

# Trees and People Coalition Annual Report for 2024



**TREES AND PEOPLE**  
**C O A L I T I O N**

## Executive Summary

This annual report highlights the Trees and People Coalition's (TPC's) successful year, driven by the organization's strong commitment to the preservation and growth of Seattle's tree canopy. The year was marked by the culmination of a fundraising effort to reach \$60,000.00. Key achievements include:

- Support for the petition filed with the Regional Growth Management Hearings Board to review the Tree Protection Ordinance (CB 126821)
- The launch of community information meetings about the zoning updates proposed as part of the One Seattle Plan
- Strengthened partnerships with other climate and environmental groups
- Continued focus on sustainability initiatives

These efforts resulted in greater recognition among community members of the need to support tree retention and planting. Looking ahead, the organization remains committed to raising awareness and promoting action for Seattle's tree canopy.



## Mission, Vision, and Values (October, 2023)

### **MISSION: *Why do we exist***

To educate and engage all people to grow and protect urban trees for the benefit of all Seattle communities



### **VISION: *What do we wish to achieve***

To protect and grow Seattle's tree canopy for the health and well-being of current and future generations

To ensure tree equity and healthy communities for all

To mitigate climate change and ensure clean air and water

To honor and learn from the historical and spiritual legacy of our urban forests

To promote awareness and understanding of human connection to all living beings

To hold the City of Seattle's leadership accountable to its commitment to preserve Seattle's urban forest

To learn from, support, and collaborate with other tree advocacy and environmental organizations locally, nationally, and globally

### **VALUES: *What is our moral compass, what is unique about us, what conduct do we practice***

To reach out to ALL communities to ensure diverse voices are echoed in our work

To work internally and externally to break down systemic patterns and policies that cause urban canopy inequities

To incorporate each member's value of trees into our organization's decision-making and actions

To maintain a respectful and open approach in all interactions

## Accomplishments in 2024

**Challenge to the 2023 Tree Protection Ordinance:** We took full financial responsibility for a legal challenge of Seattle’s 2023 Tree Protection Ordinance before the Regional Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB). In legal briefs, and at a hearing in February, our legal team provided compelling evidence that the Ordinance was inconsistent with Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan and Washington State law and violated the Growth Management Act. Unfortunately, the Board dismissed our petition.

**Fundraising:** We held two successful fundraising events which also served as community educational and networking events:

- On March 19 at Seward Park Community Club, we featured local artist Rainier Waldman Adkins and raised \$8,724.41.
- On June 1 in Wallingford, at our “Trees Alive!” event, we featured a keynote from Dave Upthegrove, then King County Council Chair, about his efforts to save King County’s legacy forests. We received 37 different items from creators and businesses for our auction and raised \$9,379.73.

Through these events and other efforts, we were able to fulfill all financial obligations to our legal team by September 30, 2024.

**Community Education and Engagement:** During the winter, we joined with Tree Action Seattle to present information about Seattle’s diminishing tree canopy and the need to revise the Tree Protection Ordinance at Horizon House, the Haller Lake Community Center, and Skyline Retirement Community.



In February, our grant proposal “Trees for Seattle’s Future” was selected as one of 46 proposals accepted by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry Program. The goals of the project are to raise awareness of and promote action for Seattle’s tree canopy and strengthen family and community bonds and connection with nature in an urban setting. The project will focus on young (aged 3-5) children, their families and caregivers, and early childhood educators. We spent the last ten months of 2024 developing the project with community partners<sup>1</sup>.

In April, for Earth Day, we provided volunteer support for a community discussion, “Seattle’s Urban Forest: Within the Balance?” held at Yesler Community Center.

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<sup>1</sup> As of March 10, 2025, no funds have been received by T&PC. Funding is currently frozen because of [federal](#) actions.

Throughout the year, members of the Trees and People Coalition attended public meetings and educational events to draw attention to the potential negative impacts of the draft One Seattle Plan on tree canopy and displacement. In October, Mayor Harrell released the details of the Plan's zoning update. If adopted, its extreme upzones would greatly reduce space for trees all over Seattle and would exacerbate existing upzones and heat islands in environmental justice priority areas. In November and December, the Trees and People Coalition hosted community education events about the impacts of the zoning proposals in five at-risk neighborhoods: Hillman City, West Seattle, Columbia City, Beacon Hill, and the Central Area. We also held an all-city session on Zoom. The sessions were well-attended, lively, and influential. We published information and educational materials on our website.

In partnership with Tree Action Seattle, we participated in many gatherings to publicize the impending loss of majestic trees throughout Seattle. Over time, these gatherings galvanized support for urban tree canopy protection among thousands of Seattle residents.

**Community Partnerships:** In addition to our work with Tree Action Seattle, we joined the Tree Equity Network (TEN), sponsored by the Seattle Parks Foundation and Birds Connect. We participated actively in TEN gatherings. We met with community organizations whose work overlaps with ours, including the Central Area Land Use Review Committee, Heron's Nest, and the Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS).

**Tree-Planting:** One of our Board members obtained 300 Western Red Cedar seedlings and made them available at cost for planting throughout Seattle.

**Building Our Organization:** We took several major steps to develop structure and policies for our new nonprofit organization:

- Partnered with two different fiscal sponsors: first, the Community Day Center for Children and later, the Seattle Parks Foundation
- Developed and approved bylaws
- Held workshops on fundraising and effective organizational communication
- Developed and approved group norms and ground rules



## Financial Report

<b>Project Profitability for Trees &amp; People Coalition's Trees &amp; People</b>	
October 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024	
	Total
<b>Income</b>	
Trees & People Coalition Donations	40,403.98
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 40,403.98</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 40,403.98</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
TP&C Legal & Professional Fees	38,902.21
T&PC Event Fees	1,501.77
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 40,403.98</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>



## Challenges in 2024

The Trees and People Coalition was a brand-new nonprofit organization which started the year owing tens of thousands of dollars to our legal team. We were inexperienced in fundraising. We learned fast and managed to pay off all of our debt by September 30.

The Mayor's Office is working closely with the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties (MBAKS) on land use policy. MBAKS has large public-relations resources and is very effective at messaging. Their messaging has convinced many Seattle organizations and individuals, including progressives, that trees must be sacrificed for density. We are working hard against great odds to get our message across: we don't need as much density as the One Seattle Plan proposes, and, where housing is needed, with smart design and effective, evidence-based tree protection regulations, we can have housing and trees. This message is beginning to resonate.

Our organization is small, and our Board and members are stretched thin. We need to build TPC into a robust organization filled with a committed and diverse membership.



## Goals for 2025

1. Grow and diversify our Board and membership; have a full Board of four officers and nine members-at-large by the end of 2025 (we now have four officers and three members-at-large)
2. Make an impact on passage of a revised Tree Protection Ordinance and other measures to increase tree canopy in Seattle to meet the [30% canopy goal](#)
3. Initiate 'Dream Big' campaign to seek donor opportunities of one-time and repeating funds for Trees and People Coalition special projects
4. Raise \$5,000 in additional funds to support our work
5. Secure funding for the Trees for Seattle's Future project, from DNR if federal funds become available or from an alternate source; begin project if funding becomes available
6. Hold at least one anti-racism training for the Board and members of the Trees and People Coalition and develop a racial equity policy
7. Focus our educational efforts on the connection between colonization and loss of tree canopy

