

**DATE:** May 8, 2023

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Eric Holmes, City Manager

**CC:** Lon Pluckhahn, Interim Public Works Director, Julie Gilbertson, Interim Environmental Resource Manager, Charles Ray, Urban Forester

**RE: Draft Urban Forestry Management Plan**

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## Background

In 2022, Vancouver's Urban Forestry Program secured a \$20,000 grant from WA Dept. of Natural Resources to fund the update of the adopted 2007 Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP).

The adopted 2007 Urban Forestry Management Plan helped guide Vancouver to make strategic improvements over the last 15 years with support from both internal City stakeholders as well as the greater community. The updated UFMP will help Vancouver identify what is next with strategic actions to work towards in the next 5 years, 10 years and beyond with community input and support, including:

- Identify and create plans to address inequities in our tree canopy
- Review our tree data, plans, policies and other available data
- Plan for an equitable, climate resilient tree canopy in the future
- A roadmap to achieve a shared vision for the future of Vancouver's trees

The purpose of the updated UFMP is to recommend direction and actions for Vancouver to optimize the benefits of trees by envisioning an equitable, climate adaptive, integrated, and sustainable approach to managing the city's urban forest resources over the next twenty-five years. The draft UFMP includes: a comprehensive analysis of the current state of Vancouver's urban forest; a discussion of existing management structures and policies; community outreach; a vision for the future; and goals and action items to support the realization of the vision. The draft UFMP also includes a monitoring plan and implementation schedule.

Development of the draft UFMP involved extensive research of other communities; review of existing plans, policy and workflows; community outreach, and discussions with stakeholders and City staff. Community outreach efforts included two online meetings, one open house, an online community

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survey, and internal/external stakeholder outreach. The draft Long-Term Framework in the UFMP identifies 3 Goals:

<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>GOAL 3</b>
<b>Proactively manage public trees, continue to grow and expand a healthy canopy to achieve the 28% citywide canopy goal, maintain public safety, and optimize urban forest benefits.</b>	<b>Achieve environmental justice through a partnership with the City and its residents to improve well-being, human health, local economies, and urban forest sustainability.</b>	<b>Strengthen policies for preserving the environmental benefits, management, and the character of Vancouver’s urban forest.</b>
Update and maintain the public tree inventory.	Maintain Tree City USA recognition.	Protect trees during construction projects.
Utilize current and future canopy assessments.	Maintain active communications with diverse audiences.	Apply a no-net-loss approach to tree canopy cover.
Stay current with industry research, tools, tech and innovation.	Provide education and training workshops.	Use tree canopy assessment data for tree management policies.
Implement a proactive pruning cycle and management program.	Implement program services through the lens of environmental justice.	Update and strengthen tree-related ordinances, design standards, and protocols
Formally update the Tree Planting Initiative.	Expand partnerships and the Neighborhood Tree Stewards program.	Enforce tree regulations.
Increase citywide tree canopy cover.	Coordinate implementation and engagement with the UFC and local partners.	
Grow a sustainable and resilient urban forest.	Effectively manage volunteers and events.	
Develop a Risk Tree Management Plan.		

The first draft of the UFMP was released for public comment on March 8, 2023. Additionally, the first draft was reviewed by the Urban Forestry Commission on March 15<sup>th</sup> and the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission on April 9<sup>th</sup>. The second draft, released April 27, 2023, is currently posted on [Project’s Be Heard website](#). The second draft will also be presented to Vancouver Planning Commission during a workshop on May 9, 2023 and is undergoing State review through the Department of Commerce and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process in May and June.

The project team will refine and finalize the draft UFMP based on additional feedback received from the community, City Council, Vancouver Planning Commission, State agencies and others with a goal to have the final UFMP submitted to City Council for consideration to be adopted as a policy and planning document, and by reference, as a component of the Vancouver Comprehensive Plan fall 2023.

**Action Requested**

Requesting feedback from City Council on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft UFMP.

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### Next Steps

Staff will be presenting to the Planning Commission on May 9, 2023.

Pending Council workshop review and feedback on May 8th, Planning Commission workshop review and feedback on May 9<sup>th</sup>, and State review, staff anticipate bringing the final UFMP forward for future Planning Commission and City Council hearings in fall 2023 for consideration to be adopted as a policy and planning document, and by reference, as a component of the Vancouver Comprehensive Plan.

### Staff Contact Information

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### Attachments

- A. Council Presentation
- B. Draft UFMP