. Trees spaced closer than their optimal spread have the potential to increase maintenance costs (more pruning), reduce visibility (commercial signs blocked), increase competition (trees die sooner) and the negative affect intense shading has on groundcovers and shrubs. In addition, planting too many trees increases installation costs unnecessarily (trees, grates, frames and concrete costs).
- Improved tree planting standards for street trees. In the past, trees have been planted near or under street lights and too close to traffic signs, signals, utilities, and fire hydrants, reducing public safety and making access difficult during emergencies.
- Tree stakes left for more than a year have damaged trees.



Liberty Park in spring

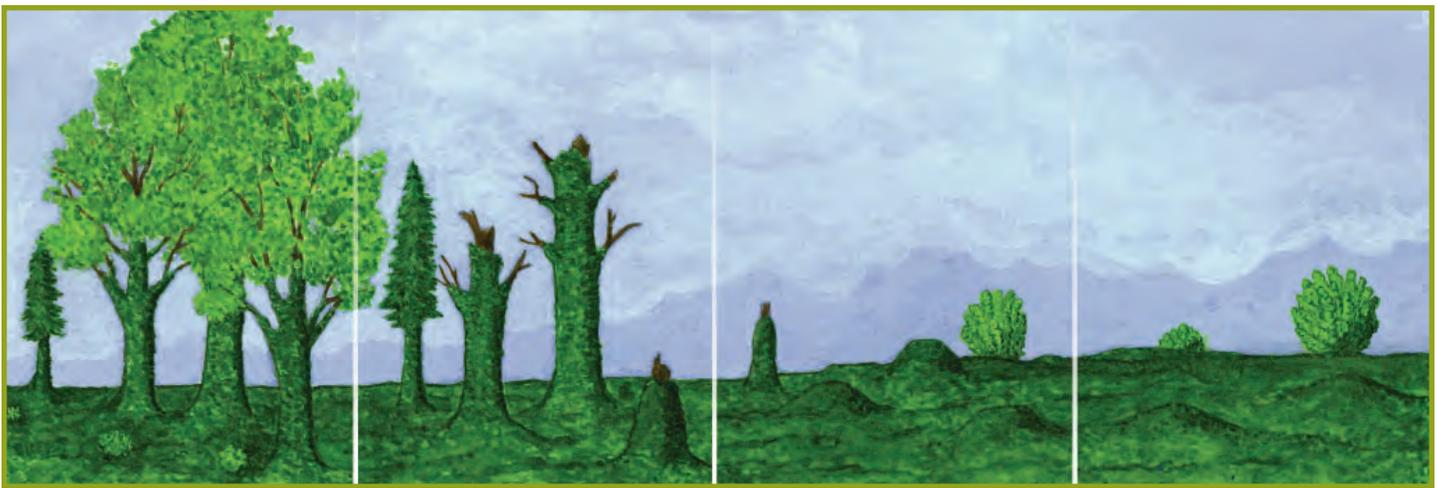
- Increasing canopy cover through tree planting in neighborhoods where nearly 2,000 trees could be planted at optimal spacing.
- Improving forest composition in natural areas. Planting with desirable species, particularly conifers, at a higher density will increase the habitat quality of natural area woodlands. Removal of invasives such as blackberry and ivy is needed.

Partnership 20-Year Plan shows what happens if Seattle’s (and Renton’s) natural areas are not maintained and invasive non-native plants are allowed to take over. Community forests urgently need English ivy removal or in 50-100 years these natural area forests could be destroyed. Figure #6 illustrates how the removal of English ivy, together with planting a balanced mix of native trees, shrubs, and groundcovers, will lead to healthy and sustainable forests.

Figure #5 below from the Green Seattle

**Figure #5:**

**If Urban Forests are not Restored (Cascade Land Conservancy)**



**NOW**

Ivy introduced from private property spreads into urban forests

**20 Years**

Ivy covers and kills trees

**50 Years**

Trees fall and few native shrubs exist

**100 Years**

Forest is destroyed leaving an ivy desert

**Figure #6:**

**Healthy Urban Forest Restoration (Cascade Land Conservancy)**



**NOW**

Ivy is targeted for removal

**20 Years**

Ivy is removed, new native plantings

**50 Years**

Mixed forest is established

**100 Years**

Healthy restored forest

## Current Urban Forest Management Issues

Maintenance and Management of Public Trees. Today, the Community Services Department maintains 1,000 street trees within the downtown core and all park trees, with the goal of pruning trees on a five-year cycle. Staff and private contractors provide maintenance. Contractors are mostly utilized for larger trees and more technical tree work. Street and park trees are planted by City staff, contractors or volunteers. The Arbor Day/Earth Day Celebration is the City's largest organized volunteer planting event, usually held on the last Saturday in April.

The Public Works Street Division is responsible for 3,200 trees within the City right-of-way, with maintenance occurring on a reactive basis, such as when a branch obscures a traffic sign. Contractors are utilized for tree removals and stump grindings.

To provide the best service possible to residents and businesses, Public Works and Community Services provide complementary support on many tree-related projects, such as sidewalk repair and replacement projects involving trees. Both departments share lift trucks and chippers with an inventory of other equipment to properly maintain



Renton natural area

trees. As trees become older and larger, more advanced equipment will be needed with additional training for City crews.

**Existing Legislation.** Trees can be found mentioned in several City codes, regulations and plans. The task force recognized the need to consolidate regulations involving trees in order to make the codes more user friendly. Regulations to guide tree planting and maintenance are few and do not sufficiently address the concerns of many City staff and the public. For example, there are no regulations about planting trees near street lights. Removing trees during construction of subdivisions became a problem after 2000 when the City experienced a period of rapid development. An emergency rule was invoked in late 2006 followed by adoption of the tree retention regulation in 2007 to deal with loss of canopy cover in new development.

Legislation affecting the City of Renton is not only local in nature. Other state and federal legislation impacts trees in the city directly or indirectly. One of these is the Evergreen Communities Act which passed the State Legislature in 2008. This act specifically benefits urban forestry across the state for local jurisdictions.



Sidewalk excavation due to tree root damage

**Existing Legislation-Tree Retention.** The Task Force identified the need to update the existing tree retention regulations and the creation of a forestry ordinance as high priority actions. The lack of a forestry ordinance has created various issues between trees and the built environment. As part of this concern, the task force identified the development of a forestry ordinance as the #1 priority.

Other issues have arisen with the pace of development into wooded tracts and the effect this has had on canopy cover. The obvious conflict between development density and urban forest preservation is manageable with better guidance early in the development process. This will require a coordinated effort between the City’s urban forestry manager, city planners and private developers. Since tree retention regulations were put in place (2007), the Community and Economic Development Department has experienced several issues at odds with long-term urban forest preservation goals:

- Regulations lack a method of preservation beyond the initial development of a property; homeowners can remove trees at a rate of three per year from a standard city lot and up to 6 trees per year on larger lots.
- 30% of existing trees shall be retained in a residential or institution development zoned RC, R-1, R-4, and R-8 Zones. 10% of existing trees shall be retained in R-10, R-14, RM-F, RM-T, Rm-U and RMH Zones, and 5% of existing trees shall be retained in all other commercial and industrial zones.
- When the required number of protected trees cannot be retained, new trees, with a 2” caliper, shall be planted at the replacement rate of 12 caliper inches of new trees to replace each protected tree. (See RMC 4-4-130 for a full performance standard for land development/building permits.)
- Right-of-way tree regulations and landscaping requirements are not integrated.

- Tree retention requirements do not include trees within right-of-ways and private access easements.
- Tree protection during construction operations is currently limited to site fencing; grading restrictions and performance bonds would increase tree survival.
- Tree protection and retention is not always practical for some developments and more flexibility is needed and can be accommodated through offsite tree planting options, tree banks, or fees.

Since 2007, the tree retention regulation for residential areas has been instrumental in



Street trees at Renton High School

preserving stands of trees, especially where development tracts are large. The current regulations requiring 30% retention of existing trees and the requirement for 6 trees planted for each retained tree removed, has resulted in less loss of canopy cover than prior years. The existing regulations provide a great foundation and “real-world” testing for increasing canopy cover in future revisions of the tree retention regulations.

***Existing Legislation-Evergreen Communities Act.*** In June 2008, the State Legislature voted to approve House Bill 2844, dubbed the Evergreen Communities Act. This act directly promotes urban forestry by allowing communities to voluntarily submit for qualification under the Evergreen Communities Recognition Program. If accepted, a community would be able to receive funding and recognition for its urban forestry program. The two major portions of the bill direct the Departments of Community and Economic Trade and Natural Resources to develop standards for management programs and tree inventories. Such programs as forestry ordinance development, management plans and tree inventory and assessments could be partially funded from grants provided by the State of Washington.

As of this writing, the Evergreen Communities Act has been postponed until economic conditions improve. As it stands now, information will become available to communities in 2009 for assisting with program development and the minimum standards for tree inventory database collection, posted to the two State departments' websites. The Evergreen Communities Act will be fully implemented whenever the State Legislature recognizes funding can be restored as economic recovery continues.

***Issues and Opportunities Identified by the Task Force.*** The Task Force identified issues and opportunities beginning with a field trip, visiting several sites throughout Renton, in preparation for the nine meetings held during 2008 and early 2009. Task Force members were eager to point to situations that concerned their respective departments' tree-related issues and expressed by the public. The following tables (Figure #7-8) summarize these issues and concerns as well as recognized opportunities for improvement.

Through consensus, the Task Force also developed succinct vision and mission statements:

## **Vision**

**Renton's urban and community forest is healthy, diverse, and sustainable, contributing to Renton's identity in the region.**

## **Mission**

**Renton will create a sustainable and exemplary urban forest, enhancing the livability of the community through education, coordination, stewardship, and conservation.**

**Figure #7:**  
**Issues and Concerns Identified by the Task Force**

<b>Issue or Concern</b>	<b>Recognized by Department</b>
• Sidewalk/curb damage	PW, RM
• Visibility for traffic cameras	PD
• Tree retention regulations	CED
• Insufficient design standards	CED, PW, CS
• Distance to trees, lights, signals, etc	CS, PW
• Consistent management/ maintenance	CS, PW
• Need list of recommended trees	CED
• Forestry ordinance	CS
• Access to fire hydrants	FES
• Leaf litter and traffic safety	PD
• Pruning/clearance/structural	PW, CS, FES
• Maintenance responsibility-agency or property owner?	PW
• Tree topping	All
• Lack of enforceable legislation	CS, PW
• Tree/construction specifications	CS, PW
• Canopy cover- ecosystem services	CED, CS
• Invasives in natural areas	PW, CS
• City Certified Arborist staff needed	All
• Coordination with utilities	All
• Public knowledge about trees	CS, PW

**Department Key**  
 CED= Community and Economic Development  
 CS= Community Services  
 FES= Fire and Emergency Services  
 PD= Police Department  
 PW= Public Works  
 RM= Human Resources/Risk Management

**Figure #8:**

## Opportunities Identified by the Task Force

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Recognized by Department</b>
• Recognition programs	CS, PW
• Forest management plans	CS
• Storm damage response plan	PW, CS, RM
• Tree planting program	CS
• Annual urban forestry report to Council	CS
• Urban forestry in the Comprehensive Plan	CED, CS
• Tree bank or fee-in-lieu program	CED
• Public education and outreach	All
• Citizen tree board	CS
• Urban forestry stewardship programs	PW
• Significant tree programs	CED
• On-going tree inventory and assessment	CED, CS
• Coordinated management for street trees and other vegetation	CS
• Planting strip on all streets standard	CED



Task Force meeting

## Renton's Business and Comprehensive Plans

The Task Force reviewed existing mission and vision statements, as well as relevant goals and objectives from Renton and other cities. Consensus was quickly reached by the Task Force that the Plan's mission and vision statements should closely reflect and support the City Business Plan's mission and vision. It was further decided that the Plan's vision statement would clearly and simply describe what the Task Force envisioned as Renton's urban forest characteristics. Likewise, the mission should be a succinct statement of what the City will do to create an exemplary urban forest that enhances the livability of the community.

