

TO: General Government Committee
FROM: Brad Medrud, Planning Manager
DATE: March 8, 2023
SUBJECT: Street Tree Plan and TMC 12.24 *Street Trees* Update

1) Recommended Action:

Review the packet and be prepared for a discussion with the City's consultant and staff on the gap analysis and public engagement plan.

2) Background:

Trees are an essential part of the character of the City. As part of a healthy community and urban forest, they provide many environmental, economic, and community benefits. Trees and their associated vegetation work constantly to mitigate the negative effects of development, while protecting and enhancing lives within the community. In addition to environmental benefits such as improving and protecting water and air quality, directly and indirectly addressing the effects of climate change, and buffering urban noise, trees and their associated vegetation also have socioeconomic and aesthetic benefits, including promoting equity and environmental justice within the community by ensuring each neighborhood in the City receives community investment and support.

The Tumwater City Council made urban forestry one of four top priority actions for 2022-23. The City Council adopted the *Urban Forestry Management Plan* on March 2, 2021 after four years of entirely City-funded work by City staff, stakeholders, a consultant, the Tree Board, and the Planning Commission.

The City's urban forest consists of all trees and understory plants on public and private property in the City. It includes a diverse mix of vegetation that is managed by a broad group of individuals and groups that are located in a range of urban and natural settings including private properties, developed parks, rights-of-way, conservation areas, and other public lands.

The focus of the *Urban Forestry Management Plan* is the "The Right Tree in the Right Place." The *Urban Forestry Management Plan* guides the stewardship of the urban forest within the City through a series of implementation actions.

The Street Tree Plan update is the next step in the City's implementation of the *Urban Forestry Management Plan*. As part of this project, the City's consultant, The Watershed Company, and City staff will be working in 2023 with stakeholders and the Tree Board, Planning Commission, and City Council to update the City's Street Tree Plan and regulations (TMC 12.24 *Street Trees*), as well as review and update other relevant regulations and standards.

In addition, the City is currently updating its tree and vegetation preservation regulations (TMC 16.08) and will be updating City's landscaping regulations (TMC 18.47) this year.

The Planning Commission and Tree Board had a short introduction to the Street Tree Plan and the TMC 12.24 *Street Trees* update at a joint meeting on January 10, 2023 and the Planning Commission discussed the Street Tree Plan gap analysis further at their January

24, 2023 worksession. The Planning Commission and Tree Board had a longer discussion of the Street Tree Plan update at a joint meeting on February 14, 2023.

There will be three Community Conversations on street trees. The first was on February 27, 2023, the second will be on March 20, 2023, and the third will be on April 17, 2023. Two internal stakeholder meetings will be held in February and March 2023.

The ordinance and plan adoption process is expected to start in June 2023.

3) Policy Support:

Conservation Element Policy C-1.1: Protect the ecological integrity of the natural environment while allowing for compatible growth and development.

Conservation Element Policy C-1.5: Maximize retention of a healthy tree cover and native vegetation and encourage restoration, replacement, and enhancement of unhealthy trees and disturbed vegetation.

Land Use Element Implementation Policy 16: Implement the Urban Forestry Management Plan through the municipal code, Development Guidelines, City employee processes, and community education and engagement.

4) Alternatives:

None.

5) Fiscal Notes:

The City has a grant for \$25,000 under the Washington State Department of Natural Resources' 2022 Community Forestry Assistance Grant to help pay for work on the Plan. The match would be an internally funded work program task.

6) Attachment:

- A. Gap Analysis
- B. Public Engagement Plan