

DRAFT

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Seattle City Council
600 4th Ave
Seattle, WA
Via email to council@seattle.gov

September 20, 2023

RE: Urban Forestry Commission support for bill protecting culturally modified trees (TMP-9902)

Honorable Seattle City Councilmembers,

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) supports Councilmember Pedersen's legislation to protect culturally modified trees (TMP-9902).

Culturally modified trees are recognized as archeological sites by Tribal and State law. Their removal requires a permit from the State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). Councilmember Pedersen's legislation would add a simple safety check to ensure the City does not unintentionally allow removal of trees that are known archeological sites prior to authorization by the DAHP.

Such a safety check will help the City comply with State law, honor and respect Tribes, and protect irreplaceable archeological sites.

The UFC appreciates CM Pedersen's outreach to the Suquamish and Muckleshoot Tribes, and his collaboration with the Snoqualmie Tribe, as he developed this bill.

In May 2023, despite concerns expressed by the UFC and requests for additional review, Seattle City Council voted six to one to update Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance. At the time, Councilmembers Strauss, Herbold, Mosqueda, Morales, and Pedersen expressed intent to work on "clean up" legislation. Your attention to TMP-9902 would be a positive signal that Council is honoring its commitment to continuing to improve tree protection in Seattle.

Sincerely,