December 6, 2022

DRAFT Urban Forest Plan Scope of Work

Background

Improving Portland's air quality, public health, and livability by expanding the city's urban forest is a top priority for the City of Portland. Preserving and planting trees mitigates the impacts of climate change by reducing the urban heat island effect and sequestering carbon. Improving the environment by preserving and increasing canopy cover can also lead to healthier communities, reducing the risk of heat-related illnesses and improving air quality. Improved environmental health can also lead to better mental and physical health outcomes for Portlanders.

The Urban Forest Plan (UFP) is the guiding document for the City's management of the urban forest. The City Forester leads the development, implementation, monitoring, and reporting of the UFP. The UFP sets goals for canopy cover and guides management, regulation, preservation, and planting decisions for Portland's urban forest. The current Urban Forest Management Plan was last updated in 2004, nearly twenty years ago. It no longer reflects the current capacity and expertise of PP&R and the Urban Forestry Division; nor does it properly address issues such as climate change, environmental justice, and equity.

Portland needs a new vision for our urban forest, one that more accurately aligns with current City and community priorities, recognizes urban trees as essential infrastructure, and that reflects the latest best practices in urban forest management. This plan is particularly important to develop now, in light of the results of recent research which indicate that Portland's tree canopy may be declining, and that the canopy and its associated benefits are not equitably distributed amongst all Portlanders.

The updated UFP will build on past work, such as the *Urban Forest Action Plan* (2007), *Growing a More Equitable Urban Forest: A Citywide Tree Planting Strategy* (2018), *Tree Canopy and Potential in Portland, Oregon* (2018), *Tree Canopy Monitoring: Protocol and Monitoring from 2000 – 2020* (2022), Urban Forest Inventory and Analysis project (UFIA), findings from the street and park tree inventories, and best practices from peer cities' Urban Forest Plans.

Urban Forestry
1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 5000
Portland, Oregon 97201
503-823-TREE (8733) | Fax 503-823-4493

PORTLANDPARKS.ORG
Commissioner Carmen Rubio
Director Adena Long

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

Goals

The goals of the Urban Forest Plan Update are as follows:

1. Update canopy targets and set appropriate timelines.

2. Develop a community-driven vision for the future of Portland's urban forest.

3. Update urban forest goals to align with other City and community plans and priorities.

4. Integrate the latest science, arboriculture, climate resiliency, and urban forest best management practices into UFP goals, recommendations, and monitoring protocols.

5. Prioritize equity in service design, delivery, and management.

6. Promote preservation and maintenance of existing trees, as well as planting new trees, and integrating climate adaptation practices into urban forest operations as critical strategies for achieving the City's climate-related goals and mitigating the effects of urban heat islands.

7. Improve collaboration among City bureaus and community partners to enhance opportunities for preserving, planting, and maintaining the urban forest.

8. Build trust and foster long-term relationships with Portlanders from diverse backgrounds to ensure that the UFP reflects the voices of all Portlanders, including those who have been historically underserved or marginalized by City processes or have disproportionately less access to Portland's urban forest.

9. Develop a plan that is actionable, accessible to diverse audiences, inclusive, and integrates a clear, transparent, and community-supported evaluation and reporting strategy.

Timeline

The Urban Forest Plan will be developed within a two-year period, beginning in July 2023.

Project Team

The Project Team will include staff from PP&R's planning and outreach teams and the Urban Forestry Division, specifically including Brian Landoe (Analyst III), Belinda Judelman (Planning and Policy Analyst), Laura Lehman (Senior Environmental Planner), and Malcolm Hoover (Senior Community Outreach Coordinator). Belinda Judelman will serve as the Project Manager and will manage the consultant team. The City Forester, Regulation and Permitting Manager, Planting, Outreach and Science Manager, Urban Forest Operations Manager, and PP&R's Equity and Inclusion Manager will participate as needed. Technical staff from the Urban Forestry Division will be encouraged to participate in select project team meetings, and to provide input on key UFP internal and external deliverables and assessment methodologies.

Technical staff from Urban Forestry, Portland Parks and Recreation, Bureau of Transportation, Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of Development Services, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Bureau of Emergency Management, Portland Fire and Rescue, Portland Water Bureau, members of the Urban Forestry Commission, and other key stakeholders will be engaged throughout the development of the UFP, as part of

stakeholder engagement, including with a Technical Advisory Committee and strategic work sessions and/or interviews.

Scope of Work

The City of Portland's Urban Forest Plan (UFP) will present a vision and implementation strategy to guide City staff and community stakeholders in managing the city's urban forest for the next ten years. The UFP will use a collaborative approach to strengthen relationships between City bureaus. It will engage the public using a robust outreach process with an emphasis on partnerships with emerging and established community-based organizations and effectively engaging community members who have been historically underserved by Portland's urban forest and disproportionately impacted by environmental and social injustices. The project team will use PP&R's Equity and Anti-Racism Lens to guide all aspects of the UFP, including analyses, outreach, goals, recommendations, evaluation protocols, and document layout.

