



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** August 13, 2013

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

**SUBJECT:** Urban Forest Management Plan Status Report

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council receive a status report and discuss development of the Urban Forest Management Plan.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The City of Santa Barbara has a long history of municipal tree planting and a diverse urban forest. Today, Santa Barbara's urban forest faces a number of challenges related to tree age, infrastructure constraints, species diversity, program funds, and community participation. The Parks and Recreation Department began developing an Urban Forest Management Plan (Plan) in July 2012 to provide a long-term guide for the preservation and enhancement of trees in Santa Barbara. Progress toward developing the Plan includes the completion of the: tree canopy assessment, community tree information survey, urban forest key issues, and draft plan goals, objectives and actions as well as mission and vision statements. Next steps include additional public discussion through community and other public meetings, community outreach, and further draft plan development.

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **Background**

The City of Santa Barbara has a long history of municipal tree planting and a diverse urban forest. Initially spearheaded in the early 1900s through the horticultural and civic leadership of prominent City residents, it is estimated that the City's urban forest is currently comprised of more than 320,000 trees. City-owned trees along public streets and in parks and other public places are estimated to represent 20 percent of the urban forest. The remaining 80 percent is found on private and other public property. There are more than 450 species of trees on City property.

Although the City has a Street Tree Master Plan (1977) and tree preservation policy guidance in the Municipal Code, General Plan, and other policy initiatives, Santa Barbara's urban forest faces a number of challenges. In certain areas of the City, the urban forest is aging, mature trees conflict with infrastructure, and species diversity is in decline. In addition, resources for the planting and care of trees and community participation in tree management are limited. The development of an urban forest management plan provides an opportunity to identify long-term preservation and enhancement objectives, and address key management considerations including canopy cover, infrastructure constraints, and environmental, land use, aesthetic, and community considerations.

### **Project Scope**

The Department began developing the Urban Forest Management Plan (Plan) in July 2012. The primary objective of the Plan is to provide a long-term guide for the preservation and enhancement of Santa Barbara's urban forest. The scope of work includes preparation of a baseline tree canopy assessment and policy options analysis; public outreach through community meetings, City TV, web resources, and other public information methods; public discussion during Board and Commission meetings, and final action by the City Council to incorporate the Plan in City policy and operations. The project has a technical advisory committee comprised of members from the City's Street Tree Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Santa Barbara Beautiful, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, and Southern California Edison. The Department is coordinating plan development with the Community Development, Public Works, and Fire Departments, and the City Attorney's Office.

### **Project Status**

Over the last 12 months, the Department completed and advanced a number of important project tasks. These include formation of the technical advisory committee, completion of the citywide tree canopy assessment, case studies of other urban forest management plans, preparation of the baseline analysis and background documents, completion of a community tree information survey, preparation of a key issues document, and development of draft goals, objectives, and actions as well as mission and vision statements.

#### Tree Canopy Assessment

The purpose of the tree canopy assessment was to document existing canopy cover through the community. A canopy cover assessment is a useful method of gauging the breadth of a community's urban forest and can provide a baseline for developing urban forest goals and programs. Canopy is generally defined as the percent of area that is covered by the crown of a tree.

Digital mapping of individual and continuous canopy throughout the City revealed that there are 2,787 acres of canopy for Santa Barbara. This area, divided by the total city area of 10,986 acres, calculated the overall citywide canopy cover at 25.4%. The area excludes unincorporated areas, the Santa Barbara Airport, and the area of the 101 Freeway that intersects within the City limits. As shown in the table below, the assessment data was used to determine canopy cover for residential areas, parks and open space, and other major land uses.

Location (2011 General Plan Zones)	Canopy Area (Acres)	Percent Canopy by Location	Percent Canopy of entire city	Estimated Tree Population
Entire City	2,787	25.4%	100%	322,290
Residential Areas	2,094	27.8%	80.6%	259,719
Parks and Open Spaces*	322	23.3%	11.6%	36,727
Commercial/Civic	140	20.4%	4.9%	16,077
Public Schools	55	18.7%	2.0%	6,299
Office Areas	20	11.4%	0.7%	2,320
Industrial	10	6.9%	0.4%	1,148

\*Parks and Open Space areas in the 2011 General Plan include The Montecito Country Club, Sheffield Reservoir, Laurel Canyon Reservoir, and the Santa Barbara Municipal Golf Course.

### Community Tree Survey

The purpose of the survey was to learn more about public concerns surrounding trees, gather perspectives of City tree priorities, and gauge familiarity with tree preservation ordinances. The survey was developed for distribution at community meetings held in January. The online survey tool, *Survey Monkey*, was subsequently used to broaden survey responses. A link to the online survey was emailed to a select group of residents including: City of Santa Barbara e-subscribers, subscribers to the City's weekly newsletter, and members of the online community forum Nextdoor.com. Additionally, the survey was placed on the Forestry webpage. Key findings from the 517 surveys include:

- *Most important tree-related issues:* Aesthetics and appearance, pruning and maintenance, tree health, tree protection, and historic and specimen species.
- *Top City priorities:* Tree health and aesthetics, public safety, tree planting, tree maintenance, and tree protection.
- *Resident contribution to the urban forest:* Maintaining and planting trees on private property, reporting problems, and understanding City policies and practices.
- *Contact with the City about trees:* 51% reported having contacted the City and 48% had not.
- *Familiarity with tree preservation policies:* 44% reported being unfamiliar, 47% reported being somewhat familiar, and 9% reported being very familiar.

