

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	29737	Agenda Number	12.
Meeting Date:	3/06/2014	Department:	Parks and Recreation	
Subject				
Approve a resolution adopting the Austin Urban Forest Plan: a Master Plan for Public Properties as required under City Code Section 2-1-183(E).				
Amount and Source of Funding				
Fiscal Note				
Purchasing Language:				
Prior Council Action:				
For More Information:	Angela Hanson (512) 974-9551.			
Boards and Commission Action:	Public hearings were held at the joint committee of the Environmental Board and Parks & Recreation Board on August 6th, 2013, the Parks and Recreation Board on July 23rd, 2013 and October 22nd, 2013, and the Environmental Board on October 2nd, 14th, and 16th of 2013. In addition 8 public meetings were held by the Urban Forestry Board to guide Plan development. The Urban Forestry Board approved the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan for City Council adoption on November 20th, 2013.			
MBE / WBE:				
Related Items:				

Additional Backup Information

City Code Section 2-1-183 (*Urban Forestry Board*) and 6-3-5 (*Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan*) directs the Urban Forestry Board to develop a Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan for public property, and to submit the Plan to City Council for adoption before implementation. The development of the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan is also a direct implementation of Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan via the Green Infrastructure Priority Program and Priority Action CE A22 which directs the City to create an urban forest plan.

Overview

Today, urban forests are increasingly considered an element of a much larger green infrastructure network. Within this network, the urban forest is an invaluable resource that plays an integral role in Austin's health and vitality by providing social, ecological, and economic benefits to the community and by enhancing the quality of life for Austin residents. The impacts from continuing growth and development, combined with long term drought conditions create an imperative to develop a plan to support the long term health and vitality of our public urban forest resource. The

Austin Urban Forest Plan: A Master Plan for Public Property establishes a broad-scoped, long-range vision for Austin's public urban forest. It provides a framework for the City of Austin to use as a guide for managing Austin's public urban forest over the next 20 years. Implementation will roll out in 2014 after Council adoption and includes a road map to reach the comprehensive vision. Each City department that interacts with trees on public property will develop their own tailored Departmental Operational Plan to address specific issues such as existing tree care, new plantings, and canopy coverage goals. There will also be an annual *State of the Urban Forest Report* which will track the overall health of Austin's public urban forest. For more information and to read the Plan, please visit www.austinurbanforestry.org.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1: Introduction This chapter introduces Austin's Urban Forest Plan by providing information on why we should care about our trees and vegetation and the benefits derived from them. In addition, this chapter lays out Austin's vision, goals, and guiding principles.

Chapter 2: State of the Urban Forest This chapter presents baseline information regarding Austin's urban forest resources as they stand today. Information such as this is the first step in future planning as it serves as a benchmark for monitoring present achievements against future goals.

Chapter 3: Implementation This chapter outlines implementation—the process of fulfilling goals and visions of the community. It involves policy measures to effect positive change within our urban forest. Our policies parallel the broad scope of this plan, as they are general and strategic, intending to change departmental urban forestry management.

Development of the Plan

In February of 2011, the Urban Forestry Board and City of Austin Urban Forester initiated the development of the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan. Upon adoption this will be the first Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan since its creation was directed in 1992.

Code Sections 2-1-183 (*Urban Forestry Board*) and 6-3-5 (*Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan*) directs the Board to develop, with the assistance of the City Urban Forester, a comprehensive urban forest plan for public property, and to submit the Plan to City Council for adoption before implementation.

Code Section 6-3-5 (B) directs the Urban Forestry Board to take the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan to the Environmental Board and Parks and Recreation Board for review and recommendations to the Board. Public hearings were held at the joint committee of the Environmental Board and Parks & Recreation Board on August 6th, 2013, the Parks and Recreation Board on July 23rd, 2013 and October 22nd, 2013, and the Environmental Board on October 2nd, 14th, and 16th of 2013. In addition 8 public meetings were held by the Urban Forestry Board to guide Plan development.

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