

# Tree Canopy Code Amendments

## Study Session

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# Direction Needed from Council

Information Only



# Agenda

1. Project Goals
2. Engagement Plan
3. Questionnaire
4. What Are We Hearing?
5. Initial Scope Recommendations
6. Next Steps



# Project Goals

## Strategy N.1. Increase Tree Canopy Citywide

- 40% goal
- Ensure sufficient code provisions
- Incentivize the right tree in the right place
- Identify opportunities for tracking data



# Project Goals

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- **Comprehensive** code review
- Support tree **preservation, retention, replacement,** and **protection**
- **Balance** housing production needs
- Improve the function and **clarity** of code
- Capture better **data**



# Engagement Plan

## Phase One (Complete)

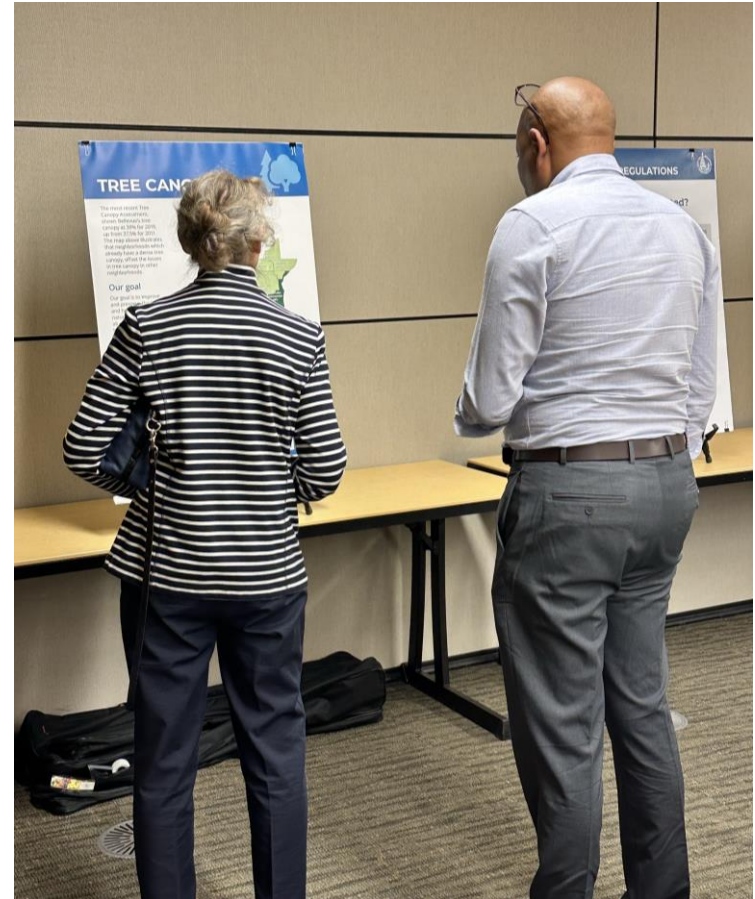
- Engaging Bellevue project site
- Direct Engagement
- Listening Sessions
- Online Questionnaire
- Public Information Session



# Engagement Plan

## Phase Two (July Onward)

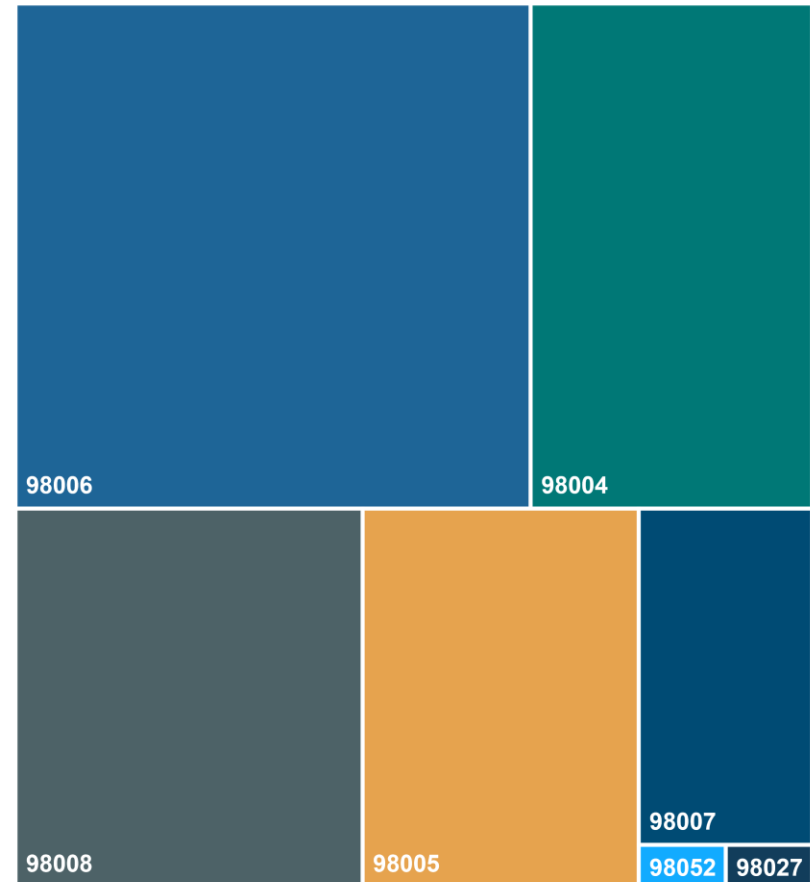
- Continued direct engagement
- Up to 6 listening sessions
- Up to 2 public information sessions
- Planning Commission Public Hearing
- **Flexibility for additional outreach**



