

To: Urban Forestry Subcommittee
 From: Urban Design and Planning Staff
 Memo Date: June 16, 2022
 Meeting Date: June 27, 2022
 Subject: Urban Forestry Subcommittee Powers and Duties

Purpose and Background

The Urban Forestry Subcommittee (UFS) has requested an update to the Gresham Revised Code (GRC) to clarify and update the subcommittee’s powers and duties. City staff attended the April 18, 2022 UFS meeting to hear the Subcommittee’s discussion around their purpose and goals for the updates and to clarify their proposed changes. Staff is providing this memo to ensure accurate understanding of the USF goals for the requested update, and to provide background to the UFS on their stated goals for the updates, where appropriate. The background provided by staff in this memo is intended to help facilitate further discussion at the June 27, 2022 UFS meeting.

Current GRC Language

The UFS purpose statement in the current GRC is as follows:

2.20.070(5)(b) Purpose. The Urban Forestry Subcommittee is the advising subcommittee to the Planning Commission on Urban Forestry issues. As such, it will advise on all activities related to the health, protection and extent of the city’s urban tree canopy. In addition, the UFS will advise and make recommendations to the council, the Planning Commission, Hearings Officer and the manager regarding preservation, protection and restoration of trees. The Subcommittee is also responsible for recommending the designation of significant trees and the maintenance and updating of the significant tree list. Through various displays and publications, the subcommittee may also engage in public education. The subcommittee will also advise on all activities related to obtaining and maintaining Tree City USA status.

UFS Goals and Suggestions

The UFS created a draft document outlining a list of suggestions for updated powers and duties in the GRC. Discussion at the April meeting helped to clarify UFS goals, and staff noted that not all goals were best addressed in the GRCs as many may be operational changes rather than policy (GRC) related. The following provides an overview of each of the previously drafted UFS powers and duties along with notes from staff.

UFS Drafted Language	Staff Notes
<p><i>Powers and Duties (Draft)</i> <i>The Urban Forestry Subcommittee, charged with enhancing tree health and tree canopy in the City of Gresham, will:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of the UFS for this item is to clarify the language in this statement based on UFS functions. It is not the intent that this statement would establish UFS as a review

<p>1. Advise the Planning Commission on matters affecting tree health particularly in new subdivisions or developments. This would include advising on: <u>selected tree species selection to ensure sufficient tree diversity across the city is sufficient for a sustainable canopy under various environmental pressures, methods and practices to increase enhance canopy with appropriately sized trees along public streets, and to preserve to the extent possible existing regulated trees on the property.</u></p>	<p>authority for development applications. Revisions to this language would be necessary to clarify this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may need to be clearly stated who is being advised. Since the USF is a subcommittee to the Planning Commission, they would be the appropriate body to list. Note that this would not limit the USF to just advising the Planning Commission, it will still be possible for the USF to advise other bodies (and staff) as appropriate/requested even if it is not specifically called out in this section of the powers and duties. • The incorporation of goals for tree species diversity into city policies does not fit as a specific role for the USF but may be a good consideration for an operational item/specific project to consider in the future.
<p>2. Create and update as needed <u>a list of the approved street trees tree list (street, parking, and buffer) that developers can select from to meet code requirements.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of this item is to formalize UFS's role in the establishment and maintenance of the city's approved tree lists.
<p>3. Receive regularly from code enforcement reports of tree code violations and how violations have been addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This item fits better as an operational topic (not a policy/GRC regulation), as it is not a power or a duty. • Staff recommends the item not be suggested as a GRC policy update, but this specific strategy may be discussed as a UFS operational item.
<p>4. <u>Provide input and endorsement of code revisions to City of Gresham's Tree regulations, where reasonable.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UFS has stated it is not their intent to establish the UFS as a review authority. • Staff suggests this statement be revised to specify the UFS provides input on tree code revisions, as appropriate.
<p>5. Advise the city manager and/or city council on any <u>all</u> policy or code provisions pertaining to the <u>planting, maintenance, preservation, protection and restoration of trees.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This item is intended to outline that a duty of the UFS is to provide input on Comprehensive Plan (policy) updates that involve tree regulations, but is not intended to establish the UFS as a review authority for development applications. • Staff suggests this statement be revised to specify the UFS provides input on tree

