TREE AND VEGETATION PRESERVATION CODE UPDATE CITY OF TUMWATER

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Prepared for:

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Title-page image: Fall in Tumwater by Tony Porter Photography

All discussions, conclusions and recommendations reflect the best professional judgment of the author(s) and are based upon information available at the time the plan was developed. All work proposed within this document does not supersede the approved scope and fee. Deliverables described will be provided within the previously agreed upon scope, budget, and timeline. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made.



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1 Introduction

The City of Tumwater's urban forest provides environmental, health, and aesthetic benefits to the entire community. The urban forest is a dynamic ecological system that includes canopy trees as well as associated understory vegetation on both public and private land that contribute to the city's character and a variety of ecosystem services such as reducing urban heat island effects, stormwater absorption, erosion reduction, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, improving mental health and wellness, recreation, and mitigating the impacts of climate change. Like many cities in the Puget Sound region, the Tumwater community is also faced with the need to support smart growth and development while also ensuring environmental sustainability and promoting equity and environmental justice.

To meet this challenge, on March 2, 2021, Tumwater City Council adopted the Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP) and made urban forestry one of four top priorities for 2022-23. To achieve the objectives of the UFMP, the City identified review and revision of the City's tree preservation code (TMC 16.08 *Protection of Trees and Vegetation*) as a high priority action (Tumwater UFMP 2021). The City recognizes that the community's urban forest is managed by and benefits a diverse group of stakeholders that are in a range of urban and natural settings, including private properties, developed parks, rights-of-way, conservation areas, and other public lands.

To ensure that the implementation of the UFMP and the associated municipal code updates are grounded in equity, inclusion, and environmental justice, the City is embarking on a public engagement process that utilizes a diverse suite of tools aimed at minimizing barriers to participation, provides multiple opportunities and mechanisms to share ideas and perspectives, and engages a wide cross section of Tumwater residents and community stakeholders. The City, with support from The Watershed Company, has developed the following Public Engagement Plan, which lays the framework for a robust community outreach effort.

2 Overview of Code Update Process

The project comprises two major phases: (1) public outreach and engagement and (2) code revision and update. During the public outreach and engagement phase the project team will identify and communicate with stakeholders—both internal and external—to solicit feedback and document attitudes and perceptions about urban forest management and tree and vegetation preservation. To capture a wide range of feedback that represents the varied and

balanced interests of stakeholder groups, public outreach, and engagement efforts will be conducted through the lens of equity and environmental justice.

Why are environmental justice and equity important to the success of this engagement effort and tree preservation code update project? Environmental justice refers to fair and equitable treatment of all people regardless of race, color, nationality, physical and mental ability, or income in all areas of natural resource management, policies, and practices. Environmental justice ensures that all community members benefit from a safe, healthy, sustainable environment, are protected from ecological harm (e.g., pollution, impacts from climate change etc.) and actively participate in the decision-making that affect their communities.

The uneven distribution of the tree canopy in urban areas and the benefits trees provide have profound implications for environmental equity and justice. Analysis of tree canopy cover distribution across urban areas of the United States, including the Puget Sound region, correlates low tree canopy cover with disadvantaged socio-economic groups and/or people of color. These groups have also been historically marginalized and excluded from local decision-making for environmental policy and natural resource allocation. This public engagement plan seeks to break down barriers to engagement and participation in order for the voices of all Tumwater community members to be heard in a meaningful way.

The public outreach and engagement effort will yield multi-layered feedback, which will be analyzed and interpreted into guidance that will help to inform the subsequent code revision and ordinance update.

3 Engagement Goals and Strategies

3.1 Urban Forest Management Goals and Objectives

The goals and strategies that will guide the outreach and engagement effort are derived from the City's UFMP. The UFMP guides the stewardship of the urban forest within the City though a series of implementation actions; its core focus is "The Right Tree in the Right Place." The primary goals, objectives, and actions of the UFMP that specifically apply to the municipal code updates and address the preservation of trees and vegetation include:

- Goal 1. Restore and enhance the community and urban forest.
 - **Objective 1.1**. Increase canopy cover in the City to expand the community and urban forest.
 - Action B. Ensure that landscaping regulations provide for the preservation of trees with potential and the planting of new trees and

understory when removing existing trees and understory on public and private properties.