Goals elaborate the vision and mission statements and objectives describe more specific outcomes in terms that can be measured or evaluated. The following paragraphs reflect on the foundations provided by the City Business Plan and Comprehensive Plan.

**City of Renton Business Plan.** Prior to preparing the forestry plan's vision, mission, or goal statements, the City Business Plan was reviewed. Key elements from the Business Plan include:

**Vision:** Renton—The center of opportunity in the Puget Sound Region where families and businesses thrive

**Mission:** The City of Renton, in partnership and communication with residents, businesses, and schools, is dedicated to:

- Providing a healthy, welcoming atmosphere where citizens choose to live, raise families, and take pride in their community
- Promoting planned growth and economic vitality
- Creating a positive work environment
- Meeting service demands through innovation and commitment to excellence

*Key City goals influencing the Urban Forestry Plan:* **Promote citywide economic development.**

- Promote Renton as the progressive, opportunity-rich city in the Puget Sound region

**Promote neighborhood revitalization.**

- Support the vitality and positive appearance of neighborhoods through community involvement
- Ensure the safety, health, and security of citizens through effective service delivery
- Promote pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and community focal points

**Manage growth through sound urban planning.**

- Uphold a high standard of design and property maintenance throughout the city

**Meet service demands that contribute to the livability of the community.**

- Prioritize services at levels that can be sustained by revenue
- Plan, develop, and maintain quality services, infrastructure, and amenities
- Balance development with environmental protection





### *City of Renton Comprehensive Plan.*

Further forestry planning and program support came from sections of Renton's Comprehensive Plan:

#### **Community Design Element Goals:**

1. To raise the aesthetic quality of the City,
2. To strengthen the economy through high quality development, and
3. To ensure that a high quality of life is maintained as Renton evolves.

#### **Landscaping Section**

- Policy CD-84. Trees should be planted along residential streets, in parking lots requiring landscaping, and in other pervious areas as the opportunity arises. Trees should be retained whenever possible and maintained using Best Management Practices as appropriate for each type.
- Policy CD-88. Street trees and landscaping should be required for new development within the Valley to provide an attractive streetscape in areas subjected to a transition of land uses.
- Policy CD-92. Residential subdivisions and multi-family residential projects should include planting of street trees according to an adopted citywide landscape plan.

#### **Streets, Sidewalks, and Streetscape Section**

- Objective CD-O. Promote development of attractive, walkable neighborhoods and shopping areas by ensuring that streets are safe, convenient, and pleasant for pedestrians.
- Policy CD-95. The design of pedestrian-oriented environments should address safety as a first priority. Safety measures should include generous separation of cars and pedestrians, reducing the number of curb cuts and driveways, having numerous, well-marked street crossings, and providing street and sidewalk lighting.

- Policy CD-103. Landscaped parking strips should be considered for use as a safety buffer between pedestrians and moving vehicles along arterials and collector streets.
- Objective CD-P. Develop a system of residential streets, sidewalks, and alleys that serve both vehicles and pedestrians.
- Policy CD-110. Street trees should be used to reinforce visual corridors along major boulevards and streets.

#### **Economic Development Element**

- Summary: The policies encourage the quality development necessary to sustain a high standard of living in Renton.
- Objective ED-B: Expand the retail and office base within the City.
- Policy ED-9. Adopt land use and zoning that is supportive of responsible economic development.

#### **Housing Element**

- Goal #4. Maintain, protect, and enhance the quality of life of Renton's residents.

#### **Quality of Neighborhoods Section**

- Objective H-K: Develop and maintain livable neighborhoods with a desirable quality of life.

#### *Goals and Objectives of the Urban Forestry Plan.*

Through nine workshops, the Task Force developed four specific goals with each having several objectives to accomplish each goal. The objectives were further divided into strategies. The Implementation Schedule in the Appendix breaks down the strategies into actions and tasks which are proposed to occur over a ten-year period. Through this process, the urban forestry plan proposal can be followed each year to culminate into what the Task Force envisioned as an exemplary plan, community enhancement, and a valuable working resource.

## Goals, Objectives and Strategies

### GOAL 1: *Create a functioning and exemplary urban forest*

#### Objectives:

1.1 Receive national and regional recognition by meeting high standards.

#### Strategies:

- A. Tree City USA Designation
- B. Society of Municipal Arborists Accreditation
- C. State Evergreen Communities Recognition

1.2 Increase the health and benefits of the urban forest on a larger geographical scale through participation and coordination.

#### Strategies:

- A. Green Cities Partnership
- B. Puget Sound Partnership
- C. Washington Community Forestry Council

### GOAL 2: *Manage the urban forest at optimum levels for canopy, health and diversity*

#### Objectives:

2.1 Coordinate City urban forestry operations.

#### Strategies:

- A. Host Department and Renton Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team
- B. Coordinated staffing and funding sources

2.2 Inventory the existing urban forest to establish canopy cover goals and management needs.

#### Strategies:

- A. Canopy Cover Analysis, in combination with other City analysis
- B. Tree Inventory and Assessment

2.3 Develop a Forest Management Plan for public trees.

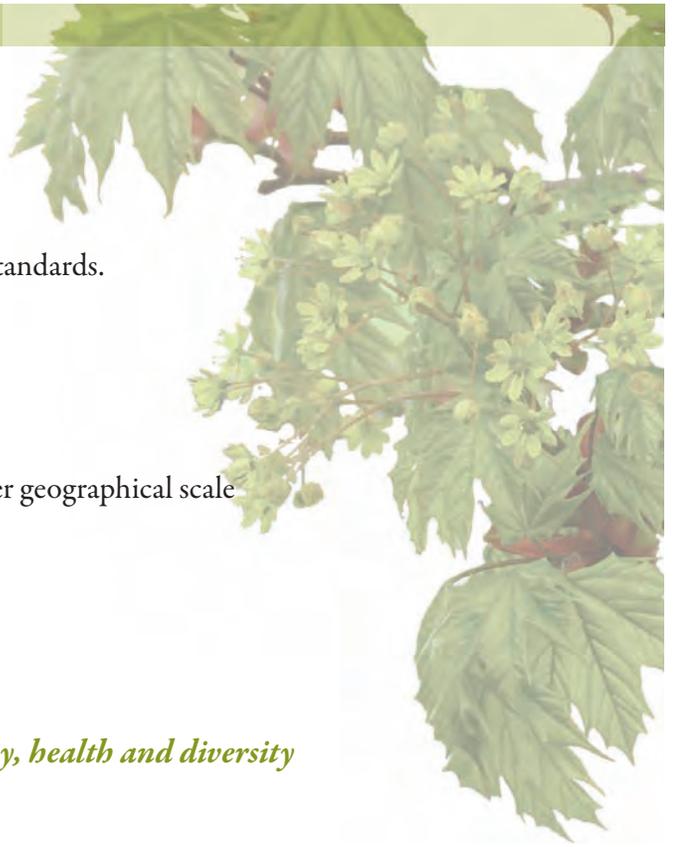
#### Strategies:

- A. Sustainable management standards and practices for public trees
- B. Tree Planting Program

2.4 Balance and manage city growth and development with the urban forest.

#### Strategies:

- A. Urban Forestry in the Comprehensive Plan
- B. Tree Retention Regulations
- C. Site Development Landscape Standards
- D. Tree Bank or “Fee in Lieu” Program





**GOAL 3: *Increase public awareness of the value and benefits of the urban forest and the urban forestry program***

*Objectives:*

- 3.1 Create an urban forestry public outreach program to educate residents and developers about the benefits of developing and sustaining a healthy urban forest.

*Strategies:*

- A. Consumer Literature
- B. Citizen Tree Board
- C. Existing Volunteer Networks
- D. Urban forestry presence at schools, clubs, community gatherings

- 3.2 Update City Council and the public on urban forestry accomplishments.

*Strategy:*

- A. State of the Urban Forest Report

- 3.3 Encourage the public to preserve and honor significant trees in the community.

*Strategies:*

- A. Significant Tree Programs

**GOAL 4: *Draft and adopt legislation that supports the urban forestry program***

*Objectives:*

- 4.1 Develop and adopt regulations that optimize tree canopy and maximize public benefits.

*Strategies:*

- Forestry Ordinance
- also 2.4: Site Development Landscape Ordinance
- Tree Retention Ordinance

## Key Strategies

The Task Force came to consensus on over 30 strategies following development of the program goals and objectives. This rich number of strategies will position Renton as a leader in urban forestry across the state and perhaps the nation. There were several significant strategies the task force highlighted as being of higher priority than others. These were predicated upon resolving public safety issues as well as improving the climate in the Puget Sound area and other benefits an urban forestry program will provide to its citizens.

### Task Force Key Strategies

- Forestry Ordinance
- CS as Lead for Urban Forestry & Vegetation Management
- Public Outreach & Education
- Certified Arborist Crew
- Canopy Cover Analysis
- Interdepartmental U.F. Implementation Team

**Urban Forestry Ordinance.** The Task Force agreed that the most important strategy the community needs is a comprehensive forestry ordinance to regulate how trees are planted and maintained. The bulk of the ordinance will address the issues and concerns the Task Force identified with the built environment. The Task Force recognized the important role trees have to the built environment, from the single street tree to the mature stand of Douglas firs in proposed housing developments. The goal of the ordinance should be to create a sense of appreciation for trees while minimizing their impacts to the built environment – more trees, fewer problems.

The figure on page 28 accurately portrays many of the issues and concerns City staff have for the challenging conditions trees grow in while maintaining a healthy and robust economy. Development and trees are com-

patible with proper planning guided by regulations and standards. The forestry ordinance will accomplish these objectives.

The ordinance would regulate planting, pruning, removal, protection and other maintenance activities near trees within the public right-of-way. Additionally, on publicly owned land and new development sites, the forestry ordinance will provide great improvements to the public's safety, health and welfare. The ordinance will clarify maintenance activities and landscape improvements that occur in the right-of-way and public versus private responsibility. In addition, an ordinance will regulate other tree-related projects, programs, procedures, and standards.

