
3.5 Strategic Plan

The City of Chico's Strategic Plan is the method by which it will progress towards achieving its vision over a 40-year timeframe. Below is a description of the various Strategic Plan components and how they relate to each other:

- **Vision statement:** Expresses the future desired state of the City's urban forest over 40 years.
- **Guiding principles:** Further defines the vision statement by the specific values of the City, community members, and stakeholders and the priorities they wish to address in the UFMP.
- **Goals:** The specific and measurable ways the City can measure progress towards achieving its Vision.
- **Action:** The specific steps to be accomplish to progress towards reaching a goal.

The following vision statement, guiding principles, goals, and actions were developed based on the UFMP analysis process, and input provided by City staff during interviews, the Working Group, and community members.

3.5.1 Vision

Our urban forest is a resilient network of trees that is sustainably managed by the City and residents, providing equitable social, economic, and ecosystem benefits to all residents and habitat for wildlife, and reflects Chico's identity and legacy as the City of Trees.

3.5.2 Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles reflect the overall vision and help to direct the goals and objectives of the UFMP. These are presented, with definitions, in Table 19.

Table 19. Guiding Principles of the Urban Forestry Management Plan

Guiding Principle	Definition
A Connected Community	All cultures, histories, and perspectives are welcomed and work together to strengthen the urban forest.
The Comfort of Trees	The urban forest protects and enhances the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of Chico community members and provides habitat for wildlife.
Start with Trees	Growth and development in the City will prioritize trees in the planning process and maximize the available space to expand tree canopy cover.
Sustainable Resources	The urban forest program will have the human and financial resources necessary to reach its long-term vision.

3.5.3 Strategic Plan

Guiding Principle: A Connected Community

Goal	
1.	By 2037, engage at least 20% of residents through outreach and engagement efforts that is representative of all residential types and demographics within the City of Chico.
Action Items	
1.a	Develop a comprehensive education program to enhance community member understanding of tree maintenance practices including planting, establishment care, pruning, and the importance of continuing to water trees to maintain tree health during drought conditions.
1.b	Prioritize tree planting efforts to the residential parcel types that have the lowest levels of canopy cover, including mobile home parks, rural residential, and suburban areas.
1.c	Develop an incentive program that offsets the cost to water a newly planted tree over one year, when residential property owners elect to provide establishment care for a newly planted City-managed tree.
1.d	Collaborate with a local utility company to develop a free residential shade tree giveaway program.
1.e	In partnership with the Butte Environmental Council, hold quarterly community engagement activities such as tree planting and care events, educational workshops, and free tree give aways.
1.g	Develop an urban forest advisory committee consisting of City staff, community members, and other invested stakeholders to ensure a broad range of voices have a say in urban forest practices in Chico.
1.h	Grow the network of community partners, to assist in community engagement and outreach activities.
1.i	Identify both communities and places of interest to focus engagement efforts.

Guiding Principle: The Comfort of Trees

Goal	
2	By 2032 increase tree canopy cover across all land use types by engaging all identified nonresidential stakeholders.
Action Items	
2.a	Enforce municipal code Municipal Code 19.70.60, which requires parking lots to be covered with 50% shade.
2.b	Provide resources to Butte Environmental Council to conduct outreach and engagement efforts to businesses along commercial corridors and retail centers.
2.c	Develop a comprehensive educational program for commercial, retail, and industrial landowners on how trees add economic value to their business or property, City standards, proper tree maintenance practices, and the importance of continuing to water trees to maintain tree health during drought conditions.
2.d	Develop an urban forest coalition comprised of other significant local and regional landowners like Chico Area Recreation and Park District, Chico Unified School District, Chico State University, Mechoopda Tribe, Butte County, utility companies, and others to ensure shared urban forest goals and policies.
2.e	Increase canopy cover by 50% across all non-City-managed land use types by 2042.
2.f	Update municipal code Municipal Code 19.70.60 parking lot standards for tree planting that provides adequate space and soil volume to support long-term tree growth and health.
2.g	Ensure not net less of canopy cover on both public and private land.

Guiding Principle: The Comfort of Trees

Goals	
3.	Increase City-wide canopy cover to 40% by 2062.
Action Items	
3.a	Plant at least 500 more trees than are removed annually by the City.
3.b	Achieve a minimum stocking rate of 95% of all identified City-managed planting sites by 2042
3.c	Prioritize tree planting actions towards City-managed vacant sites on commercial corridors and neighborhoods with low canopy cover.
3.d	Select tree species for individual locations that will provide the highest possible canopy cover for the space given the planting area.
3.e	Develop City of Chico Best Practices Manual with alternative design standards for City infrastructure such as sidewalks, streets, and curb and gutters, that increase the available space and soil volume for trees, and likelihood of tree preservation when infrastructure conflicts occur.

