

CHAPTER 12: URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL

Sec. 1200. Purpose--Urban Forestry Council.

Sec. 1201. Scope of Authority.

Sec. 1202. Council Composition and Administration.

Sec. 1203. Responsibilities.

Sec. 1204. Urban Forest Plan.

Sec. 1205. Public Education and Outreach.

Sec. 1206. Best Management Practices.

Sec. 1207. Funding Assessment.

Sec. 1208. Staffing Support and Responsibilities.

Sec. 1209. Reporting Responsibility.

SEC. 1200. PURPOSE--URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL.

(a) It is the intent of the Board of Supervisors to form an Urban Forestry Council that will protect the community interest and ensure that San Francisco realizes the full range of tree benefits into the future. The Board also intends to replace any existing tree advisory bodies that the Board of Supervisors has created through legislation.

(b) The purpose of the Council is to guide the stewardship of San Francisco's trees by promoting a healthy and sustainable urban forest that benefits all San Franciscans while ensuring public health and safety.

(c) To meet this purpose, the Council shall work with all the affected stakeholders to:

- (1) Develop and adopt a comprehensive urban forest plan;
- (2) Educate the public on urban forestry issues;
- (3) Develop and adopt tree care standards;
- (4) Identify funding and staffing needs and opportunities for urban forestry programs;
- (5) Report on the state of the urban forest;
- (6) Help secure and encourage commitment of adequate resources for tree programs; and
- (7) Facilitate coordination among agencies with tree management responsibilities.

(d) This Chapter applies the Precautionary Principle to the management of trees in San Francisco by emphasizing public participation, preservation, and expansion of the urban forest.

(Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.230; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1201. SCOPE OF AUTHORITY.

(a) The Council's scope of authority is limited to the territorial boundaries of the City and County of San Francisco.

(b) The Council shall consider issues as they relate to trees on property managed by government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private property owners.

(c) In order to effectively address the whole of the urban forest, the Council also shall consider issues as they relate to trees on private property.

(d) The Council's scope of authority is completely advisory and educational in nature. The Council will have no authority to legislate.

(Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.231; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1202. COUNCIL COMPOSITION AND ADMINISTRATION.

(a) Council members will represent the full range of urban forest stakeholders including City agencies, non-profit organizations, tree management organizations, and community members. The Council shall be composed of eleven voting members.

(1) The Board of Supervisors shall appoint seven voting members:

- (A) One member from an educational organization involved with tree management (University of California Cooperative Extension, etc.);
- (B) Two members certified by a professional tree management organization (International Society of Arboriculture, American Society of Consulting Arborists, or American Society of Landscape Architects, etc.);
- (C) Two members of non-profit organizations involved in urban forestry or other environmentally-related issues; and
- (D) Two members from the community.

(2) The Mayor shall appoint two voting members:

- (A) One member from the tree care industry; and
- (B) One member at large.
- (3) The following departments shall have voting members:
 - (A) The Director of the Department of Public Works or his or her designee; and
 - (B) The Director of the Planning Department or his or her designee.
- (b) The Council shall have advisory members comprised of representatives from the following departments:
 - (1) The Recreation and Park Department; and
 - (2) The Public Utilities Commission.

In addition, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area are invited to send representatives to sit as advisory members of the Council.

- (c) Council members shall serve for two years. Members can serve successive terms if reappointed by the body originally appointing the Council member. Council members serve at the will of the body that appoints each Council member as specified above. The body that appoints Council members also may appoint at-large members to serve any unfilled Council positions.
 - (d) The Council shall meet at least once each month.
 - (e) The Council shall establish its own operating procedures, which, at a minimum, shall meet the public notice, meeting, voting, agenda and other procedural requirements set forth in local law.
 - (f) Subcommittees shall be created to adequately address other special areas of concern on an as needed basis.
 - (g) The Department of the Environment, with adequate funding to assist the Council in carrying out its mission, shall provide professional and administrative staff to the Council.
 - (h) All members of the Council shall serve without compensation.
- (Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.232; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001; Ord. 210-08, File No. 080233, App. 9/19/2008)