- Action C. Require appropriate tree planting in new development and redevelopment, by emphasizing proper planning for trees, correct planting techniques, and aftercare that supports the healthy establishment of newly planted trees.
- **Goal 2.** Protect and preserve the community and urban forest, which includes trees, understory, habitat, and soils.
 - **Objective 2.1.** Use regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to protect and retain the community and urban forest to the extent practicable within the context of necessary growth and development.
 - Action A. Enforce tree protection regulations to protect healthy existing trees and forested areas and replace on public and private properties.
 - Action J. Designate, register, and promote heritage trees.
- **Goal 4.** Balance the protection and support of the community and urban forest with other City strategic priorities, which include, in part, providing affordable housing, developing a walkable urban community, economic development, addressing climate change, and protecting endangered species.
 - **Objective 4.1.** Update the Urban Forestry Management Plan and supporting regulations regularly and ensure they work in harmony with other City strategic priorities.
 - Action D. Review tree preservation, landscaping, and street tree regulations regularly to ensure that they are working with other City strategic priorities, plans, and regulations, responding to changes in climate, and implementing the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

3.2 Public Outreach Goals and Strategies

The following goals and strategies will guide the outreach process.

- Learn about the community's preferences for tree and vegetation preservation in the City of Tumwater.
 - Seek insights and perspectives from community members to capture their desires for tree and vegetation preservation to update the City's tree and vegetation preservation regulations (TMC 16.08 *Protection of Trees and Vegetation*).
 - Establish and maintain on-going long-term relationships with project stakeholders and members of the community.
- Stay in touch inform and involve.

- Keep stakeholders and the public informed on the status of the outreach initiative and code update process.
- Identify a point of contact(s) who will be responsible for ongoing communication and updates on the project.
- Maintain current lists of organizations and groups identified in the Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement section.
- Communicate with key stakeholders on project process, updates, and upcoming outreach and engagement activities.
- Respond to emails whenever possible to acknowledge input and concerns.
- Update project information and status in a timely manner.
- Use multiple avenues, such in-person outreach and interviews, social media, post, and email, to engage diverse user groups. See the Notification Tools section.
- Be inclusive.
 - Select activities, locations, and times that are accessible, consider busy schedules, and best create opportunities for inclusive engagement to reach a broad group of participants.
 - Make sure we hear broadly from the community and that input represents the community's diverse demographics and neighborhoods.
 - Create multiple ways to engage, whether on-line or in-person, and through multiple outreach activities.
- Learn from outreach efforts to improve and document feedback.
 - Keep records of outreach attendance.
 - Make time to reflect on the outcome of each activity what went well, what could be improved, and what was learned.
 - Document feedback and update this plan accordingly with summary information.

3.3 Success Metrics

The project team will employ the following success metrics to measure achievement of the outreach goals stated in the prior section.

Success Strategy	Success Metrics		
	• Direct mailing to all addresses within the City of Tumwater, including roughly 9,750 households and 670 businesses.		
Reach a broad audience of residents, organizations, and	 Aim for 2,500 impressions through the project website and social media campaign (e.g., visitors, views, likes, or reposts), representing approximately 10% of the City's population. 		
businesses that reflects the Tumwater community.	 Conduct targeted outreach to groups, individuals, or organizations representing the three demographic trends outlined in Table 2. 		
	 Conduct direct outreach to groups or organizations representing 11 interests outlined in Table 2. 		
Provide flexible opportunities for participation that cater to	 Use social media and a project website to maintain a digital presence throughout the duration of the project that provides on-demand information on project scope, progress, and how to participate. 		
differing community needs.	 Leverage the popularity of mobile phones for assistive technologies and translation by formatting the project website for viewing on phones and tablets. 		
Maintain clear and accurate documentation and clearly define project team goals and responsibilities.	 Use a collaborative cloud-based platform for project documentation (i.e., SharePoint), including stakeholder contact lists, project schedules, and feedback logs. Use team meetings as a regular touch point to report and reflect on outreach and engagement efforts. 		

 Table 1.
 Summary of Outreach Success Metrics

4 Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement

The goal of stakeholder identification is to achieve a representative sample of the Tumwater community that considers both demographic trends and balances the broad and competing interests relevant to the scope of the tree and vegetation preservation ordinance. To achieve this goal, outreach and engagement efforts are structured to target the community's specific needs and profile. Further, targets help to determine the extent to which effective outreach is achieved.

4.1 Stakeholder Identification

4.1.1 Demographics

According to Census.gov, as of July 1, 2021, the City of Tumwater hosts a population of 25,844 residents across 9,272 households and 663 employers (non-farm establishments). While

stakeholder participation is encouraged broadly by any interested parties, the project team aims to capture feedback that reflects the specific demographics of the greater Tumwater community. Specifically, the following groups should be represented in the feedback received.

