

August 10, 2023  
Item 5

**TITLE: REVIEW THE URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN (CIP NO. 22773) PROCESS  
AND PROVIDE STAFF WITH COMMENTS REGARDING THE PROCESS**

**SUMMARY**

City Council prioritized the preparation of the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) and approved the project, CIP No. 22773, as part of the FY 2021/22 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget. The UFMP was recommended to provide a management plan for the urban forest for the next 25 years, update the tree preservation ordinance and tree inventory, obtain public input and address the goals of the Climate Action Plan 2.0.

In May, city staff and their consultant, Dudek, held the kickoff meeting and started the tree inventory collection phases of the project. In addition, public outreach efforts are underway. Staff is holding public outreach events at the Saturday morning Farmers Market on August 5, 2023 and September 16, 2023, and the Concert in the Park on Friday, August 11, 2023. A survey has been created and sent out in the city's August newsletter. Staff is requesting that the Commission provide input on the UFMP and public outreach process and participate by taking the survey.

A final draft of the plan is expected in late 2024.

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. Receive the staff presentation; and
2. Review the UFMP and outreach process; and
3. Provide staff with comments.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

There is no direct financial impact resulting from a Parks and Recreation Commission action.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 1971, the City recognized the importance of its urban forest by adopting a tree preservation ordinance and preparing a plan that evaluated the City's trees.

In the early 2000s, the City identified a need to inventory its trees and created its first tree inventory comprised of City-owned trees. Staff has utilized that inventory as an important tool to care for and maintain the city's approximately 26,000 trees.

In 2022, City Council adopted Climate Action Plan 2.0 (CAP 2.0) which recommended the creation of an Urban Forest Master Plan.

City Council prioritized the preparation of the UFMP and approved the project, CIP No. 22773, as part of the FY 2021/22 CIP budget.

In October 2022 staff advertised a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the project. Six firms responded to the RFQ and on March 21, 2023, City Council approved a contract with the top ranked firm, Dudek. Staff held the kickoff meeting with Dudek on May 16, 2023.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Urban Forest Master Plan is a document that will guide the management of the City's urban forest over the next 25 years. The plan will lead to an equitable, resilient, and sustainably managed urban forest, will clearly and concisely communicate a framework for the long-term care, preservation and expansion of the community's urban forest and will include:

- An update to the inventory of trees managed by the City
- A review of the general health of the urban forest considering both public and private trees
- A guide for tree maintenance and tree planting practices for public areas and private development to sustain and enhance the urban forest into the future.
- An analysis of environmental programs relating to the urban forest, including meeting the goals of the CAP 2.0
- A cost/benefit analysis of the urban forest related to CAP 2.0 goals
- Recommendations on engagement and education to the community about the importance of a sustained urban forest
- A review of the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance for consistency with the UFMP, and if appropriate, recommended changes to the ordinance to assist with the implementation of the UFMP.

The UFMP will utilize the existing documents that helped to establish the city's urban forest, including the Tree Preservation Ordinance, the CAP 2.0, and the tree inventory to create a comprehensive guide for the management of the urban forest. The plan will guide Tree Preservation Ordinance updates, implementation of CAP 2.0 goals, tree inventory updates and maintenance management, and public outreach and education regarding the city's urban forest. The UFMP is intended to be comprehensive enough to provide a broad vision for the future of the city's urban forest and detailed enough to

address individual community concerns regarding the urban forest, such as potential hazards with trees relating to storms and fires.

The UFMP's analysis of the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance will help to address concerns identified by the community over the last several years such as tree protection standards, potential hazards with trees relating to storms and fires, conflicts between trees and infrastructure, safety concerns, and the health of the city's urban forest. The recommendations will help to address changes that have taken place in the community and urban forest over the last 50 years.

Additionally, the UFMP will outline a plan to implement the goals of the CAP 2.0. One of the primary recommended actions of CAP 2.0 was to create an Urban Forest Master Plan to help increase carbon sequestration opportunities and improve ecosystem resilience. The UFMP will analyze carbon sequestration, average pollutant capture, avoided runoff, avoided emissions, and structural and functional value. Dollar amounts will be estimated for these benefits, which will be useful for education, long-term planning, and securing tree program funding. New tree planting recommendations will also be provided to meet the goals of the CAP 2.0; this will include optimum planting locations, species and maintenance management.

The tree inventory and canopy cover analysis will serve as the foundation for the UFMP. While the City developed the tree inventory in the early 2000s, over the years it has become inaccurate and is focused only on individual trees. The updated tree inventory will identify and evaluate the public trees and will help define the recommendations of the UFMP for sustaining and growing the city's urban forest. The tree canopy cover analysis will account for public and private trees and address shade cover and carbon sequestration questions. Together, both the tree inventory and the canopy cover analysis are vital to the CAP 2.0 analysis and meeting the goals set forth in the CAP 2.0.

The updated inventory will be transparent to the public (a map will be available for the public to view the locations and types of trees managed by the City) so the public is aware of the City's urban forest and can make more informed decisions regarding planting trees on their own property.

The creation of the UFMP will be rooted in an extensive public outreach process so that the plan represents the desires and needs of the community regarding the urban forest. The process is expected to take place over an approximately 18-month period with multiple opportunities for the public, Parks and Recreation Commission, and the City Council to provide input.

To encourage public input, staff is creating a website dedicated to the UFMP process: [www.ptowntrees.com](http://www.ptowntrees.com).

The website will contain information regarding the UFMP, a link to a survey, past and future outreach events and eventually, will contain the draft UFMP and an interactive map showing City tree types and locations, and the final UFMP.

The first public outreach events, which focus on informing the public about the UFMP and encouraging residents to take the survey, are as follows:

- August 5 – Pleasanton Farmers Market
- August 11 – Concert in the Park (Lions Wayside Park)
- September 16 - Pleasanton Farmers Market
- October 3 – City Council.

The [survey](#) regarding the UFMP will be open until mid-October.

Further outreach events are currently being reviewed by staff and Dudek. Staff is requesting that the Parks and Recreation Commission review and comment on the urban forest master plan and outreach process.

The tree inventory process is anticipated to extend to the end of 2023 with the first draft of the UFMP expected to be ready for review in August/September 2024 and the final plan expected to be ready for adoption in late 2024.

Submitted by:



Matt Gruber  
Landscape Architect

Attachments:

1. UFMP Survey (online only)

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/391b40ffe45a4200a0354882df3d6aae>