

**TUMWATER TREE BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
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CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Trent Grantham and Commissioners Brent Chapman, Michael Jackson, Dennis Olson, and Tanya Nozawa.

Excused: Commissioners Nathan Lubliner and Jim Sedore.

Staff: Planning Manager Brad Medrud, Associate Planner Suresh Bhagavan, and Recording Secretary Valerie Gow.

**CHANGES TO
AGENDA:** There were no changes to the agenda.

**NEXT TREE BOARD
MEETING DATE:** The next meeting of the Tree Board is on February 11, 2019 at 7 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES –
DECEMBER 10, 2018
MEETING:**

MOTION: **Commissioner Chapman moved, seconded by Commissioner Nozawa, to approve the minutes of December 10, 2018 as published. Motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.

**ITEMS FOR
DISCUSSION:**

**URBAN FORESTRY
MANAGEMENT PLAN
(UFMP) DISCUSSION:**

**UFMP OUTLINE AND
VISION:** Manager Medrud briefed Commissioners on the outcome of the briefing to the City Council on January 8, 2019 on the status of efforts for drafting an Urban Forestry Management Plan. Many of the comments from the City Council match the direction of the Board.

The City Council was asked to provide feedback on two questions:

1. What does success look for an Urban Forestry Management Plan? What would the plan include and how would success be measured?
2. The structure of the plan can range from a graphic plan, a more conceptual plan, or an intense and in-depth format. What format of the plan would be preferred?

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The Council provided the following responses to the first question:

- Lots of public input. Content should focus on the canopy and ecological values, habitat continuity, and wildlife corridors.
- Acknowledge wildlife benefits of trees with a focus on preservation of large mature trees.
- Conduct a thorough review of the City's Tree Ordinance in conjunction with the development of the plan. Success would entail preservation of the canopy and trees. Balance a successful Urban Forestry Management Plan with climate actions. Ensure that the preservation and new plantings are based on specificity and knowledge in terms of the right tree or plant in the right location to create successful canopies and trees benefiting the environment and wildlife.
- Reopen the tree survey to afford more opportunities for the public to provide input and to provide information to help the public understand the issues.
- Consider ways to limit removal of large mature trees in new developments.
- Consider methods and ways to minimize infections and insect infestations of trees. Some species of trees might be more prone to infestations than other species.
- Consider maintenance responsibilities of trees in areas where private property trees trespass public right-of-ways.
- Include sections in plan specific to commercial, industrial, and residential uses for guidance and include visual aids on the website on allowed or prohibited species. Help public learn about diversity of trees and what it represents. Consider neighborhood improvement grants and connect and engage with community on proper planting and maintenance.
- Consider the correlation between urban forestry and public health. Studies reflect that areas with dense urban forestry and tree coverage have better public health outcomes. In addition to the ecological benefits of trees, consider the physical aspects of trees on people.
- Consider coverage of trees in neighborhoods of lower property values. Consider areas currently underserved by street trees. Ensure an equitable distribution of tree coverage in the City.
- Identify areas of the City lacking tree canopy for planting of trees. Develop a maintenance program. Strategically consider the species of trees planted near infrastructure to avoid infrastructure damage from roots, etc.
- Provide better guidance on the right tree in the right location. Consider lessons learned from previous experiences.
- Pay attention to tree diversity and resistance to climate change.
- Consider balance between forest canopy and prairie

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preservation.

- Review geographic areas and identify environmental sensitive areas that need to be preserved (green printing exercise). Inventory high value areas.
- Control invasive species (ivy, holly trees) to reduce tree damage and death.

The Council was advised of the Board's review of three urban forestry plans from the cities of Santa Monica, California; Renton, Washington; and Guelph, Ontario, Canada.

The Council provided the following responses to the second question:

- Consider two versions of plan – detailed for the City and less-intensive for the community. Access to both versions should be available to the public.
- Include graphics to increase and attract attention.
- Include easy guide for citizens, plan should convey the benefits of existing inventory and future plantings. Assist the public in proper maintenance of trees and plants.
- Share information on climate change and the importance of preserving canopies to respond to climate change.
- Include FAQ for trees. Provide clear and simple Do's and Don'ts in the City's web search engine.
- Consider ways to ensure landscaping companies follow City codes for tree preservation and maintenance.

Manager Medrud said the feedback reflects the Council's preference for a conceptual and user friendly plan similar to the Santa Monica plan with the appendices providing details and technical information.

Commissioner Olson asked whether there was any clarity in terms of the Council's direction with respect to establishing broad policies. Manager Medrud advised that the Council is interested in the Board's work with respect to policies. As the Board continues to work through the process, staff is scheduled to brief the General Government Committee and the Planning Commission on progress for developing the plan. Feedback from both the General Government Committee and the Commission will be shared with the Board prior to completion of the plan. Commissioner Olson asked whether the Council discussed how the Planning Commission might utilize the plan. Manager Medrud said the Commission would likely use the plan as the basis for updating the City's landscaping standards.

Chair Grantham commented that it appears the Council would like to include information with respect to what the code allows or does not

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allow to help guide citizens. Manager Medrud said the City has a design guideline process for development. To avoid bogging down the development of the plan, the plan will serve as the basis for moving forward with revisions or updates to the code.

Manager Medrud responded to questions about the timing for completion of the plan. A tentative delivery date is May/June 2019 with the Board reviewing sections of the plan as drafted over the next several months.