- Working Families with School-Aged Children. Several statistics captured by the 2020 U.S. Census paint a picture of working families with school-aged children as a key demographic in Tumwater. Specifically, more than one quarter of the population of Tumwater is under the age of 18 (27.1%) and the average persons per household is 2.51. More than two-thirds of the population is in the civilian labor force (69.2%) and an overwhelming majority of persons over age 25 have at least a high school diploma (95.6%). Further, an overwhelming majority of households have a computer with broadband internet (94.2% and 91.0%, respectively). Altogether, this suggests that digital engagement and outreach to schools and workplaces could be effective means of outreach. Further, it suggests that a middle- to high-school reading level would be appropriate for use in outreach and engagement materials.
- Diverse Communities. According to U.S. Census data, most of the Tumwater's population self-identifies as white (76.2%); however, other ethnic communities are significantly represented, including Hispanic or Latino (8.6%), Two or More Races (8.2%), Asian (3.5%), and Black or African American (3.3%). Further, less than 1% of residents self-identify as American Indian and Alaska Native (0.4%) or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (0.2%). Although some households speak a language other than English at home (6.2%), a large majority of households are English-speaking (93.8%); therefore, outreach material in English with opportunities for translation, such as using web-enabled translation tools, could be helpful in engaging a broad audience.
- Long-term Residents. According to the U.S. Census data, more than three-quarters of residents lived in the same house a least one year prior to the census (80.2%). This is supported by the large number of owner-occupied housing units (57.3%), also captured by the Census. The number of long-term residents and owner-occupied housing units both support that direct mailing could be an effective outreach tool.

Demographic Group	Potential Outreach Avenues, Liaisons, and Partners in Outreach		
Working families with school-aged children	 Daycare and childcare centers Elementary, middle, and high schools School districts Parent-Teacher organizations Youth advocacy and engagement organizations Community centers and libraries 		
Diverse communities	 Faith-based organizations Cultural and ethnic organizations Local circulation media, including English and non-English publications 		
Long-term residents	 Neighborhood and community organizations Community destinations (e.g., grocery stores, retail centers, parks) Homeowner associations 		

Table 2. Summary of Demographic Engagement

4.1.2 Interest Groups

The City identified numerous stakeholder groups that represent interests related to tree and vegetation preservation. Acknowledging that some groups may be more organized and vocal than others, targeted outreach will be conducted to seek diverse input and to balance the interests of input received.

Interest	Potential Stakeholders		
Tumwater residents	HomeownersRenters		
Residential property owners	 Homeowner associations Residential landlords (single and multi-family) Residential property management companies Non-resident homeowners (i.e., owners of second or vacation homes) Owners of short-term rentals (e.g., Airbnb, VRBO) 		

 Table 3.
 Summary of Stakeholder Interest Groups*

Interest	Potential Stakeholders		
Commercial, industrial, and institutional property owners	 Business owners and operators and their employees Commercial landlords (warehouse, office, service, and industrial) Commercial property management companies Port of Olympia Tribes 		
Residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional developers	 Individual construction and development companies Construction and developer advocates and trade organizations 		
Professional consultants, such as landscape architects, foresters, and arborists	 Companies located in Tumwater Companies who serve Tumwater Individual consulting companies Industry advocates and trade organizations 		
Tree cutting/landscape maintenance companies	 Companies located in Tumwater Companies who serve Tumwater Individual tree cutting/landscape maintenance companies Industry advocates and trade organizations 		
Environmental groups	 Tribes Tree and arboricultural advocacy organizations Wildlife groups Land conservancies Climate change advocacy groups Hunting and fishing / sportsman groups Outdoor recreational advocacy groups 		
Utility providers	 Puget Sound Energy Other private utility providers Tumwater Water Resources and Sustainability Department (water and stormwater services) LOTT (sewer services) 		
Economic development groups	 Tumwater Chamber of Commerce Thurston Chamber of Commerce Olympia Master Builders 		
City development review staff	 Community development department staff (zoning, environmental) Building department staff Transportation and development engineering department staff 		

Interest	Potential Stakeholders	
	 Parks and recreation department staff 	
City maintenance staff	 Transportation and operations department staff 	
	 Utility department staff 	
	 Police department staff 	
	 Community development department staff 	
City code enforcement staff	 Building department staff 	
	 Water resources department staff 	
	 Utility department staff 	

*Stakeholder groups also apply to the Street Tree Plan and Code Update Project

5 Outreach Strategy

The following table describes methods of notification that can be used to provide the public with project information and inform them of upcoming public participation opportunities. When providing notification about upcoming opportunities for public engagement, the City should consider how best to reach key stakeholders and demographic groups identified in the Stakeholders section.

