

Urban Forestry Commission

Aaron Clark (Position 1 – Wildlife Biologist) • **Alicia Kellogg** (Position 2 – Urban Ecologist)
• **Lani Chang** (Position 3 - Natural Resource Agency or University) • **Drue Epping** (Position 5 –
Arborist) • **Maeve Gillis** (Position 10 – Get Engaged) • **Melanie Ocasio** (Position 11 –
Environmental Justice) • **Andrea Starbird** (Position 12 Public Health) • **Lia Hall** (Position 13 –
Community/Neighborhood)

Date: March 31st, 2026

To: Mayor Katie Wilson

CC: Lisa Chen, Deputy Director of Community Relations; Sunaree Marshall, Executive Operations Manager; Lylianna Allala, Acting Director, Office of Sustainability & Environment

From: Urban Forestry Commission

Subject: Urban Forestry Commission's Welcome Letter to Mayor Wilson's Office

Dear Mayor Wilson,

On behalf of the [Urban Forestry Commission](#) (UFC), congratulations on assuming office as Mayor of Seattle. We welcome your leadership at this critical moment for our city and look forward to working with you to advancing our shared goals.

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) was established by [ordinance](#) as an advisory body to the Mayor and Council on policies and programs that affect Seattle's urban forest. The UFC's mission is to ensure Seattle's urban forest is protected, well-managed, and thriving. UFC members bring an intersectional lens to urban forestry policy through our various backgrounds and experience. We look forward to partnering with your administration in a collaborative, solutions-oriented way as we work to ensure that Seattle's trees and forests are recognized and managed as essential public infrastructure.

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We have mutual interests in building healthy communities and providing clean air, green public spaces, and climate resilience, starting with those most harmed by inequities. We share your vision for vibrant, resilient neighborhoods, and for inclusive and accountable governance. Urban forestry intersects with many of these priorities you've identified, and we see strong opportunities for alignment across departments and initiatives. We look forward to learning more about your priorities related to urban forestry and would welcome an opportunity to meet with you or a member of your staff.

We'd like to highlight several of our current priorities for 2026, in which we hope to collaborate with your administration and City departments:

- **Provide input on the city's 2026 canopy cover study, which will be coordinated by the Office of Sustainability (OSE).** We support the city's goal of 30% equitable canopy by 2037 and an Urban Forest that supports climate resilience, biodiversity, and the well-being of everyone in the city. The 2026 canopy cover study allows us to assess progress toward this goal.
- **Support Canopy Equity Resilience Plan (CERP) through the Office of Sustainability (OSE).** The Urban Forestry Commission is committed to partnering with City Staff to assess, communicate, and help implement the findings to advance Seattle's equitable canopy goals.
- **Support incentive initiatives for trees on private property.** Private land trees are a critical and large component of Seattle's urban forest and expenses to maintain them fall disproportionately on communities facing health inequities and the greatest urban heat impacts. We aim to collaborate with the City to help support private landowners' stewardship of their trees to benefit the wellbeing of our communities.

To recap, as a Commission we are here to provide timely, actionable input for policy impacting our urban forests. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss shared priorities and identify opportunities for partnership. Our city liaison will be reaching out (OSE_UFC_Liaison@seattle.gov) to coordinate.

We look forward to working together to steward a healthy, equitable, and resilient urban forest that supports the health of current and future generations.

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Best,



[Aaron D. Clark \(03/26/2026 11:46:58 PDT\)](#)

Aaron Clark, Co-Chair
Wildlife Biologist, Position 1
Urban Forestry Commission



[Drue Epping \(03/26/2026 12:23:26 PDT\)](#)

Drue Epping, Co-Chair
Arborist, Position 5
Urban Forestry Commission



[Andrea Starbird \(03/30/2026 12:20:52 PDT\)](#)

Andrea Starbird, Co-Chair
Public Health Representative, Position 12
Urban Forestry Commission