

TO: Neighborhood Tree Team members and tree advocates
FROM: Bruce Nelson, Cully Tree Team, 12.11.19
RE: Portland Urban Forestry Commission Meeting 11.21.19:
Summary and Comments

I have been attending most of the Urban Forestry Commission meetings since July 2016. These two-hour meetings occur on a monthly basis, on the third Thursday of the month at City Hall, usually in the Lovejoy Room. Official minutes of the meetings are available at the website for the Urban Forestry Commission, once they are approved by the Commissioners (usually 1-3 months after the meeting). <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/60405>

The decisions made at these meetings often affect the volunteer tree advocacy work we are doing. I will send you timely commentary on these monthly meetings. If you do not wish to receive this, let me know.

Italicized text indicates my own point of view and/or items not necessarily expressed during the meeting.

The monthly Urban Forestry Commission meeting was held November 21, 2019 in the Lovejoy Room in City Hall, 9:30 am – noon.

Urban Forestry Commissioners Present - Vivek Shandas (Chair), Gregg Everhart, Brian French, Barbara Hollenbeck, Lorena Nascimento, Bruce Nelson, Daniel Newberry, Damon Schrosk , Thuy Tu, Megan Van DeMark

Urban Forestry Commissioners Absent - Anjeanette Brown

Urban Forestry Staff Present - Jenn Cairo (City of Portland Forester), Brian Landoe (Budget and Programs Analyst),

Deputy City Attorney- Tony Garcia

Visitor Presenters for Meeting – Ian Scott and Ruth Williams (Davey Resource Group)

Public Comments

Doug Klotz expressed his interest in the progress of the Portland Bureau of Transportation's STREETS 2035 PROJECT. He has found very little information regarding the work that is being done within that work group. This important project will determine guidelines for how decisions are made for right-of-way (ROW) space use. These decisions will greatly influence tree planting potential in the ROW space for many areas in Portland (*especially those with high levels of unimproved streets*). He hoped that Streets 2035 would:

1. Get more street tree canopy over streets.
2. Remove parking near corners and make curb extensions standard.
3. Prioritize all other uses of the curb zone over parking, with exceptions for spaces for disabled citizens, on each block.
4. Keep corners clear of poles.
5. Keep protected bike lanes separated from auto traffic, including at intersections.
6. Always pave to property line at sites in zones with CM or EX zoning.
7. On ROWs less than 60 feet, preserve narrow width with development, and eliminate parking to get wider pedestrian area, before widening ROW.

City Forester Report Jenn Cairo

1. The Streets 2035 Project, under the leadership of Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), is a multi-year endeavor for developing guidelines on managing infrastructure in the right-of-way. There are still 3.5 years remaining on this work. The key individuals involved in this group have met 3 times, focusing on identifying priority issues. Matt Berkow is the Project Manager at PBOT on this work (Streets2035@portlandoregon.gov). He will be presenting information on the work of this group at either the January or February 2020 Urban Forestry Commission meeting. For further information, see <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/79886>.
2. A new Urban Forestry staff member has been hired. Dawn Morris will be working at Urban Forestry's desk at Development Services and at the Tree Hotline (503.823.TREE).
3. The December 19, 2019 Urban Forestry Commission meeting will start with an informal breakfast gathering from 9:30 am – 10:30 am. Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) Director Adena Long and Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish have been invited. The location will be announced later. The business portion of the meeting will convene at City Hall in the Lovejoy room at 10:45 am and end at noon.

4. The upcoming focused PP&R Sustainable Future City Council work session will be November 26th in Council Chambers from 9:30 – 11:30 am. The focus will be a) addressing level of services delivered by PP&R based on City Council recommendations and b) potential funding sources, in addition to General Fund budget dollars, that could supplement PP&R budget dollars derived from General Budget dollars. This meeting is open to the public but only invited testimony will be heard. One of the items that is included in potential levels of services provided by PP&R is maintenance of street trees within the city. *The link below provides a video recording of that meeting if you click on November 25, 2019 Work Session on Sustainable Future.* <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/video/player/?tab=council>
5. Brian Landoe has been working on the Annual Report for the Urban Forestry Commission for 2018. He will send this to UFC Commissioners for feedback. Official approval of this report will occur at the next UFC meeting. *Currently this is only in draft form, which I am sending as a separate attachment.*
6. Nik Desai and Angie DiSalvo have played key roles in developing the new APPROVED STREET TREE PLANTING LIST. This list was developed using a variety of criteria, including climate change. There is now more information in this list that addresses sun and water needs for each tree. The list also includes more options for the different types of trees (broadleaf evergreen, deciduous, evergreen). The new list can be viewed at: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/66682>
7. Jenn appreciates the work that the Policy Committee has done on Title 11 updates. There will be discussion at the December 5th City Council meeting on Code changes pertaining to the large tree amendment. It is likely this will be an emergency item.

Street Tree Maintenance Report Draft Ian Scott and Ruth Williams of Davey Resource Group

Davey Resource Group does contract work all over the USA, including the June 2009 study contracted by Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability called Initial Assessment of the Costs of Managing Street Trees as a Public Asset. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/276362> . At the time this work was done, street and park tree inventories for Portland trees had not been done, although reasonable estimates of the numbers of trees were available. Following the time this report was done, there was a decision on the part of the City not to assume responsibility for maintenance of street trees.