SEC. 1203. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- (a) The Council's responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) Advise the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, city departments and commissions on urban forestry concerns;
 - (2) Review project plans for major publicly-sponsored developments and civic improvements and changes to the public right-of-way as they may impact trees. Based on its review, the Council shall make recommendations regarding these projects to the Planning Department and other affected agencies;
 - (3) Establish criteria for a landmark/heritage tree program to provide for the protection of valuable trees on public and private property. The program shall propose administrative procedures and a tree removal appeal process for landmark/heritage trees;
 - (4) Adopt guidelines for protecting trees during project design and construction;
 - (5) Encourage early and continuous public participation in urban forestry projects and programs that includes consideration of neighborhood interests;
 - (6) Facilitate the cooperative interaction of tree-related activities among various city, State, and federal agencies, as well as among businesses, public utilities, non-profit organizations, and the public;
 - (7) Notify and involve public agencies when issues relate to trees on lands under their jurisdiction;
 - (8) Provide at designated Council meetings for a regular forum that follows an agenda of scheduled topics for public discussion of urban forestry issues;
 - (9) Assist with the formulation of legislation and policies that affect trees;
 - (10) Serve as a clearinghouse for information related to the urban forest through the Department of the Environment;
 - (11) Prepare the plans and reports as set forth in this legislation; and
 - (12) Assist agencies with tree management responsibilities in their efforts to incorporate and follow the urban forest plan guidelines, best management practices, and other Council recommendations and policies.
- (Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.233; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1204. URBAN FOREST PLAN.

- (a) To assure well-guided stewardship of San Francisco's trees, the Council shall develop and adopt a long-term comprehensive plan that sets policy for the management of the City's public and private trees. This Urban Forest Plan shall be developed in consultation with affected City agencies and with input from interested members of the public.

- (1) The planning process for such Plan shall include an assessment of the current condition of the urban forest and create a vision and goals that incorporate community values on urban forestry stewardship.
 - (2) The Planning process also shall include consideration of and referral to existing plans that relate to trees, including, but not limited to, plans for reforestation of parks and plans for street trees.
 - (3) The Plan shall include strategies and activities for achieving the envisioned urban forest. It shall include specific guidance to agencies and the public in developing education programs, establishing continuous and consistent tree care practices, identifying funding priorities and opportunities, and assuring that all needs of the urban forest are recognized and addressed.
 - (b) The Council shall oversee periodic updates to the Plan and evaluate the effectiveness of agencies in reaching the Plan's goals.
 - (c) Prior to adoption of the Plan or amendment thereto, the Council shall forward the plan and amendments to affected city agencies for review.
 - (d) The Council shall work with the Planning Department and the Department of the Environment to incorporate elements of the Urban Forest Plan into the City's General Plan.
 - (e) The Council shall work with the Recreation and Park Department and the Department of the Environment to incorporate elements of the Urban Forest Plan into the Recreation and Park Department's forestation plans.
- (Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.234; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1205. PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.

- (a) To improve management by individual property owners and those who provide tree services to property owners, the Council shall assist with education programs. The Council shall design education programs for the public and tree care professionals to inform and gain public support for urban forestry programs.
 - (b) The Council shall promote trees as essential infrastructure with inherent value to the City of San Francisco. As infrastructure, trees will require consideration when designing and engineering public and private development projects.
 - (c) The Council shall promote an understanding of San Francisco's urban forest as habitat for the wild animals that make up a significant part of San Francisco's natural heritage.
 - (d) The Council's outreach shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) Fostering an understanding of the value of trees;
 - (2) Promoting public understanding of City tree programs and laws;
 - (3) Working with the media to bring urban forest concerns and information to the public;
 - (4) Facilitating presentations, programs, and other outreach to property owners and the business and corporate community; and
 - (5) Promoting special events such as a citywide Arbor Day.
- (Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.235; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1206. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.

- (a) In an effort to establish and maintain a healthy and sustainable urban forest and ensure public health and safety, the Council shall develop and adopt tree care best management practices for public and private trees. The practices for tree maintenance shall focus on the protection of trees from premature death and irreversible damage caused by improper or inadequate tree maintenance.
- (b) The Council shall develop the best management practices in consultation with affected City agencies and with input from interested members of the public. The Council's evaluation of such practices shall incorporate an analysis of the projected costs for implementation of the practices. The best management practices shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) Species selection;
 - (2) Planting practices;
 - (3) Young tree care;
 - (4) Tree pruning and maintenance; and
 - (5) Tree removal.
- (c) The Council, with the assistance of the Board of Supervisors, shall urge and encourage City, State, and federal agencies, as well as private property owners and tree care companies working in San Francisco, to adhere to the Council's management practices and tree care standards.

(Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.236; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1207. FUNDING ASSESSMENT.

- (a) The Board of Supervisors shall make efforts to provide adequate funding for the Department of the Environment's support of the Council.
- (b) In the event funding is not allocated by the City and County of San Francisco for staffing the Council, the Council shall pursue funds for any shortfall in the necessary staffing and support activities and additional funds for any other project it deems necessary to implement this legislation.
- (c) To ensure that adequate resources are available for tree management and that public funding is used wisely, the Council shall:
 - (1) Review urban forest program budget priorities and make recommendations about urban forest funding requirements to the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and affected city departments and commissions;
 - (2) Investigate and pursue funding options for various urban forest activities;
 - (3) Assist agencies and organizations in securing funding for urban forest programs;
 - (4) Apply for and accept grants for public agency or privately sponsored urban forest programs pursuant to the procedures in the Administrative Code; and
 - (5) Determine whether there are opportunities to improve efficiency and eliminate possible redundancies among managing agencies through city-wide, coordination of tree operations.

(Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.237; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1208. STAFFING SUPPORT AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

- (a) A coordinator from the Department of the Environment shall staff the Council. The coordinator's responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) Fundraising;
 - (2) Developing and drafting guidelines for adoption;
 - (3) Preparing staff and annual reports;
 - (4) Coordinating with other agencies; and
 - (5) Develop an annual city-wide tree management budget for local governmental agencies.

(b) The coordinator is essential in order to implement the intent of this legislation.

(Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.238; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

SEC. 1209. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY.

- (a) The Council shall report to the Board of Supervisors and Mayor by September 1st of each year regarding the state of the urban forest. The report shall contain a review the quality of urban forest stewardship and an assessment of how well public agencies and other urban forest managers are implementing the Urban Forest Plan. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) Condition of the urban forest, species composition, and other tree stand characteristics;
 - (2) Summary of urban forest activities, such as total number of trees, number of trees removed, and number of trees planted on private lands and under the jurisdictions of public agencies and non-profit organizations.
 - (3) Analysis of the adherence to the Urban Forest Plan;
 - (4) Analysis of the adherence to the best management practices;
 - (5) The Council's public education and outreach projects;
 - (6) Notable achievements in urban forest;
 - (7) The status of funding for urban forest programs; and
 - (8) Proposals for tree care guidelines or changes to adopted tree care programs or plans.
- (b) City agencies and any non-profit organizations that accept city funding shall report to the Council regarding the trees they manage, the extent to which their management plans correspond to the Urban Forest Plan, and implementation of the best management practices. The Council shall receive the report no later than June 30 of each year. Other public entities also are urged to submit reports to the Council regarding the trees they manage.
- (c) City agencies that do not adhere to the policies, guidelines, or standards outlined in the Urban Forest Plan or best management practices shall explain their reasoning at a public hearing before the Council.
- (d) Within ninety (90) days of the Council's establishment, the Council shall adopt procedures to address the public hearing process specified in Subsection (c) above.

(Added by Ord. 171-03, File No. 030422, App. 7/3/2003) (Derivation Former Administrative Code Section 5.239; added by Ord. 21-01, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001)

Editor's note: Ordinance 21-01, §§ 3 through 5, File No. 002106, App. 2/16/2001 contained the following provisions which were not codified as part of this Article XXIII:

"After six (6) years from the effective date of this legislation, the Board shall review the status of the Urban Forest Council. The Council shall continue to operate unless the Board, by ordinance, terminates this Article or creates a successor to the Urban Forestry Council.

This legislation shall not be operative unless and until funding becomes available for the Department of the Environment to fund the Urban Forestry Council coordinator position specified in San Francisco Administrative Code Article XXIII, Section 5.238 and associated staff support. Within six (6) months after funding becomes available, the Urban Forestry Council shall be appointed and established.

This legislation and its implementing actions shall not supersede provisions of the City's General Plan, Recreation and Open Space Element, Citywide System, Objective 2, Policy 13 concerning the preservation and protection of significant natural resource areas. In addition, this legislation and its implementing actions shall not supersede the reforestation program for Golden Gate Park as set forth in the Golden Gate Park Master Plan."