

Trees4Livability
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Release Date
March 15, 2022

NONPROFIT PROPOSES TREE CODE UPDATES TO CITY COUNCIL

[Bellevue, WA, March 2022] Trees4Livability presented their proposed tree code changes at the Bellevue City Council meeting on Monday, March 14. Hundreds of residents have signed the petition urging the city to take action to preserve the local tree canopy in 2022.

“I have been horrified at the rapid loss of tree cover in Lake Hills,” Melinda C. explains. “We need some protections in place so that it’s not so easy to thoughtlessly and reflexively cut down these trees that take decades to grow.”

“We should at least have tree protection equivalent to other cities around us,” adds Curtis S.

Read and sign the petition at <https://trees4livability.org/tree-code-petition>.

Bellevue is unique in Puget Sound in that it still has mature trees close to a city center. The thriving economy, award-winning schools, effective police force, and beautiful tree canopy attract residents to Bellevue every year. Trees4Livability believes that the time to preserve tree canopy is now to keep Bellevue’s “City in a Park” for residents and visitors alike.

“The entire region is experiencing explosive population growth, accelerating redevelopment in neighborhoods. We fully support building much-needed housing; however, we believe that development should be done with careful thought and intention to maintain our tree canopy,” explains founder Khaiersta English. “Tree canopy preservation needs to coexist with new development efforts. One does not need to be at odds with the other. We have architects, home-builders, and structural engineers among our members who support a balanced approach.”

After researching other cities in the region, Trees4Livability recommends several changes to the current tree code to maintain the green spaces of Bellevue. These include preserving Landmark

Trees, many of which are 150 years old, and increasing protections for Significant Trees. In Bellevue, developers can cut down five significant trees without a permit. Other cities in Puget Sound do more to protect their Significant and Landmark Trees.

Trees4Livability is collecting petition signatures throughout March in preparation for the city council's retreat at the end of the month. Get involved by attending a promotion team kick-off on Saturday, March 19, at 9 am via Zoom. Sign up at trees4livability.org. You can also watch a recording of the March 14th meeting on the Bellevue TV YouTube channel, or on the Trees4Livability News and Press page <https://trees4livability.org/news-and-press>. Learn more by attending the remaining city council meetings in March, held on Mondays at 6 pm.

Trees4Livability comprises a group of concerned citizens from many backgrounds and neighborhoods across the city. Their volunteer Tree Code Working Group headed by Khaiersta English and Ruth Lipscomb collaborated to produce a research study comparing regional city tree codes and offering detailed recommendations.

The report has been endorsed by more than ten civic, environmental, and advocacy organizations, including 300 Trees, People for Climate Action, 350 Eastside, Bellevue Green & Clean, and Eastside Audubon, with more taking up the cause weekly. Read and sign the petition at <https://trees4livability.org/tree-code-petition> and help spread the word!