	<p>policy revisions, as appropriate (this would include both comprehensive plan policies and documents such as the technical tree manual) and if it lists who is being advised that be limited to the Planning Commission.</p>
<p>6. <i>Provide comment or recommendations to <u>Design Commission, Planning Commission, and a hearings officer</u> on any matters related to tree code or tree canopy <u>issues considerations</u>.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This item is intended to outline that a duty of the UFS is to provide input on Comprehensive Plan (policy) updates that involve tree regulations, but is not intended to establish the UFS as a review authority for development applications. The text would need to be updated to clarify this is specific to policy matters not development review. • This item may also include an operational discussion between UFS and staff about how to implement this in practice (such as when and how staff engages with the USF on policy development/updates and shares UFS feedback with other advisory bodies and with review authorities).
<p>7. <i>Design and implement a significant tree nomination and selection process and maintain an inventory of those trees for the city <u>and all its residents</u>.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an existing function of the UFS and may be appropriate to identify as one of its functions in the GRC.
<p>8. <i>Provide <u>content for online tree forum hosted on the city's website that supplies helpful information for businesses and residents on tree regulations, organizational partnerships, and tree planting/pruning/care tips</u>.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This item appears to combine both a policy (the UFS role/duty to serve an educational role) and a specific method to operationally fulfill that role (specific web forum). • Staff recommends the item be consolidated with item 12 to one general statement on the UFS educational role for the GRC update discussion, and the specific strategy be included in UFS operational discussions. (For example, a policy statement could read <i>"The subcommittee may also develop a program of public education relating to trees and tree canopy, including general and technical information on the value of trees and tree canopy in the urban landscape and information on tree species and planting."</i> Note this is similar to an established GRC

	policy for the Historic Resources Subcommittee.)
9. <u>Respond and facilitate city resident's tree related inquiries such as canopy condition questions or concerns, and requests for educational material.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An educational role is appropriate for the UFS (see #8 above), however it is the role of city staff to advise the public on matters of policy and policy implementation. Staff would recommend this item be removed, and that the specific methods for implementing the UFS's educational role (per item 8 above) be discussed as operational items.
10. <u>Designated member(s) will serve on the Coordinating Committee and assist in the creation of successive work plans in support of the City Council work plan.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is covered by the Coordinating Committee section of the GRC and is not necessary to repeat in the USF section.
11. <u>Advise on activities related to obtaining and maintaining Tree City USA status.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an existing function of the UFS and may be appropriate to identify as one of its functions in the GRC.
12. <u>Through various displays and publications, the subcommittee may also engage in public education to promote the value of trees in the urban landscape.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is similar to item 8 above. Staff suggests this item is removed and consolidated into item 8.

Potential Draft GRC Updates

Based on staff's understanding of the Goals of the UFS and staff's notes above, the following could represent an updated request from the UFS for GRC updates to section 2.20.070 Citizen Advisory Subcommittees. This is provided only as a starting point for discussion and does not represent a formal recommendation by staff.