The ordinance would be a supporting document closely coordinated with other City ordinances, codes, and regulations. This would include among others the City Business Plan, water conservation programs, landscape requirements in new developments, the comprehensive plan and tree protection regulations. The interdepartmental team, the City Attorney's Office, City Council, the Mayor and the general public will be consulted during the development of the forestry ordinance.



Street right-of-way planting



Volunteers removing ivy

***Community Services Department as lead for urban forestry and vegetation management.*** The Task Force concurred with the recommendation to place all urban forestry maintenance and management within the Community Services Department. It was clear to the Task Force that one department should be responsible for trees along streets and on public property instead of splitting responsibility currently between Community Services and Public Works. This strategy will make tree and vegetation management operations streamlined, more effective, provide consistency in maintenance practices and add value to the resource.

***Importance of urban forestry as a catalyst for community involvement.*** The City's most important resource, its people, was identified in the early stages of Task Force meetings as critical to the success of Renton's urban forestry program and implementation of this Plan. Engaging the community and informing residents about urban forestry were two components of this strategy.

Volunteers are increasingly becoming more important to the successful accomplishment of many projects that would not occur without their involvement. Coordination of volunteers is occurring throughout most City

departments and gains momentum each year. In 2008, volunteers contributed \$1.3 million in services helping with Arbor Day/Earth Day plantings and other projects.

The power of volunteers will become an important catalyst for urban forestry program development and acceptance of the program by the community as a whole. Engaging the community in urban forestry projects is critical, not only for accomplishing City projects but educating volunteer residents about the importance of the urban forest and proper tree care and promoting the program to the general public. The information volunteer's gain from working on City projects can be utilized in their yards and will result in improving the private urban forest.

Educating its citizens about urban forestry, from the need for regulating trees along streets to maintaining trees on their own property, was viewed as important by the Task Force for engaging and uniting people and to foster a better sense of community. One of the key components in this strategy is having public information about trees accessible to all. For example, an important message the Task Force discussed includes the negative effects tree topping has on the urban forest. The Community Services Department currently provides a pamphlet on tree top-



Arbor Day volunteers

ping and other information that can be found on the City’s Urban Forestry web page. (See resources in Appendix.)

Public outreach and education programs and the people they reach create a win-win situation for Renton’s urban forests and enable efforts beyond the resources and time availability of City staff.

**City Certified Arborist Crew.** A certified arborist is a tree worker who has studied arboriculture, passed certification exams and receives annual continuing education training. Arboriculture is the cultivation and management of trees within the landscape. This includes the study of how trees grow and respond to cultural practices and the environment, as well as application of cultural techniques such as selection, planting, care, surgery and removal.

Renton’s street trees have a current value of over \$6.6 million. This value has accrued with slight attention to proper management and maintenance. This valuable resource has the potential to significantly increase in value with proper maintenance, additional tree planting and as the trees become larger. As with other infrastructure along busy streets and residential areas, public safety and reducing the risk associated with the urban forest in the built environment is critical. Safety and value alone are good reasons to want the best care possible for the community’s trees. Utilizing certified arborists is the best and most effective way to increase Renton’s tree resource values and increase safety as trees become larger.

The Task Force agreed on the importance of a dedicated full time city arborist crew. They recognized the advantages of this crew in relation to emergency storm damage response and accomplishing tree work for other emergency situations when contract crews are unavailable. The Task Force agreed that the arborist crew would be responsible for all trees in the right-of-way, all trees in parks and natural areas and all trees on other public

grounds. Other City crews could supplement the arborist crews for special projects such as pruning trees along sweeper routes in the winter using Public Works staff. The arborist crew would provide support for other non-tree related activities whenever their equipment might be needed such as assisting Public Works with installing banners or backing-up City departments when needed.

The Task Force agreed that the arborist crew would be best located within the Community Services Department. Finally, the Task Force agreed to convene an Interdepartmental Team to discuss the arborist crew funding and staffing options as part of Plan implementation.

**Continued interdepartmental cooperation & involvement in the urban forestry program.** The Task Force recognized the urgent need to provide the highest value and control service costs utilizing existing City crews and resources. The Task Force agreed to work as an Interdepartmental Team to discuss departments’ staffing options further. The Task Force agreed that the certified arborist crew would be best located within the Community Services Department, with interdepartmental support from City depart-

**Figure #9:**  
**Program Coordination**



ments, Mayor and City Council, Commissions, and the public (Figure #9).

**Canopy cover analysis.** A city-wide framework is needed to determine whether Renton's urban forest objectives are being met. For over a decade, developing cities across the country have set up tree-canopy goals to ensure urban forest survival above minimum levels ([www.americanforests.org](http://www.americanforests.org)). A necessary supplement to Renton's existing public-tree inventory, the canopy cover analysis will help set-the-stage and clarify the case for ongoing and city-wide, tree conservation efforts. Canopy assessments help urban forestry programs create realistic goals with proven tools for evaluation and measurement of success.

A canopy cover assessment and analysis measures the extent and function of the forest resource over the entire city (both private and public lands), creating a base reference. The analysis defines the benefits of the existing canopy (stormwater, air, water, wildlife, etc.), places a dollar value per tree on those benefits, locates opportunities for increasing the canopy cover, calculates the current canopy cover percentage by land use type, suggests canopy cover goals, and offers recommendations for the future. Value assessments take into account maintenance and other costs to determine annualized net returns on the public-tree investments.

The canopy measurement is an easily measured and updated indicator of progress toward meeting local objectives. The study

would be repeated periodically to evaluate the progress and success of key program objectives. Management for all features that sustain the healthy forest would be adjusted based on changing conditions.

American Forest's Regional Ecosystem Analysis of Bellevue's canopy found a 36% overall coverage of tree canopy in 2007, higher than some cities, but lower than the 40% overall canopy coverage recommended by American Forests. Bellevue's urban residential areas were found to have 30% tree canopy cover versus American Forest's recommendation for 35% cover and street right-of-ways had 20% cover versus American Forest's recommendation for 25%. Renton is planning to conduct an overall canopy cover analysis in the near future.

## Administration and Management

The Task Force nominated the Community Services Department to be the host department and to lead efforts within the urban forestry program, including vegetation management. The Community Services Department currently employs an Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Manager. This leadership and coordination will clarify responsibility and action in the context of well-established regional efforts to increase and improve urban forest resources.

**Shared City Resources, Funding and Staffing Options.** While certain strategies have been identified to accomplish the vision, goals and specific objectives of Renton's urban forestry program, tying in with realistic current and projected funding and staffing resources is critical. The Task Force has begun the work of this interdepartmental effort. A suite of funding and staffing options will be examined. With public oversight and coordinated management, public resources will be evaluated for best long term economic benefit to sustain and grow Renton's urban forest.

**Figure #10:**

### American Forests Tree Canopy Recommendations

#### Metropolitan Areas in the Pacific Northwest

Average tree cover - all zones	40%
Suburban residential	50%
Urban residential	25%
Central business districts	15%

## Evaluation

*How do we know we are successful?* The Renton Urban and Community Forestry Program is being created in the context of collaboration with all City departments and federal, county and civic efforts to ensure a healthy environment, balance growth and conservation, and create healthy communities. Opportunities for partnership and program expansion lie in existing regulations, city policies, and established regional partnerships. Utilizing proven methods and existing resources will help support a high quality program and stretch Renton's financial investments. Award programs structure benchmarks for measurable program progress, as well as showing citizens and businesses what they can be proud of and the results that their tax dollars are yielding.

### *Plans Change – Adapting to Change.*

Adapting to change is key to successful program development. Just as implementing this Plan will create changes in how we do business, the plan must also adapt to changing conditions. During development of the plan, the Task Force struggled with accomplishing the many strategies each department representative saw as a priority. Task Force members understood that the entire plan as shown in



Young volunteers planting native shrubs

the Implementation Schedule in the Appendix was impossible to accomplish in one or two years. During the 2008 Task Force meetings, economic conditions in Renton and across the country began to change. Those conditions continue in 2009 and the Implementation Schedule as envisioned by the Task Force has been modified due to the local economy.

Updating the plan should occur on a regular basis to adapt as needed to the current economic situation. While none of the Task Force members desired this, the Implementation Schedule reflects 2009's current economic conditions. Out of several planned programs for 2010, the most important is the Forestry Ordinance development.

Most of the Plan programs or strategies can remain unchanged, only the timeframe will change in the short term. It is the hope of the Task Force that the original schedule can be reestablished once the economic conditions improve.

The Action Timeline shown in the Appendix reflects the Task Force's approach in implementing the Plan. Because of the current economy, the Implementation Schedule now reflects those conditions and focuses upon strategies that can be accomplished by City staff. Strategies requiring expenditures have been moved to post-recovery years in the Implementation Schedule.



## Implementation Schedule

The Appendix contains the Implementation Schedule which is the yearly program for the next ten years. It takes the strategies, shown under the goals and objectives, and subdivides each strategy into actions and tasks. In addition, the Implementation Schedule shows a budget estimate with a total by year. The Schedule is the main piece of the Plan that can be easily adapted to changing conditions, providing more or less activity in any given year.

The Implementation Schedule will be used by City staff to guide activities occurring in the current year and to plan for succeeding budget years. It provides the reader with information on how each program strategy is to be accomplished. The budget estimates used in the Schedule are in 2009 dollars.

## Summary and Conclusion

Renton has a rich forestry history that strongly influenced the City's early development. Today, with all of the original vegetation gone, the urban forest plays an important role in making life richer for Renton citizens and visitors, and attracting new businesses. Several attempts were made in the past to bring urban forestry forward to this point in time. To resolve many of the issues with the built and the natural environments experienced today, this Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan is timely. With dedication, Renton's urban forest will once again provide the value of the historic landscape.

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Research that demonstrates ways that trees add value to communities, converting results into financial terms to stimulate investment in trees.

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# Appendix

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## Contents

1. **2009-2020 Implementation Schedule.** The urban forestry proposal listing strategies, actions and tasks by year with estimated budgets.
2. **Program Timeline.** The original timeline as chosen by the Urban Forestry Task Force. The 2009-2020 Implementation Schedule superseded this timeline to reflect the current economic conditions in 2009.
3. **Goals, Objectives and Strategies Definition Chart.** Defines and provides reasons for each of the strategies.
4. **Executive Summary to the 2007 and 2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Reports.** Provides an overview of these documents.
5. **Committee of the Whole - Committee Report.** Documents the review of the Plan and its approval by Renton's Parks Commission on July 14, 2009, and City Council on July 20, 2009.
6. **2009 City of Renton Limits and Surrounding Area Aerial Photograph from 2007**
7. **2008 Urban Forestry Programs Comparisons**



# Appendix

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## 2009-2020 Implementation Schedule

### 1. 2009-2020 Implementation Schedule - 5 pages

- The urban forestry proposal listing strategies, actions and tasks by year with estimated budgets.
- Dark Green = No Direct Budget Associated with Strategy  
Bright Green = Proposed Funds from Operating Budget  
Light Green = Proposed Funds from Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Page 5 Totals - Subtotals shown for Operating Budget and CIP Budget separately followed by Grand totals for both.
- Timeline Costs adjusted for 2009 economic conditions. Most strategies and actions that have no direct costs are planned for the period between 2009 and 2011. Work to occur mainly by City staff during this period. Compare with the Program Timeline which reflects the Urban Forestry Task Force original schedule of activities.

