

City of Portland Tree Planting Program Strategy

April 2020

Project Background

- The late Commissioner Fish, who oversaw both Portland Parks and Recreations (PP&R) and the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), tasked the bureaus to consider how they could collectively deliver more efficient and sustainable services, better serve the environment and people of Portland, and model good governance.

Intent

- Reduce redundancies and bureaucratic layers, better integrating tree planting into life-cycle tree care and urban forest management, and more effectively leverage BES and PP&R resources.
- Align, strengthen and grow resources.
- Capitalize on BES and PP&R's partnerships and collaborations, many of which are shared, and any confusion among residents and community groups regarding the City's tree planting services.
- Deliver expanded, more equitable, more efficient, and more sustainable urban forest management and tree services to Portlanders.

Process to Date

- In mid-2019, PP&R and BES initiated a joint project to identify ways to improve coordination between the two bureaus in an area of overlapping interest—natural resources management.
 - A Steering Committee composed of senior managers from each bureau led the project and a Project Management Team of BES and PP&R staff managed day-to-day progress.
 - Leadership divided the project into two tracks of natural resource management: Tree Planting and Natural Areas.
 - The project included interviews and focus groups with internal stakeholders, as well as multiple facilitator-led work sessions with inter-bureau teams.
- In the Tree Planting track, PP&R Urban Forestry (UF) and the Environmental Services Tree Program (ESTP) participated in multiple facilitator-led work sessions to develop high-level process maps of the current tree planting programs, discuss desired goals and outcomes, and identify problem statements.

BES-PP&R Director's Proposal January 2020

- Based on this joint work and subsequent leadership conversations, the BES & PP&R Directors recommended the City's tree planting programs should be housed within UF as the City's urban forest manager. UF leads implementation of the City's Urban Forest Management Plan and Title 11 Trees, has administered tree planting programs for decades, assesses canopy distribution and inequities in forest services to residents, and recently completed and is now implementing [Growing a More Equitable Forest: Portland's Citywide Tree Planting Strategy](#).
- Due to community concerns, including a lack of stakeholder engagement, the Directors agreed to continue program analysis and evaluation, and include stakeholder feedback in the decision process.