Manager Medrud reviewed a proposed outline of the plan. The intent is to minimize the length of the document (50-60) pages with appendices on policies, actions, and implementation actions.

Chair Grantham inquired about the extent of assistance from the consultant team for graphic and drafting assistance. Manager Medrud replied that staff is working with the consultant team to finalize the analysis and some of the final data on the street tree inventory. Mr. Bornsworth is unavailable for the next month because of the birth of his first child. Some funds might be available in the budget for additional consultant assistance to draft the plan. The City also has graphic capabilities to assist in producing graphics based on feedback from staff. Input from the Board will also help guide the inclusion of graphics.

Commissioner Chapman referred to the comments from the Council on prairie needs. Manager Medrud said staff is also identifying species models for the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). Most of that effort focuses on land cover and soil types, which is the primary driver for the gopher population. Work on the HCP will likely contribute to the development of the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

Chair Grantham suggested the outline of the plan should feature some of the benefits for homeowners and property owners at the beginning of the plan rather than toward the middle or end of the plan.

Commissioner Chapman referred to the draft of the vision statement and Commissioner Sedore's email communication recommending against the inclusion of "maintain." As he suggested, "maintain" could be equated with status quo or stagnation. It is important for the vision to augment rather than maintain.

Commissioners and staff reviewed the draft vision statement and offered several revisions to the draft. The Board unanimously supported the following mission statement: ***"The City of Tumwater will align resources to enhance and manage its healthy urban forest to enable the ongoing development of the community while***

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protecting its unique environment.”

Manager Medrud reviewed the proposed outline and invited comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **Jorjana Pedersen, 2425 Sapp Road SW, Tumwater,** asked about the plan including lands managed by other entities, such as forest lands managed by Port Blakely. Manager Medrud agreed on the importance of referencing those types of lands within the plan. Ms. Pedersen offered to follow up with Port Blakely to identify properties located in Tumwater.

The Board and staff discussed the inclusion of costs. Manager Medrud said costs would be included for lifecycle costs for street trees. Commissioner Olson asked whether the City would budget for costs to oversee implementation of actions. Manager Medrud said the City would need to identify the responsibility for ongoing maintenance and implementation of actions.

Commissioner Jackson asked whether the responsibilities for landscaping would be included in the plan. Manager Medrud said that it was not the intent of the plan other than including some level of discussion about the importance of landscaping over the planning horizon and including references to other City documents.

Commissioner Olson asked whether the Council would consider assigning a staff member to manage implementation of the plan. Manager Medrud said those actions would be considered by the Council as the plan would identify the level of staff resources necessary to manage efforts identified in the plan.

Commissioner Jackson asked about the City's ability to utilize the City's professional forester, Kevin McFarland. Planner Bhagavan advised that at this time, fees for the professional forester are paid by the entity utilizing the service.

Commissioner Chapman suggested including some order of priority or top priorities within the plan with identified costs. Manager Medrud said the City would likely use the City's Capital Facilities Plan as a model for prioritizing implementation actions.

Commissioner Chapman asked about releasing the draft plan to the public for comment and feedback. Manager Medrud replied that the schedule includes a minimum of two open house opportunities with the first scheduled in March followed by a second open house as the draft nears completion and prior to review by the City Council.

The Board offered suggestions for public outreach and recommended

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presenting the draft plan to local homeowner associations, the Tumwater Chamber of Commerce, and during the Arbor Day event at the Tumwater Library.

The Board discussed recent land clearing activity off Old Highway 99 near the Preserve subdivision.

Responding to an inquiry as to the definition of “desirable wildlife,” Commissioner Chapman explained that the language is to ensure avoidance of non-native plants and ecosystems as those systems are not as healthy for native species of wildlife.

Manager Medrud referred the Board to an article provided by Mayor Kmet on “Including public health benefits of trees in urban forestry decision making.”

Chair Grantham shared information on a recent article he read that purports minimal benefits of urban trees. The information was somewhat surprising and not what he expected as it disputes the benefits of urban trees on energy savings and carbon sequestration.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Chair Grantham inquired about the status of inventory items for the Arbor Day event.

Planner Bhagavan offered to follow up with an inventory of items. The Board’s remaining funds from the prior budget is \$1,139. The Board has a budget of \$2,000 for 2019 and 2020.

Commissioner Jackson reported on the difficulty of obtaining bare root tree stock for the tree giveaway during the Arbor Day event because of the closure of a local wholesale nursery. Previously, the Board spent approximately \$300 on trees. He offered to follow up with information on possible resources for obtaining trees.

Planner Bhagavan reported the Arbor Day event is scheduled on April 20, 2019 at the Tumwater Library from 10 a.m. to noon.

Planner Bhagavan asked the Board for input on rescheduling the March 11 meeting to March 4 because of the lack of a meeting room. In the event a March meeting is unnecessary, the next meeting is on April 8, 2019 affording sufficient time for the Board to finalize details for the Arbor Day event.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about the possibility of the Board exhibiting at the Tumwater’s Farmer Market to solicit feedback on the Urban Forestry Management Plan. Manager Medrud offered to follow up with staff on the opening date for the market.

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ADJOURNMENT: **With there being no further business, Chair Grantham adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m.**

Prepared by Puget Sound Meeting Services, psmsoly@earthlink.net