### Urban Forest Key Issues

The Department developed an assessment of urban forest key issues (Attachment 1) through the community tree survey, community meetings, and discussions with the technical advisory committee, City staff, and City Boards and Commissions, including the Street Tree Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Single Family Design Review Board, Architectural Board of Review, Historic Landmarks Commission and Planning Commission. As the attached document illustrates, many of the key issues address street tree and park tree maintenance and management, private tree maintenance, program funding, policy guidance, public participation and knowledge about trees, and environmental considerations.

### Vision and Mission

To guide the development of the urban forest management plan, the technical advisory committee and staff developed the following vision and mission statement.

*Vision:* Santa Barbara's urban forest is healthy and diverse, and contributes to the community's economic, environmental, and aesthetic vitality. It is valued and cared for by the City and its citizens, and reflects our horticultural heritage.

*Mission:* Preserve, protect and enhance our trees, promote the benefits of trees, and foster a healthy and diverse urban forest.

### Draft Goals, Objectives, Actions

Since April 2013, the Department has been working with the technical advisory committee and other department staff to develop draft urban forest plan goals, objectives, and actions (included as Attachment 2). Based on the key issues identified to date, they represent potential steps that the City and community could take over the next 30+ years to preserve and enhance Santa Barbara's urban forest.

There are four primary goals for the plan, including:

- Goal 1: Elevate the importance of the urban forest.
- Goal 2: Continue Santa Barbara's horticultural legacy.
- Goal 3: Promote a vibrant and healthy community.
- Goal 4: Foster awareness and appreciation of trees.

Fifteen draft plan objectives are organized under three areas: Tree Resource Management, City Organization and Policy, and Community Involvement. Each objective has a series of actions. Tree Resource Management objectives and supporting actions are primarily focused on the planning, planting, and maintenance of trees and tree growing spaces on City streets, parks and other public places. City Organization and Policy draft plan objectives and supporting actions address organizational management needs, and policy and inter-agency coordination considerations. Community Involvement objectives and supporting actions focus on enhancing and expanding community participation and investment in the urban forest.

#### Next Steps/Project Schedule

To solicit feedback and additional public discussion on the project, including a review of the draft goals, objectives and actions, the Department will be conducting additional community meetings as well as presenting to City boards and commissions in September and October 2013. The Department will also develop an implementation matrix that includes roles and responsibilities, prioritizes the actions, and establishes a timeframe (short, medium or long-term) for implementation. Community information tools including CityTV *Inside Santa Barbara*, printed materials and website updates will also be developed in fall 2013. The Department anticipates returning to Council with the draft plan in January 2014.

#### **BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

The total cost of the project is \$120,342. The project is funded in part by a \$71,092 grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire. The Parks and Recreation Department is providing matching funds in the amount of \$49,250. Matching funds are included in the Parks and Recreation Department's annual operating budget.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:**

In addition to quality of life and aesthetic community benefits, the City's urban forest provides energy conservation, water quality, air quality, and wildlife habitat benefits.

**ATTACHMENTS:** 1. Urban Forest Key Issues  
2. UFMP Draft Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives and Actions

**PREPARED BY:** Jill E. Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director

**SUBMITTED BY:** Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office

**Santa Barbara Urban Forest Project  
Key Issues – March 21, 2013**

In order to develop goals and actions for the Urban Forest Management Plan, a number of key issues and considerations are presented for discussion. These issues have been identified by or discussed in a range of venues by the Department and other City staff, appointed Board and Commission members, and members of the public attending Community Meetings and Tree Survey respondents. Also included are comments from Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members. Key issues have been categorized into five subject areas: Tree Resource Management, Policy and Planning, Program Funding, City Organization and Community Involvement.

Description of Key Issue	Also Identified by Public	Comments
<b>Tree Resource Management - Street Tree Management and Maintenance</b>		
Low diversity/Overuse of similar species in existing population	✓	TAC identified key issue
Need to develop a proactive approach to systematic removal and replacement of poor performing trees, or trees at the end of their life	✓	Community attendees and survey respondents identified quick replacement of dead and dying trees as a key issue
Need to develop a plan to systematically address/minimize infrastructure conflict	✓	Public safety as it relates to infrastructure conflicts was one of the top five issues identified in both the Community Meeting and Tree Survey. Sidewalk conflicts fall at #6 as most important tree issue in Tree Survey.
Tree planting and landscaping challenges when buildings are constructed at property line and/or building heights limit tree sizes and/or ability to plant trees		Redevelopment/Urban infill changes street scapes and tree options.
8,000 vacant planting sites	✓	Community attendees and survey respondents identified quick replacement of dead and dying trees as a key issue
Maintenance focus on grid pruning and citizen response pruning	✓	Proactive Pruning/Maintenance second most important issue most important to public in Tree Survey and most commented on City priority.
Climate change impacts have unknown consequences on tree population	✓	Identified by TAC and City departments.