5.1 Notification Tools

The following table describes methods of notification used to promote the project and share opportunities for public participation.

Notification Tool	Key Actions	Due	Lead
Online Open House The online open house will provide a homebase for information about the project and engagement opportunities, including links and schedules.	Build framework Populate content Soft (test) launch Launch	Launch ASAP, at least 2 weeks prior to the first stakeholder workshop	Watershed
Postcard A postcard will provide direct outreach to all mailing addresses within the City of Tumwater to promote the project and drive traffic to the online open house.	Design postcard Coordinate printing and mailing	ASAP, at least 2 weeks prior to the first stakeholder workshop	Watershed to design postcard; City to coordinate printing and mailing
Poster* A poster will provide direct outreach to select venues within the City of Tumwater to promote the project and drive traffic to the online open house.	Design poster Coordinate printing and distribution	ASAP, at least 2 weeks prior to the first stakeholder workshop	Watershed to design poster; City to coordinate printing and distribution. Locations include the library, post office, Senior Center, Olympia-Tumwater Foundation Park
Social Media Promotion Use the City's established social media channels for broad engagement beyond the city limits to raise awareness of project goals and objectives, promote the project, and drive traffic to the online open house.	Regular and frequent posting across all social media channels	At project milestones (e.g., online open house launch, collateral mailing, and distribution); per Schedule of Outreach	City

Table 4. Summary of Notification Tools

Notification Tool	Key Actions	Due	Lead
Direct Engagement Project liaisons will forge and foster direct relationships with stakeholder groups identified. Direct engagement may include email, phone, or in-person communication; attendance at regular group meetings; and routing of project information and feedback between interest groups and the project team.	Regular communication with leadership or key representatives of each group	At least monthly, or as needed, throughout project duration	City

*Poster design is not included in Watershed's executed contract but was discussed as an additional useful tool to reach a wide audience. Project team to discuss additional budget needed and benefits to outreach.

5.2 Alternate Engagement Tools

The project team identified several alternate means of outreach that may or may not be possible within the scope of the Tree and Vegetation Preservation Ordinance Update effort, due to schedule constraints, or the availability of budgetary or staff resources.

Engagement Tool	Potential Benefits, Limitations, and Concerns	Status
Community Task Force A formal body of community members who convene regularly for direct consultation with City staff. The task force may be appointed for a single project or advise on multiple projects. They make formal recommendations to the City.	 Provides regular recurrent feedback to City and project team, from a body who is willing to participate in in-depth discussions and be educated on topics, if needed. Requires pre-planning and ongoing effort by City staff. May require formal authorization from City Council, Mayor, or other leadership. Requires volunteer community members who have interest and availability to serve on Task Force for designated term. May attract stakeholders who are likely to be proactive participants in the regular engagement process, which could result in overrepresentation of well organized, vocal, and/or privileged populations. Should target representatives of historically underrepresented populations and interests. 	The City's Tree Board will satisfy this role for the purpose of this project.

Table 5.Outline of Alternate Engagement Tools

5.3 Stakeholder Meetings

A major component of the engagement effort will include a series of both internal and external stakeholder meetings. A total of one internal and three external stakeholder meetings are planned. If needed, a fourth external stakeholder meeting may be conducted. The purpose of the stakeholder meetings will be to facilitate iterative discussions that build on the feedback received and inform subsequent steps in the ordinance update process. An outline of the scope of discussion for each stakeholder meeting is provided below.

Internal Stakeholder Meeting (1 of 1)

- Attendees: City departments and staff
- Discussion: Scope of project, project schedule, scope of current ordinance
- Desired feedback: Concerns about current code, experience with current code, primary concerns regarding tree and vegetation preservation
- Exercises:

- Priority setting (ex. "What do you see as the main priorities for tree and vegetation preservation? heritage trees, climate change, canopy cover, environmental justice, etc.)
- Rank priority
- What are the key concerns affecting each priority?
- What is the desired outcome for management of each priority?
- Which of these priorities are inextricably linked? (Generate pairs or groups)

External Stakeholder Meeting (1 of 3)

- Attendees: Any external stakeholders
- Discussion: Scope of project, project schedule, scope of current ordinance
- Desired feedback: Concerns about current code, experience with current code, primary concerns regarding tree and vegetation preservation
- Exercises:
 - Priority ranking (ex. "What do you see as the main priorities for tree and vegetation preservation? (Rank top 3) champion trees, climate change, canopy cover, environmental justice, etc.)
 - "If we had a focused discussion about your TOP priority, would you be interested in participating in that session? If yes, provide your contact information."