The UFP will include the following tasks:

1. A summary of existing urban forest conditions using data from recent reports and by conducting new analyses where necessary to present a synthesis of the following:

    a. Review of existing research on the social, environmental, and economic benefits of the urban forest, including impacts to air quality, water quality, mental and physical health, urban heat island effect, and climate change. Findings will be applied to Portland's urban forest tree inventory data to showcase the benefits and services our urban forest provides to the community.

    b. Management of the Urban Forest

        i. Stakeholders: The landscape of organizations, constituent groups, and City bureaus that directly influence Portland's urban forest. This will include developing an understanding and documentation of stakeholders representing a diversity of lived experiences and identities, prioritizing representation from communities most impacted by poor canopy cover.

        ii. Policy framework: A review of plans and policies that guide decisions and regulations of the urban forest, including but not limited to maintenance strategies, Title 11, Title 33, Urban Forest Management Plan (2004), Urban Forest Action Plan (2007), 2035 Comprehensive Plan, Climate Action Plan (20115), Portland's Climate Emergency Workplan: Priority actions for 2022-2025 (2022), the upcoming Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland Foundations Report, etc. This will also include a review of environmental justice and urban-forest related reports from non-government entities in Portland.

        iii. In-depth assessment of existing management framework and identification of opportunities and constraints.

    c. Urban Forest Health

        i. Canopy cover

        ii. Species diversity, native vegetation

        iii.   Function, structure, condition

        iv.   Pest, disease, and drought management

  d.   Distribution of Portland's Urban Forest
        i.   Overall distribution of canopy and associated environmental services

        ii.   Identification of communities who have less access to street trees and trees in City-owned parks and natural areas, including a discussion and map highlighting canopy access among vulnerable populations. This could also include a spatial examination of the canopy and urban heat islands and air quality, depending on data quality and availability.

  e.   Challenges to growing, managing, and protecting our urban forest (e.g., small growing spaces, climate change, funding, maintenance, development…etc.)

  f.   Investigation of possible causes of recent canopy decline

        i.   Comparison to trends in peer cities

        ii.   This could include a more detailed review of where canopy decline occurred (e.g., neighborhood or public vs private property) than was presented in the 2022 canopy monitoring report to try to understand why canopy is declining at a higher rate than peer cities.

        iii.   Investigate causes of tree removal in recent years (pest and disease, damage, drought, winter storms, development, natural mortality…etc.)
            1.   Assess impact of Title 11 on tree removal and canopy decline. This could include a Title 11 impact analysis, similar to the Citywide Tree Project Data Report (2016).

2. A community-driven vision statement and accompanying set of goals to guide future management of the urban forest. The vision statement will be accompanied by an updated canopy target (or set of targets) to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe. The goals may cover urban forest topics such as management, policy, funding, education, and outreach.

  a.   Review existing data and conduct additional analyses as needed to update canopy target(s); develop robust methodology for identifying canopy targets.

  b.   Review urban forest plans conducted by peer cities in the United States and abroad to ensure Portland's goals and recommendations align with industry best practices.

3. A set of recommendations to help achieve the UFP vision and goals that is derived from information collected during previous tasks and community and stakeholder feedback. Recommendations will cover equity, management, policy, funding, education, outreach, data, and research or analytical needs. Recommendations will include opportunities for partnerships with community groups, and other bureaus and City programs, such as the Portland Clean Energy Fund. This effort will include a review of the existing planting strategy methodology. Recommendations will be developed for expanding access to the urban forest and the

identification of opportunities for tree preservation, planting, and management in the public right-of-way, on private property, and City-owned property, including in parks and natural areas.

4. A detailed implementation strategy that can be used to prioritize recommendations identified in the previous task. The strategy will include clear timelines, assign lead agencies and partners, and reflect community and stakeholder priorities. The strategy will also include appropriate performance metrics and a timeline for monitoring and reporting progress towards tree preservation, planting, and maintenance, to the extent possible. Planting targets and timelines will be included in the implementation strategy. Metrics may focus on both citywide and priority service area strategies, and will align with outcomes measures of the Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland strategic planning framework, as appropriate.

5. A community and stakeholder engagement strategy and summary of feedback. The engagement strategy will detail how members of the Urban Forestry Commission, technical City staff not involved in the project team, community stakeholders, members of the public, and historically underserved communities will be engaged throughout the planning process. The engagement strategy will likely include a Technical Advisory Committee, Community Advisory Committee, and interviews with technical experts and discussions with key players involved in managing Portland's urban forest.

   Community and stakeholder engagement will provide Portlanders with an opportunity to develop and provide feedback on the UFP's vision, goals, priorities, and recommendations. The project team may also solicit feedback on specific topics to inform recommendations, this could include subjects like urban forest regulatory policies and street tree maintenance and management. The engagement strategy will include an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the draft UFP.

   Community engagement will include a diverse Community Advisory Committee and a combination of online and in-person events. It will include strategies specifically designed to solicit feedback from Portlanders living in low-income and low-canopy neighborhoods, Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, immigrant and refugee communities, LGBTQIA+ people, older adults, and people with disabilities. Evaluations will be conducted at key points during the outreach process and activities may be adjusted to ensure input is being collected from diverse audiences.

6. A draft, final draft, and final UFP. The public will have an opportunity to review a draft of the plan before it is finalized.