



**CITY OF CHICO  
BIDWELL PARK AND PLAYGROUND COMMISSION (BPPC)  
TREE COMMITTEE**

(Commissioners Craig, Herrera, Mikles, Chair)

March 14, 2012, 6:00 p.m.

Municipal Center - 421 Main Street, Conference Room 2

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*Materials related to an item on this Agenda are available for public inspection in the Park Division Office at 965 Fir Street during normal business hours or online at <http://www.chico.ca.us/>.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- 2. REGULAR AGENDA** - All items listed under the Regular Agenda are in the order which is believed are of interest to the public or which require Committee action at this meeting. The items will be considered in the order listed unless the Committee members request a change. Any person may speak on items on the Regular Agenda.

**2.1. DISCUSSION OF CONCEPTS FOR AN URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN**

At it's meeting of 2/8/12, the Tree Committee continued discussion and development of an Urban Forest Management Plan. This meeting will continue that discussion with the following specific items to be included:

- a. Using the format and web site toolkit from the CaUFC for the Plan
- b. Definition of an Urban Forest
- c. Draft Vision Statement

**3. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Members of the public may address the Committee at this time on any matter not already listed on the agenda; comments are limited to three minutes. The Committee cannot take any action at this meeting on requests made under this section of the agenda.

**4. ADJOURN**

Adjourn to the next regular meeting tentatively scheduled for 4/11/12 at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room 2, Chico Municipal Center building (421 Main Street, Chico, California).

**Distribution:** BPPC



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## BPPC Tree Committee Report Item 2.1

Meeting Date: 3/14/12

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**DATE:** March 8, 2012  
**TO:** TREE COMMITTEE (Commissioners Craig, Herrera, Mikles, Chair)  
**FROM:** DENICE F. BRITTON, URBAN FOREST MANAGER, 896-7802  
**RE:** CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF THE URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

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### **BACKGROUND:**

At its meeting of 9/20/11, the City Council adopted the 2011-12 BPPC Work Plan which identified the establishment of goals for an Urban Forest Management Plan as one of the priorities of the Commission. The Tree Committee began working on the goals at its meeting of 1/11/12. This meeting will continue that discussion and review.

### **DISCUSSION:**

1. Staff was asked at the previous committee meeting to provide a protocol for entering comments on the Urban Forest Mgt Plan web site. At this point in time, the Toolkit requires that each person working on the editing team must be added to the program by the administrator. This requires their preferred email address. They will then be provided with a link that will allow them editing privileges.

A method for input is being researched by staff and will be presented at the meeting.

2. At the last meeting, staff was asked to submit a definition of the Urban Forest for Review.

A general definition of an Urban Forest, as presented in the Toolkit is as follows:

*"The sum of all woody and associated vegetation in and around dense human settlements, ranging from small communities in rural settings to metropolitan regions."*

The definition that most closely fits the one discussed at the February meeting is as follows:

*"Chico's Urban Forest is made up of trees and related vegetation within the City's parks, along the streets and creeks, and within private property. The urban forest provides an essential character to the City that includes both esthetic values and functional benefits to its citizens both individually and as a whole. The elements of the urban forest exist throughout the community, although their care is under several jurisdictions, including both private and governmental entities."*

The Tree Committee is asked for their further review of this definition.

3. The Tree Committee and public present discussed a Vision Statement – below is a summary of that discussion for further review.

Chico's Urban Forest canopy provides coverage and shade over a large area of the City – creating an aerial view of what appears to be a natural forest. This canopy contains trees of all sizes at maturity, is multi-aged and diverse. The forest is healthy and safe, with appropriate tree species planted in appropriate locations. Citizens are active partners in our program – they want the trees in front of their homes to be thriving and understand they have a role in accomplishing that. The Standard of Care for the forest is based on accepted Industry Standards and the concept of enhancing the longevity of the trees within the forest.

