



WORK SESSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council

STAFF

Kendra Boot, City Forester
Mike Calhoon, Parks Department Director
Dean Klingner, Interim Director, Community Services
Ted Hewitt, Legal

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Urban Forestry Strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this work session is to provide an overview of the current state of municipal forestry and to seek Council feedback around future urban forest strategy and policy development. Staff will share proposed next steps for the Urban Forest Strategic Plan effort.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

1. What general questions or feedback does Council have on how the Forestry Division is addressing the urban forest-related Council Priorities?
2. What general questions or feedback does Council have on the proposed areas of focus and proposed process for the Urban Forest Strategy?

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Urban forestry has been a priority in Fort Collins for decades and has created a strong foundation to advance trees as important infrastructure for generations to come. Council identified two tree-related priorities this term. Staff will share high level details on what efforts have been made thus far related to *Tree Subsidy* and *Improving Tree Policies* and briefly share the programs and existing codes that have helped create the canopy that is present today.

Recent municipal code amendments (June 21, 2022) for improving tree policies included:

- Dedicating all trees, public and private, as important community infrastructure has been created. As trees are essential ecological, cultural and socioeconomic resources for the City, its residents and visitors, this provision will bring awareness to these important assets through the new ordinance. The benefits provided by a diversified and abundant community forest are many and are stated within the ordinance.

- Providing that no person shall affix any item as a tree attachment to any tree within the public right-of-way of any street or sidewalk. Exceptions to this prohibition include: City employees or contractors performing work for the City; authorized use of slacklines or hammocks; and holiday lights from October through February.
- Requiring any person who engages in the business of felling trees for financial gain to be licensed as an arborist in accordance with standards of the City Forester.
- Requiring property owners to maintain trees up to the center line of any alley adjacent to their property to provide for the safe and convenient use of alleys, streets, and sidewalks.
- Authorizing the City Forester to set reasonable arborist license fees by rule and allowing annual adjustments to the fees based on an evaluation of regional arborist licensing fees.
- Authorizing additional flexibility for the terms of repayment when a property owner is to be assessed the costs of complete tree removal.
- Making technical amendments and other minor Code revisions to improve clarity and connection to other Code sections.

Council also funded an Urban Forest Strategic Planning Effort including community engagement that will kick-off in 2023. Staff will provide a presentation on the importance of an urban forest strategic plan and the proposed areas of focus.

NEXT STEPS

- **Urban Forest Strategic Plan** – Council funded budget offer NLSH 59.6 for 2023. Staff is working on a Request for Proposals and will kick-off the consultant driven planning effort in the Spring.
- **Tree Subsidy** – Council funded 1000 trees to be subsidized and planted on private property through the Community Canopy Program in 2022, and again in 2023 and 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Memo, June 24, 2022
2. Presentation