Description of Key Issue	Also Identified by Public	Public, TAC and City staff comments
<b>Street Tree Management and Maintenance continued</b>		
Conflict between trees/solar access/views likely to increase	✓	TAC, City departments, survey respondents identified this as a key issue.
Need for proactive vs. reactive pest management		
Value of trees not frequently considered		
Trees not treated as a capital resource		
<b>Park Tree Management and Maintenance</b>		
Park tree maintenance focused on safety		
Significant number of park trees occur only once with no plan to offset loss of unique species	✓	Identified by TAC and public as a key issue. Tree health and protection identified as #3 and #4 most important tree issues in Tree Survey.
Climate change impacts have unknown consequences on tree population health, longevity and maintenance requirements		
Value of trees not frequently considered (such as water sequestration to reduce runoff)		
Opportunity to restore/enhance riparian canopy, eliminate invasive species and increase native habitat in open space parks and parks with creeks	✓	Tree protection identified as 4th most important to public in Tree Survey. Bird habitat frequently commented on as important resource.
Trees not treated as a capital resource		
<b>Private Tree Management and Maintenance</b>		
Poor or no maintenance and inappropriate planting and pruning practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire access and vertical height clearance</li> <li>• Private trees that damage public infrastructure- City liable</li> </ul>	✓	Identified by City Fire Department as key issue. Tree Survey respondents listed planting and maintenance as number 1 way residents can contribute to the health of the urban forest.
Loss of tree resources through removals		
Conflict between trees and access to solar and views likely to increase	✓	Identified by TAC, City staff of various departments, Community Meeting attendees and Tree Survey respondents
Tree planting and landscaping challenges when buildings are constructed at property line and/or building heights limit tree sizes and/or ability to plant trees	✓	

Description of Key Issue	Also Identified by Public	Comments
<b>Private Tree Management and Maintenance continued</b>		
Lack of knowledge of landowner responsibility for maintenance of private infrastructure and regulated trees	✓	City liability when private trees and infrastructure damage City property identified as key issue by various City departments.
Enforcement of City tree preservation rules complaint driven		
Opportunities for restoration and enhancement of oak woodland and riparian woodland habitat	✓	Tree protection identified as #4 most important issue to public in Tree Survey.
Climate change impacts have unknown consequences on tree population health, longevity and maintenance requirements		
<b>Policy and Planning</b>		
Street Tree Master Plan outdated, provides limited guidance	✓	Identified by TAC and City staff
No overall Park Tree Master Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of coordination with fire guidelines in open space parks</li> <li>• Fire prevention and species selection in parks and open spaces (Honda, Hale, canyons, Parma park, examples)</li> <li>• Defensible space considerations</li> </ul>	✓	Fire prevention a key issue identified as a key issue in Community meeting and Tree Survey, although discussed to a lesser extent.
Landscape design guidelines require the planting and maintenance of some trees on private property, yet enforcement of those plans is limited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single Family Residential landscape plan trees are not protected unless the design review approval includes a protection condition</li> </ul>	✓	Identified by TAC members as key issue
Tree Plantings on rooftops and design review		
Santa Barbara General Plan, Climate Action Plan, Local Coastal Plan outline support for urban forest management but implementation not fully identified	✓	Implementation identified by City staff of various departments as key issue
City has a strong foundation for tree protection and enhancement		
Well-established advisory boards provide a solid framework to address urban forest issues.		

Description of Key Issue	Also Identified by Public	Comments
<b>Policy and Planning continued</b>		
Tree preservation ordinances do not completely address native trees, native habitat areas, or wildlife corridors	✓	Tree protection identified as #4 issue most important to public in survey. Bird habitat commented on.
Pedestrian Master Plan does not adequately address need for space to plant trees		
Design Review Boards require landscaping within parkways without regard to maintenance needs		
Risk Reduction Plans based on reducing wind/falling limb hazards-identify potential high hazard trees or areas		
High Fire Hazard Area Defensible Space requirements limit tree planting opportunities and require certain tree maintenance	✓	Identified by Fire Dept. as key issue
Purpose and function of Historic and Specimen designations not well defined • Review of definition and designation process with consideration of replacement species and location	✓	Identified by TAC and City staff of various departments as a key issue
<b>Program Funding</b>		
Limited funding resources to plant, establish and maintain new street trees	✓	Community attendees and survey respondents identified quick replacement of dead and dying trees as a key issue
Limited funding resources to maintain existing street trees	✓	Proactive Pruning/Maintenance second most important issue most important to public in Tree Survey and most commented on City priority.
Lack of funding and mechanisms for community education/outreach and tree planting programs	✓	Involvement in tree planting and maintenance was one of three main items identified in the Tree Survey as ways in which residents can contribute to the health of the urban forest. The number one item they would like to learn more about- Caring for Street Trees.
Limited funds (recent reductions of 20%) for park tree maintenance		
Limited of funding for new park tree planting and establishment	✓	TAC and staff identified key issue especially as it relates to lost park species diversity