Existing GRC Language with Proposed Updates	Commentary
2.20.070 Citizen Advisory Subcommittees. (5) Urban Forestry Subcommittee (UFS). (a) Membership. The Urban Forestry Subcommittee shall consist of seven members. The subcommittee is established pursuant to GRC 2.18.010(1). Five of the Subcommittee members shall have expertise associated with trees. This includes, but is not limited to, professional arborists, nursery operators, foresters, and landscape architects.	<i>No recommended updates.</i>
(b) Purpose. The Urban Forestry Subcommittee is the advising subcommittee to the Planning Commission on <u>matters</u>	<i>Language clarification based on other</i>

<p><u>related to Urban Forestry and supporting trees and the retention and expansion of tree canopy in Gresham, issues.</u> As such, it will advise on all activities related to the health, protection and extent of the city’s urban tree canopy. In addition, the UFS will advise and make recommendations to the council, the Planning Commission, Hearings Officer and the manager regarding preservation, protection and restoration of trees. The Subcommittee is also responsible for recommending the designation of significant trees and the maintenance and updating of the significant tree list. Through various displays and publications, the subcommittee may also engage in public education. The subcommittee will also advise on all activities related to obtaining and maintaining Tree City USA status.</p>	<p><i>subcommittee GRCs and UFS draft updates.</i></p> <p><i>These items are moved to new section (c) below.</i></p>
<p><u>(c) Duties and responsibilities include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>(i) Make recommendations on the designation of Significant Trees and maintain a Significant Tree list for the city and all its residents.</u> <u>(ii) Advise on the creation of, or proposed amendments to, city policies and code provisions relating to the planting, maintenance, preservation, protection, and restoration of trees and tree canopy, as requested by the Manager, Planning Commission, or Planning Commission Coordinating Committee.</u> <u>(iii) Advise on activities related to obtaining and maintaining Tree City USA status.</u> <u>(iv) Advise on the creation and maintenance of the city’s approved tree lists.</u> <u>(v) Upon Council direction, advise on the creation and maintenance of a technical tree manual.</u> <u>(vi) The subcommittee may also develop a program of public education relating to trees and tree canopy, including general and technical information on the value of trees and tree canopy in the urban landscape and information on tree species, health, and planting.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) is an existing GRC duty and item 7 from the UFS draft updates list.</i> <i>(ii) is a consolidation of the existing GRC purpose statement and items 1 and 4-6 from the UFS draft updates list. (Note, specific operational procedures for how staff engages with the USF and/or shares UFS feedback with other advisory bodies would be established outside of the GRC.)</i> <i>(iii) is in the existing GRC purpose statement and is item 11 from the UFS draft updates list.</i> <i>(iv) is item 2 from the UFS draft updates list. Note the specific tree lists (parking lot, street, buffer) are not necessary to list individually in the GRC.</i> <i>(v) is a consolidation of the existing GRC purpose statement and items 8 and</i>

	<i>12 from the UFS draft updates list.</i>
(c) (d) Meetings. The Urban Forestry Subcommittee shall meet at the call of either the chair, council liaison, staff liaison, or two members of the subcommittee at a time and place designated by the subcommittee. <u>The quorum provisions of GRC 2.18.080(3) shall apply to the operation of the Urban Forestry Subcommittee.</u>	<i>Quorum provisions are referenced in other subcommittee meeting provisions so are proposed to be added here for consistency.</i>

Next Steps

The notes and potential draft updates provided by staff in this memo are intended to be used as a starting point to facilitate further discussion at the June 27, 2022 UFS meeting. Considerations for that meeting could include if the memo accurately reflects the UFS’s goals for a potential GRC update and if anything needs to be modified.

In staff’s notes several items were identified from the UFS draft document as operational items rather than policy (GRC) items. These items are listed here to track for future discussions:

- Incorporation of goals for tree species diversity into city policies.
- UFS receiving code enforcement reports on tree code violations.
- Operational discussion between UFS and staff around procedures for engaging the UFS in tree policy updates/development.
- Specific methods to fulfil an educational role (such as creation of online resources, etc.).

After discussions at the June 27 meeting, staff could compile an updated draft document on behalf of the UFS with track changes to the GRC reflecting the UFS goals and requests. That draft could then be brought back to the UFS to ensure it accuracy conveys UFS’s intent before being forwarded to the Planning Commission for their consideration. Ultimately, City Council would need to approve and adopt any GRC changes and may initiate further review/evaluation of a request to update the UFS powers and duties.