

# #11

**COMPLETE**

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## Q1

Please share your information below:

Name	<b>Bob Kettle</b>
District	<b>7</b>
City	<b>Seattle</b>
Position	<b>City Council</b>

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## Q2

As a City of Seattle Council Member, will you commit to prioritizing amending Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance to include maximizing the retention of existing healthy trees, especially large ones, and planting more trees, as part of a climate resiliency plan for low income and economic justice communities to respond to environmental inequities?

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you::  
As a member of the Queen Anne Community Council, we worked with the Toll Brothers on the townhome community they put in place of the old Seattle Children's Home. One part of the project that we advocated for--and got--was to keep the big cedar on 10th Ave and elms on 9th, as well as pines on the corner of McGraw and 9th. Keeping existing healthy trees in new developments, and planting new trees as well, is good for mental and environmental health in low-income communities.

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## Q3

Seattle's new tree ordinance would allow the removal of all trees when lots are developed without considering alternative site design and building options to save trees. Would you support an amendment to the Tree Protection Ordinance requiring developers to consider alternative site designs to protect more trees? Many trees are the edge of lots.

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you::  
Trees and other greenery directly contribute--positively--to property values. Alternative site designs that keep trees in place will increase the value of those developed lots over time.

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**Q4**

As Seattle's population increases, so does the pressure for increased housing. Significant tree loss occurs in Seattle when lots are clear-cut for development. Advocates for more tree protection believe with better planning and regulations, we can both increase housing and save more existing trees. Trees create healthy communities. Can you think of additional ways Seattle can succeed at saving more of its exceptional and significant trees while building new housing?

Alternative site / property designs are one. The other is to encourage growing more of Seattle's trees, especially its evergreens, as well. More trees mean better air quality, further protection from extreme temperature events, and increased mental health benefits.

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**Q5**

The Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) currently oversees tree protection on private property. SDCI is mainly funded by money from development permits but gets no money for tree protection. This creates a potential conflict of interest. Additionally, SDCI has no Urban Forestry Division or Urban Foresters. Trees and our urban forest need a city department to represent them that does not have conflicting priorities. San Francisco has a Department of the Environment with responsibilities for a diversity of issues, including the urban forest and climate. Would you support moving tree and urban forest protection and oversight to a new independent Department of the Environment and Climate that includes an Urban Forestry Division to specifically coordinate and prioritize tree and urban forest protection?

**No,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you: Instead of creating a new department (and therefore new bureaucracy), let's create a new division or section within SDCI and fund it independently. Separately, the city should support the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission and also fund Parks to oversee Seattle's many green belts.

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**Q6**

Portland, Oregon requires that a comprehensive Tree Inventory and Tree Plan be done at the beginning of their development permit process. Developers enter the inventory and information into an Excel spreadsheet which can easily be added to a city database. This allows developers to plan around trees from the start of the development process and not a later add on, complicating an already moving process. This will also help Seattle more quickly track tree loss and replacement during development. The current tracking is requiring SDCI staff to remove data from a site plan which is both time consuming and frequently incomplete because all the information is not on the site plan. It also eats up employee time and the SDCI budget. Do you support amending the current Tree Ordinance to add this requirement?

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you: We should ensure that this is as simple a process as possible.

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**Q7**

Seattle, in 2007, set a 30 - year goal to reach a tree canopy of 30% by 2037. Yet there has been no specific plan developed by the city detailing how we can reach this goal. The recent record temperatures in Seattle and the Northwest confirmed the deadly impacts of urban heat island effects on human life, especially in areas where there is low tree canopy. Mapping has shown these areas to be mostly previously redlined areas and low- income areas. Seattle needs a detailed plan in place to plant in areas needing more trees to address environmental equity. Will you support developing a tree planting plan and prioritizing this goal by moving the 30% canopy goal to 2030 as is being done with other climate mitigation timeline goals in Seattle?

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you::

Trees are good for mental health and environmental health in general. When it comes to previously redlined areas and low-income areas, it's even more critical to have trees and green spaces.

**Q8**

Many trees in Seattle die as the result of invasive species like English ivy, killing them with their climbing vines. On steep slopes this greatly threatens slope stability and increases the risk of landslides. A good time to remove invasives is during development. The current landscaping plan requires that invasives be removed only where a replacement tree is being planted. Do you support requiring developers, as part of their landscape plan, to remove all invasives on the lot undergoing development?

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you::

Seattle--and the state of Washington more generally--have amazing indigenous trees and other plants. Invasives directly contribute to indigenous plants and trees dying off and don't generally have the same positive effects as indigenous plant life does in mitigating extreme natural events.

**Q9**

Portland, Oregon in 2020 complied with an Oregon State law to require approval of building 4 plexes in their single-family zone. Last November, responding to continued canopy loss, they amended their building code to require a dedicated 20% Tree Retention and Planting area in multifamily zones and a 40% dedicated Tree Retention and Planting area in their 1-4 family zone as a planning alternative to save trees. Would you support a similar provision to help Seattle protect its tree canopy for climate resiliency and tree equity across the city?

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you::

Trees are a net good for the communities they're in, and they increase property values.

**Q10**

The new Tree Protection Ordinance guarantees developers a 100% allowable development area in Midrise, Seattle Mixed and Commercial zones and an 85% allowable development area in the Lowrise zones. Seattle's multifamily zones currently have a 23% canopy cover and Seattle mixed zone has a 12% canopy cover according to the Seattle 2021 Canopy Report. Would you support maintaining the present building code which allows the city to work with developers to try to save trees in these zones instead of a one size fits all guarantee that will result in significant canopy loss in these zones?

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you::

I am generally in favor of maintaining tree canopy for all its benefits, and I will need to review the recent Tree Ordinance before giving a more detailed response.

**Q11**

The Seattle City Council approved funds to scope a study of Seattle's Natural Capital but never followed through. Would you support funding a Natural Capital Study for Seattle to monetize the economic value of Seattle's trees and urban forest?

**Yes,**

Please share why this is, or is not, important to you::

Seattle and the PNW has a strong eco-tourism economy, and Seattle parks and other green spaces are a big draw for Seattle visitors and residents. By funding a Natural Capital Study, we can have more information about how much our trees and urban forest are worth, and that will allow for accountability and transparency in our city's approach to our trees and urban forest.

**Q12**

Share your favorite type of tree and how you like to spend time in nature?

I love evergreens, whether they're cedars, firs, or pines, and they make a big difference in Seattle winters. I have 2 Cairn terriers that I enjoy walking in Queen Anne's green spaces and our family enjoys visiting all our National and State parks.

**Q13**

Is there anything else you would like to share about why tree protection is important (or not) to you?

Trees, for the most part, are good for people, communities, and developments. Keeping trees in place and planting new trees is good for residents and good for overall property values. We can have trees that meet both social and economic considerations at the same time.