NOTE: The Implementation Schedule is subject to change from time to time. The most current version can be found on the Urban Forestry web page edition at <http://rentonwa.gov/Living/Default.aspx?id=16702>.



**Urban Forestry Program  
2009 - 2020 Implementation Schedule**

Strategies & Actions	YR2009	YR2010	YR2011	YR2012	YR2013	YR2014	YR2015	YR2016	YR2017	YR2018	YR2019	YR2020
<b>1.1A Tree City USA Designation &amp; Growth Award</b>	[Green Bar]											
Action 1.1A.1 Submit Annual Application	[Green Bar]											
Arbor Day Celebration and Proclamation	[Green Bar]											
Update and Install Arbor Day Signs, Flags and Plaques	[Green Bar]											
Action 1.1A.2 Join the Arbor Day Foundation & Pay Annual Dues	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Action 1.1A.3 Submit Application for Tree City USA Growth Award	[Green Bar]											
<b>1.1B Society for Municipal Arborists Accreditation</b>	[Green Bar]											
Action 1.1B.1 City Forester Obtain Arborist Certification through ISA Program			150									
Obtain 30 CEUs each 3 years & Recerfication Fee				300	350	300	300	350	300	300	350	300
Action 1.1B.2 City Forester Obtain Municipal Specialist Certification & Recertifications						55			45			45
Obtain 12 CEUs each 3 years							50	50	50	50	50	50
Action 1.1B.3 Research, Purchase & Incorporate ANSI Standards into Ordinances, UF Plans, Procedures & Contracts				120	Completed as other Strategies are Implemented, for example the forestry ordinance							
Incorporate Preference for Tree Care Industry Arborists into RFPs												
Incorporate SMA Code of Ethics & Sign Code of Ethics Pledge Letter into Procedures or Plans												
Action 1.1B.4 Complete the Forest Management Plan (See Strategy 2.3 A)												
Action 1.1B.5 Maintain Annual Tree City USA Designation (See 1.1A)												
Action 1.1B.6 Tree City USA Growth Award Designation (See 1.1A.3)												
Action 1.1B.7 Submit Application to SMA								300				
Receive accreditation, incorporate into NRPA accreditation												
Action 1.1B.8 SMA Reaccreditation												Occurs in 2021
<b>1.1C State Evergreen Community Designation</b>	Awaiting full program development and implementation by the State of WA											
Action 1.1C.1 Continue to track and monitor progress on implementaiton of the Act												
Periodically contact WADNR-UF Coordinator on status												
Action 1.1C.2 Promote funding of the ECA Program through state lobbyist												
Contact state legislators to make them aware of the ECA												
Action 1.1C.3 Volunteer to sit on future SEC Act committees												
Action 1.1C.4 Review WDNR website and provide feedback on ECA Information												
<b>1.2A Green Cities Partnership</b>	[Green Bar]											
Action 1.2A.1 Meet with Cascade Land Conservancy (CLC) - focus meeting												
Action 1.2A.2 CLC presentation to City Council												
Action 1.2A.3 Identify grant funding opportunities and apply												
Action 1.2A.3 Prepare scope of work with CLC (see Forest Management Plan, Strategy 2.3A)												
Identify natural area restoration projects												
Identify possible groups within Renton and from outside												
Action 1.2A.4 Process contract with CLC						30000						
Action 1.2A.5 Determine funding strategies for specific projects and budgets												
Identify grant funding opportunities												
Action 1.2A.6 Implement project (s) annually							10000	10000	15000	15000	15000	20000
Volunteer training sessions							5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000
Forest Stewards training sessions							5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000
<b>1.2B Puget Sound Partnership</b>	[Green Bar]											
1.2B.1 Research methods to influence partenership members on urban forestry issues												
<b>1.2C Washington Community Forestry Council</b>	[Green Bar]											
Action1.2C.1 City Forester serves a second term as the Forest Manager Rep												
Attend Quarterly Meetings												
Serve on Evergreen Community Act Inventory Advisory Committee												
<b>2.1A Host Department and Renton Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team</b>	[Green Bar]											
Action 2.1A.1 Designate CS as the host department for all ROW landscape maintenance												
Research process for implementation												
Council Presentation and Adoption												
Action 2.1A.2 Determine areas for ROW landscape mainenance												
Determine annual budget for maintenance												
Investigate staffing/contracting options												
Hire staff or contract			250000	250000	250000	260000	260000	260000	270000	270000	270000	280000
Action 2.1A.3 Officially designate the Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Identify Team Members												
Annual Team Meeting												

**Urban Forestry Program  
2009 - 2020 Implementation Schedule**

Strategies & Actions	YR2009	YR2010	YR2011	YR2012	YR2013	YR2014	YR2015	YR2016	YR2017	YR2018	YR2019	YR2020
<b>2.1B Coordinated staffing and funding sources</b>												
Action 2.1B.1 Meet with Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Discuss and develop a team recommendation												
Action 2.1B.2 Determine budget implications and prepare plan for Administrators												
Submit recommendation to Dept. Administrators for consideration & approval												
Action 2.1B.3 Prepare information for Parks Commission recommendation												
Presentation to Parks Commission												
Action 2.1B.4 Presentation to CS Committee for recommendation												
Action 2.1B.5 Prepare information for Council presentation (Committee of the Whole)												
Action 2.1B.6 City Council Considers Adoption												
Action 2.1B.7 Submit plan information for budgeting and hiring or transfer of FTE												
Action 2.1B.8 Implement the staffing and funding sources plan												
Hire or direct 3 FTE staff			270000									
Purchase vehicles & equipment			175000				175000					
Annual Operating Costs (supplies, clothing, equipment, rental etc.)			35000	35000	40000	40000	40000	45000	45000	45000	50000	50000
Fund annual training and arborist certifications				1000	1000	1000	1500	1500	1500	1500	2000	2000
Certified Arborists join ISA			600	600	600	600	600	700	700	700	700	700
Oversee daily assignments												
<b>2.2A Canopy Cover Analysis</b>												
Action 2.2A.1 Research best methods for obtaining information												
Action 2.2A.2 Prepare scope of work and RFP												
Select eligible firm												
Prepare and execute contract			60000					60000				
Review, edit and publish report												
Action 2.2A.3 Distribute and present report to stakeholders												
Presentation to Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Presentation to Parks Commission												
Presentation to City Council												
Publish to website												
Schedule report on City cable access channel												
<b>2.2B Tree Inventory and Assessment</b>												
Action 2.2B.1 Research best methods for obtaining information. Identify grant funding opportunities												
Action 2.2B.2 Prepare scope of work and RFP												
Select eligible firm												
Prepare and execute contract				100000					125000			
Review, edit and publish report												
Action 2.2B.3 Distribute and present report to stakeholders												
Presentation to Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Presentation to Parks Commission												
Presentation to City Council (receive & file)												
Publish report on website												
Schedule summary report on City cable access channel												
Action 2.2B.4 Research tree maintenance software programs												
Purchase software (may not be necessary if EAM is active)					6000							
Tree inventory integration					6000							
Purchase hand held devices for arborists to update inventory daily					6000							
<b>2.3A Develop a Forest Management Plan for Public Trees</b>												
Action 2.3A.1 Prepare Forest Management Plan												
Research other cities' examples												
Determine Evergreen Communities Act Standards												
Identify grant funding opportunities and apply												
Identify plan components												
Prepare draft of plan												
Subsequent drafts for review												
Action 2.3A.1a Prepare Sustainable Management Standards and Practices for Public Trees												
Research other cities' examples												
Develop and draft specifications												
Review of specifications by Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Revise specifications												
Review by stakeholders (e.g. Transportation) and revision												
Prepare draft of plan												
Parks Commission reviews plan												

**Urban Forestry Program  
2009 - 2020 Implementation Schedule**

Strategies & Actions	YR2009	YR2010	YR2011	YR2012	YR2013	YR2014	YR2015	YR2016	YR2017	YR2018	YR2019	YR2020
<b>2.3A Develop a Forest Management Plan for Public Trees</b>												
Action 2.3A.1a Prepare Sustainable Management Standards and Practices for Public Trees												
Committee of the Whole reviews plan/receive and file												
Action 2.3A.1b Street Tree Selection List												
Research other examples												
Prepare draft of recommended trees booklet												
Review of booklet by Community Forestry InterDepartmental Team												
Revise & publish												
Action 2.3A.1c Franchise Utility Cooperative Program												
Focus meeting with affected utilities												
Draft letter of understanding with each utility												
Review with Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Present to utilities for signature												
Incorporate into Forestry Ordinance (see 4.1A)												
Annual Review with each utility as necessary												
Action 2.3A.1d Storm Damage Emergency Response Plan												
Focus meeting with Emergency Management Director												
Focus meeting with other City Departments												
Prepare draft of plan												
Review with Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Revise draft												
Review with City Administration and revise as needed												
Presentation to Parks Commission and recommendation to approve												
Presentation to Committee of the Whole - receive and file												
Revise and publish												
Action 2.3A.1e Wood Waste Recycling Program												
Research other examples												
Prepare program plan												
Presentation to Parks Commission												
Presentation to Committee of the Whole - receive and file												
Incorporate into operations and implement												
Action 2.3A.1f Develop operating policies and information (see 2.3A Forest Management Plan)												
Public notification forms for planting, pruning, removals & others												
Action 2.3A.2 Update the UF Development Program Plan							25,000					25000
<b>2.3B Tree Planting Program</b>												
Action 2.3B.1 Develop Tree Program Plan												
Scope New Tree Planting Program												
Scope Replacement Tree Planting Program												
Scope Tree Planting Donation Program												
Draft plan and review by CS staff												
Action 2.3B.2 Present New Tree Planting Program Plan to Parks Commission												
Action 2.3B.3 Present New Tree Planting Program Plan to CS Committee												
Action 2.3B.4 Present New Tree Planting Program Plan to City Council (Committee of the Whole)												
Action 2.3B.5 Submit New Tree Planting Program budget												
Action 2.3B.6 Implement New Tree Planting Program												
Purchase one-time equipment					80000						40000	40000
Hire 3 Part-time staff					40000	40000	40000	40500	40500	40500	41000	41000
Purchase trees and supplies annually					60000	60000	60000	60000	60000	60000	60000	60000
Annual sidewalk repair program related to trees						100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000
Prepare and distribute new tree planting care guidelines to residents												
Action 2.3B.7 Identify grant funding opportunities												
Action 2.3B.7 Designate site(s) for City nursery tree production												
Purchase and plant liners						4000		1000		1000		1000
Annual maintenance of nursery trees							1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000
Identify annual citywide tree planting sites												
Order Supplies and Transplant trees												4000
<b>2.4A Urban Forestry in the City Comprehensive Plan</b>												
Action 2.4A.1 CS & CED Draft UF elements												
Action 2.4A.2 CS & CED present UF elements to Committees and Council												
Action 2.4A.3 City Council Adoption												

