

January UFC Program and Staff Reports

7. Program Updates

AmeriCorps and Friends of Trees:

Upcoming plantings:

Volunteer event, Bagley Downs Tree Planting at Not Utah property on 1/11

Volunteer event, Coop Park Tree Planting on 1/18

Volunteer event, MLK Day of Service, restoration planting at the Water Center on 1/20

Friends of Trees planting in Central Vancouver 1/25

School planting with students, Vita Elementary on 1/29

School planting with students, School for the Blind on 2/6

Riley is moving on to a new job! She will be working with the Hillsboro Water Department coordinating outreach and education on water programs. Riley's last day with Urban Forestry is January 21. She will be coordinating the plantings on 1/11 and 1/18 and transitioning the coordination of the youth program to Bri Graw. It has been a wonderful to have Riley on our team, and we are excited for her next chapter.

Annual Report 2024:

Staff has begun work on the annual report. Please send us any partners you have worked with, projects you have worked on, and other activities to be included in our 2024 Annual Report. See last year's Annual Report for reference, [UF_AR2023.pdf](#). Also please email your estimated 2024 volunteer hours to Charles Ray. If you have any questions about how to compile your volunteer hours, contact staff.

Arbor Day 2025 Planning:

The Outreach Subcommittee and staff are developing plans for Arbor Day 2025. Please share any ideas on locations, themes and any improvements.

Mac Awards 2025:

The Commission will be awarding the annual Mac Awards as part of Arbor Day. The Commission will vote on this year's nominates at the March meeting. Individuals, organizations, and businesses that have made a significant positive impact on Vancouver's urban forest are eligible for the Mac Award. Activities worthy of recognition include organizing a tree planting project, educating others about the benefits of trees

or proper tree care, preserving trees during land development, donating time and/or funds to advance the mission of the Urban Forestry program, developing creative partnerships in community forestry, or any other activity that inspires community stewardship of the urban forest. Please nominate candidates.

Subcommittee Reports:

Outreach:

Outreach 12/10/24 notes:

- 2/8/25: Save the date for a tree planting volunteer event for the commission w/ new Youth Corps members
- 1/4/25:Farmer Market 4 January... handouts and apple tree recipe in the works
- 12/11/24: holiday get-together
- Arbor Day planning in the works

Policy:

No report

Pollinator:

No report

Corridor:

No report

9. Urban Forestry Staff Report

Since the November Commission meeting, staff has been focused on fall/winter planting projects, implementing our 3-year Green Work Force IRA grant; our Tree Inventory IRA grant; next steps with our Urban Forest Management Plan and our workload to ensure all aspects of our program are moving forward. At the November meeting, the Commission requested an update on the city's budget reductions in regard to community partner programs such as the Watershed Alliance and Columbia Springs. Attached is a brief memo that summarized the reductions in the 2025-26 City Budget.

Tree City USA and Growth Award Application

Staff submitted to recertify as a Tree City USA for 36th year and for a Growth Award for the 25th year. The Growth Award is a prestigious award designed to recognize cities that have made notable improvements in their Urban Forestry Programs over the last year. Vancouver would qualify for the Growth Award due to the partnership with Friends of

Tree Adult Internship Program, Urban Forestry's work with Planning regarding Urban Forestry staff now reviewing all single family residences and the Old Apple Tree Festival.

Tree Inventory Grant 2025-26

This summer Urban Forestry was awarded \$350,000 to complete a tree inventory from Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as part of an Inflation Reduction Act grant. City Council approved the grant agreement on October 7, 2024. Staff has been working with Procurement on a request for proposal to secure a contractor to complete the project. The goal is to have a contractor by January.

Green Work Force Grant 2024-2026 Environmental Youth Corps Program

Riley has done an outstanding job creating a school-year program. With her taking a full time job with City of Hillsboro, staff will be working with Bri Graw in the short term to keep the program moving forward.

Proactive Street Tree Program

The proactive street tree program continues to move forward in coordination with Transportation's Pavement Management program. UF Staff is developing plans for the outreach and services for 2025 streets which will be complete from Feb-June. It is anticipated this program will reduce storm damage in the right of way, address social/environmental justice, and improve climate resilience.

Urban Forestry Work Plan 2025-26

Thank you for your support with the Work Plan. Staff will be posting it online on the UF website this month.

Staff has been working with Parks and Operation's Grounds Team to finalize our 2025 Park Proactive Pruning sites.

Our site visit inspection backlog is approx. 11 days (goal is 10 day response time) and hovering around 15 requests. Development and inspection requests are steady.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 27, 2024

TO: Urban Forestry Commissioners

FROM: Charles Ray, Urban Forester

RE: **Columbia Springs & Watershed Alliance Budget Update**

CC: Will Elder, Environmental Services Manager

This memo is to address Commissioners' questions regarding the Watershed Alliance and Columbia Springs contracts as part of the 2025-26 City Budget process.

During the development of the 2025-26 City Budget, the Columbia Springs and Watershed Alliance contracts were identified for reduction. This decision was driven by the challenging budget process, which required significant reduction goals for each department.

Both contracts were established years ago to support specific environmental initiatives and have proven to be effective and beneficial partnerships. Upon evaluation however, it was determined some of the services originally covered under these contracts were no longer needed or could be completed in-house. Rather than ending the contracts abruptly at the close of 2024, the City opted for a phased approach by providing funding through 2025. This transition funding allocated \$100,000 to the Watershed Alliance and \$30,000 to Columbia Springs for 2025.

The City remains committed to environmental stewardship and continues to achieve this mission through various programs, including the Water Center, Greenway Sensitive Lands Team, Volunteer Program, and Urban Forestry Program. We value our partnerships with the Watershed Alliance and Columbia Springs and look forward to continued coordination to enhance environmental efforts.