

**DATE:** September 14, 2023

**TO:** Chair Ledell and Planning Commission members

**FROM:** Charles Ray, Urban Forester, Public Works/Environmental Resources

**RE:** **Final Draft Urban Forestry Management Plan**

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## Background

In 2022, Vancouver's Urban Forestry Program secured a \$20,000 grant from WA Dept. of Natural Resources to fund an update to the adopted 2007 Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP).

The adopted 2007 Urban Forestry Management Plan helped guide Vancouver to make strategic improvements over the last 15 years with support from both internal City stakeholders as well as the greater community. The updated UFMP will help Vancouver identify what is next with strategic actions to work towards in the next 5 years, 10 years and beyond with community input and support, including:

- Identify and create plans to address inequities in our tree canopy.
- Review our tree data, plans, policies and other available data.
- Plan for an equitable, climate resilient tree canopy in the future.
- Provide a roadmap to achieve a shared vision for the future of Vancouver's trees.

The purpose of the updated UFMP is to recommend direction and actions for Vancouver to optimize the benefits of trees by envisioning an equitable, climate adaptive, integrated, and sustainable approach to managing the city's urban forest resources over the next twenty-five years. The final draft UFMP includes: a comprehensive analysis of the current state of Vancouver's urban forest; a discussion of existing management structures and policies; a summary of community outreach activities and feedback; a vision for the future; and goals and action items to support the realization of the vision. The final draft UFMP also includes a monitoring plan and implementation schedule.

Development of the draft UFMP involved extensive research of other communities; review of existing plans, policy and workflows; broad community outreach and discussions with key stakeholders, including the Urban Forestry Commission and City staff. Community outreach efforts included two online meetings, one open house, an online community survey, and internal/external stakeholder outreach.

The final draft Long-Term Framework in the UFMP identifies 3 Goals:

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
<p><b>Proactively manage public trees, continue to grow and expand a healthy canopy to achieve the 28% citywide canopy goal, maintain public safety, and optimize urban forest benefits.</b></p>	<p><b>Achieve environmental justice through a partnership with the City and its residents to improve well-being, human health, local economies, and urban forest sustainability.</b></p>	<p><b>Strengthen policies for preserving the environmental benefits, management, and the character of Vancouver’s urban forest.</b></p>
<p>1.1A Update and maintain the public tree inventory.</p>	<p>2.1A Maintain Tree City USA recognition.</p>	<p>3.1A Protect trees during construction projects.</p>
<p>1.1B Utilize current and future canopy assessments.</p>	<p>2.1B Maintain active communications with diverse audiences.</p>	<p>3.1B Apply a no-net-loss approach to tree canopy cover.</p>
<p>1.2A Align staffing levels with the needs of the urban forest and the community.</p>	<p>2.1C Provide education and training workshops.</p>	<p>3.1C Use tree canopy assessment data for tree management policies.</p>
<p>1.2B Establish and implement a proactive pruning cycle and management program for City-maintained trees.</p>	<p>2.1D Implement program services through the lens of environmental justice.</p>	<p>3.1D Update and strengthen tree-related ordinances, design standards, and protocols.</p>
<p>1.2C Ensure newly planted trees receive post-planting care and young tree training.</p>	<p>2.2A Expand partnerships and the Neighborhood Tree Stewards program.</p>	<p>3.2A Enforce tree regulations.</p>
<p>1.3A Formally update the Tree Planting Initiative.</p>	<p>2.2B Coordinate Plan implementation and community engagement with the Urban Forestry Commission and local partners.</p>	
<p>1.3B Increase citywide tree canopy cover.</p>	<p>2.2C Effectively manage volunteers and events.</p>	
<p>1.3C Grow a sustainable and resilient urban forest.</p>		

The first draft of the UFMP was released for public comment on March 8, 2023. Additionally, the first draft was reviewed by the Urban Forestry Commission on March 15<sup>th</sup> and the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission on April 9<sup>th</sup>. The second draft, released April 27, 2023, was reviewed with City Council during a workshop on May 8, 2023 and Planning Commission workshop on May 23, 2023.

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The second draft also underwent State review through the Department of Commerce and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process in May-July of 2023.

In August 2023, the project team refined and finalized the draft UFMP based on feedback received from the community, City Council, Vancouver Planning Commission, State agencies and others and is now posted on [Project's Be Heard website](#). The final draft UFMP will be reviewed by the Urban Forestry Commission on September 20, 2023 with the request to endorse and recommend Council adoption of the final draft UFMP.

### Action Requested

No action required. The purpose of the presentation is to provide a final opportunity for Planning Commission review and comment prior to taking it to Council for adoption, given that the Planning Commission will be engaged in future implementation of the plan. The final draft of the Urban Forestry Management Plan is posted on [Project's Be Heard website](#).

### Next Steps

After the Planning Commission workshop on September 26, 2023, staff anticipate bringing the final draft UFMP forward to City Council on October 23, 2023 for 1<sup>st</sup> reading and November 6, 2023 for 2<sup>nd</sup> reading/public hearing with a recommendation of adoption.

In addition, pending Council adoption, adoption by reference of the UFMP into the Comprehensive Plan will be included in the City's 2023 annual review program for Comprehensive Plan changes.

### Staff Contact Information

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### Attachments

- A. Final Draft UFMP is available on the [Project's Be Heard website](#).