Description of Key Issue	Also Identified by Public	Comments
<b>City Organization</b>		
Budget implications across many departments with proactive identification and resolution of infrastructure conflicts	✓	Maintenance number one item discussed at Community Meeting and on Tree Survey
No comprehensive enforcement program that is proactive, education based		
Limited staff training		
Competing priorities among different departments can create conflict and adversely affect trees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wildland Fire Plan and high voltage wire street clearance requirements can lead to radical pruning with aesthetic and tree value impacts</li> </ul>	✓	SCE trimming practices commented on as aesthetically displeasing in Community Meeting and on Tree Survey
Inconsistent interdepartmental communication and coordination can result in missed opportunities to plant/maintain and protect trees		
Lack of staff knowledge on tree preservation and maintenance requirements results in missed opportunities, delayed project decision-making, loss of trees, lost opportunities for planting new trees and other issues.		
<b>Community Involvement</b>		
Limited community involvement in street tree selection, planting and maintenance	✓	Involvement in tree planting and maintenance was one of three main items identified in the Tree Survey as ways in which residents can contribute to the health of the urban forest. Out of 5 options, Survey respondents would like to learn most about Caring for Street Trees, followed by Caring for trees on their property, Different trees in the City, Planting Street Trees and last Benefits of trees.
Limited public knowledge of tree preservation policies	✓	Tree Survey respondents familiarity with Tree Preservation Policies: 44% Unfamiliar 47% Somewhat familiar 9% Very familiar

Description of Key Issue	Also Identified by Public	Comments
<b>Community Involvement continued</b>		
Public perception of street trees is diverse	✓	Tree Survey and Community Meeting responses range in opinion of aesthetics, proper maintenance, species type and more.
Lack of knowledge of City preservation rules and landowner responsibility for maintenance of private infrastructure and regulated trees	✓	See above comments. Survey respondents chose “Caring for trees on their property” as the 2 <sup>nd</sup> most requested item to learn more about.
Limited resident participation in street tree maintenance	✓	Care for street trees was rated as the number 1 topic residents would like to know more about.
Community involvement primarily focused on street tree maintenance through tree permitting.		
Incentive programs do not exist to promote tree planting on private property	✓	Identified as key issue by TAC, Community Meeting attendees and Tree Survey respondents
Residential homeowners often have an expectation that the City will provide prompt response based pruning	✓	Proactive Pruning/Maintenance 2nd most important issue to public in Tree Survey and most commented on City priority.

**City of Santa Barbara Urban Forest Management Plan  
Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives and Actions  
Draft - July 26, 2013**

**Vision**

The vision of Santa Barbara's Urban Forest Management Plan and Urban Forest Program is that:

*Santa Barbara's urban forest is healthy and diverse, and contributes to the community's economic, environmental, and aesthetic vitality. It is valued and cared for by the City and its citizens, and reflects our horticultural heritage.*

**Mission**

The mission of the urban forest management plan is to:

*"Preserve, protect and enhance our trees, promote the benefits of trees, and foster a healthy and diverse urban forest."*

**Goals**

The urban forest management plan has four main goals:

1. Elevate the importance of the urban forest.
2. Continue Santa Barbara's horticultural legacy.
3. Promote a vibrant and healthy community.
4. Foster awareness and appreciation of trees.

## Urban Forest Objectives

The fifteen objectives and corresponding implementation actions of the urban forest management plan are organized under three categories: 1) Tree Resource Management, 2) City Organization and Policy, and 3) Community Involvement.

### I. Tree Resource Management

#### **Objective 1: Maintain City trees to promote safety, health and longevity.**

##### Actions

1. Continue to maintain the city tree database to achieve urban forest objectives and monitor tree management.
2. Increase frequency of the street tree trimming /maintenance cycle to promote safety, aesthetics, and tree health.
3. Develop multi-year plan to address tree maintenance, planting and removal citywide.
4. Conduct periodic tree assessments to monitor tree performance.
5. Develop a young tree training program to reduce the potential for mature trees to conflict with high voltage lines and other utilities and infrastructure.
6. Broaden and formalize partnerships with Southern California Edison (SCE), Caltrans and other utility companies through MOU's or other means to implement tree trimming plans that minimize conflict/maximize safety while promoting tree canopy, health and longevity.
7. Continue to work with the Fire Department to develop and implement proactive maintenance plans for street trees located in high fire zones.

#### **Objective 2: Enhance street parkway growing conditions where feasible.**

##### Actions

1. Identify existing parkways that could be enlarged to accommodate greater canopy and/or larger canopy trees.
2. Revise City infrastructure construction specifications to maximize tree health and longevity and minimize infrastructure damage.
3. Provide extra protection for newly planted trees such as curb adjustments and protective barriers where necessary.
4. Promote streetscape redevelopment to maximize parkway planting area.
5. Improve parkway soil conditions to promote young tree root development and minimize infrastructure damage.
6. Where feasible, include irrigation during parkway and sidewalk redevelopment.
7. Revise parkway and tree planting guidelines and specifications to maximize tree health.
8. Work with adjacent land owners and neighborhoods to provide supplemental water and weed management.