**Urban Forestry Program  
2009 - 2020 Implementation Schedule**

Strategies & Actions	YR2009	YR2010	YR2011	YR2012	YR2013	YR2014	YR2015	YR2016	YR2017	YR2018	YR2019	YR2020
<b>2.4B Tree Retention Regulations Update</b>												
Action 2.4B.1 CS assists CED in update												
CS Research other tree retention regulations												
CS Review draft regulations and comment												
Review and Recommendation of Planning Commission												
Review and Adoption by City Council												
<b>2.4C Update Site Development Landscape Standards &amp; Regulations (Led by CED)</b>												
Action 2.4C.1 Hire consultant to prepare draft standards												
Action 2.4C.2 Review standards and revise by Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Action 2.4C.3 Presentation of standards & regulations to developers & revisions												
Action 2.4C.4 Presentation of draft to Parks Commission, revision & recommendation												
Action 2.4C.5 Presentation of draft to Planning Commission, revision & recommendation												
Action 2.4C.6 Presentation of draft to CS Committee & revision												
Action 2.4C.7 Presentation to City Council (Committee of the Whole)												
Action 2.4C.8 Prepare and publish final draft												
Action 2.4C.9 City Council adoption												
Action 2.4C.10 Implementation												
Action 2.4C.11 Periodic Update												
<b>2.4D Tree Bank or "Fee in Lieu" Program</b>												
Action 2.4D.1 Research tree banks and fee in lieu of programs												
Action 2.4D.2 Review options with Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Action 2.4D.3 Identify regulations that tree bank might affect and revise accordingly												
Action 2.4D.4 Adopt tree bank												
<b>3.1A Consumer Literature</b>												
Action 3.1A.1 Provide UF consumer literature at Special Events			500			500			500			500
Action 3.1A.2 Make literature available through advertising on UF web page & mailings												
Action 3.1A.3 Develop UF web page to offer online sources of extended educational information												
<b>3.1B Citizen Tree Board</b>												
Action 3.1B.1 Research responsibilities of tree boards and prepare white paper												
Action 3.1B.2 Present findings to Parks Commission for discussion												
Action 3.1B.3 Prepare Tree Board Plan & present to Parks Commission for recommendation												
Action 3.1B.4 Determine next steps												
Action 3.1B.5 Present Tree Board Plan to Community Services Committee												
Action 3.1B.6 Present for adoption the Tree Board Plan to City Council												
<b>3.1C Existing Volunteer Networks</b>												
Action 3.1C.1 Assist with Volunteer Program incorporating UF projects												
See 1.2A Green Cities Partnership												
<b>3.1D Urban Forestry at schools, clubs, community events</b>												
Action 3.1D.1 Identify school programs, club events and community events for initial contact												
Action 3.1D.2 Participate in Schools Sponsored Arbor Day events												
<b>3.2A State of the Urban Forest Report</b>												
Present annually to Parks Commission												
Present annually to City Council												
<b>3.3A Significant Tree Programs</b>												
Action 3.3A.1 Research other programs and prepare a concept plan												
Action 3.3A.2 Identify grant funding opportunities												
Action 3.3A.3 Review plan with Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Action 3.3A.4 Prepare Program Plan & Guidelines												
Action 3.3A.5 Present Program Plan to Parks Commission & recommendation												
Action 3.3A.6 Present Program Plan to CS Committee												
Action 3.3A.7 Implement Plan												
Advertise Program												
<b>4.1A Forestry Ordinance (for streets, parks, public open spaces)</b>												
Action 4.1A.1 Prepare scope of work, RFP & hire consultant	50000	110000										
Research other ordinances												
Identify key elements												

**Urban Forestry Program  
2009 - 2020 Implementation Schedule**

Strategies & Actions	YR2009	YR2010	YR2011	YR2012	YR2013	YR2014	YR2015	YR2016	YR2017	YR2018	YR2019	YR2020
<b>4.1A Forestry Ordinance (for streets, parks, public open spaces)</b>												
Action 4.1A.1 Prepare scope of work, RFP & hire consultant												
Prepare draft ordinance												
Action 4.1A.2 Review draft with Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team												
Revisions and drafts												
Action 4.1A.3 Review by City Attorney												
Revisions and drafts												
Action 4.1A.4 Presentation to Parks Commission & recommendation												
Revisions and drafts												
Action 4.1A.5 Presentation to CS Committee												
Revisions and drafts												
Action 4.1A.6 Presentation to City Council (Committee of the Whole)												
Revisions and drafts												
Action 4.1A.7 City Council Adoption												
Action 4.1A.8 Implementation												
Action 4.1A.9 Periodic Update												
<b>Subtotals - Operating Budget</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>731,260</b>	<b>287,030</b>	<b>423,960</b>	<b>342,465</b>	<b>518,460</b>	<b>349,410</b>	<b>359,605</b>	<b>359,060</b>	<b>405,110</b>	<b>444,605</b>
Subtotals - Capital Improvement Program Budget	50,000	110,000	45,000	100,000	60,000	194,000	205,000	226,000	310,000	186,000	185,000	190,990
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>50,010</b>	<b>110,010</b>	<b>776,260</b>	<b>387,030</b>	<b>483,960</b>	<b>536,465</b>	<b>723,460</b>	<b>575,410</b>	<b>669,605</b>	<b>545,060</b>	<b>590,110</b>	<b>635,595</b>

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# Appendix

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## Program Timeline

### 2. Program Timeline

- The original timeline as chosen by the Urban Forestry Task Force. The 2009-2020 Implementation Schedule superseded this timeline to reflect the current economic conditions in 2009.



## PROGRAM TIMELINE\*

Strategy	six-year program							long term
	short term			mid term				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015-2019	
1.1A Tree City USA Designation								
1.1B Society for Municipal Arborists Accreditation								
1.1C State Evergreen Community Designation								
1.2A Green Cities Partnership								
1.2B Puget Sound Partnership								
1.2C Washington Community Forestry Council								
2.1A Host Department and Renton Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team								
2.1B Coordinated staffing and funding sources								
2.2A Canopy Cover Analysis								
2.2B Tree Inventory and Assessment								
2.3A Sustainable Management Standards and Practices for Public Trees								
- Best Management Practices (specifications manual)								
- Street Tree Selection List								
- Franchise Utility Management Program								
- Storm Damage Emergency Response Plan								
2.3B Tree Planting Program								
2.4A Urban Forestry in the City Comprehensive Plan								
2.4B Tree Retention Regulations update								
2.4C Site Development Landscape Standards								
2.4D Tree Bank or "Fee in Lieu" Program								
3.1A Consumer Literature								
3.1B Citizen Tree Board								
3.1C Existing Volunteer Networks								
3.1D Urban Forestry at schools, clubs, community events								
3.2A State of the Urban Forest Report								
3.3A Heritage or Significant Tree Program								
4.1A Forestry Ordinance (for streets, parks, public open spaces)								

\* Original timeline proposed by Task Force



# Appendix

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## Goals, Objectives and Strategies Definition Chart

### 3. Goals, Objectives and Strategies Definition Chart

- Defines and provides reasons for each of the strategies and describes if a short, mid, or long term item.



## GOAL 1: CREATE A FUNCTIONING AND EXEMPLARY URBAN FOREST

1.1 <u>Objective:</u> Receive national and regional recognition by meeting high standards.			
	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Action Timeline*</u>
<b>A</b>	<b>Tree City USA Program Designation</b> (There are 4 standards to the designation: ordinance; tree board or dept; annual work plan; and an Arbor Day proclamation). The Growth Award is achieved with additional activities and funding.	This national designation is recognized to celebrate communities meeting basic standards for a city urban forestry program; this may give Renton an advantage with grants	<b>Short-term:</b> Adopt forestry ordinance; consider Parks Commission as citizen Tree Board; new Community Forestry Program; coordinate Arbor Day annually <b>Mid-term:</b> Pursue Growth Award when appropriate
<b>B</b>	<b>Society of Municipal Arborists Accreditation</b> - This accreditation is the highest designation for urban and community forestry programs and entails eight rigorous standards.	Achieving this national accreditation would set Renton as one of the few top regional cities dedicated to a quality urban forestry program	<b>Long-term:</b> Review standards of SMA accreditation
<b>C</b>	<b>Evergreen Communities Recognition</b> - This new Washington State program offers assistance and may provide funding for communities to develop a city-wide tree inventory, regulations, and management plans in order to achieve this designation	Being one of the first communities to reach this designation in the County would demonstrate the City's progressive commitment to urban forestry.	<b>Long term:</b> State program under development; pursue recognition when appropriate
1.2 <u>Objective:</u> Increase the health and benefits of the urban forest on a larger geographical scale through participation and coordination.			
	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Action Timeline</u>
<b>A</b>	<b>Green Cities Partnership</b> - The Cascade Land Conservancy develops public-private partnerships with municipal agencies to develop community-based stewardship programs for forested parklands and community open spaces. <b>Puget Sound Partnership</b> - Established to lead efforts to protect and restore the Puget Sound and its diversity of life; local watershed forums with tributaries and shorelines contribute to the efforts toward salmon recovery that is used as a basis for this entity's action agenda.	The model program with Green Seattle resulted in a 20-year Restoration Plan and valuable partnerships with community businesses for volunteers and funding; neighboring cities of Kirkland and Redmond have also joined the program  Urban forestry plays a critical role in water quality and fish habitat. The Cedar River flows through Renton and there are numerous opportunities to coordinate urban forestry efforts with PSP action agenda	<b>Short-term:</b> Explore existing City volunteer and parks stewards program to determine benefit of participating in program  <b>Short-term (current):</b> City forester will assist City stormwater in review and adoption of plans; City will participate on Watershed Forums, WRIA 8 and 9
<b>B</b>	<b>Washington Community Forestry Council</b> - This council appointed by the State Commissioner of Public Lands advises the Washington State DNR in carrying out the Washington State Urban and Community Forestry Program.	This appointment provides representation for the City of Renton and municipal foresters across the state	<b>Short-term:</b> Participate on Council

