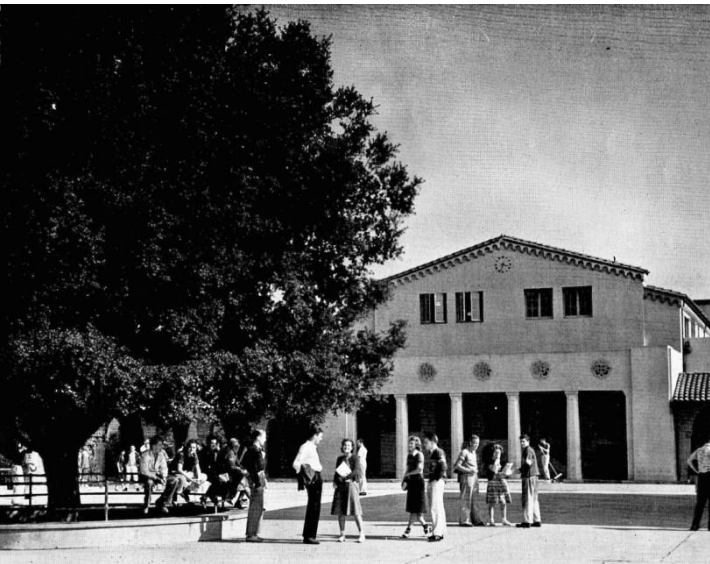


Community Forest
Management Plan

2023

Heritage Trees Committee Position Paper



Friends for a Livable Fullerton Heritage Trees Committee

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1. Mission

The mission of Friends for a Livable Fullerton's Heritage Trees Committee is to advocate for the enjoyment and preservation of Fullerton's unique and special public and private trees.

To accomplish these goals, we hope to work with the City of Fullerton to improve and maintain our Community Forest through education, documentation, best practices, and funding. We seek to understand the City's expectations for the Community Forest, convey the expectations of Fullerton residents, and assist with funding in achieving our common goals.

In this collaborative spirit, we offer the following suggestions for the 2023 Community Forest Management Plan:



2. History of Fullerton's Community Forest

For historical context, we suggest including statements similar to the City's original 1998 CFMP such as:

Fullerton's topography is unique for the north Orange County. Fullerton's flat plain in the south and many small hills and riparian areas in the north have created ideal environments for native, agricultural and ornamental trees.

Even before its founding in 1887, Fullerton had a rich heritage of native local trees such as oak, elderberry, black walnut and sycamore. Early rancho and homestead tree plantings were followed by a successful agricultural era famous for its walnuts, citrus, avocado and rare subtropical fruit. Remnants of these commercial and home orchards still survive.

Fullerton trees provide relief from an urban environment, habitat for birds and wildlife, and complement the historic buildings and cultural roots of the community, helping Fullerton retain its small-town feeling.

The further time distances Fullerton from its indigenous and agricultural roots, the less familiarity there is with good tree care practices. Community education of best practices can help maintain, prevent damage to, and grow a thriving Community Forest.

3. The City's Role and Jurisdiction

• Oversight

Could there be a short explanation of the roles and responsibilities of:

- City Staff: Engineering, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Building Dept., Community and Economic Development
- Contracted services: Explain benefits, background, and responsibilities. Discuss 3 or 4-year grid cycle
- Public Oversight: City Council, Infrastructure and Natural Resources Committee (INRAC), Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning (and Landmarks) Commission

• Public / Private

To set expectations and improve coordination, could there be a short explanation of the jurisdiction of the City and also its partnering with private entities?

- Trees at other government agencies - county, state, federal
- Trees at educational institutions: FSD, FJUHSD, NOCCCD, CSUF, including the City / Redevelopment Agency's early partnership with the Arboretum
- Utility relations, including new communications trenching
- Private trees at single or multi-family residences and HOAs – encouraging / conveying best practices through education, assistance, contractor licensing, landmarking, landmark districts, private trees shading public infrastructure (mentioned in inventory)
- Private trees at parking lots, commercial locations, and during entitlement processes



