Urban Forest Master Plan Progress Report

Introduction

This report outlines the progress made on the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) to date, including activities both before and after tropical storm Helene.

- **Project Team Meetings:**
  - **July 17th, 2:00 PM - Kick-off Meeting**
    - **Project Roles:** The initial meeting involved all five teams: City Staff, Urban Canopy Works, ArborPro, Dudek, and HARP. Introductions were made, and the roles and responsibilities of each team member and their respective teams were discussed.
    - **Project Timeline:** Urban Canopy Works presented their proposed project timeline.
    - **Data Collection:**
      - **Tree Inventory:** Review and discussion of data fields, outreach and public notice strategies, and anticipated completion.
      - **Canopy Analysis:** Discussion of the process, AVL GIS layers, LiDAR/NAIP utilization, and anticipated completion.
      - **Invasives Assessment:** Overview of the process, areas of study, and anticipated completion.
    - **Discussion on Teams:**
      - **Working Groups:** Steering (7 members), Advisory (60-100 members), and Focus (10-15 members).
        a. **Note that a decision has been made to not use this originally (pre storm) proposed structure; this is based on the needs of the project, City best practices, and new developments such as the advent of City Recovery Boards. See September 8th, 2025 for additional details/changes.*
    - **Project Logistics:** Communication plan, data sharing protocols, and invoicing procedures were addressed.
    - **Next Steps:** Bi-weekly meeting invitations, initiation of the master team list, establishment of workshop dates and locations, transfer of GIS base layers, identification of data collection locations, and scheduling of an inventory meeting.
  - **July 8th, 4:00 PM**
    - **Data Collection Update:**
      - **Invasives:** Finalization of locations, geo-referenced map, and anticipated completion within eight weeks from the start date.
      - **Tree Inventory:** A sub-meeting was held on August 7th. Topics included public notification, GIS layers, finalization of data fields, identification of priority areas, and establishment of a completion date.
      - **Canopy Analysis:** GIS confirmation, land classifications, and anticipated completion by the end of summer.
    - **Engagement Planning:** Identification of additional stakeholders, naming of teams, determination of meeting dates, initial discussion of web content, and scheduling of speaking engagements.
    - **Next Steps:** Compilation of a master list, identification of workshop locations, development of an inventory flyer, creation of web content for public input, and determination of data needs and collection locations.
  - **August 26th, 4:00 PM**

        - **Data Collection:**
            - **Invasives:** Selected locations were provided to HARP, with a projected start date of September 7th.
            - **Inventory:** Outreach efforts, completion of the area map, social media posts, data fields, start date, and anticipated completion by October 31st.
            - **Canopy Analysis:** Update on classifications and anticipated completion by October 31st.
        - **Engagement Planning:** Establishment of team names and assembly of teams, determination of dates and locations, planning of workshops, scheduling of speaking presentations, and development of the website and its content.
        - **Next Steps:** Updating the master list, setting a date for public tabling, creating a flyer, and developing the website.
    - **September 9th, 4:00 PM**
        - **Data Update:**
            - **Invasives:** No update provided.
            - **Inventory:** Flyer completed and social media posts initiated.
            - **Urban Tree Canopy (UTC):** Classification completed, with preliminary citywide results and data segmentation.
        - **Engagement Planning:** Development of a survey, formation of groups (Steering Committee meeting in October, Advisory Group, Focus Group with progress updates and a December meeting), identification of location events and outlets, website publication with UTC and inventory data as it becomes available, and identification of necessary website tabs, and survey development.
- **Next Steps (Prior to Suspension):** Master List compilation, finalization of the last UTC segment, confirmation of location events, development of web content, preparation of display boards, drafting of invitation text, creation of a draft survey, completion of the Invasive Report, and continuation of data collection.
- **Next Meeting:** September 23, 2025

September 27th - Project Suspension:

Due to TS Helene the project was on hold for approximately one year.

2025

- **September 8th, 10:00 AM - Project Restart**
    - **Project Status:** Welcome back, review of timeline, and establishment of bi-weekly meetings.
    - **Data Collection:** The 2022 UTC report is complete. Post-storm UTC analysis involves 30 cm imagery and satellite tasking. Inventory restart is scheduled for January.
    - **Engagement:** Website relaunch, speaker series, presentation of data findings, timeline review, survey development, and formation of focus groups. Focus groups will replace the Steering Committee (SC) and Executive Committee (EC), project will incorporate the new People and Environment Recovery Board and assign tasks (through Department Director or Council) to UFC and or SAC. Three groups will be established, including a Youth Team with Daniel Manget (from Parks) added to City staff team. Workshops are planned for February (virtual) and March/April (in-person). Speaking

engagements/Road Show will commence in November, with a master timeline for events and public questions for in-person sessions, along with a survey. Advisory workshops are scheduled from February to April, including two invite-only workshops, one public workshop, and one focus group workshop. Consideration was given to other storm-related workshops and potential event fatigue. A virtual Q&A is planned for March or April.

- **Next Steps (Post Restart):** Website relaunch, drafting of the survey, post-storm analysis, determination of dates and locations for workshops and broader public engagement, and development of an operations questionnaire.
- **September 22nd, 10:00 AM**
    - **Data Collection:** UTC data has been shared with the city. Post-storm analysis involves a 9/5 satellite tasking, currently in the queue with an open window. Inventory restart is scheduled for January.
    - **Engagement Discussion:** Review of the timeline.
    - **Website Status:** Relaunch, links to data, timeline, opportunities, and survey (online by November 1st).
    - **Recovery Board Discussion:** Combining/replacing the SC and EC, a November presentation, and UFC/SAC workshop support.
    - **Four Avenues (Public):** Survey, speaker circuit, virtual meeting, and a public workshop in March (neighborhood groups, date and location to be determined, 3-hour workshop).
    - **Stakeholder Workshops:** Two 2-hour invite-only workshops. Master list, invitations in November or December, and determination of date, time, and location.
    - **Focus Groups:** Scheduled for April, following public and stakeholder workshops. These groups will address issues that emerged in other engagements and provide additional understanding, targeting groups with special interests.
- **Next Steps:** Website relaunch, finalization of survey questions, post-storm analysis, creation of the stakeholder invite list, determination of dates and locations for workshops and the Recovery Board meeting, UCW (will create the materials) speaker presentation/road shows, and City Plan Review.
- **October 6th, 10:00 AM**
    - **Data Collection:** Invasive study and 2022 Canopy Assessment is ready for the website. Inventory is planning on restarting in January. Post storm leaf-on imagery has been put on hold, however the contractor is working to provide a mosaic to fulfill the contract following the same criteria.
    - **Engagement:** Roadshows engagement beginning November with UFC tasking. The survey is almost finalized. Virtual Launch for the general public pushed to the first week in February with Stakeholders workshops to begin in Late February and March. There will also be a public in person workshop offered in March with requested support from the UFC and SAC. Focus Groups will be targeted in April, if needed. That need is based on feedback from all previous engagement sessions. Website to go live 10/7. Youth team is being developed with Parks participation.
- **Next Steps:** Website launch 10/7 by 1:00 pm, approve survey questions, finalize stakeholder list following UFC input, solidify dates and locations for workshops and Recovery Board meeting, finalize slide/deck presentation for Roadshows.