\*Original timeline proposed by UF Task Force

## GOAL 2: MANAGE THE URBAN FOREST AT OPTIMUM LEVELS FOR CANOPY, HEALTH AND DIVERSITY

<b>2.1 Objective:</b> Coordinate City urban forestry operations.			
	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Action Timeline*</u>
<b>A</b>	Responsible Department and Renton Community Forestry Interdepartmental Team (CFIDT)	Maximize efficiency and expertise with an interdepartmental team to identify and collaborate on city-wide urban forestry issues and coordination by one City department.	<b>Short-term</b> - Agreement with existing Task Force to be based with City Forester as lead and Community Services the responsible department for community forestry and vegetation management.
<b>B</b>	Coordinated staffing and funding sources	Identify needed staffing levels, expertise, and both internal resources to use for leverage with outside sources (grants, sponsorships, volunteers, and in-kind contributions).	<b>Short-term</b> - Coordinate staffing and funding sources as part of the city-wide management plan
<b>2.2 Objective:</b> Inventory the existing urban forest to establish canopy goals and management needs.			
	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Action Timeline</u>
<b>A</b>	<b>Canopy Cover Analysis</b> - Using sophisticated imaging methods and analysis, map the canopy cover in the city in order to quantify the benefits and measure change over time	Understanding the change and extent of the existing urban forest helps in promoting effective programs, policy, regulations, and outreach (requiring funding and staffing).	<b>Short-term</b> - Explore providers of canopy cover imagery and analysis services (American Forests, NDCI Imaging and Mapping); conduct mapping; specify analysis by existing land uses; establish baselines for proposed land uses <b>Mid-term</b> - Develop a monitoring program; update mapping every five years
<b>B</b>	<b>Tree Inventory and Assessment</b> - Collect individual tree information (location, species, size, condition) and planting spaces in rights-of-way and public spaces	The condition and composition of the urban forest are essential factors in prioritizing management	<b>Short-term</b> - Utilize existing inventory as baseline; data transfer into management software; create a City GIS layer of public trees <b>Mid-term</b> - Conduct and update inventory every five years

\*Original timeline proposed by UF Task Force

<b>2.3 Objective: Develop a Forest Management Plan for public trees.</b>			
	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Action Timeline*</u>
<b>A</b>	<b>Sustainable management standards and practices for public trees</b>	Clear guidelines and specifications, particularly with trees in public right-of-ways, are a high priority to ensure safety, proper design, installation, and coordination between infrastructure, utilities and the landscape. Planting and maintenance of trees in parks and natural areas are also important.	<p><b>Short-term</b> - Develop and coordinate Best Management Practices for public trees: street tree selection (list of recommended trees), installation and maintenance specifications; invasive species removal policy; franchise utility cooperative management program; wood waste utilization program</p> <p><b>Mid-term</b> - Pruning cycle strategy program; Emergency Response Plan for storms; Update plan using adaptive management</p> <p><b>Mid-term</b> - Identify planting opportunities from inventory; coordinate requests, tree bank planting from development, and volunteer and Arbor Day planting events (larger scale)</p> <p><b>Long-term</b> - Explore benefits of a Street Tree Master Plan</p>
<b>B</b>	<b>Tree Planting Program</b>	Right tree in the right place through coordinated effort throughout the city. Improve canopy cover to meet standards.	
<b>2.4 Objective: Balance &amp; manage city growth &amp; development with the urban forest.</b>			
	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Action Timeline</u>
<b>A</b>	<b>Urban Forestry in the Comprehensive Plan</b>	Urban forestry has become an increasingly important component for urban planning and development	<b>Short-term</b> - Update Comprehensive Plan to include Urban Forestry as an element or component in the Environment element; integrate urban forestry throughout plan
<b>B</b>	<b>Tree Retention Regulations</b>	Clear guidelines and reasonable requirements to retain and protect significant trees on private property are needed, particularly on developing sites	<b>Short-term</b> - Review and prepare amendments to the ordinance to enhance better tree retention during development; consider tree removal limits or meeting a minimum tree density on-site; option of
<b>C</b>	<b>Site Development Landscape Standards</b>	Provide developers with a basic level of required landscaping for both commercial and residential to include street trees, buffers, screening For sites where required tree replacement is impractical, this provides an option to receive monies to plant trees off-site in public areas	<b>Short-term</b> - Update existing standards to enhance landscaping requirements and guidelines <b>Long-term</b> - Develop landscape strip standards for all streets
<b>D</b>	<b>Tree Bank or "Fee in Lieu" Program</b>		<b>Short-term</b> - Coordinate a "receiving" plan and create an urban forestry account (in ordinance)

\*Original timeline proposed by UF Task Force

### GOAL 3: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE VALUE AND BENEFITS OF THE URBAN FOREST AND THE URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM

<b>3.1</b>	<b>Objective:</b> Create an urban forestry public outreach program to educate residents and developers about the benefits of developing and sustaining a healthy urban forest.				<b>Action Timeline*</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Strategy:</b> Consumer Literature		<b>Reasons</b> Provide useful information about tree benefits, care, and selection		<b>Short-term</b> - Distribute ISA General tree care brochures; develop a recommended tree list (from street tree list); develop a Renton urban forest benefits brochure <b>Mid-term</b> - Use BMP's from management plan for invasive species management
<b>B</b>	<b>Strategy:</b> Citizen Tree Board		A citizen board will help promote and assist the program		<b>Short-term</b> - Establish a citizen tree board; the Parks Commission can serve this function initially
<b>C</b>	<b>Strategy:</b> Existing Volunteer Networks		Utilizing volunteer "Friends of" organizations and City's volunteer program will broaden outreach		<b>Mid-term</b> - Introduce program and work plan to existing volunteer networks to generate interest in coordinating projects
<b>D</b>	<b>Strategy:</b> Urban forestry presence at schools, clubs, community gatherings		Public opportunities to speak and host booths go a long way in helping the community appreciate the program		<b>Mid-term</b> - Provide speakers and program literature to interested parties; sponsor booths at community gatherings

<b>3.2</b>	<b>Objective:</b> Update City Council and the public on urban forestry accomplishments.				
<b>A</b>	<b>Strategy:</b> State of the Urban Forest Report (annual)		<b>Reasons</b> Based on the annual work plan, the annual report outlines recent accomplishment and actions, budget, partners, and schedule for the following year.		<b>Action Timeline</b> <b>Short-term</b> - Prepare State of the Urban Forest Report annual report

<b>3.3</b>	<b>Objective:</b> Encourage the public to preserve and honor significant trees in the community.				
<b>A</b>	<b>Strategy:</b> Significant Tree program		<b>Reasons</b> Designation and celebration of the special trees in the community (historic, rare, landmark, champion, heritage) generates pride and desire to preserve		<b>Action Timeline</b> <b>Long-term</b> - Have Tree Board develop program; Identify incentives for program participation; Establish criteria/policy; Identify possible candidates from inventory; Create a program booklet

\*Original timeline proposed by UF Task Force

**GOAL 4: DRAFT AND ADOPT LEGISLATION THAT SUPPORTS THE URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM**

4.1	<u>Objective:</u> Develop & adopt regulations that optimize tree canopy & maximize public benefits.	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Action Timeline*</u>
A	Forestry Ordinance (for streets, parks, public open spaces)	Regulations need to be in place to ensure proper protection and management of public trees	Provide developers with a basic level of required landscaping for both commercial and residential to include street trees, buffers, screening	<b>Short-term</b> - Research other jurisdictions' Forestry Ordinances; Develop ordinance in tandem with the Forest Management Plan; Update periodically
B	Site Development Landscape Ordinance		Clear guidelines and reasonable requirements to retain and protect significant trees on private property are needed, particularly on developing sites	<b>Short-term</b> - Update existing standards to enhance landscaping requirements
C	Tree Retention Ordinance			<b>Short-term</b> - Review and prepare amendments to the ordinance to enhance better tree retention during development; consider tree removal limits or meeting a minimum tree density on-site; option of off-site planting using 'tree bank'

\*Original timeline proposed by UF Task Force



# Appendix

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## Executive Summary to the 2007 and 2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Reports

4. **Executive Summary to the 2007 and 2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Reports - 10 pages**
  - Provides an overview of the above document.
  - Describes the inventory process for Street Trees, Park Trees and Natural Area Trees.
  - Summary of the number of trees in the above areas, the percentages of major species, their relative condition (health) and real estate values.





Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report  
March 2007

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Renton has a diverse urban forest that includes trees growing along street rights-of-way, in parks and natural areas, in private yards, on commercial and industrial properties, and on public and private woodlands and wetlands. As a whole, these trees contribute to the quality of life in Renton and create a favorable climate for residents to live, work and play.

“The tree inventory is a proactive management tool. It is the cornerstone of a long-term urban forestry maintenance and management program. Tree inventories are fundamental to the development of comprehensive, sustainable, and appropriate arboricultural and management practices.”<sup>1</sup> To get an idea of the quantity and diversity of trees in the urban forest, and to begin planning for their care, the City commissioned a public property inventory of street, park and natural area trees in 2003. This report provides a summary of the inventory with detailed information found in the appendix.

A tree inventory is important for many reasons including:

- Determining the quantity and composition of trees;
- Understanding the quality, the health and condition of trees;

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<sup>1</sup> The Tree Inventory as a Proactive Management Tool, M. Duntemann & S. Gasperini, City Trees, March/April 2007, Volume 43, No. 2, page 6.

- Assessing the real estate value of trees;
- Calculating the environmental benefits of trees;
- Finding the location of trees;
- Learning about the maintenance needs of trees;
- Establishing risk management goals for trees;
- Informing residents of their tree resources;
- Developing a management plan to maintain trees;
- Discovering new tree planting opportunities and;
- Beginning point for a comprehensive urban forestry program.

A tree inventory is a dynamic process because all trees grow, becoming larger with time. In addition, the inventory changes as new trees are planted, others are pruned and some removed. Annexations can affect an inventory when new areas are added, increasing trees in the community. Since 2003, this inventory was updated to reflect the additions of the Panther Creek Wetlands and Tonkin Park – areas not included in the original inventory.

Only trees found on street rights-of-way and City-owned properties were considered in the inventory. Trees found on private lands were not inventoried. The general categories of trees represented are street trees, park trees and natural area trees. Information about street and park trees was gathered using global positioning satellite (GPS) equipment. This equipment pinpoints a tree on land using coordinates triangulated and transmitted by satellites and is accurate within a few millimeters. The “tree points” were plotted onto aerial photographs called orthophotographs used as a scalable base map. Each tree on the inventory base map is represented by a green tree symbol. The LandInfo Parcel Map’s program within the City’s intranet system, known as RentonNet, provides a visual location of the tree and inventory information that can be viewed on a computer.

Natural area trees were inventoried differently than street and park trees without using GPS equipment. Instead one-tenth acre sample plots were established, tree information gathered and the data extrapolated to provide a total tree estimate for the wooded portion of each area. Tree species and number of trees were tallied for the natural area inventory.

Street and park tree information collected during the inventory included tree species, diameter, condition, maintenance needs, tree problems and more. Appraisal data was gathered to apply a monetary value to trees. Street tree data was collected by six management units presented in the document, “Parks, Recreation and Open Space Implementation Plan.”

This report is divided into four sections:

- The Introduction (Page 6)

- Street Tree Inventory (Page 10)
- Park Tree Inventory (Page 23)
- Natural Area Tree Inventory (Page 28) and;
- The Appendix (Page 34).

