

CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

RESOLUTION NO. 38-23

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2023 GRAND JUNCTION URBAN FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Recitals:

In 2020, the City adopted the One Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan, addressing the community's vision, goals, objectives, policies, and establishing a process for orderly growth and development. The One Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan called for the City to develop an Urban Forestry Management Plan and support the implementation of goals, objectives, and action items defined in that Urban Forestry Management Plan adoption.

In 2021, the City adopted a Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan. The PROS Master Plan called for the City to meet the community's mandate to increase shade by conducting an urban tree canopy assessment as part of an Urban Forest Management Plan. This determines a goal for canopy coverage and strategies for maintaining a healthy canopy.

In response, City staff have coordinated with stakeholders including the City of Grand Junction Forestry Board, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB), community members through various methods such as public meetings and a survey, and urban forestry experts in the Rocky Mountain and Southwest regions, to develop an Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP).

The plan has been carefully and diligently considered and formulated, driven by community input and best practices for managing forestry resources. This work has informed the plan for forestry management in the City of Grand Junction and within the Urban Development Boundary. The resultant plan provides potential improved management strategies that may be considered for future funding opportunities, relevant information, policy options, and goals for increased tree canopy cover. The adoption of the plan does not constitute any decision or review of funding for all or part of the plan. Any such decisions will be made following future discussions and decisions with consideration of the City's budget and/or other available funding sources such as grants.

By and with this resolution, the City Council adopts, approves, and endorses the 2023 City of Grand Junction UFMP.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Engagement:

- 529 responses to surveys (not statically valid but informative nonetheless)
- Fifty-three stakeholder interviews
- Two sets of community meetings
- Eight process update meetings with City Council, Boards, and Committees

Grand Junction's Tree Canopy:

- Includes 12,000 street trees and more than 45,000 other trees on public property
- The Urban Tree Canopy is principally located on private property (75% of urban trees)
- Has a value exceeding \$1 billion
- Sequesters over 3,927 tons of carbon annually
- Has increased residential property values by \$60 million since 2011
- Increases happiness, quality of life, and physical health
- Requires improved diversity, especially a reduced proportion of vulnerable ash trees that comprises over 20% of the urban tree canopy
- Saves the City \$395,000 in annual stormwater infrastructure costs
- Is at risk from drought, water scarcity, pests, diseases, extreme weather, and wildfire
- Expands primarily through private planting, especially by real estate development

A Majority of Survey Respondents:

- Maintain trees at their homes and businesses without professional assistance
- Support protecting trees during construction when feasible
- Support maintaining or increasing canopy cover
- Value the environmental benefits of trees, especially shade

Goals of the Plan:

- Extend trees' benefits to all
- Invest water in shade
- Diversify the canopy
- Care for park and street trees
- Build knowledge of tree care
- Plant and retain trees
- Integrate trees into decisions
- Increase canopy coverage from 13% of City limits to 18%

The City Council and City staff will use the UFMP to guide management decisions, raise public awareness and participation in tree care, and expand forestry programs over the next 10+ years. The overall purpose of the UFMP plan is to ensure a balanced approach to managing this complex resource. It is also designed to inform and empower both the Forestry Division and the public to improve the health of the urban forest.

The UFMP communicates the challenges and opportunities presented by the urban forest and provides a practical menu of programming to allow for flexible management of the tree canopy. It has no regulatory authority but includes recommendations for the long-term evolution of City policy on urban forest management and will serve as an accessible reference document for public use.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION THAT:

The 2023 City of Grand Junction Urban Forestry Management Plan is hereby approved and adopted as generally and specifically provided therein and in accordance with this resolution.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 19th day of April 2023.



Anna M. Stout
President of the City Council

ATTEST:



Amy Phillips
City Clerk

