

Elliott Bay Connections

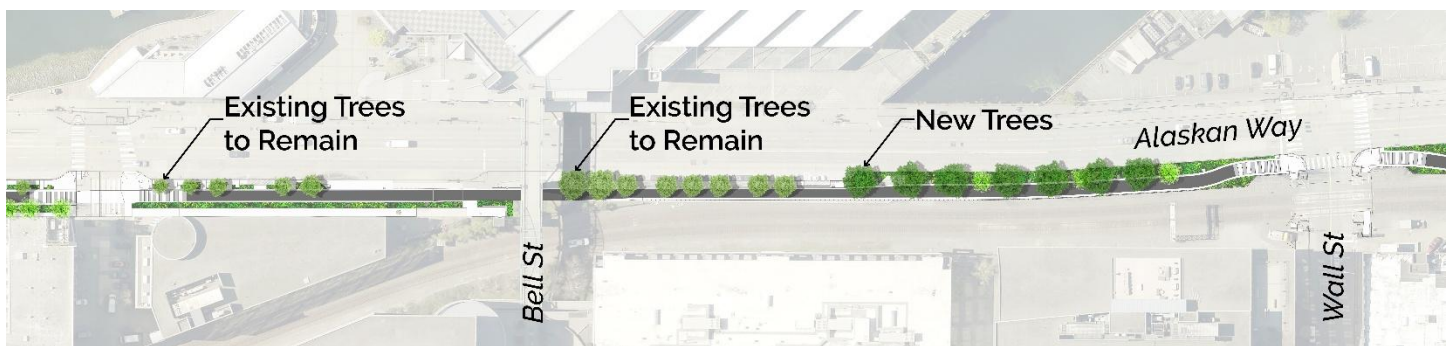
Frequently Asked Questions:

Alaskan Way Tree Removal and Replacement

Starting as early as late October 2025, trees along the eastern side of Alaskan Way between Blanchard St. and Wall St. will be removed and replaced as part of the new pedestrian and bicycle greenway trail being constructed as part of the Elliott Bay Connections (EBC) project.

Under Seattle's [Street Tree Ordinance](#), all tree removals are reviewed and permitted by the Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT) Urban Forestry Division and public notice must be provided 24 days in advance of work being performed. This notice will be posted on site.

These trees will be replaced with a more diverse variety of healthier, broader-canopy tree species planted in improved soil with new irrigation and more root space that will allow the new trees to thrive and flourish for generations to come. In addition to new trees, there will be diverse native plantings that evoke the Pacific Northwest coastal landscape, including native evergreen shrubs, grasses and perennials.



Why are these trees being removed?

The existing trees on the eastern side of Alaskan Way have been carefully evaluated by a certified arborist and marked for preservation or removal and replacement. Preservation was prioritized wherever possible, so all trees in good condition that could safely remain are being protected during construction and will remain as part of the new landscaping and pathway.

Under the City ordinance, a street tree may be removed only if a certified arborist finds that the tree "is hazardous, poses a public safety hazard, exhibits poor health or poor vigor or cannot be successfully retained due to public or private construction."

Are you sure that these trees are not in good health?

Even if a tree looks healthy, it may have hidden problems such as compacted roots, limited soil, or internal decay. Certified arborist evaluations identified limited rooting area and sidewalk uplift creating trip hazards, indicating trees that would not thrive long term.

How is the public being informed about the tree removals?



Required public notices will be posted on each affected tree and online at least 24 days prior to removal. The public can send comments to SDOT Urban Forestry at DOT_LA@Seattle.gov and questions to the EBC inbox at info@ElliottBayConnections.org.

Sample SDOT Urban Forestry Division Notice.

What's the replacement plan? Does it meet Seattle's tree policy?

The Seattle tree policy calls for a 3:1 replacement ratio on public property when trees are removed. The EBC project, which includes the new greenway trail and improvements to Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks, is following a 4:1 ratio in the replacement of trees. Where space is constrained, every tree removed will be replaced one-for-one with enhanced soil and new irrigation. Where more room is available, every removed tree will be replaced by up to four trees. **EBC will add nearly 200 new trees** to Seattle's urban tree canopy.

What are the new trees being planted?

Most of the trees being removed in late October are **columnar Norway maples (*Acer platanoides*)**, a non-native variety bred to grow in a tall, narrow form.

The new trees will be a mix of broad-canopy and climate-adapted species that provide shade, seasonal interest and support wildlife. The new trees will create a layered canopy that supports the City's goal to reach 30% canopy cover by 2037 and improve tree health and resiliency to climate change.

Replacement tree species include:

- **Elms (disease-resistant varieties):** broad canopy, fast growing, very resilient to urban conditions
- **Pines:** year-round stormwater uptake, visual screening, wildlife habitat
- **Ironwood:** fall and winter character, very resilient to urban conditions
- **Dogwood (native hybrid):** spring flowers, fall color, wildlife habitat
- **Serviceberry:** spring flowers, fall color, wildlife habitat



New Ironwood trees planted as part of the EBC project. Photo Credit: Sellen Construction.

When are the new trees and plantings being installed?

Tree installation in the southern portion of the greenway trail has already begun and will continue in other areas throughout the autumn and winter.

What is the greenway trail?

The new greenway trail includes a multi-use trail designed for people of all ages and abilities walking, biking and rolling, replacing the obsolete trolley track and sidewalk on the east side of Alaskan Way.

Improvements also include:

- Lush landscape areas planted along the multi-use trail that will feature native and climate-adapted trees, shrubs and ground cover plantings.
- New directional signage to provide clear navigation for residents and visitors.

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- New and improved lighting that will make it safer for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel from Waterfront Park to the Olympic Sculpture Park, Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Park and beyond.



The pedestrian and bicycle greenway trail is replacing the obsolete trolley track on the east side of Alaskan Way with a multi-use trail designed for people of all ages and abilities walking, biking and rolling. Renderings by Walker Macy.

When will the greenway trail open? What about Myrtle Edwards and Centennial parks?

The greenway trail and parks will be open to the public no later than June 2026.

How has the public been engaged throughout this project?

Starting in September 2023, the EBC team of landscape architects and others has shared designs and gathered community input through online presentations, surveys and updates on the [EBC website](#).

How can I learn more?

- **Email:** info@ElliottBayConnections.org
- **Construction Hotline:** (206) 462-1275
 - Hotline monitored whenever construction is taking place.
- **Sign up for construction updates:** [ElliottBayConnections.org](https://elliottbayconnections.org)