



Agenda Item B.2
DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM
Meeting Date: March 15, 2023

TO: Chair and Members of the Public Tree Advisory Commission

FROM: Charles W. Ebeling P.E., T.E., Director of Public Works

CONTACT: George Thomson, Parks and Open Space Manager

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annual Work Program Scoping for Urban Forest Management

RECOMMENDATION:

Provide input on urban forest management annual work programs for the Street Maintenance Division and the Parks and Open Spaces Division for the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget development process.

BACKGROUND:

Each year, every City department presents an Annual Work Program to the City Council. An Annual Work Program serves to define work priorities and communicate progress on existing work commitments. The Annual Work Program allows the City Council to recognize workloads and staffing levels and set work priorities. The Annual Work Program also serves as a key part of the City's annual budget development process. The adopted current Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Annual Work Programs, as well as the staff presentations and City Council discussion can be viewed at the City's website: <https://www.cityofgoleta.org/your-city/city-manager-s-office/department-annual-work-programs>.

Development and drafting of the Annual Work Program, operating budget, and capital improvement program typically takes place over several months during the leadup to the City Council budget adoption in June. To increase involvement of the Public Tree Advisory Commission (PTAC) in the development of specific Annual Work Program items related to the urban forest, City staff are seeking input from the PTAC early in the work program and budget development process. PTAC's role is to advise City staff and the City Council in developing plans and goals for the Goleta urban forest, represent the interests of the community and inform the community of the Urban Forestry program as directed by the City Council. Aligning this role with the City's development of the Annual Work Program and budget will provide the PTAC with an opportunity to advise staff on community priorities for the urban forest and potentially identify critical work items that may not be currently envisioned for the new Annual Work Program. Adoption of the final

Annual Work Program, including any new proposed work efforts and potential budget considerations, is at the sole discretion of the City Council.

DISCUSSION:

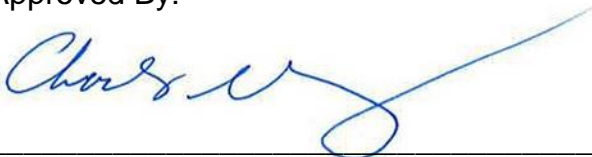
Management of the urban forest is carried out primarily by staff and contractors in the Public Works Department's Street Maintenance Division and the Parks and Open Space Division. The following proposed Annual Work Program items are presented for the PTACs consideration and input as the project scopes of work are refined in spring 2023.

- Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) Update – the UFMP was originally adopted by City Council in 2011. Since then, advances in mapping technology, increased community interest in street trees, and changing climate have all pointed to the need for the City to reinvest in our urban forest. An update of the UFMP would focus on digitizing and updating the jurisdiction-wide tree inventory, urban forest mapping and analysis, and increasing the number of approved street tree species and designated locations. The UFMP update and associated work tasks would also emphasize replanting street trees. A tiered work effort could also include creating master tree landscape plans for individual parks. The City does not currently have a street tree replanting program or individual park tree planting plans.
- Street Tree Maintenance Program – Street tree maintenance services, including trimming, planting, and removal for City of Goleta (City) trees are primarily done using contractors as these services require specialized equipment and training. Additional services are provided upon request based on need and funding, as directed by the Public Works Department. In November 2022, City Council authorized a contract amendment with West Coast Arborists, Inc. to provide \$300,000 of tree maintenance services annually through June 2026. The current street tree maintenance cycle includes a three-year trim cycle. In addition, West Coast Arborists is updating the City's street tree inventory. An updated tree inventory is needed so that staff can adequately maintain all City trees. This count will also provide the City with extensive information regarding the current height and canopy width of the trees, trimming dates for risk management, tree health, as well as the amount of tree planting vacancies to be utilized for plantings in the near future.
- City-wide Open Space Management and Maintenance Plan – an updated inventory and mapping of the City's open spaces, maintenance needs, and a community-endorsed plan for improved habitat stewardship are the foci of this plan. A Request For Proposals for this project will be developed in the first half of 2023. The Parks and Open Space Division currently conducts open space maintenance on an iterative basis, without comprehensive permits or a complete inventory of natural resources and infrastructure assets. The Capital Improvement Program project would provide for a comprehensive inventory, standardized annual maintenance procedures, planned asset replacement, and programmatic California Environmental Quality Act analysis and permitting for ongoing

operations necessary to protect natural resources and complete required annual maintenance, such as defensive space vegetation management to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Finally, a City-wide open space plan would describe and allow for the permitting of habitat restoration and enhancement projects that would potentially be eligible for grant funding and support a broader section of community volunteers.

- Creek and Watershed Management Plan Implementation – the City is moving into the implementation phase of the plan by City Council. The Parks and Open Space Division proposes to prioritize invasive plant removal and riparian tree habitat restoration. This work effort would have an emphasis on community involvement and education, reduction of wildfire risk, and increase of native tree canopy throughout Goleta's 12 creek ecosystems.
- Goleta Butterfly Grove at Ellwood Mesa Enhancement – work planned at the Butterfly Grove in 2023-2025 includes replanting both eucalyptus and native trees; reducing fire risk by chipping downed, dead trees other highly flammable vegetation; installing a temporary irrigation system to encourage sapling growth and reduce the impacts of potential drought; planting of tens of thousands of native plants that will provide food for monarch butterflies and other wildlife; and infrastructure improvements to address access and safety concerns or reduce impacts to sensitive habitats. The implementation plan is being developed by a team of technical experts, with a significant community engagement and review process. Work is anticipated to start in spring 2023, with major project implementation in 2024, and, ultimately, regular maintenance and tree care continuing annually as part of a new, regular habitat stewardship program.

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles W. Ebeling", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Charles W. Ebeling P.E., T.E., Director of Public Works

ATTACHMENT:

1. Presentation Slides: "Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annual Work Program Scoping for Urban Forest Management"