



Portland Urban Forest Plan

Community Advisory Committee Meeting 3 Summary

Date: Thurs, April 30th, 2024

Time: 6:00pm-8:00pm

Location: Portland Community College, Southeast Campus

Attendance: 13 Community Advisory Committee members, 5 Project Staff, 1 Urban Forestry Commission Member, and the City Forester

Abstract

The purpose of Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #3 was to begin developing the vision and goals for the Portland Urban Forest Plan. The 2-hour meeting included a presentation to define vision and goal statements, explain how the vision and goals fit into the Portland Urban Forest Plan and how they are used to help the City manage the urban forest. Attendees evaluated example vision and goal statements from other cities and discussed priorities and themes to cover in the new vision and goals.

Administration

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Commissioner Dan Ryan



Director Adena Long

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

Meeting 3 Outcomes

- CAC members understood how Portland Parks & Recreation defines and uses vision statements and goals for the Portland Urban Forest Plan.
- CAC members understood the process for creating the vision and goals for the plan.
- CAC members evaluated example vision and goal statements and identified elements they liked, didn't like, and discussed important topics or language that was missing from the examples.

Discussion Summary

Discussion #1: Example Vision Statements

CAC members were shown vision statements from urban forest plans in other cities and given time to review them in advance of, and during the meeting. Members were polled to get an initial temperature check on how effective they thought the vision statements were based on the criteria - (1) describes ideal future (2) provides direction (3) clearly communicates values. After submitting their responses in the poll, CAC members discussed with the group what they liked and didn't like about the vision statements they reviewed.

In the discussion CAC members were asked to:

1. Identify (more specifically) what people liked, disliked, and why.
2. Identify ways to improve on examples.
3. Share concepts that are missing from the examples but are important to CAC members.

Below are highlights from the discussion:

- **Be clear and specific about the intention of the vision.**
 - A vision statement should give clear direction to staff and decision makers

- The vision should be action-oriented
- Language in the vision should include specifics like who, what, and why
- The vision should avoid vague language and “buzz words” that lack meaning
- **Allow for some flexibility and innovation.**
 - Provide enough clear guidance to stay true to the vision, but remain flexible to allow for innovation
 - Allow enough flexibility in the plan that you can adjust some of the tactics to respond to your monitoring results (change the allowed species lists, maintenance rules/limitations, etc)
- **The vision should have accountability measures.**
 - Include an accountability statement or a path to measuring success
- **The vision should be direct about equity.**
 - Including equity in the vision statement is a must.
 - Equity should be called out specifically, not just alluded to.
 - The Columbus, OH provided an example people liked, saying that tree canopy should be expanded “equitably across neighborhoods”
- **Include the benefits of trees and why they are important.**
 - The benefits of trees are important to call out in some way in the vision – these benefits provide motivation for protecting and enhancing our urban forest.
 - Trees should be characterized as critical infrastructure for cities.
 - Emphasize that trees benefit many facets of society - public health, economy, recreation, education, etc.
 - Include mention of climate resilience.
- **Include the importance of stewardship and community involvement.**

- Emphasize the importance of community participation and stewardship in caring for and growing the urban forest
- **Two example vision statements stood out.**
 - Of the example vision statements that were shared, Toronto's was the most popular. People thought that it communicated values clearly and did the best job of providing motivation by mentioning the many benefits of trees and encouraging community involvement.
 - Several people liked the example from Seattle because it was clear and specific.

Discussion #2: Goals

CAC members were given a worksheet with example urban forest management goals grouped into the following themes: (1) Equity and Canopy Distribution, (2) Preservation, Maintenance, and Expansion; (3) Education and Outreach; (4) Community Partnership and Support; (5) Climate Action and Monitoring. In pairs, they were asked to provide feedback to the following prompts:

1. What themes were you most interested in discussing first?
2. What goal statements stood out to you?
3. What do you like and dislike about them? Why?
4. How well does this list of example goals reflect what is most important to you? What is missing?

Below are highlights of the discussion:

- The three themes that people were most interested in discussing were Education and Outreach, and Community Partnerships and Support, and Equity and Canopy Distribution
- The community partnership theme was well liked but needs to be more robust
- The equity theme was well received - people like the theme and its goals
- Overall, CAC members liked goals with specific and action-oriented language

- Action statements and active direction
- Accountability
- Direction for decision-makers/making
- **Goals need to be tied to accountability and measurable results**
 - Unclear how you would measure some goals
 - No statements about accountability, goals can look great but accountability statement somewhere would ensure goal success
- **What was missing in the goals:**
 - Include trees in both public and private realms
 - Should clearly emphasize tree protection
 - Ecological preservation
 - Air quality improvements
 - Community connectivity
 - Good health of human life
 - Accountability of arborists – require they be registered with the City or have an orientation
 - Accountability of other bureaus and utility companies to help preserve and protect trees

Detailed feedback on goal themes:

- **Equity and Canopy Distribution**
 - Overall people felt that the goals in this theme were well written
 - Include more specifics and the “how” and “when”
- **Preservation, Maintenance, and Expansion**
 - Include both public and private property
 - Only including City property and the ROW is too limiting
 - Some of the example goals were too vague or passive
 - Support the goal of the City taking over management of street trees but we should include community stewardship and emphasize collective responsibility
- **Education and Outreach**

- Education and outreach are a critical part of winning hearts and minds and conveying the importance of trees to our city
- This is an opportunity to educate people about how trees are critical infrastructure
- Education leads to community buy-in
- **Community Partnerships and Support**
 - Some of the example goals needed to include more specifics and context
 - Community should be empowered to be advocates for the urban forest, including opportunities for presenting proposals or creating policy papers
 - More trust building with community leaders and organizations
 - “Look back to go forward” - look at and share past practices to understand how we have gone wrong in order to do better in the future
 - Meet with community to understand their needs so we can address them upstream
 - Make sure we consider equity, connect with less affluent communities; make everyone feel like they’re part of the solution
 - People liked goal 5 - “providing incentives and regulation for keeping, replacing, and planting trees”
- **Climate Action and Monitoring**
 - Education/outreach is an important part of climate action that may not have been captured in the example goals
 - Some of the example goals needed to include more specifics

Meeting Design and engagement accountability measures

- The meeting was held in person, with an option to join remotely. It was designed to encourage two-way communication rather than just sharing information.

- Community Advisory Committee members who attended virtually were accompanied by a virtual facilitator, as a measure to provide a comparable experience to those who attended in-person.
- Project staff worked to accommodate Community Advisory Committee members' schedules, accessibility, and childcare needs and provided communication leading up to and in follow up of the meeting.
- Qualitative and quantitative data were collected and equally valued as inputs into the project's process.