



## Portland Urban Forest Plan **Community Advisory Committee Meeting 5 Summary**

**Date:** Thursday, October 17, 2024

**Time:** 6:00pm to 8:00pm

**Location:** Virtual (Zoom)

**Attendance:** 13 Community Advisory Committee members, 5 Project Staff

### **Abstract**

The purpose of Community ADvisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #5 was to discuss and provide feedback on the Portland Urban Forest Plan (PUFP) approach for measuring canopy goals and draft recommendations and actions. The 2-hour meeting included a presentation on how the City is approaching settign canopy goals, and an overview about how the draft recommendations and actions were created. Attendees participated In live polls and group discussions to provide feedback on both topics.

### **Meeting 5 Outcomes**

- CAC members shared feedback on the proposed approach to developing canopy goals for the city.

### **Administration**

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Director Adena Long

*Sustaining a healthy park and recreation system to make Portland a great place to live, work, and play.*

- CAC members evaluated draft recommendations and actions and provided in-depth feedback to help improve their connection to the goals and share priorities.

## **Discussion Summary**

### **Discussion #1: Canopy Goals**

#### Geographic boundaries for measuring goals

- Participants were asked how they want to see canopy goals defined spatially. Most (68%) said that they wanted to see canopy goals measured by both extents shown in the presentation, neighborhood minimum and pattern area.
- There was some concern over managing a system with too many data points (too many polygons), but some participants also felt that Census tracts would be a useful measure because it allows for easy analysis with demographic and public health data.
- There was some discussion about setting canopy goals by land use type. Some members thought some areas, like commercial areas with low tree canopy should be prioritized for improvement.
- CAC members liked the street tree canopy goal.
- Members want to make sure equality is prioritized

#### How to set goals

- Participants were polled on how high or ambitious canopy goals should be set. Nearly 60% of CAC members voted for “medium: a goal that is a challenge but could be achievable in 30 years”. None of the members selected a low goal. About 30% of members selected a high goal that’s a big challenge but could be achieved in 50 years.
- There was general agreement that setting overly ambitious goals is not desirable and can limit accountability, and we need to have goals on multiple timelines (i.e., short-term goals to

meet long-term goals). However, some participants felt that we should not limit ourselves, and that setting a high and very ambitious goal challenges us in a good way. CAC members want the City to think of new ways of doing things to achieve goals.

- Some CAC members expressed that the community wants to see bold actions now to help Portland respond to climate change, reduce urban heat, and improve public health. They want high goals even if the City might not have the capacity to achieve the goals at the moment. They want goals that reflect the urgency of the climate and health situation.
- Members also expressed that these goals could provide an opportunity for the city to demonstrate leadership in urban forest management and show the community that the City is taking action.
- Some people were concerned that canopy cover may not be the best way to measure success, since a tree's lifespan is long and tree survivability rates, measured 3 to 5 years after planting, could be used as shorter-term metrics.

## **Discussion #2: Recommendations and Actions**

### General feedback

- Participants expressed overall positive feedback, finding the recommendations comprehensive and aligned with prior discussions, and addressing key issues such as preservation, financial support, and community partnerships.
- CAC members liked that City responsibility for street tree maintenance was included, along with other actions to reduce the cost of tree care to Portlanders.
- CAC members think the recommendations and actions could help us achieve a medium canopy goal.
- Preservation of the trees the city already have is a top priority

- Training and education for Portlanders in trees and tree care and partnering with community groups is also critical to CAC members.
- There's an interest in seeing the City identify "low-hanging fruit": quick, impactful actions that will build trust with the community.
- Members like the depaving action, especially when connected with community organizations, as well as other actions that create new space for tree planting and improve data and monitoring.

#### What is missing

- There is a need for clear cost estimates and implementation timelines.
- There were suggestions to link volunteer opportunities with future paid roles in tree maintenance.
- Actions specifically mentioning tree planting and maintenance at affordable housing and businesses are missing.
- The City needs to implement a program to street tree maintenance and also include an action to change City policy for street tree maintenance.
- Additional actions to reduce tree care costs for Portlanders, including actions to provide outreach and assistance to businesses to plant and maintain trees could also be added.
- Other missing topics include language emphasizing the preservation of large forested and natural areas and collaboration with Indigenous tribes on tree management and design.
- CAC members want to see more actions and clearer guidelines for working with developers to make sure tree planting occurs and the right trees are planted in the right place
- CAC members want to make sure that as redevelopment occurs, developers are responsible for providing tree canopy as they build apartments.

- They also want strengthened regulations to prevent unnecessary tree removals and ensure developers plant trees that will thrive.
- Members have an interest in an action to support education about the importance of large-form trees
- Members want actions to educate youth about the importance of canopy and shade equity as well as tree planting and care. Some want to see specific language about youth education and involvement in the process of tree care and canopy goals, particularly youth of color, to promote opportunities for future leadership and career paths.
- Several members mentioned the need for stronger partnerships with community organizations like Friends of Trees. They noted that many of the actions should be completed through partnerships with community groups.
- CAC members want increased transparency and accountability in progress updates.

### **Meeting Design and Engagement Accountability Measures**

- The meeting was held virtually and designed to prioritize bringing people together and two-way communication rather than just sharing information from City staff.
- Project staff worked to accommodate CAC members' schedules and accessibility needs and provided communication leading up to and in follow up of the meeting.
- Qualitative data was collected and valued as inputs into the project's process.