Guiding Principle: The Comfort of Trees

Goals	
4	By 2032, the City-managed tree inventory will achieve target urban forest sustainability metrics.
Action Items	
4.a	Limit the planting of tree species that represent more than 5% of the City inventory including, Chinese pistache, valley oak, red maple, and crape myrtle.
4.b	Annually review the City recommended tree species list and update it as appropriate to ensure species are suitable for current and future climate conditions, are low water use, will achieve species diversity standards, and will prioritize well-adapted local and regionally native species.
4.c	Ensure that the top six most common trees in the City inventory have a relative performance index score of 1 or better.
4.d	Conduct an analysis of tree species in the inventory that are marked as poor or critical to further understand if they are suitable for the City recommended tree species list, or if they should be removed.
4.e	Adopt standards for green stormwater infrastructure projects to include trees. Update the tree species selection process for such projects to align with the standards established in the UFMP.
4.f	Provide resources and educational materials for private property owners on current and emerging threats to trees, such as drought, pests, and diseases, and steps they can take to improve tree health.

Guiding Principle: Start With Trees

Goals	
5	By 2032, City planning processes, ordinances, and policies will be aligned with the standards of the UFMP.
Action Items	
5.a	Review and update the Municipal Code Section 16.66: Tree Preservation Regulations to ensure that defined protected tree regulations apply to all private property regardless of qualifications, entitlements, or lot size.
5.b	Update the City Tree Preservation Regulations to apply to capital improvement projects, so trees removed through a project will require replacement.
5.c	Update the standards for new residential developments to require a neighborhood plan that will meet the adopted canopy cover goals of the UFMP.
5.d	Update the General Plan to adopt the canopy cover and urban forestry goals of the UFMP.
5.e	Update the General Plan to reference species selection, planting guidelines, and other best management practices identified in the UFMP.
5.f	Ensure the permit review process for landscape plans aligns with goals of the UFMP, and are approved in consultation with the City’s urban forester or a City-qualified certified arborist prior to issuance of permits.
5.g	Review the placement of trees during the landscape plan review process to avoid impeding sight distance views at intersections.
5.h	Develop, standards and guidelines to better protect and preserve trees during construction.
5.i	Establish and implement a performance bond process for development projects to ensure trees are successful 5 years after planting.
5.j	Update the City Design Guidelines Manual to include tree planting guidance and landscape design standards that include minimum tree planting requirements by land use type.
5.k	Adopt a policy requiring trees in streetscape improvement projects.

Guiding Principle: Start With Trees

Goals	
6	By 2037, the City will have tree management practices and policies that lead to sustainable management of the urban forest.
Action Items	
6.a	Conduct an analysis of the Northern California black walnut (<i>Juglans hindsii</i>) species, to identify strategies that preserve trees in the short-term, and replace failing trees over the long-term.
6.b	Develop a long-term plan to replace failing trees based on the analysis of the Northern California black walnut (<i>Juglans hindsii</i>) species.
6.c	Achieve a 5-to-7-year pruning cycle, and inspection cycle of all City-managed trees.
6.d	Annually conduct a level 1 survey of all City-managed trees.
6.e	Complete first formative pruning of trees within 5 years after planting.
6.f	Provide all newly planted trees a minimum of 3 years of establishment care and watering.
6.g	Identify historic trees in Bidwell Park and develop additional protection, preservation, and maintenance standards appropriate for their age and condition.
6.h	Develop a program that provides incentives for tree removal companies to utilize removed trees in an urban wood reuse program.
6.i	Update standard details to align with the standards discussed in this UFMP (Section 5.3).
6.j	Implement the street tree planting plan included in this UFMP.

Guiding Principle: Sustainable Resources

Goals	
7	By 2037, the City will have the financial and human resources to fully support implementation of the UFMP.
Action Items	
7.a	Achieve appropriate funding to meet Goal OS-6 of the General Plan, to ensure a healthy and robust urban forest.
7.b	Continue to seek external funding sources that support tree planting and establishment care projects like the Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program to reduce the energy load on the grid by providing shade trees to residents.
7.c	Conduct an analysis of mitigation and in-lieu fees to determine if fees are adequate to replace and care for newly planted trees, and adjust fees as appropriate.
7.d	Explore opportunities to leverage future development projects to increase resources for urban forest management.
7.e	Annually provide a report on the City's return on investment from the funding that is allocated to urban forest management.
7.f	Develop a process that incentivizes City staff to obtain Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).
7.g	Ensure the City has funding to create a staff position or on-call contract for a certified arborist to effectively manage and implement planning policies on private property including code enforcement, site plan review, post-installation inspections.
7.h	Achieve one City tree crew per each of the seven maintenance zones and one City tree crew to manage Bidwell Park.
7.i	Ensure a City arborist is directly involved in reviewing new development designs, project permits, and removal applications to ensure best arboricultural practices are being instituted.
7.j	In partnership with other agencies, bring International Society of Arboriculture training opportunities to Chico that will help support the greater arboriculture industry north of Sacramento.

3.6 Implementation Plan

[This section will be developed after the Strategic plan is complete]

3.7 Monitoring Plan

[This section is being developed with support from the Working Group and City. A Vibrant Cities Gap Score Analysis is to be completed with the Working Group and will be used to complete the Monitoring Plan.]