**Elements of a Vision Statement previously discussed include:**

1. Chico's Urban Forest covers a large percentage of area within the City limits – creating an aerial view of a natural forest. Prior to man's settlement of Chico, the forest consisted of a large grove of primarily oaks on the valley floor between the creeks and more diverse riparian vegetation along the creeks. Today, the Urban Forest canopy exists in every section of town, even in areas that were historically devoid of trees. It can be seen on aerial photographs as consisting of a large number of street trees, orchard trees, trees along creeks and in private yards and commercial areas.
2. Trees improve the environment in Chico. Citizens know that the City's trees provide significant benefits to them, including shade, beauty, temperature amelioration, pollution reduction, noise reduction and improved property values.
3. Chico has a healthy and safe urban forest that contains large trees over the older sections of town that are revered and protected by the citizens. Young and moderate sized trees are growing vigorously in other parts of town. Large trees are planted where space allows and encouraged in open space parks, etc.
3. Citizens are active partners in our program – they want the trees in front of their homes to be thriving and understand they have a role in accomplishing that.
4. Citizens see the tree crew as keepers of the trees, who can be depended upon to do what's right to keep the trees healthy and safe, while enhancing their benefits to the citizens.
5. Main corridors have large trees along them and citizens tolerate the small inconveniences resulting from their presence because they see the trees as a benefit.

The citizens of Chico most interested in the Urban Forest see it as a continuation of the forest within it's heart: Bidwell Park. The Urban Forest is a diverse and sustainable canopy of trees and related vegetation. While made up of trees that are both planted and native, the trees are planted to create an almost continuous canopy over the City. The canopy is multi-level, with trees of all sizes at maturity, multi-aged and diverse. It provides a plentiful habitat for birds and other wildlife, and is seen as an integral part of the community.

A more aggressive educational program should be developed to improve citizen understanding of the functional benefits of trees. Education should also focus on the selection of good trees to start with, and the care of trees, including planting, proper soil preparation, watering, and pruning.

When trees die, decline or become hazardous, their ultimate use should be as beneficial to the City and the planet as possible. The use of chips and the sale of commercial wood products should be considered a good end use for the trees.

The canopy provide diverse functional benefits to the citizens, including shade, that reduces the heat island effects and energy costs pollution absorption, sequestering carbon, and catching dust, nitrous oxides, and other particulate matter on tree leaves, storm water reduction, by slowing down the intensity of rainfall onto the soil, and absorbing water in the net of tree roots under the gardens and paved surfaces throughout town.

- The Vision Statement needs to be broad and address not only the vision for the Urban Forest, but also a definable vision for the Urban Forest Management Plan.
- Reflect that Bidwell Park is at the heart of Chico's Urban Forest, but it is under different management and with different considerations. The Vision Statement should have a similar structure to the BPMMP, so the two documents are compatible.
- The Urban Forest should be a diverse and sustainable canopy of trees and related vegetation.
- The Urban Forest should be healthy and safe, and be regularly cared for.
- The Standard of care for the Urban Forest should be high, and based on accepted Industry Standards and the concept of enhancing the longevity of the trees within the forest.
- There needs to be continued planting of trees throughout the City and throughout the years to maintain a multi-aged stand of trees. Tree planting and landscaping needs must be considered indispensable and be adequately budgeted for in new City Projects, and therefore not be eliminated because of cost overruns.
- Appropriate tree species should be planted in appropriate locations. Trees planted along the City streets need to be planted according to Professional Standards, and inspected by the City to be certain they meet these standards. Wherever possible, with adequate space and conditions, native trees species should be encouraged.
- Habitat values of trees should be emphasized.
- A more aggressive educational program should be developed to improve citizen understanding of the functional benefits of trees. Education should also focus on the selection of good trees to start with, and the care of trees, including planting, proper soil preparation, watering, and pruning.
- When trees die, decline or become hazardous, their ultimate use should be as beneficial to the City and the planet as possible. The use of chips and the sale of commercial wood products should be considered a good end use for the trees.
- The overall value of trees to the healthy human psyche should be honored as one of the values associated with trees.
- Other esthetic and functional values need to be included in the vision statement, because trees contribute more to the City than is realized by many.

**Goals for April Meeting:**

1. Review a list of goals presented in an effort to develop a Mission statement.
2. References for the Management Plan

City Municipal Code sections that pertain to trees can be found on the Street Trees Division web site: [http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/general\\_services\\_department/park\\_division/street\\_trees/](http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/street_trees/)

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