### **Objective 3: Optimize tree canopy.**

#### Actions

1. Identify planting locations along City streets, in City parks and on other public property that can support greater canopy and/or large canopy tree species.
2. Increase the use of large-canopy trees where practical.
3. Expand street tree planting and replacement program placing priority on neighborhood with the least trees and in neighborhoods willing to provide supplemental early tree care.
4. Expand young tree care program to increase plantings and associated care and maintenance.
5. Determine the extent of available planting space and opportunities to increase available planting space along City streets, in City parks and on other public property.

### **Objective 4: Optimize age and enhance species diversity.**

#### Actions

1. Maintain existing species diversity and investigate methods for increasing desirable species that are rare.
2. Assess and develop age and species criteria for City parks and other City property.
3. As part of the Street Tree Master Plan (STMP) update, define appropriate age and species diversity distribution and locate areas where new or replacement trees should be planted.
  - Increase planting species that have longer average life spans and decrease use of those with shorter average life spans.
  - Determine potential life spans in Santa Barbara for designated trees and potential designated trees.
  - Determine potential growth size of designated and potentially designated trees in Santa Barbara.
  - Formalize the criteria and methodology for change to street tree designations.
5. Enhance and preserve historic and culturally significant trees city-wide.
6. To the extent feasible, work with local and regional nurseries and other public agencies to grow/propagate unique and desirable tree species not commercially available.

### **Objective 5: Maximize the economic, environmental, and aesthetic benefits of the urban forest.**

#### Actions

1. Locate new tree plantings in areas that will maximize energy conservation in building and shading of pavement.
2. Encourage the use of parking lot and streetscape designs that provide greater amounts of pavement shading.
3. Develop an economic/environmental tree resource calculator/performance checklist to evaluate the tree resource as it relates to other capital resources during land development.
4. Develop long-term street tree plans for major commercial corridors and public areas such as Upper State St, De La Vina Street, Carrillo Street, Milpas Street, Chapala Street and Cliff Drive. Integrate plans in land development projects and public infrastructure improvements.

5. Require street tree plantings and maintenance as part of permitting for all land development and/or redevelopment, when new trees are planted.
6. Develop tree resource management guidelines that balance tree resource value with solar access and solar energy system design.
7. Work with private landowners to minimize the potential for private trees to conflict with public infrastructure.

**Objective 6: Provide urban forest benefits that enhance visitor experiences in City parks and facilities.**

Actions

1. Increase park tree maintenance for prolonged health and longevity.
2. Develop a tree replacement program that enhances aesthetics and promotes recreation.
3. Continue to work with the Fire Department to develop and implement proactive maintenance plans for parks located in high fire zones.
4. Protect and enhance trees in historically significant parks such as Alameda Park, Alice Keck Park Memorial Gardens, Orpet Park and Franceschi Park through increased tree maintenance and tree planting programs.
5. Maintain the history, design, cultural integrity, and functional use of developed parks, particularly during replanting and/or redesigning elements of developed parks.
6. Increase canopy cover to enhance habitat for wildlife and for public benefit, where appropriate.
7. Maintain stands of large trees in open spaces and community and developed parks.

**Objective 7: Enhance and preserve trees within native habitats including riparian areas, oak woodlands and protected open spaces.**

Actions

1. Use large native trees in riparian zones and areas that connect to native landscaping and open spaces, where feasible.
2. Minimize compaction of soil under drip lines of trees by routing trails and pathways around trees.
3. To the extent feasible, control invasive, non-native vegetation that threatens trees in riparian areas and open space parks.
4. Develop riparian canopy restoration program in parks with creek habitats.
5. As part of the Park Tree Master Plan, address riparian and oak woodland management to preserve and protect mature trees, native tree saplings and native understory vegetation.

## **City Organization and Policy**

### **Objective 8: Enhance City investment in the health and management of the urban forest.**

#### **Actions**

1. Increase funding for the management and care of City trees in the urban forest.
2. Establish funding for community outreach programs and public education resources.
3. Identify and obtain external sources of funding to support the goals and strategies of the Management Plan.
4. Develop public-private partnerships to address tree resource needs not addressed in budget appropriations.
5. Evaluate the feasibility of the Street Tree/Parkway Management Assessment District.
6. Develop tree mitigation banking program that provides funding for the young tree care program.

### **Objective 9: Improve interdepartmental communication and coordination related to tree preservation and enhancement.**

#### **Actions**

1. Establish formal urban forest team comprised of staff from Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and Community Development and Fire to address tree management and coordinate tree review for land development projects.
2. Implement annual staff and board/commission tree training program to review Tree Preservation and Tree Maintenance Policies, plus objectives and actions outlined in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
3. Collaborate with the Public Works Department to enhance street tree grow space during construction projects that involve sidewalks, curbs, gutters and other street-related work.

