



# Memorandum

Date: June 16, 2022

To: Tree Commission  
Stan Gryczko, Director - Public Works Utilities & Operations

From: Charlie Murphy, Urban Forestry Manager  
Adrienne Heinig, Assistant to the Director  
Davey Resource Group, Inc.

Subject: Item 6B – Framework of Tree Planning Efforts

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## **Recommendation**

Informational Item.

Receive informational memo from Urban Forestry staff and the consultant working with the City on the Urban Forest Management Plan (Davey Resource Group, Inc.) on opportunities for engagement with the Tree Commission on the planning efforts for the following tasks: the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), the City's Tree Ordinance Update, and updates to tree-related policies and procedures utilized by City staff, Council and other City Commissions in the review and management of trees.

## **Background**

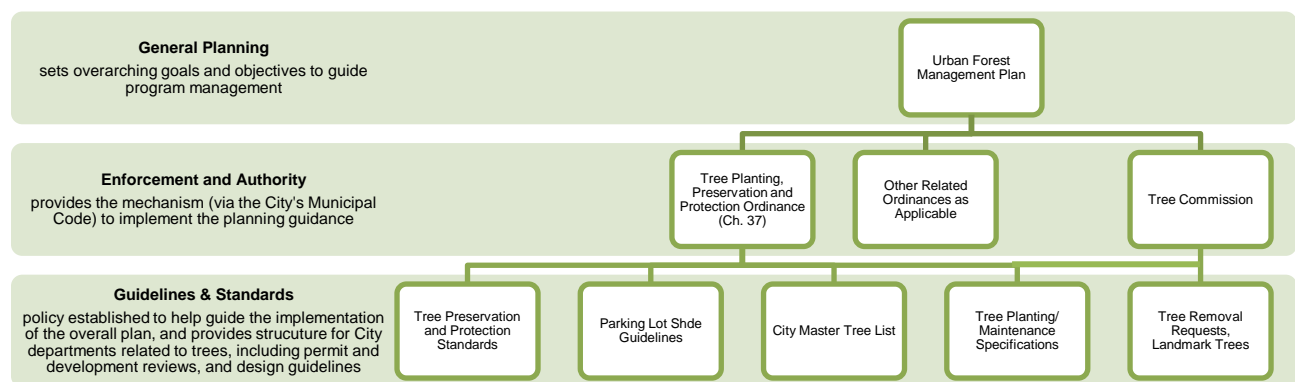
Updates to a number of documents related to the City's urban forest, including a new look at an Urban Forest Management Plan (funded partially by grant funds obtained from CAL FIRE), revisions to the City's municipal code, and updates to City policies related to trees have been underway in some form or fashion for a number of years. Resourcing challenges (including staffing vacancies) and shifting priorities have interrupted the planning efforts on a number of occasions, most recently with the shift of Urban Forestry into Public Works Utilities and Operations, as well as the departure of the City's long-time Urban Forestry Manager.

Updates to major planning documents, as well as updating City Municipal Code and policy are important to undertake at regular intervals, as the changing nature of the City, and influences such as growth, weather, economic and social factors, etc. on the City's urban forest need to be accounted for in the City's approach to management. In addition, processes that may not be working well, or need further detail or direction, can also be updated in regular reviews. Recent challenges and concerns around the development review process, and the need to ensure that the City's policies utilized in the evaluation of projects by other City commissions are as up-to-date as possible, as

well as being in line with the goals of urban forest management, highlight the need for timeliness in the completion of these updates.

### **Approach to Planning Efforts**

Understanding the need for timely updates, and with the acknowledgement of resourcing constraints that still exist, City staff propose to work through each of the planning items over the next year, with the first and guiding focus being the UFMP. General planning guidance (such as the UFMP), as demonstrated by the graphic below, sets the overarching goals and objectives that guide the management of not only the Urban Forestry program, but the revision and update to City ordinances, policies and planning documents as well.



In keeping with the complementary aspects of each type of update or revision the Commission will undertake, there will likely be overlap in the updates of the Plan, Municipal Code and policy documents. While this memo contains a tentative structure of how the Commission may undertake reviews, throughout the process it is anticipated that the schedule will be flexible, and the priority of focus items may shift. With that proviso, outlines of the reviews of the Urban Forest Management Plan, the Municipal Code and policy guidance are included in detail below.