4. Best Practices and Policies for Public Trees

1. List meeting Tree City USA requirements as an annual goal
2. Follow ISA / ANSI standards and best management practices (BMPs)
3. Start protecting trees just as we do other municipal infrastructure
4. Include tree projects in department annual work plans and budgets
5. Create a policy to prioritize urgently needed replacements and maintenance in under-resourced areas, reducing disparities between South and North Fullerton tree needs
6. Consider adding special status tree species with special protection, such as oaks
7. Ensure removal of protected trees requires 4:1 replacement
8. Ensure tree protection in public rights-of-way and setbacks throughout demolition and construction projects
9. Add tree protections to entitlement checklists and agenda reports for every renovation or new development project
10. Require all development projects that come before staff, Council, committees and commissions to clearly show all existing trees, noting location, species, size and condition, and whether existing trees are proposed to be retained, removed or relocated. Since trees must be shown on a plot plan prior to issuance of building permits, the plot plan could possibly serve
11. Communicate existing best practices and policies to park maintenance staff and contractors to prevent future trunk and root issues due to improper mulching, soil compaction, irrigation, mowing, and string trimming damage, first concentrating on South and then North Fullerton parks. Preventive care will save money as well as protect our legacy
12. Promote "Trees over Turf" and lawn-to-mulch conversion in problem areas, particularly in South Fullerton
13. Clarify differences between topping and crown reduction practices
14. Create a corrective pruning program to restore storm damaged or topped trees
15. Create policies to improve relationship to overhead and underground utilities, including solar and trenching
16. Be sure that sewer system repairs protect trees as much as possible
17. Unify City policy across documents and educate public about bird nesting season and MBTA
18. Become familiar with rare and threatened plant / animal species to better protect trees in habitat conservation areas
19. Transition to organic and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices
20. Public tree wells along heavily travelled sidewalks should be maintained at sidewalk level so as not to cause tripping hazards







5. Best Practices and Policies for Private Trees - Residential and Commercial

1. Link private tree service contractor business license renewals / denials to a short annual ISA guidelines training or pledge (see: <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/PacificGrove/html/PacificGrove12/PacificGrove1250.html>, <https://sanluisobispo.municipal.codes/Code/12.24.130>, etc.)
2. Referral to list of "recommended" licensed or certified tree contractors
3. Create policies and track data to improve outcomes from overhead and underground utilities, including solar and trenching
4. Institute Item 10 above, requiring both private and public development projects to document existing trees
5. Educate the public about:
 - a) proper pruning practices and the dangers of topping
 - b) guidelines for corrective trimming after poor pruning practices
 - c) alternatives to invasive species (Brazilian pepper, bamboo, etc.)
 - d) nesting season and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

6. Tree Removals

- Strengthen protocols (flow chart) for proactively preventing and mitigating risk and removals:

BEST PRACTICES TO PREVENT TREE REMOVALS	
A. HEALTHY TREES	B. UNHEALTHY TREES
Implement a Robust Landmark Tree Program 	1. Prioritize Early Risk Assessments ↓
Make Tree Data Easily Available and Identify Trees on All Public Projects and Projects Seeking Entitlements 	2. Mitigate Issues ↓
Provide Proper Pruning, Lawn Trimming and Irrigation, and Prevent Conflicts with Utilities 	3. Informed Removal (communicate removal decisions) ↓
Enforce Tree Protections Against Illegal Removals in Trails, Parks and Parkways 	4. Retain Standing Tree Snags Until Replacement Trees Mature ↓
When Replacing Trees, Retain Snags Until Replacement Trees Mature	5. Urban Lumber

- Start a robust landmarking program to kickstart 20-year backlog
- Clarify the tree diversity policy: species and age diversity objectives
- “Least loss / Let’s lose the right trees”: Expand Tree Risk Assessment program to handle backlog, and going forward:
 - Define acceptable risk
 - Weighted tree risk matrix: imminent risk, moderate risk (possible in storm)
 - Powerline assessment
 - Annual ISA Level 1 visual assessments noting and implementing cost-saving preventive measures, including solving soil compaction issues
- Communicate the Director of Maintenance Services’ and any other removal decisions through an opt-in email and phone interest list, public and private entities, phone blast to neighbors, *and* onsite notices. Publicize the existing appeal process and / or define a new appeal process through the Parks and Recreation Commission
- Create a policy to retain snags as much as possible, especially where replacement tree plantings are delayed, with on-site public education flyers to explain
- Develop a policy that defines that the City retains tree removal urban lumber and how the public may obtain it
- Create a robust but fair prevention and enforcement protocol for illegal tree removals (including state treble damages)
- On construction projects – Require the listing and mapping of mature trees by species, diameter, location and review opportunities to save or mitigate the removal of private trees
- Partner with utilities, including electric, phone, fiber, wireless, water and solar to preserve and protect trees