# Questionnaire

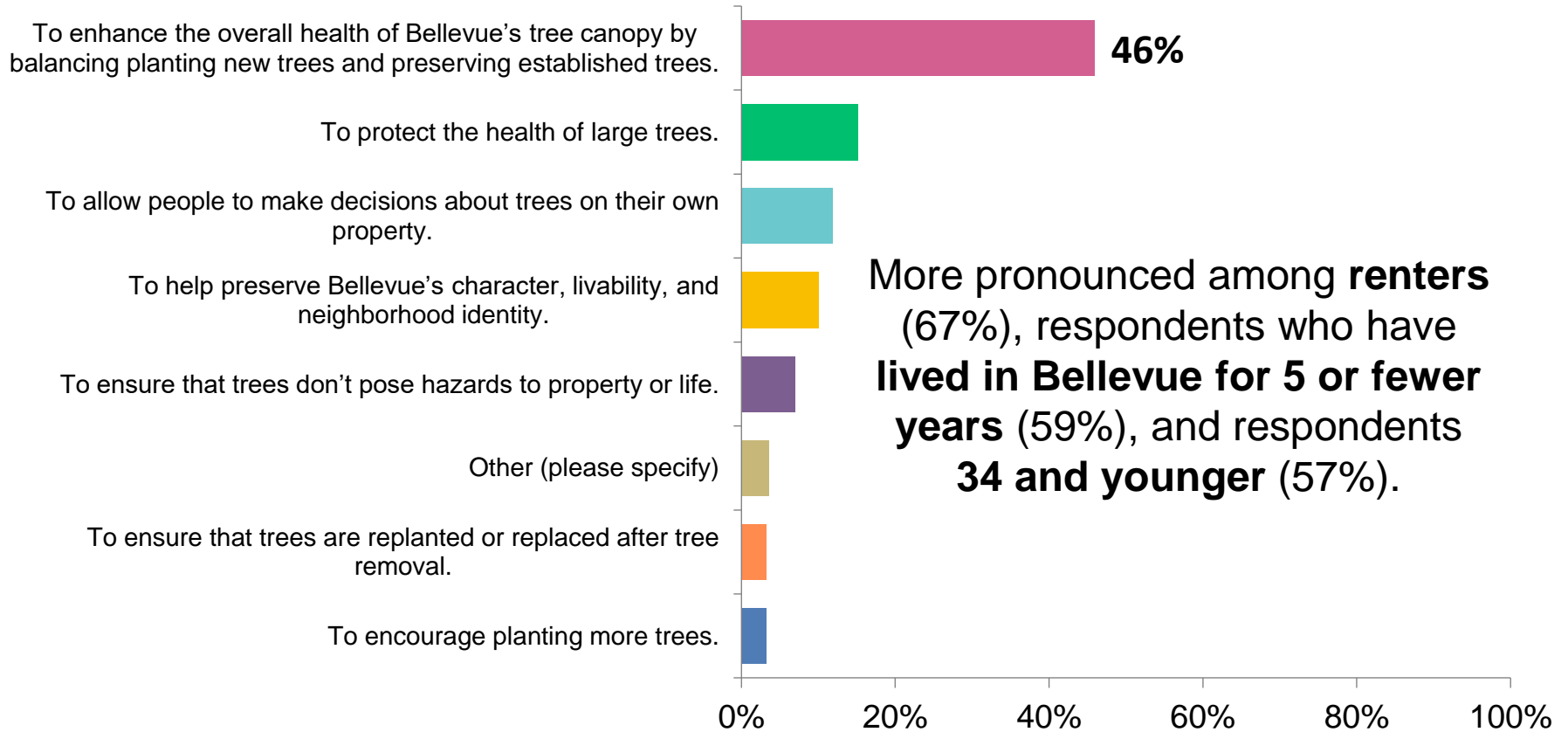
## Who did we hear from?