### **Urban Forest Management Plan**

It is important that throughout the urban forest planning process, there are regular check-ins with the Tree Commission in order to: (1) report on the progress of planning efforts; and (2) provide opportunities for collaboration on planning project tasks, approach, and results.

Staff and the consultant have identified the following milestones to engage with the Tree Commission on the Urban Forest Management Plan:

- **Resource Analysis:** The Resource Analysis is a summary report that highlights the structure, composition, and benefits provided by the community tree resource

(public trees along streets, rights-of-way, in parks, and at City facilities). (ETA August)

- **Tree Canopy and Land Cover:** Davey Resource Group (DRG) is using aerial imagery of the entire urban forest to evaluate tree canopy and its relationship with other primary land cover in Davis. (ETA August)
- **Tree Species Palette:** Potential workshop starting with a presentation on climate ready tree species for the region and review of the updates proposed for the City's tree species palette. (ETA October)
- **Outreach/Engagement Process:** HELIX and DRG will provide a summary of input received from the public engagement process. (ETA November)
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** The UFMP process includes background and operations review, regulatory review, interviews with managing collaborators, and working group meetings to identify the challenges and opportunities facing Davis' urban forest. Discussion will include key challenges and opportunities along with potential recommendations. (ETA December)
- **Goals and Objectives:** A preview of proposed goals and objectives. While the Commission will be reviewing the goals and objectives as included in the Community Forest Management Plan from 2002 prior to December, we want to make sure that the discussions related to the goals and objectives for the Urban Forest Management Plan occur once there is input from everyone involved in the planning process, including the collaborators and community. (ETA December)
- **Tree Planting, Preservation and Protection Ordinance:** Review of the recommended updates to the Tree Ordinance. (ETA December)

The schedule after December will be developed as the planning process moves forward and will be reviewed with the Commission once finalized. A tentative schedule of items for review is included at the end of this memo.

#### Municipal Code Update - Chapter 37

Put on hold with the transition of the Urban Forestry Division from Parks and Community Services to Public Works Utilities and Operations, the update to the City's Municipal Code chapter on trees, Chapter 37: Tree Planting, Preservation and Protection will resume, likely at the end of the calendar year when additional recommendations from DRG on the ordinance are presented to the Commission. Staff propose to re-introduce the ordinance, review the revisions already included, consider any additional potential revisions from staff, the consultant, commissioners, or public input and continue the work of drafting an ordinance revision for City Council consideration. (ETA November 2022 - March 2023)

Tree-related Policies and Procedures

There are a number of policies and guidance documents that the Tree Commission has identified for an update, including the City’s planting standards, tree preservation and protection standards, the City’s Master Street Tree List (as well as the Parking Lot Tree List) to name a few. Discussions around tree removals, and whether or not to include additional factors for the City arborist or Tree Commission consideration, including climate readiness, tree age, etc. are also important to undertake. It’s likely that policy and guidance updates will be the most flexible to schedule for review, however specific timing for updating the Master Tree List, after a proposed workshop on tree species palette selection, for example, or the discussion of Tree Removals just before the re-introduction to the Municipal Code revision, are presented for Commission consideration. (ETA October, April)

*Tentative Outline of Planning Efforts*

2022				
August	September	October	November	December
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Analysis (UFMP)</li> <li>• Tree Canopy and Land Cover (UFMP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree Species Palette/ Workshop (UFMP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree Removals (Policy)</li> <li>• Review &amp; Update Master Tree List (Policy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach/ Engagement Process (UFMP)</li> <li>• Re-introduction to Ordinance Updates (Ord)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges and Opportunities (UFMP)</li> <li>• Ordinance Updates (UFMP)/(Ord)</li> </ul>

2023			
January	February	March	April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ordinance Updates (Ord)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Plan Review (UFMP)</li> <li>• Ordinance Updates (Ord)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan Review &amp; Recommendation to Council (UFMP)</li> <li>• Ordinance Updates (Ord)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Planting Standards (Policy)</li> <li>• Review Tree Preservation and Protection Standards (Policy)</li> </ul>

*Note: the end of the calendar does not denote the end of planning updates, rather a revised calendar with the prioritized policies for review will be provided in January 2023.*