The Street Tree Inventory section defines street trees as those within the public right-of-way. These are trees growing either in sidewalk cutouts, in planting strips between sidewalk and curb, in boulevards or in other landscaped islands. Renton has 4,220 street trees within 205 miles of street rights-of-way. The Community Services Department - Parks Division maintains approximately 1,000 of these street trees and the Planning/Building/Public Works Department has responsibility for the remainder.

A reason for collecting inventory information is to determine the diversity of species being planted, with greater diversity being the goal. Reliance on too many of one species or genus has proven to be costly in the past when an insect or disease epidemic affects an entire city's tree population consisting of one species or genus of tree. In Renton, 35% of the street tree population are maple trees. Researchers recommend that only 10% of the total street tree population be comprised of a particular genus or species to avoid problems such as those experienced with American elms caused by Dutch Elm Disease in the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the recent outbreak of emerald ash borer on ash trees in the Lake States.<sup>2</sup>

The inventory indicates Renton has a relatively young street tree population with 82% of the trees less than 25 years old. Sixty percent (60%) are in fair to excellent condition. Renton's street tree population has a value of approximately \$6.6 million. Improving the existing street tree population through active maintenance such as planting, pruning, removing tree-staking wire, mulching and other practices can increase condition, health and value of trees. Identifying unsafe trees in the inventory and removing them before they cause problems is important - 215 trees were identified for potential removal. Planting opportunities abound – the inventory discovered 1,740 vacant sites along streets within planting strips between sidewalks and curbs.

The Park Tree Inventory section identifies 2,918 trees that were planted and another 17,082 trees that are remnant forest trees found in small groves within parks. In developed areas of established parks, maples (38%) are more prevalent than other species followed by pines (12%). Park trees tended to be older, larger, in better condition and with fewer problems than street trees. Because of their larger average size and better condition, park trees present a greater value per tree than street trees. Total value of the planted landscape trees found in parks is \$9.7 million.

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<sup>2</sup> R.W. Miller. 1997. Urban Forestry: Planning and Managing Urban Greenspaces. Prentice Hall

105,367 trees are included in The Natural Area Tree Inventory section. Natural areas comprise 769 acres; the areas inventoried comprised 401 acres of fully wooded portions or 52% of total natural area acres. The remaining acreage had few if any trees - comprised of wetlands, fields and other open space lacking groupings of trees. Natural areas are comprised of:

- Bigleaf maple - 31%
- Cottonwood - 20%
- Alder - 18%
- Hemlock 9%
- Douglas fir 9%
- Western redcedar - 7%
- Others – 6%

The number of natural area trees per acre is considerably lower than is typical for many Washington forests, a result of having been logged in the past but not replanted. Inferior species such as cottonwood and invasive plants like Himalayan blackberry have dominated and have prevented more desirable species from becoming established such as, Oregon ash, Garry Oak, Douglas fir, Western red cedar and Western hemlock. However, the land remains valuable for recreation, wildlife habitat, and watershed. The current timber value of trees in natural areas is approximately \$1.2 million.



In summary, 4,220 street trees, 20,000 park trees and 105,367 natural area trees exist. These 129,587 trees present many challenges to those managing this valuable resource. The tree inventory provides information that should prove useful to managers for increasing the value of the City's urban forest resource and managing it more wisely into the future. The inventory is the

“springboard” for an urban forest management plan which would address the maintenance recommendations found in the inventory.

# City of Renton

## Benson Hill Neighborhood

### 2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report

#### Executive Summary

In March, 2008 the Benson Hill Neighborhood was annexed into the City of Renton. Approximately 17,000 new residents added to the City's existing population to make Renton the 11<sup>th</sup> largest Washington city at 83,650 people. Annexation increased the total street miles by 44 miles (249 total citywide). With those streets came street trees within public right-of-ways. Other public property annexed and part of this inventory includes two fire stations, the Edlund Farm property and Cascade Park.<sup>1</sup>

This report provides the summary of the 2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report conducted and prepared by the Davey Resource Group. It considers only trees within the public right-of-way as well as three of the four properties mentioned above. A separate tree inventory was prepared by TreeResource, Incorporated for Cascade Park, whose summary is included below.



Field data was collected using Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) equipment to locate trees and integrated to work with the City's Geographic Information System (GIS). Tree location can be viewed using the City's ParcelViewer program via the internet. Information about each tree is detailed when a tree is selected from the GIS aerial map of the city - the parcel number and address can also be viewed.

The field data collected was analyzed and a summary report prepared. Some of the information derived includes:

- There are a total of 2,544 trees in the Benson Hill Neighborhood located on street right-of-ways and at the four other locations. The distribution is as follows:
  - Street Trees – 1,677
  - Vacant Tree Planting Sites Along Streets – 195
  - Cascade Park Trees – 370
  - Edlund Farm – 349
  - Fire Station 13 – 64
  - Fire Station 17 – 83

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<sup>1</sup> This is the unofficial Executive Summary of the 2009 Benson Hill Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report. For the official version, and the full report, please refer to the on-line version at <http://www.rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=16702>.

# City of Renton Benson Hill Neighborhood 2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report Executive Summary

## Street Trees

- Street Trees. There are at least 48 genera represented by 98 identified species primarily composed of:
  - 35% White or Red cedar (Thuja)
  - 18% Plum & cherry (Prunus)
  - 9% Douglas fir (Pseudotsuga)
  - 8% Maple (Acer)
  - 3% Ornamental pear (Pyrus)
  - 27% Miscellaneous (represented by 3% or less of other species)

The 24 most common species include:

Thuja occidentalis (587)	Malus fusca (37)	Cornus florida (15)
Prunus cerasifera (157)	Acer macrophyllum (27)	Acer circinatum (13)
Pseudotsuga menziesii(147)	Tilia cordata (24)	Betula papyifera (12)
Prunus serrulata (80)	Picea pungens (22)	Betula pendula (10)
Thuja plicata (63)	Acer palmatum (20)	Ilex aquifolium 10)
Pyrus calleryana (57)	Acer platamoides (16)	Populus nigra italica (10)
Acer rubrum (54)	Fraxinus Americana (16)	Pinus nigra (9)
Liquidambar styraciflua(53)	Alnus rubra (15)	Tsuga heterophylla (8)

The 1,400 trees in the table represent 84% of the total street tree population.

## Tree Condition

Tree condition is determined by evaluating a tree's structural integrity and health. This assessment includes visual observations of the trunk, branches, foliage and roots. A tree with a condition rating of 100% is in better health than one rated at 50%.

The inventory indicates that street tree condition is nearly evenly spread between the general classifications of poor, fair and good. 25% of the trees were rated at 50% condition or less (poor); 32% at 60% and 70% condition (fair) and 43% rated 80% or higher (good).

## Age Distribution

The age distribution of trees was not a direct measurement taken as part of the inventory. However, using an age-diameter comparison provides insight into tree age assuming a small diameter tree is younger than a large diameter tree of the same species. Using this assumption, the table below presents the approximate age distribution using diameter classes.

**City of Renton**  
**Benson Hill Neighborhood**  
**2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report**  
**Executive Summary**

<u>1-3"</u> 1-6 yrs	% of Total	<u>4-12"</u> 7-24 yrs	% of Total	<u>13-24"</u> <u>25-50</u> yrs	% of Total	<u>25-36"</u> 51-75 yrs	% of Total	<u>37"+</u> 76 yrs+	% of Total
227	13%	898	54%	429	26%	91	5%	32	2%

From the table, 67% of the street trees are 25 years old or less. Trees in size classes twelve inches and below were mostly represented by Thuja occidentalis (arborvitae). The arborvitae tended to be of small diameter and planted in hedgerows. 33% of all trees are older than 25 years.

Indications of age can determine the level of maintenance required such as tree pruning. Generally, the younger the stand the more pruning is required to create positive branch structure. Branch structure is important to prevent costly maintenance when trees become larger. Generally, pruning should be early and often in younger trees and infrequent in older trees, therefore, the time to prune is now!

Pruning can significantly improve tree condition or health. Condition has a direct relationship on tree value; the higher the condition rating, the more valuable the tree. Performed properly, pruning lowers safety risk, increases life span, contributes to higher real estate values and enhances ecosystem services benefits.

As an example of how tree pruning can increase the real estate value of trees, the following example is presented:

Tree ID #: 126  
 Species: Bigleaf maple (Acer macrophyllum)  
 Diameter: 45 inches  
 Existing Condition: 70%  
 Current Appraised Value: \$32,700.00

Problem Code indicates structural issues and there are some dead branches in the tree. Pruning the tree will increase the condition rating by a minimum of 10% in this example, raising it from 70% to 80%.

Increase in value by pruning: \$4,700.00

Post-pruning Condition Rating: 80%  
 Post-pruning Value: \$37,400

A structural pruning of this bigleaf maple increases its safety rating, the tree will not likely break apart as easily thus live longer, dead branches have been removed to reduce

**City of Renton**  
**Benson Hill Neighborhood**  
**2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report**  
**Executive Summary**

chances of insect or disease problems or from falling from the tree and pruning adds nearly \$5,000.00 more to the real estate value of the property it abuts.

**Treatments**

<b>Treatments</b>	<b>No. of Trees</b>	<b>Treatments</b>	<b>No. of Trees</b>
Clearance	220	Prune	97
Remove	25	Unstake	9
Monitor	119	Stump Removal	7
Mulch	3	Repave	42
Plant	194	None	1,162

Treatments are related to tree problem codes (not shown here). For example, a treatment of “Clearance” (actually clearance pruning) means there are low hanging branches over the street and/or sidewalk that hinder access. The treatment of “Pruning” includes removing any broken, dead or diseased branches or other branches to improve tree structure. The data collection format allowed for two problem codes so some trees may show both such as a need for “Clearance” pruning and the other kinds of pruning under “Pruning.”

“Removal” means whole tree removal and is associated with poor tree condition. This group of trees needs to be located from the database and work initiated at removing these unhealthy trees. Stump removal is a part of that operation. It is listed in the table because pre-existing stumps were found but were never removed.

Monitoring some of the trees is indicated in the table. “Monitor” is required for such trees as those showing signs of decline, decay or other conditions that do not require removal or pruning at this time but could over time if conditions deteriorate.

Mulch is a material applied around the base of trees to cover the roots, preventing competition from other plants such as weeds or turf and to conserve moisture. Mulching trees is very beneficial during the first several years of establishment and beyond.

Because the inventory assessed available tree planting sites, a treatment of “Plant” was used and shows 194 sites that could potentially be planted. Many times, as part of tree planting, stakes are used to prevent trees from falling over during the first year. Left attached, the materials that tie a tree to a stake can girdle the stem. Also, research shows staking weakens stems when they prevent natural swaying. Removing stakes and ties after one growing season is recommended.

**City of Renton**  
**Benson Hill Neighborhood**  
**2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report**  
**Executive Summary**

Where tree roots have heaved sidewalks, the treatment of “Repave” indicates the sidewalk may need to be repaired or replaced. And, the treatment of “None” shows the majority of the street trees do not require any maintenance work at this time.