In 2019 Portland Urban Forestry commissioned the Davey Resource Group to **“explore the costs and benefits of the City of Portland assuming responsibility for street tree maintenance.”** The 2019 draft of this report, called *Managing Street Trees as Green Infrastructure 2019 Cost Assessment* is currently available at (<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/747180>)

In this draft report, street tree maintenance includes a) planting, b) establishment, c) training, d) maintenance pruning and f) tree removal as needed, for all street trees in Portland. Special attention was paid to how this work could integrate equity and workforce development. This report includes a) the cost to do what is currently done in which the City does not take on any additional responsibilities from those currently in existence, b) the cost to carry out an ongoing standard maintenance cycle program taken on by the City that includes maintenance of all street trees and a maintenance pruning cycle of every 10 years, and c) the cost to carry out an optimal maintenance program taken on by the City that includes maintenance of all street trees and a maintenance pruning cycle of every 5 years.

In this 2019 working draft, several assumptions made by the Davey Resource Group appear to be made:

- 1. Urban Forestry will define the various tasks to be performed and contract out to various enterprises to do the actual work.*
- 2. Urban Forestry would manage the oversight of the contract to get the groundwork done by contracted companies. These may be non-profit or for-profit companies.*
- 3. Urban Forestry staff will no perform any of the actual fieldwork involved in the maintenance of street trees.*
- 4. Fieldwork on street trees can be done less expensively by private contractors.*
- 5. Urban Forestry would maintain a workforce to do the maintenance work in Portland Parks and some of the emergency street tree work that occurs right after severe storms.*
- 6. Urban Forestry staff would have responsibility for outreach to the public to inform them of the changed practices while clearly communicating City responsibilities and adjacent property owner responsibilities.*

Table 3.9 Summary of annual program costs for optimal and standard maintenance program options presented in 2019 report, Managing Street Trees as Green Infrastructure 2019 Cost Assessment

	Optimal	Standard
Program Tasks	5-year Program	10-year Program
Maintenance	\$7,019,668	\$3,509,834
Tree Planting (Replacement Only)	\$1,507,393	\$1,507,393
Administration	\$3,252,750	\$3,252,750
Emergency Response	\$575,000	\$575,000
Software	\$2,500	\$2,500
Total Program Cost per Year	\$12,357,310	\$8,847,476

Urban Forestry Commissioners’ comments and questions included:

1. Does the City takeover of maintenance of street trees increase or decrease community engagement with Portland’s urban canopy?
2. Is there an option that would include a pilot project, not just all or nothing, relevant to street tree maintenance, as a means to develop a sound program that fits Portland?
3. Would there be a way to involve the community more in developing a Streets Tree Maintenance Program?
4. There would need to be some very creative marketing, if the City were to take over street tree maintenance.
5. It would seem more appropriate to use 5 years as the establishment care period for street trees rather than 3 years, in light of climate change.

Ian Scott and Ruth Williams thanked the Commissioners, expressed appreciation for their questions and comments, and welcomed any further suggestions. The Davey Resource Group hopes to present a revised draft to the Urban Forestry Commission at the January meeting.

UFC Statement on Title 11 Amendments Daniel Newberry, Policy Committee Chair

After some discussion led by Daniel Newberry, the UFC Commissioners voted to advise the City Council to make the following 3 changes to the City's Tree Code, Title 11:

1. Amend Title 11 either by extending the sunset date of tree preservation requirements in development situations (11.40.040C) from 12/31/19 for at least two years (12.31.21), or – as was suggested at the City Council meeting on November 13, 2019 – make this change permanent. These temporary preservation requirements were originally approved by City Council in 2016 (ORD 187685).
2. Amend Title 11 to remove the exemptions from Tree Preservation and Tree Density standards (11.50.040.B.1 and 11.50.050.B.1.c, respectively) trees in development situations on sites in specified industrial, commercial, and employment zones (1H, IG1, EX, and CX).
3. Amend Title 11 to reduce the 36” DBH threshold to 20”DBH, for inch-for-inch mitigation (Table 50-1), and for required preservation or fee-in-lieu payment (11.50.040.C.1.b).

It was agreed that Daniel would work with Vivek to write and send to Portland City Council a letter expressing UFC's support of the above 3 changes and the basis for this support.

Next Urban Forestry Commission Meeting

The next Urban Forestry Commission meeting will be Thursday, December 19, 2019, 10:55 am – 12 noon in the Lovejoy Room at City Hall. The Commissioners will meet for a celebratory breakfast from 9:30 am – 10:30 am at a location to be determined. Portland Parks and Recreation Director Adena Long and City Commissioner Nick Fish have been invited to attend.

The next meeting agenda:

10:55-11:00 am: [Review and Approve Minutes](#)

11:00 – 11:05 am: [Approve 2018 UFC Report – Brian Landoe](#)

11:05 – 11:35 am: [FY 21 Budget - Jenn Cairo, City Forester](#)

11:35 – 11:45 am: [Forestry Report – Jenn Cairo, City Forester](#)

11:45 - Noon: [Title 11 Amendments - Daniel Newberry, Policy Committee Chair](#)