External Stakeholder Meeting (2 of 3)

- Attendees: Select external stakeholder based on interest from External Stakeholder Meeting 1 (invite only)
- Discussion: Focused breakouts on priorities that emerged from External Stakeholder Meeting 1
- Desired feedback: Gaps, targets for revision, focus areas within code
- Engagement questions:
 - What are the key concerns affecting this priority?
 - What is the desired outcome for management of this priority?
 - What are some methods or strategies for achieving the desired outcome?

External Stakeholder Meeting (3 of 3)

- Attendees: Select external stakeholders chosen based on interests represented at External Stakeholder Meeting 2, but targeting equal representation across interest (invite only)
- Discussion: Breakouts on balanced interested that emerged from External Stakeholder Meeting 2

- Desired feedback: Actionable code guidance, compromise
- Engagement questions

6 Outreach Schedule

To provide accountability and build trust with community stakeholders, the project team will maintain a regular schedule of outreach through the duration of project. In the initial phase of outreach and engagement, outreach will be interactive, including both outreach to and feedback from community members. Through the later project phase of code revision and outreach, the project team will keep stakeholders informed of project progress and milestones. An outline and relative schedule of social media posting is provided after the overall schedule of outreach.

Date	Milestone / Notes	
August 2022	 Draft Public Engagement Plan 	
September 2022	 Finalize Public Engagement Plan Build online open house framework and content outline Draft templates for outreach collateral Final postcard and poster provided to City Soft Internal Launch online open house 	
October 2022	 City coordinates postcard mailing and poster distribution Joint meeting of Tumwater Tree Board and Planning Commission (Scheduled for October 11th) Live Launch Event - online open house Internal Stakeholder Meeting (late October) 	
November 2022	 External Stakeholder Meeting #1 	
December 2022	 External Stakeholder Meeting #2 Work Session with Tree Board 	
1 st Quarter 2023	 External Stakeholder Meeting #3 (Early January) Work Session with Tree Board 	
2 nd Quarter 2023	• Ordinance Adoption Process	

Table 6. Target Schedule of Outreach and Engagement

Social Media Promotion

The following table provides an outline of key messages for social media posts along with a targeted timeline for posting relative to project milestones and events.

Milestone / Event	Key Messages	Relative Timing
Online open house launch	 Visit the Online Open House [provide direct link] Share project goals Share project timeline Sign up for project updates [provide direct link to sign up form] Who should participate? (Everyone!) 	Coincident with launch of online open house
Postcard mailing	 Look out for postcard [share image of postcard] Visit the Online Open House [provide direct link] Sign up for project updates [provide direct link to sign up form] Who should participate? (Everyone!) 	1 day before expected delivery date
Poster distribution	 Look out for poster [share image of poster] Visit the Online Open House [provide direct link] Sign up for project updates [provide direct link to sign up form] Who should participate? (Everyone!) 	2 days after expected distribution date
External stakeholder meetings	 Are you interested in tree and vegetation preservation? Sign up for project updates [provide direct link to sign up form] Save the Date [publish date] Register today! [share registration link] Reminder, meeting is tomorrow! Reminder, meeting is today! 	Starting at least 6 weeks before scheduled meeting
Project milestone achieved	 The City is making progress on the tree and vegetation preservation update! [share about milestone and share direct link, if available] 	Within 3 days of achievement

Table 7. Outline of Social Media Promotion

Milestone / Event	Key Messages	Relative Timing
New content posted to online open house for public review	 The City needs your input about tree and vegetation preservation! View the [content description] and share your feedback! [provide direct link] Reminder: your input is needed by [date]! 	Coincident with posting 2 weeks before feedback period is closed 1 week before feedback period is closed 1 day before feedback period is closing

References

Census.gov, Tumwater, WA: Quickfacts. Accessed, August 2022.

City of Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan. March 2021

Appendix A

DETAILED STAKEHOLDER INDEX

Content to be added during the public engagement and municipal code update process.

Appendix B

STAKEHOLDER MEETING SUMMARIES

Content to be added during the public engagement and municipal code update process.