

San Francisco's Urban Forestry Council Strategic Planning Process follow-up and notes

As a result of the strategic planning sessions on November 20, 2009 and June 2, 2010, a group of appointed UFC members met to review the work and findings.

Mission statement from the bylaws:

The Urban Forestry Council was established for the purpose of guiding the stewardship of San Francisco's trees by promoting a healthy and sustainable urban forest that benefits all San Franciscans while ensuring public health and safety. The Council will carry out the duties specified in the ordinance so as to protect the community interest and ensure that San Francisco realizes the full range of tree benefits into the future.

Council members will represent the full range of urban forest stakeholders including city agencies, non-profit organizations, tree management organizations, and community members.

Mission from the SFE Website:

The Urban Forestry Council advises city departments, including the Board of Supervisors and the mayor. Its tasks are to develop a comprehensive urban forest plan; educate the public; develop tree-care standards; identify funding needs, staffing needs, and opportunities for urban forest programs; secure adequate resources for urban forest programs; facilitate coordination of tree-management responsibilities among agencies; and report on the state of the urban forest.

Mission for the upcoming year, developed at the strategic planning sessions:

The Urban Forestry Council brings professional expertise and informed perspective to a public forum with the purpose of protecting and enhancing the Urban Forest of San Francisco

We provide guidance to the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and public agencies in determining priorities, establishing regulations, and setting policies with regard to the management of a sustainable and beneficial Urban Forest.

While the work group would like to emphasize that the Council needs to remain reactive to developing issues, two key areas of necessary focus were identified, along with possibilities for addressing the concerns. Items listed for potential action are not intended to represent a finite list, only a starting point:

Increasing Council visibility and communication to build Council credibility and influence with key decision makers

Action item suggestions: Council members to build and/or further develop relationships with neighborhood groups and the Supervisors with which they may already have connections.

Educating the public and activating/empowering citizen groups

Action item suggestions: Exploring methods to support current work addressing construction related tree damage, excessive pruning, and unpermitted removal of public trees; Creating and distributing "How to" guides for education and enforcement; Increasing engagement in Arbor Day events.

The workgroup also suggests annual and ongoing review of the Council bylaws, which serve as the Council's guiding document.