



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

(Commissioners Craig, Herrera, Mickles, Chair)

January 11, 2012, 6:00 p.m.

Municipal Center - 421 Main Street, Conference Room 2

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 the 7/25/11 BPPC Meeting, the Commission approved their biennial work plan priorities for 2011-2012. That plan included the development of a set of goals that will become the foundation of an Urban Forest Management Plan. This meeting will begin the discussion of what goals the plan should include.

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 2/08/12 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-Finance Committee Report Item 2.1

Meeting Date: 1/11/12

DATE: January 5, 2012
TO: TREE COMMITTEE (Commissioners Craig, Herrera, Mikles, Chair)
FROM: DENICE F. BRITTON, URBAN FOREST MANAGER, 896-7802
RE: **DISCUSSION OF CONCEPTS FOR AN URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN**

BACKGROUND:

The City Council adopted the BPPC's Work Plan FOR 2011-2012 on September 20, 2011. That work plan identified the establishment of goals for an Urban Forest Management Plan as one of the priorities of the Commission. Specifically, the BPPC adopted the following in regard to the City's Urban Forest:

1. Begin development of an Urban Forest Management Plan
 - a. Establish goals that will be the foundation for an urban forest management plan that is consistent with both the new General Plan and the BPMMP;
 - b. Review landscaping policies with the goal of enhancing the appearance of the City's public properties and parks while alleviating the overall cost of maintenance; and
 - c. Provide for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the urban forest, including both street trees and Bidwell park trees.

DISCUSSION:

Relevant elements of the General Plan include the City's role in maintaining the Urban Forest. Most specifically, the Open Space and Environment Element has a section on the Urban Forest. Attached is a detailed summary of the General Plan discussion of Street Trees, public plantings and the Urban Forest.

Staff is asking the Committee to review and edit the following list of goals for the Urban Forest. This provides the initial step toward approving a series of goals and developing a vision statement for Chico's Urban Forest. The list is categorized for ease of discussion, no priority is intended.

Tree Resources:

1. Provide for a healthy and safe Urban Forest.
2. Retain as many large old trees as possible, while recognizing conflicts with other infrastructure within the City.
3. Increase planting efforts within the City to fill the 3000 plus empty planting sites.
4. Reduce spacing of trees in areas where canopies are already over-lapping.
5. Increase the canopy of shade trees within the City, focusing on newer neighborhoods and commercial areas.
6. Improve the species planting list so that the right tree is planted in the right place.

7. Allow adequate growing space for new trees, both above ground and below ground
8. Increase the number of Heritage Trees recognized by the City.
9. Due to staffing levels, hazards will likely increase in the future.

Management

1. Develop and implement a 5 to 10 year trim cycle (minimum).
2. Focus on formative pruning on young trees to reduce maintenance needs as the trees mature.
3. Be aggressive about removing declining/dying trees.
4. Focus on elevation of foliage near intersections and along main corridors to improve visibility and reduce breakage from traffic.
5. Continue to allow private citizens to have their trees pruned or removed and replaced under permit.
6. Insure that trees are planted properly to reduce failure due to circling roots.
7. Improve staffing levels so that goals can be achieved within a reasonable time frame.

Community Values/Concerns

1. Preserve the character of Chico's tree resources.
2. Recognize the benefits of the urban forest to the community, especially in regard to accomplishing the goals of sustainability.
3. Recognize that trees provide oxygen, improve air quality, sequester carbon.
4. Educate and involve citizens to grow and protect trees, in part because they add to property values by providing beauty as well as shade and other benefits to the citizens.

Historical context

1. John Bidwell and the founding citizens of Chico planted trees to provide shade and beauty to City streets.
2. Chico has a rich history of planting trees and supporting the public infrastructure of street trees.

Environment

1. Increase the use of native species in street tree and public plantings.
2. Avoid planting invasive species as street trees or in public plantings.
3. Enhance water conservation efforts by planting more drought tolerant species.