### **Objective 10: Elevate urban forest objectives in City policies and land development considerations.**

#### **Actions**

1. Update the Street Tree Master Plan to address long range tree management objectives.
2. Develop a Park Tree Master Plan that includes maintenance objectives, and planting and replacement strategies.
3. Continue to implement and update, as needed, urban forest objectives in the City's General Plan Climate Action Plan, Local Coastal Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, and Wildland Fire Plan.
4. Integrate tree resource management objectives in the future update to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of the General Plan.

**Objective 11: Ensure tree preservation and land development ordinances support urban forest management goals.**

Actions

1. Review and update, if necessary, the City ordinances pertaining to trees and landscapes to ensure they are consistent with urban forest management plan objectives.
2. Develop Parkway Vegetation Planting and Care Guidelines/Checklist to better articulate and document plantings during land development review.
3. Review and revise, as needed, the definition of and criteria for designation of historic and specimen trees.
4. Clarify guidance for maintenance, longevity and replacement of designated Specimen and Historic trees.

**Objective 12: Improve interagency coordination and partnerships.**

Actions

1. Broaden and formalize partnerships with Southern California Edison (SCE), Caltrans and other utility companies through MOU's or other means to implement tree trimming and planting plans that minimize conflict/maximize safety while promoting tree canopy, health and longevity.
2. Develop partnerships with organizations, businesses and the public school system to encourage tree health and plantings on private property.

**Community Involvement**

**Objective 13: Enhance public awareness and appreciation of the urban forest as a community resource.**

Actions

1. Develop a comprehensive tree education program to provide city residents with information about tree preservation policies, the benefits trees provide, and the importance of tree canopy.
2. Strengthen citywide approaches to communicating about trees through web, print and media and social media plus continue to provide resources about urban forestry to the public through newsletters, permitting, websites, and other resources.
3. Hold annual public workshop to educate public on policies, maintenance and care of trees.
4. Develop partnerships with organizations, businesses, private schools the public school system and other public property to encourage tree health and plantings on private property.
5. Institute a program to acknowledge and publicize contributions to urban forestry by residents, businesses, institutions, and neighborhood group organizations.
6. Develop a heritage tree program to foster appreciation and inspire awareness of the contribution of city owned street trees and park trees to the City's history and heritage.

**Objective 14: Expand public participation in urban forest preservation and enhancement.**

Actions

1. Develop Adopt-a-block or Adopt-a-Tree program to encourage healthy long-lived street trees.
2. Develop a technical assistance program to support the planting and care of trees on private property.
3. Develop community service opportunities with schools and other institutions for urban forest stewardship projects.
4. Identify/Explore mechanisms for community involvement in street tree designations, maintenance, plantings and care.
5. Engage the community to identify opportunities and barriers for tree planting and preservation on public property.
6. Develop volunteer maintenance programs to increase public participation opportunities.

**Objective 15: Expand public/private partnerships.**

Actions

1. Develop partnerships with organizations, businesses, neighborhood associations, private schools and the public school system to encourage tree health and plantings on private property.
2. Seek opportunities to collaborate with universities and colleges and the public school system on urban forestry science and current research.
3. Partner with corporate programs that fund tree planting opportunities for carbon footprint reduction.
4. Encourage private landowners to apply the tree resource calculator when selecting trees to increase economic, environmental and aesthetic benefits and enhance property values.



**Parks  
&  
Recreation**  
*Enriching People's Lives*

# Urban Forest Management Plan

Status Report to the Santa Barbara City Council  
August 13, 2013



# Presentation Overview

- Management Plan Scope of Work
- Progress to Date
  - Santa Barbara's Tree Canopy
  - Key Urban Forest Issues
  - Vision and Mission of the Urban Forest Management Plan
  - Goals, Objectives and Actions
- Next Steps

