

Green Factor Director's Rule *Update*

Urban Forestry Commission
November 14, 2018

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Timeline

May 2018 – briefed UFC on upcoming updates to Director’s Rule

September 2017 – briefed UFC

November 2017 – MHA legislation forwarded to Council

- Score sheet
- Seattle Municipal Code update

Agenda

What is Green Factor?

What materials guide designers?

Why are we updating Green Factor?

What changes do we propose?

Next steps

Green Factor: *What is it?*

- The City's landscaping requirement for new development
- First adopted in 2006, SMC updated in 2010 to include more zones
- Director's Rule last updated in 2015

Green Factor: *What is it?*

- Stated benefits:
 - Improves the look and feel of a neighborhood
 - Reduces stormwater runoff
 - Cools cities during heat waves
 - Provides habitat for birds and beneficial insects
 - Supports adjacent businesses
 - Decreases crime
- Qualifying landscape elements:
 - Trees
 - Shrubs and other low plantings
 - Groundcovers
 - Vegetated walls
 - Green roofs
 - Structural soils
 - *And more...*

What materials guide designers?

- **Seattle Municipal Code**
 - Chapter 23.45 Multi-family Zone development standards
 - 23.86.019 Green Factor measurement
- **Scoresheet**
 - updates proposed through MHA in 2017, not yet adopted
- **Worksheet**
 - Minor edits will be proposed to coordinate with Scoresheet
- **Director's Rule**
 - updates proposed now (last updated 2015)
- **Tree & Plant lists**
 - Interdepartmental team coordinating to update lists, expected in early 2019

Why are we updating Green Factor?

- Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA)
 - *See revised score sheet transmitted with MHA legislation in November 2017*
- Community feedback
- City- and designer-identified issues with the Director's Rule

What are we trying to achieve?

- Improve aesthetic quality of landscape elements
- Improve survivability of landscape plantings (particularly trees)
- Mitigate experience of building height and bulk
- Transition to the pedestrian scale
- Improve landscape performance
- Increase overall health, wellbeing, and livability benefits associated with nature contact

When?

- Expected MHA vote at Council is Q1 or Q2 2019
- Introduce Director's Rule prior to vote – Q1 2019

What changes are we considering?

- Clarify **irrigation** requirements
- Clarify **maintenance** requirement
- Increase and clarify **soil** requirements **for trees**
- Update and clarify **vegetated wall** requirements
- Indicate responsibility for **landscaping in the ROW**
- Align with **tree and plant lists** used elsewhere in the City (SPU, SDOT)
- Ensure **consistency** with Stormwater Code and Right of Way Improvements Manual
- Improve **user experience** for designers

Next steps

- Circulating draft update with SDCI, OSE, SDOT, SCL, and SPU staff
- Testing updates with landscape designers & UFC
- Anticipate final draft in December
- Requires 21-day comment period
- Goal is to become effective concurrent with MHA ordinance

Thank you.