7. Tree Plantings including Native Trees

- Find funding to expedite additional necessary tree replacements, perhaps with community partners
- Address north-south disparity in plantings
- Improve girdling issues and sapling quality
- Thank you so much for increasing natives and please add more to the sustainable species list
- Could we remove Brazilian and Peruvian Pepper trees from the new list?
- Could we remove the limit on the number of types of street trees permitted per street?
- Ensure trees are appropriate for their site – account for sewer, sidewalk, overhead utilities, light poles, driveways, fire hydrants, utility meters, soil compaction

8. Tree Inventory and Data Access

- Please list City trees: street trees, median trees, greenbelts, park trees, Sister City trees, nature preserves (East and West Coyote Hills, Brea Dam area), city facilities, including community centers, museums, cultural centers, sports centers, National Register, State Register and local landmark listings, historic districts (include maps)
- Track trees under powerlines and describe trenching damage and removal
- Explain current and historical tree data information, including assessment forms
- Create a requirement that all tree data be available to City during and after private contracts
- Ensure that the City staff, oversight entities, and the public, have access to the city's tree data and tree inventory, similar to the City building permits that are now available online

9. Education and Communications

- Arbor Day activities
- Tree care and tree damage:
 - Topping – public and private
 - Prevent tree risk and preserve urban canopy
 - Don't water trunk—other care information from Harmful Practices section
- Discourage tree damage from public and private signs, and stringing lights. Educate about best practices—wire, elastic harness—tree savers
- Discourage planting of invasive trees
- Expand website and other public communication (e-mail newsletter, brochures, social media, NextDoor)
- Educate public about MyFullerton app and phone alternatives
- Earlier tree documents discussed ways to foster resident support. We believe, and the survey shows, that there is no need to seek support; trees are an extremely popular Fullerton amenity, and the City can enjoy ample support just by its positive contributions.

10. Funding

Great ideas need adequate funding to implement and sustain. We would like to have a discussion of how we can partner with the city to seek grants and create an endowment or restricted fund devoted to tree care:

- Tree plantings and replacements
- Damage mitigations
- Core consultations
- Enforcement to prevent illegal tree removals
- Education

Appendix / References

- **Relevant Documents**

- Include links to [General Plan](#), [General Plan EIR](#), MBTA, [Street Tree Master Plan](#), [Donating a Memorial Tree](#), Contracted Services Agreement
- Index and include links to all tree policies including:
Design Guidelines for Residential Preservation Zones – “H. Features within Public Rights-of-Way”

Mature street trees planted in parkways shall be preserved as a whole, with individual trees removed only if diseased or dying. Full consideration shall be given to the fact that the prevailing tree species for a street is a contributing feature of the historic fabric of the neighborhood.
- Include City district maps, tree grid maps, Sister City tree maps,
- and, eventually, a map of notable or landmark trees
- Include links to topography, hydrology, and soils maps (Watershed study 2021)
- Include [Tree City USA](#) qualifications and requirements
- To reduce confusion, include Tree Survey results in appendix, with only key takeaways in main document

- **Relevant Organizations and Contact Information**

City of Fullerton:

- Public Works Department (714) 738-6845
- Parks and Recreation Department (714) 738-6575
- Community and Economic Development (Planning) Dept (714) 738-6837
- West Coast Arborists (City tree services contractor) www.wcainc.com

Community Resources:

- Arbor Day Foundation / Tree City USA www.arboday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/index.cfm
- California Invasive Plant Council www.cal-ipc.org
- Fullerton Arboretum www.fullertonarboretum.org
- Friends for a Livable Fullerton’s Heritage Trees Committee www.SaveFullerton.com/trees
- Friends of Fullerton’s Urban Forest <https://www.facebook.com/groups/281619405846913>
- Fullerton Heritage www.FullertonHeritage.org
- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) www.isa-arbor.com
- Women’s Club of Fullerton www.womanscluboffullerton.org

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