

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 11, 2024

TO: City of Portland Design Commission

FROM: Brian Landoe, Strategy & Planning Manager, PP&R Urban Forestry

SUBJECT: Portland Urban Forest Plan Project

Project Overview

The Portland Urban Forest Plan is the guiding document for the City's management of trees in the city. It is the City's roadmap for protecting, preserving, restoring, and expanding Portland's tree canopy equitably.

Portland needs to update the Portland Urban Forest Plan to align with current community priorities, respond to climate change, and improve access to tree canopy and nature. The Urban Forest Plan will include a new vision and goals for trees in Portland and provide a framework for management, preservation, maintenance, and planting decisions for the next 10 years.

The Urban Forest Plan will be developed with input from the public, City staff, and three advisory bodies. The three advisory bodies include a technical advisory committee, community advisory committee, and the Urban Forestry Commission. Portland Parks & Recreation will engage Portlanders from diverse backgrounds to ensure that the plan reflects a variety of voices, including those who have been historically underserved or marginalized by City processes or have disproportionately less access to Portland's urban forest. There will be opportunities for the community to provide input during each phase of the project.

Challenges and Opportunities

Portland is in a pivotal moment in its management of the urban forest. After several decades of documented growth, our urban canopy is declining. Longer, hotter, and drier summers are a threat to the health and long-term viability of native species. And

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the introduction of new pests and pathogens like Emerald Ash Borer exacerbate these challenges.

At the same time, growing awareness of the vital benefits and services trees provide in urban environments has led to a significant increase in resources for this work. The Portland Clean Energy Fund has committed \$40 million over the next five years to expand tree planting in the highest need areas of the city and an additional \$100 million for tree preservation and maintenance. In addition, a Friends of Trees led coalition of more than a dozen organizations, including PP&R Urban Forestry, recently received an \$8 million federal grant to support community-based education, outreach, and tree planting in East Portland.

Project Timeline

- Phase 1: Assess Current Conditions (September 2023 to March 2024)
 - Listen to community members and stewards of the urban forest to better understand current conditions, community visions, and community priorities.
 - Analyze data and explore the distribution and condition of the urban forest, resilience to climate change, and where canopy may be growing or declining.
 - Learn about strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the ways we protect, plant, and care for trees.
- Phase 2: Recommendations and Actions (March 2024 to September 2024)
 - Use what we learned in Phase 1 to develop a vision and goals for the future.
 - Identify tree canopy targets, recommendations, actions, and other next steps to help achieve the vision and goals.
 - Create a reporting strategy.
 - Connect with the community to help us refine priorities and other elements of the plan.
- Phase 3: Develop the Roadmap (August 2024 to March 2025)
 - Review public feedback and information collected in Phases 1 and 2 to draft the new Portland Urban Forest Plan.
 - This phase will include a public review period.

Upcoming Events

- Project Open House
 - April 24th, 5:00 to 7:30pm
 - McDaniel High School, 2735 NE 82nd Ave.
- Public Survey
 - March 25th to May 2nd