# Santa Barbara's Urban Forest





# Project Scope

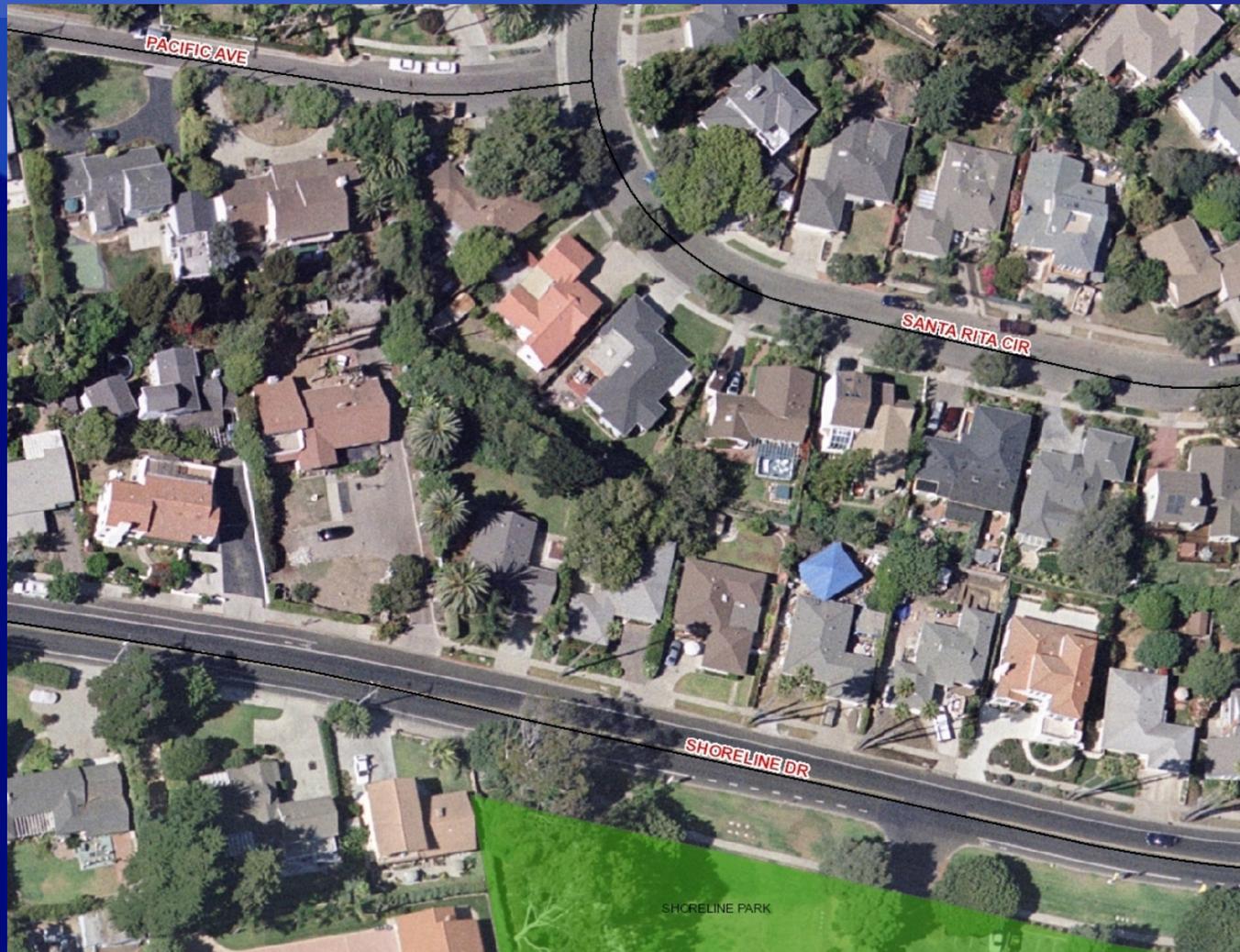
- Complete baseline assessment
- Establish Technical Advisory Committee
- Coordinate with City departments
- Conduct public outreach/discussion
  - Community meetings, tree survey
  - Board and Commission meetings
- Identify key issues
- Develop plan to address tree management with a 30+ year timeline



# Baseline Assessment

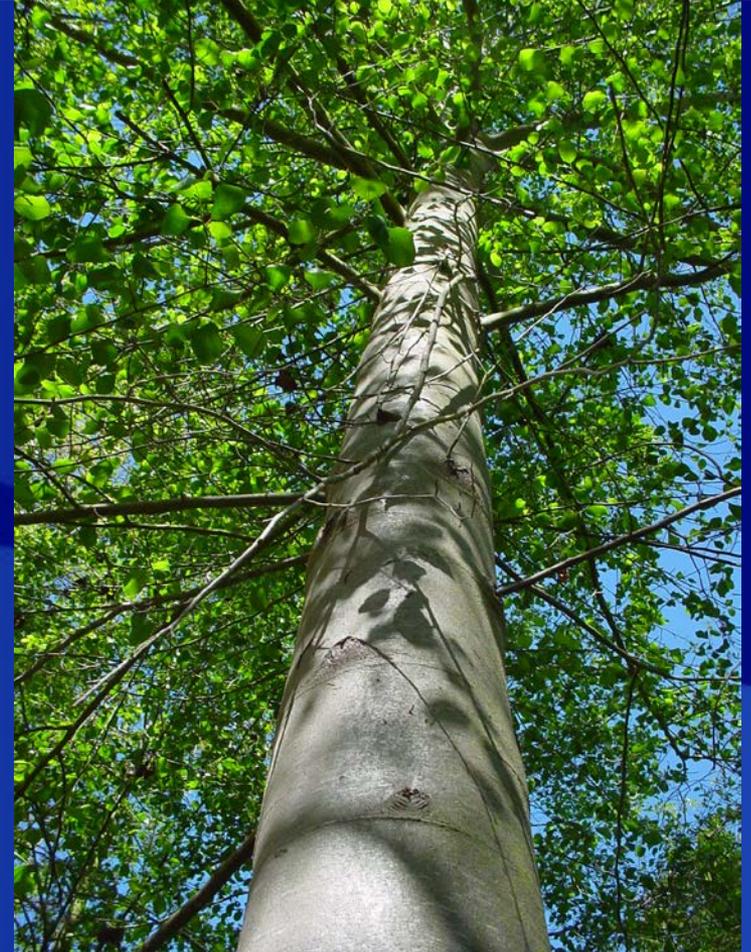
- Case studies of other urban forest management plans
- Review City policies and practices related to trees
- Complete tree canopy assessment

