



Urban Forestry Strategic Plan Executive Summary

The City of Olympia has a long, proud, and successful history of caring for our urban forest. From the majestic oaks on Legion Way planted on Veterans Day in 1928, to the planting of 1,000 trees in a single day in 2007 by the City's NeighborWoods program. Olympia's love and appreciation of trees is a reflection of who we are as a community, and our deep appreciation for our natural environment. However, the recent recession has left the urban forestry program with limited resources.

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is now.

Chinese Proverb

In recent months we have reviewed Olympia's urban forestry programs, practices, policies and our organizational structure. The goal is to examine ways to maintain a sustainable urban forestry program with best practices. Four major components have emerged as challenges:

Increase Our Knowledge: A comprehensive understanding of Olympia's urban forestry is essential to success.

Have a Plan: Develop and implement an urban forest management plan.

Identify Needs: Clarify roles and responsibilities throughout the City and identify resource gaps and program needs.

Public Involvement: Involve and educate our community.

To begin to address these four challenges one essential element is the evaluation of the duties of the City's Urban Forester and the establishment of an interdepartmental Urban Forestry team. In addition, we have further identified strategies for consideration that would require additional funding (outside of grants). They would require the commitment of additional staff resources.

The proposed strategies, budget, and the anticipated timelines are outlined in Chapter 6, Table 2.

Through the dedication of additional resources, an urban forestry management plan can be developed and successfully implemented. This will ensure that the Olympia urban landscape continues to include a healthy urban forest - part of our vision for a vibrant and healthy community.

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