Attachment: General Plan Elements

DISTRIBUTION:

Tree-Finance Committee of BPPC
General Services Director and Street Tree Field Supervisor

Relevant statements about the Urban Forest, as found within various Elements of the General Plan:

OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT –

Goal OS-1 **Protect and conserve native species and habitats.**

Goal OS-2 **Connect the community with a network of protected and maintained open space and creekside greenways. [my note: these two first points are VERY important aspect that can ONLY be done through native plantings.]**

Goal OS-3 Conserve water resources and improve water quality.

Goal OS-4 Improve air quality for a healthy City and region.

Goal OS-5 **Preserve agricultural resources for the production of local food and the maintenance of Chico’s rural character. [my note, this would include pollinator population health, which depend on natives]**

URBAN FOREST

The term “Urban Forest” refers to the abundance of trees found in the City. Chico’s urban forest provides an aesthetic community benefit, energy savings from its shade canopy, areas of refuge from warm summer temperatures, and increased foraging and nesting locations for flora and fauna.

Goal OS-6: Provide a healthy and robust urban forest. (Page 10-23)

• **Policy OS-6.1 (Healthy Urban Forest) – Ensure the continued protection and management of the urban forest to reduce energy demand, increase carbon sequestration, and reduce urban heat gain.**

Action OS-6.1.1 (Urban Forest Maintenance) – Maintain and expand the urban forest by:

- Maintaining existing City trees through regular, scheduled service.
- Planting new trees to replace those that require removal and to enhance the street tree canopy, where needed.
- Requiring street and parking lot tree planting in new development.
- Working with commercial parking lot owners to improve the shade canopy.
- Implementing the Municipal Code’s tree protection regulations.
- Using volunteer groups and property owners to plant new trees, care for newly planted trees, maintain young trees, and provide information and instructions regarding such care and maintenance.

Action OS-6.1.2 (Utility Impacts) – Where feasible, require new underground utilities that are in close proximity to trees to be designed and installed to minimize impacts to trees through consultation with the Urban Forester.

Action OS-6.1.3 (Tree Planting Program) – Develop and implement a tree planting program as a mitigation method to reduce air quality impacts and improve carbon sequestration.

SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT (PAGE 2-14)

Policy SUS-4.2 (Water Efficient Landscaping) – Promote drought tolerant landscaping. [my note: natives are best here and offer the least chance of escape]

□ Action SUS-4.2.1 (Public Landscaping) – **Install drought tolerant landscaping** and water conserving irrigation systems at City facilities, medians, and parkway strips to reduce water use and maintenance costs.

Policy SUS-6.4 (Community Trees) – Continue to support the planting and maintenance of trees in the community to increase carbon sequestration.

COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT (PAGE 5-3)

COMPLETE STREETS AND SCENIC ROADS

The intent of the complete streets concept is to ensure that streets accommodate vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. The 2030 Vision Book, explained in the Introduction chapter, states that in 2030, the City’s bicycle-friendly streets will continue to thrive, tree-lined streets and boulevards will be a defining characteristic, and streets will be safe, friendly, and multimodal with dedicated bike lanes.

Goal CD-1: Strengthen Chico’s image and sense of place by reinforcing the desired form and character of the community.

Policy CD-1.1 (Natural Features and Cultural Resources) – **Reinforce the City’s positive and distinctive image by recognizing and enhancing the natural features of the City and protecting cultural and historic resources.**

▣ Action CD-1.1.2 (Landscape Improvement) – Emphasize landscaping as a fundamental design component, retaining mature landscaping when appropriate, **to reinforce a sense of the natural environment and to maintain an established appearance.**

PARKS, PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT (PAGE 9-1)

“Neighborhood parks are incorporated into existing residential areas, and ample parks and recreation services are required in new development areas. Aging park facilities have been improved and updated. Tree-lined streets and boulevards continue to be a defining characteristic of Chico.”