**Summary of Street Trees**

Between the 2007 Inventory and Assessment Report and the 2009 Report, through Annexation, Renton now has a total of 5,896 street trees more or less. In addition, there are a total of 1,937 potential tree planting locations. Since 2007, Renton’s street tree population has increased by 28%. The real estate value of this resource today has a conservatively estimated appraised value of \$11,160,000.00. While the majority of street trees are the responsibility of the property owners to maintain, tree value is so great that a higher level of maintenance is justified and achieved using professional arborist staff.

**Edlund Farm, Cascade Park, Fire Stations 13 and 17**

<b>Property - Total Trees</b>	<b>Major Species</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No. of Trees</b>	<b>Total No. of Species</b>
Edlund Farm - 349	Alnus rubra	42%	147	35
	Acer macrophyllum	5%	20	
	Betula pendula	5%	20	
Cascade Park - 370	Populus trichocarpa	53%	195	14
	Alnus & Salix	27%	100	
	Pseudotsuga menziessii	11%	41	
FS 13 - 64	Thuja plicata	24%	15	11
	Tsuga heterophylla	22%	14	
	Calocedrus decurrans	19%	12	
FS 17 - 83	Thuja plicata	37%	31	7
	Acer macrophyllum	23%	19	
	Pseudotsuga menziesii	16%	13	

The four properties listed in the table represent 34% of the trees found in the Benson Hill Neighborhood inventory of public property. Each location is significantly different than the others in composition. Descriptions of each follow:

*Edlund Farm.* Located at the intersection of Petrovitsky Road and Carr Road, this nearly 18-acre area is maintained in its former farm-like state. There are a few native stands of Douglas fir, Western redcedar and bigleaf maple with many of the other trees planted by the former owners. Contrasted with Cascade Park, there is a rich diversity of species

**City of Renton**  
**Benson Hill Neighborhood**  
**2009 Public Property Tree Inventory and Assessment Report**  
**Executive Summary**

however, red alder dominates on the formerly exposed farmland edge. Typical of park-like areas, the trees are in better condition, with fewer problems and less maintenance needs than street trees; their sizes tend to be larger and trees are somewhat older. Unusual species identified in the inventory include English walnut, butternut, white oak and common fig.

*Cascade Park.* Located in the southeastern area of Renton, this nearly 9 acre park contains a majority of black cottonwood nearing maturity. High risk trees identified in the inventory have been removed; relatively little maintenance is required of remaining trees. Probably the greatest maintenance needs are gradual removal of Himalayan blackberry followed by tree planting with desirable species. Some of the unexpected species found in the park include London planetree, Pacific madrone and European mountainash.

*Fire Stations 13 and 17.* Station 13 is located on 108 Avenue SE and has new landscaping. Most of the trees are small having been planted two years ago. A few larger trees exist that were protected during development. Very few problems exist and pruning will become important in the next year and beyond. Noteworthy species include eastern red cedar, downy serviceberry and Pacific dogwood.

Fire station 17 is an older facility located on Petrovitsky Road in the Fairwood Neighborhood. It contains larger mature trees typical of the Pacific Northwest. These remnant forest trees require very little maintenance other than periodic removal of dead or storm damaged branches. The site is home to a bigleaf maple measured at 58 inches in diameter.





# Appendix

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## Committee of the Whole - Committee Report

### 5. Committee of the Whole - Committee Report

- Documents the review of the Plan and its approval by Renton's Parks Commission on July 14, 2009, and City Council on July 20, 2009.
- Document signed by City Council Chairman Randy Corman.



APPROVED BY  
CITY COUNCIL

Date 7-20-2009

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
COMMITTEE REPORT

July 20, 2009

**2009 Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan**  
(July 13, 2009)

The Committee of the Whole recommends concurrence in the Board of Park Commission's recommendation to approve the 2009 Renton Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan. The Plan will establish the focus and direction over the next 10 years to ensure management, maintenance, and restoration of the City's trees, vegetation, and natural areas – its urban forest.



Randy Corman, Chair

Cc: Terry Higashiyama, Community Services Administrator  
Leslie Betlach, Parks Director  
Terry Flatley, Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Manager  
Todd Black, Capital Project Coordinator



# Appendix

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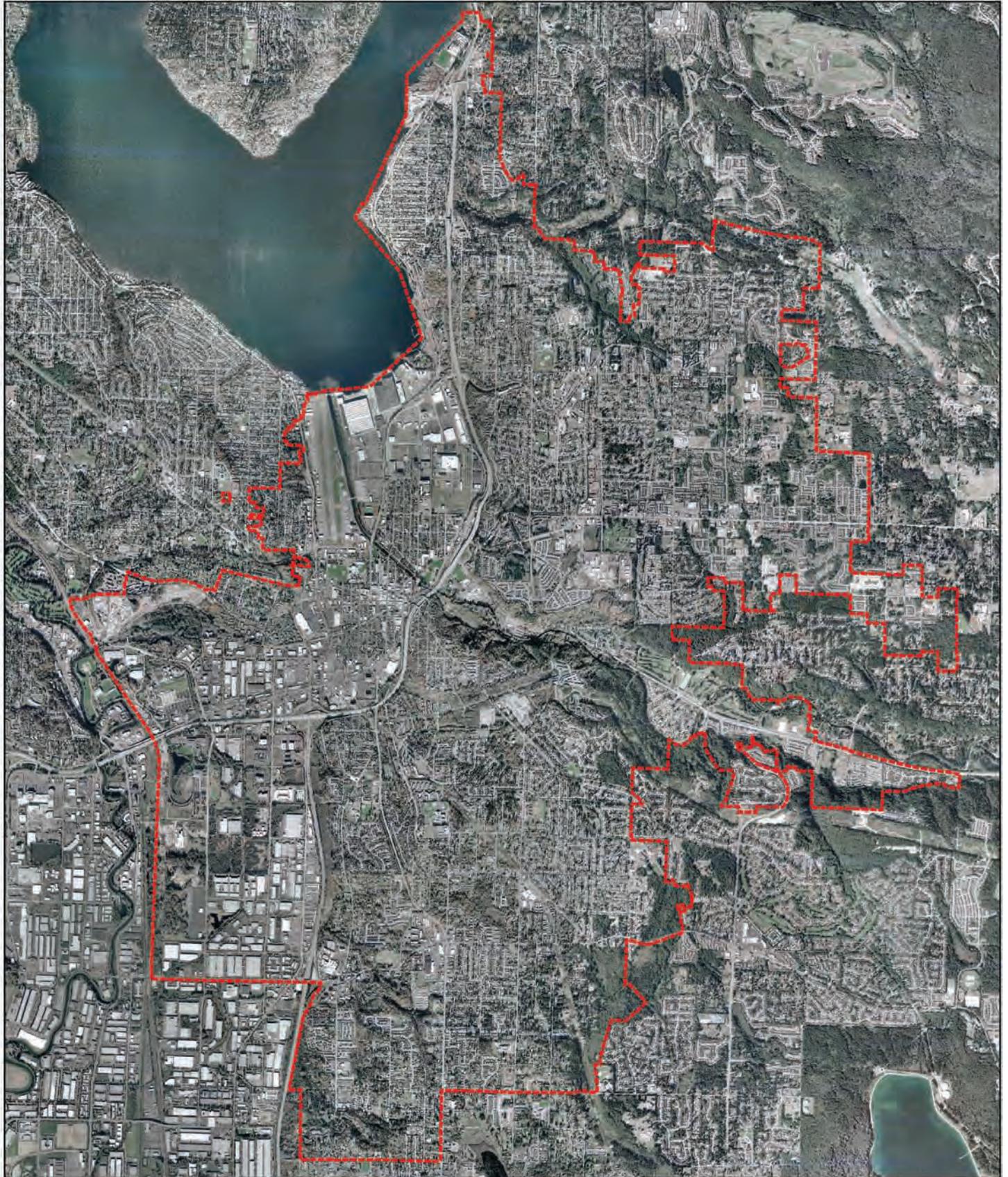
## 2009 City of Renton Limits and Surrounding Area Aerial Photograph

### 6. 2009 City of Renton Limits and Surrounding Area Aerial Photograph

- Aerial shows the City of Renton in 2007 with City limits in red.
- Shows surrounding areas not within City limits but part of the proposed annexation areas and other parts of King County.
- Lake Washington is in the upper left corner (north) with the southern portion of Mercer Island. Lake Youngs in in the lower middle right corner (south).



# City of Renton



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
Gregg Zimmerman, Administrator  
Technical Services  
B. MacDine, D. Vignesi  
Printed on July 27, 2009

This document is a graphic representation, not guaranteed to survey accuracy, and is based on the best information available as of the date shown. This map is intended for City display purposes only.

 Renton City Limits

0 1,200 2,400'





# Appendix

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## 2008 Urban Forestry Programs Comparisons

### 7. 2008 Urban Forestry Programs Comparisons

- Table comparing urban forest programs of 4 representative cities and Renton.
- Illustrates the Urban Forestry Task Force desires for programming in Renton.



**RENTON URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY TASK FORCE – Meeting #6, September 18, 2008**

PROGRAM COMPONENTS	Vancouver, WA	Portland, OR	Bellevue, WA	Kirkland, WA	Renton, WA	Notes
Population	162,400	568,380	119,200	45,740	√ = desired 83,000	
Host Department	Parks	Parks	Parks & Community Services	Planning	Parks & Community Services	Vancouver, Portland and Bellevue do not have arborist in Planning
Staff	3	25	5	1.25*		*0.75 in Planning + 0.5 PW field arborist
Funding	General + Storm PW	Mix	General + Park Bonds/Levy	General		
Tree Board (citizen)	Yes	Yes	No	No	√ (In Parks Commission)	
Inter-departmental Group	No*	Urban Forestry Policy Group	Natural Resource Division	Natural Resource Mgmt. Team	√	*As part of sustainability reorganization into Environmental Resources of PW next year
Developed "Strategic" Plan for the program	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	√	Kirkland – interdisciplinary
Program official inception	1996	1970's	1980's	2002	2008	
Private Tree Regulations	Both related and not related to development	Both related and not related to development	Related to development only*	Both related and not-related to development	Both related and not-related to development	*not extensive
TreeCity USA	19 years	13 years	16 years	6 years	√	
Street Tree List	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	√	
Forestry Ordinance / Public Trees	Street tree and hazardous vegetation	Street tree and other public trees	No	Street tree and park trees	√	
Street Tree Management	Citizen	Citizen	Private/Public*	Citizen	Private/Public	*Has a dedicated street tree program for blvd./arterial trees
Volunteer stewardship and maintenance programs, e.g. Green Cities Partnerships	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
Heritage Tree Program	Yes	Yes	No	No	√	
NeighborWoods (citizen tree planting)	Yes (Friends of Trees)	Yes (Friends of Trees)	Yes (new)	Yes (limited)	√	
Canopy cover analysis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	√	
Tree inventory	Yes (not updated)	Yes	Yes	Yes (not updated)	Yes	