# Canopy Cover Assessment



# Santa Barbara Tree Canopy

- Citywide – 25.4%
- Residential – 27.8%
- Parks/Open Space – 23.3%
- Commercial/Civic – 20.4%
- Office Areas – 11.4%
- Industrial – 6.9%
- Public Schools – 18.7%



# Public Discussion/Outreach

- Community Meetings
- Tree Survey
- Board and Commissions
  - Parks and Recreation Commission
  - Street Tree Advisory Committee
  - Historic Landmarks Commission
  - Single Family Design Board
  - Architectural Board of Review
  - Planning Commission





# Key Urban Forest Issues

- Increase Tree Maintenance
- Address Infrastructure Conflict
- Plant More Trees
- Protect/Enhance Tree Diversity
- Improve City Practices
- Increase Community Knowledge and Participation
- Develop Tools to Value Trees



# Goals/Objectives/Key Actions

- Developed with City Staff, Technical Advisory Committee, community meetings and survey
- Provide approach and focus for plan
- Will continue to further expand/refine through plan development
- Seeking further input from public, boards and commissions and Council



# Urban Forest Project Vision

*Santa Barbara's urban forest is healthy and diverse, and contributes to the community's economic, environmental and aesthetic vitality. It is valued and cared for by the City and its citizens, and reflects our horticultural heritage.*

# Urban Forest Project Mission

*Preserve, protect and enhance our trees, promote the benefits of trees, and foster a healthy and diverse urban forest.*



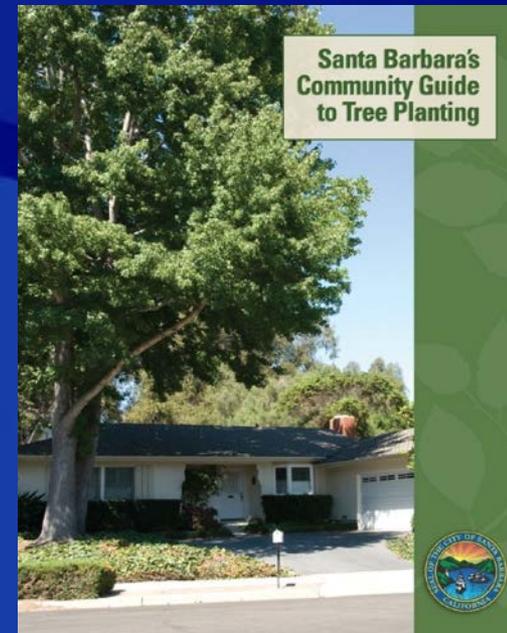
# Draft Plan Goals

- Elevate the importance of the urban forest
- Continue Santa Barbara's horticultural legacy
- Promote a vibrant and healthy community
- Foster awareness and appreciation of trees



# Objectives/Key Actions Themes

- Tree Resource Management
  - *Maintain, sustain, maximize, enhance*
- City Organization and Policy
  - *Funding, communication, coordination, partnerships*
  - *Plan integration*
- Community Involvement
  - *Public awareness, education, incentives, participation*





# Tree Resource Management

1. Maintain trees to promote safety, health and longevity
  - *Increase tree trimming, formalize partnerships, conduct assessments*
2. Enhance street parkway conditions
  - *Enlarge parkways, protect young trees, improve soil, watering*
3. Optimize tree canopy
  - *Plant trees in low-canopy areas*



# Tree Resource Management

4. Optimize age and species diversity
  - *Age and species criteria, collaborate with local nurseries*
5. Maximize benefits of the urban forest
  - *Energy, shading, resource calculator, Major commercial corridors*
6. Provide urban forest benefits in parks
  - *Protect, enhance, increase canopy*
7. Enhance native trees
  - *Riparian areas, open spaces*



# City Organization and Policy

8. Enhance City investment in health of urban forest
  - *Funding, partnerships*
9. Improve interdepartmental communication and coordination
  - *Urban forest team, training*
10. Elevate urban forest objectives in City polices and land development
  - *Update Street Master Plan*



# City Organization and Policy

## 11. Ensure ordinances support urban forest goals

- *Tree and parkway guidelines, historic and specimen trees*

## 12. Improve interagency coordination and partnerships

- *SCE, Caltrans, community organizations, and businesses*



# Community Involvement

## 13. Enhance public awareness and appreciation

- *Education programs, workshops, technical assistance*

## 14. Expand public participation

- *Adopt-A-Tree, community service*

## 15. Expand public/private partnerships

- *Encourage planting and care for trees*

# Next Steps/Schedule

- Community meetings
  - September 18 and 21
- Boards and Commissions
  - October and November
- Additional Community Outreach
  - October - January
- Finalize plan - December
- Ordinance Committee/Council
  - January/February

