



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0696, **Version:** 2

Resolution to Adopt the City of Ann Arbor Urban and Community Forest Management Plan Attached for your consideration is a resolution to adopt the City's first Urban and Community Forest Management Plan. The plan is a culmination of a multi-year public planning process that engaged the community and stakeholders. The Park Advisory Commission and Environmental Commission have passed resolutions in support of the Urban and Community Forest Management Plan on April 15, 2014 and April 24, 2014, respectively.

The final draft of the plan is attached and it can also be viewed on the city website at:

[http://www.a2gov.org/government/publicservices/fieldoperations/forestry/Documents/Urban%](http://www.a2gov.org/government/publicservices/fieldoperations/forestry/Documents/Urban%20Forest%20Management%20Plan%20Final%20Draft.pdf)

Adoption of the plan does not commit City resources. Adoption of the plan would provide policy direction and guidance to staff for future implementation recommendations to City Council. The City Administrator's FY 2015 Recommended Budget anticipated favorable consideration of the final draft.

Ann Arbor's urban and community forest is made up of the trees, shrubs and woody vegetation growing along city streets, in city parks, and on institutional and private property. It is a defining and valued characteristic of the City that residents affectionately call "Tree Town," helping to make it a desirable place to live, work and play.

The City of Ann Arbor has approximately 6,900 trees in mowed areas of city parks and over 41,000 trees growing along city streets. These publicly-managed trees provide over \$4.6 million in benefits to the community each year, including reducing stormwater run-off, improving air and water quality, and beautifying the city. The City has a long history of care and management of the urban and community forest. However, serious challenges over the last decade, like the emerald ash borer, have impacted the City's ability to sustainably care for and manage the urban and community forest, placing the health and condition of the City-managed trees at risk.

In 2011, a planning process was undertaken to develop the City's first Urban and Community Forest Management Plan (UCFMP) to provide a framework to effectively manage the urban and community forest as a sustainable asset, consistent with the values and needs of the community. Through a multi-tiered and comprehensive public engagement process, stakeholders, community leaders, residents, and city staff participated in the development of the UCFMP. Public workshops, on-line surveys, focus groups, A2 Open City Hall, and an Advisory Committee were used to gather input during the planning process. This input helped to identify and focus plan goals and provided a means of vetting ideas, exploring implementation options and establishing priorities among multiple-management activities. The public engagement process was successful in making the UCFMP a community-driven plan that is responsive to the issues, needs and desires of the community.

The overarching goal of the UCFMP is to sustainably protect, preserve, maintain and expand Ann

Arbor's tree canopy and urban and community forest. The targets, supporting goals and recommendations outlined in the UCFMP will help to achieve this overarching plan goal, as well as further goals in the City's Sustainability Framework adopted by City Council in February 2013.

Prepared by: Kerry Gray, Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Planning Coordinator

Reviewed by: Craig Hupy, Public Services Area Administrator

Approved by: Steven D. Powers, City Administrator

Whereas, Ann Arbor's urban and community forest is a defining and valued characteristic of the city that residents call "Tree Town," making it a desirable place to live, work and play;

Whereas, Ann Arbor's urban and community forest is made up of the trees, shrubs and woody vegetation growing along city streets, in public parks, and on institutional and private property;

Whereas, Ann Arbor's urban and community forest provides millions of dollars in benefits to the community each year, including reducing stormwater run-off, improving air and water quality and beautifying the city;

Whereas, Events over the last decade, such as the emerald ash borer, have impacted the city's ability to sustainably care for and manage the urban and community forest putting the city-managed trees at risk;

Whereas, A planning process was undertaken to develop the city's first Urban and Community Forest Management Plan (UCFMP) to effectively manage the urban and community forest as a sustainable asset, consistent with the values and needs of the community;

Whereas, Through a multi-tiered and comprehensive public engagement process stakeholders, community leaders, residents, and city staff shaped the scope, content and direction of the UCFMP;

Whereas, The 17 recommendations in the UCFMP provide the framework for the development of a sustainable urban and community forest;

Whereas, The UCFMP identifies measurable targets, actions and recommendations to further goals in the City's Sustainability Framework;

Whereas, As with all projects requiring significant city investment, relevant components of the UCFMP will be presented to City Council in the future for ultimate authorization; and

Whereas, The Ann Arbor Park Advisory Commission and the Environmental Commission passed resolutions in support of this plan on April 15, 2014 and April 24, 2014, respectively;

RESOLVED, That the Ann Arbor City Council adopt the Urban and Community Forest Management Plan to demonstrate the city's commitment to conserve, protect, enhance and restore the community's aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.