- Available in 7 languages
- 687 complete responses
- 92% live in Bellevue, and generally:
  - Older, longer time residents
  - More likely to identify as white and female
  - More likely to own single family homes





# Questionnaire



# What Are We Hearing?

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## Preventing and Mitigating Tree Loss

- Perceptions **too many trees** are being removed
- Concern with losing **large trees**
- Concern with **lot clearing** before development
- **Mitigation** for loss is not sufficient today
- Perceptions many **are not aware** of regulations
- Regulations should **not be complicated or too costly**



# What Are We Hearing?

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## Supporting a Healthy Canopy and Community

- Emphasis on the benefits of **large trees**
- Support **tree diversity**
- Need **flexibility** to retain trees with best chances after development
- Provide **more consistent canopy** across neighborhoods



# What Are We Hearing?

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## Accommodating Different Preferences

- Deeply-held **contrasting** opinions exist
- **Property owners** should maintain right to make decisions
- Maintaining room for **varying preferences**



# What Are We Hearing?

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## Maintaining Development Capacity

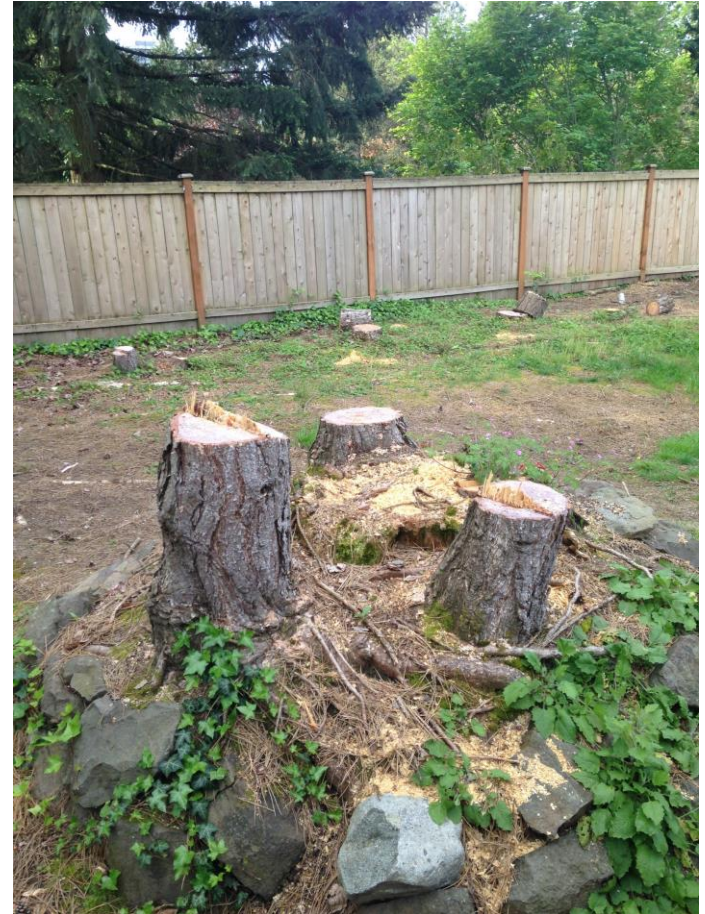
- Regulations must be **predictable and objective**
- Desire for **flexibility**
- Longer **timelines** increase costs
- Include considerations for different **development types**
- Find **incentives** to encourage better outcomes



# What Are We Hearing?

## Enforcing Regulations

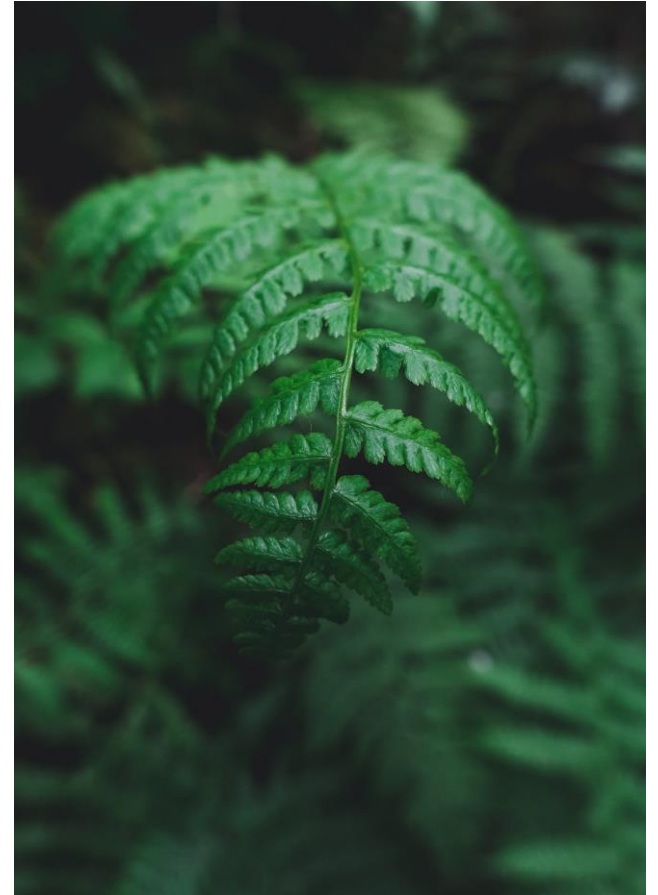
- Concern regulations are **too weak**
- Perception there is a **lack of consequences** for violations
- Support for financial **penalties**
- Concerns with some tree **service providers**



# Initial Scope Recommendations

## Definitions

- Update **significant tree** definition
- Implement permanent definition for **landmark trees**
- Develop definition for **hazardous trees**



# Initial Scope Recommendations

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## Tree Removal

- **Permit** to remove any significant tree
- Discourage **lot clearing** before development
- Evaluate expanding **replacement requirements**
- Evaluate imposing **financial penalties** for violations





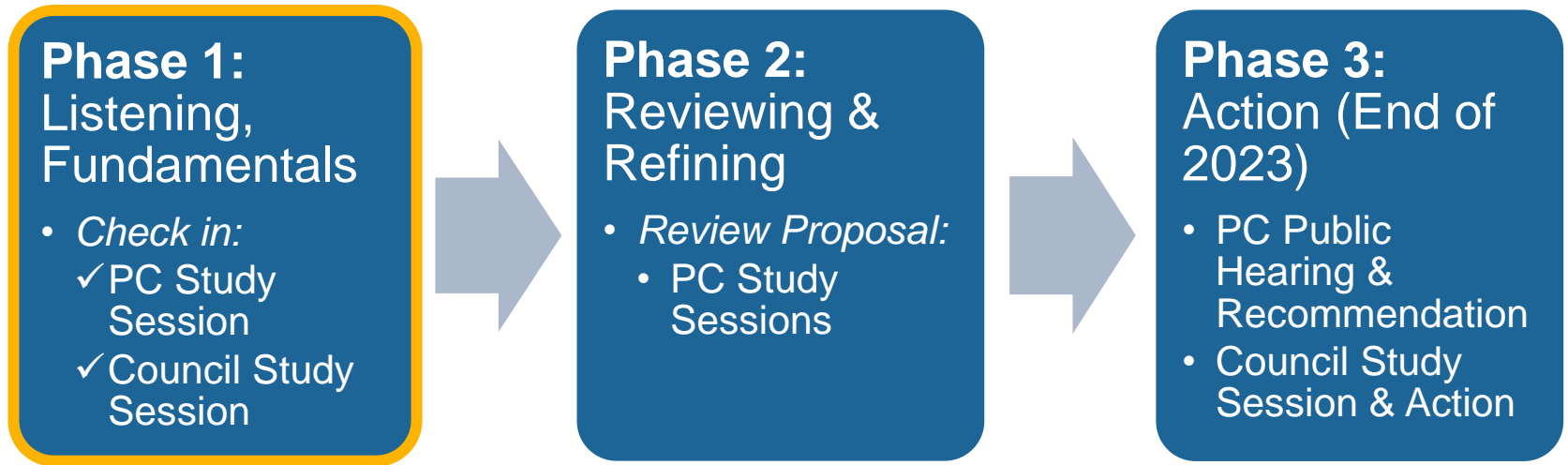
# Initial Scope Recommendations

## Tree Retention

- Evaluate alternative **minimum canopy approach**
- **Clarify duration** for retained trees
- Update retention **criteria**
- Codify **key protections** during construction



# Next Steps



Questionnaire

Technical Analysis

Listening Sessions

Public Info Sessions ★  
6/8





# Direction Needed from Council

Information Only

