



Staff Liaison
Stephen Prée | 510-559-7685
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AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE

Monday August 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

El Cerrito City Hall
City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

7:00 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

- 1. ROLL CALL** - Chair Cathy Bleier; Vice-Chair Catherine (Cassie) Hughes; Members: Robert Hrubes, Jennifer Kaczor, Yan Linhart, Robin Mitchell
- 2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC and INTRODUCTION BY INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN SERVING ON THE ADVISORY BOARD**
Remarks are typically limited to three minutes per person and may be on anything within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. Remarks on non-agenda items will be heard first, remarks on agenda items will be heard at the time the item is discussed.
- 3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS, INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA (10 minutes)**
- 4. CITY COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS (10 minutes)**
City Council Liaison Quinto and / or City Staff may report on Council policies, priorities, and significant actions taken by the City Council, and / or matters of general interest to the Urban Forest Committee (UFC).
- 5. PRESENTATION ON THE HILLSIDE NATURAL AREA FIRE RESILIENCE AND FOREST CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN DRAFT: (25 minutes)** Receive a presentation on the Draft Plan from City staff.
- 6. ACTION ITEMS: (10 minutes)**
 - A. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Consider a motion to adopt the minutes from the June 10, 2024, UFC meeting.
 - B. **ADVISORY BODIES UPDATE:** Consider a motion to request a youth member as a non-voting appointment to the Urban Forest Committee.
- 7. COLLABORATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE (3 minutes)** Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding collaborating with the EQC.
- 8. COLLABORATION WITH THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION (3 minutes)** Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding collaborating with the PRC.

9. URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR, AND WORK PLAN:

Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible actions that correspond with development of the Urban Forest Committee Work Plan and calendar of events. (50 *minutes*)

A. EL CERRITO WORLD ONE FESTIVAL JULY 4 OUTREACH DEBRIEF
(*Hrubes and Linhart*).

B. UFC 2025/26, 2026/27 WORK PLAN VISIONING (*All*)

10. ITEMS FROM TONIGHT’S MEETING THAT REQUIRE FURTHER ACTION

(5 *minutes*)

11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Hear committee member suggestions for future UFC meeting items (5 *minutes*)

- Work Plan Visioning
- Urban Forestry Grants and Fundraising (Hrubes, Kaczor, Mitchell)
- HNA Plan

12. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Staff Liaison, 510-559-7685. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the members regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at El Cerrito Recycling Center during normal business hours.



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DRAFT MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
Urban Forest Committee
Monday June 10, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

El Cerrito City Hall
City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

CONVENE REGULAR MEETING: *Chair Bleier* called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Cathy Bleier, members: Robert Hrubes, Jennifer Kaczor, Yan Linhart, Robin Mitchell.

Absent: Vice Chair Catherine (Cassie) Hughes.

Also present: Staff Liaison Stephen Prée

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: there were none.

3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS /CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA:

Chair Bleier suggested adding a new regular agenda item: "Committee Communications and Information Exchange"; after a discussion the UFC agreed that this would not be a new, agenda item, but would fall under the "Committee Member Announcements" agenda item (3). *Mitchell* announced that the *Friends of the Hillside Natural Area (HNA)* is hosting periodic evening work parties. *Linhart* recommended new books, one by *Amy Tan*, and one by *Renée Bergland*. *Bleier* reported that she had listened to a *Davey Resource Group* webinar on Innovations in Urban Forestry and recommended a book "It's not the end of the Earth".

4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS: *Staff Liaison Prée*

inquired if members had received the City Clerk's invitation to attend the 68th Advisory Body Recognition Dinner on June 14th. He also reported that the draft HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan would be released in early July with a 45-day public comment period to follow. *Prée* announced that he would be out of state during the July 8 UFC meeting and gave the Committee the option to meet without him (with an acting liaison) or to cancel the meeting; the UFC agreed to cancel the July meeting.

5. ACTION ITEMS:

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Consider a motion to adopt the minutes from the May 13, 2024 UFC meeting. **Motion:** *Mitchell*; **2nd:** *Kaczor*; **Ayes:** Unanimous of those present.

- B. UFC 2023/2024 WORK PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS DOCUMENT APPROVAL:
Consider a motion to approve documentation of the UFC Accomplishments for the period July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. **Motion:** *Mitchell*; **2nd:** *Kaczor*; **Ayes:** Unanimous of those present.

6. **COLLABORATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE – Vice Chair**
Mitchell reported that the EQC is discussing the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, promoting early wins, including support for watering new street trees and is discussing the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. A discussion followed regarding the feasibility of the City utilizing a tree-watering-trailer.
7. **COLLABORATION WITH THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION-** *Kaczor*: no meeting to report.
8. **URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR, AND WORK PLAN UPDATE-**
- A. COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE- removed from agenda (see item 3, above)
- B. UFC 2025/26, 2026/27 WORK PLAN VISIONING – *Linhart* recommended that the upcoming work plan include planting more trees; create a donation mechanism to fund tree planting to raise money; recruit new members, connect with community groups and neighbors. *Kaczor* reminded the Committee that creating a donation account was reported to be a strain on staff time. Other suggestions include use existing UFC budget for a mailer, update the UFC webpage, more frequent outreach to schools. *Hrubes* said that more results are needed- plant more trees, improve student awareness of trees, promote forestry related speakers at schools. *Mitchell* recommended developing a volunteer group to plant and care for trees; discussion of enlisting an existing non-profit group, advancing the creation of a “Friends of...” group; budgetary constraints. *Chair Bleier* concluded that the work plan should include the investigation of volunteer group involvement.
- C. EL CERRITO WORLD ONE FESTIVAL JULY 4 – *Hrubes* and *Linhart* volunteered to staff a UFC information table at the festival. *Kaczor* and *Mitchell* volunteered to create a QR code that could be used at the table linking to the City website UFC page.
- D. URBAN FORESTRY GRANTS AND FUNDRAISING UPDATE – no news.
9. **ITEMS FROM TONIGHT’S MEETING THAT REQUIRE FURTHER ACTION:**
- *Hrubes* and *Linhart*- July 4 UFC information tabling
 - *Kaczor* and *Mitchell* – QR Code development
 - *Mitchell* and *Hrubes* – Richmond Complete Streets Project letter

- *Kaczor*- Locate and share an Effectiveness Impact Graph

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS –

- UFC Work Plan Accomplishments
- HNA Plan Update
- Richmond Complete Streets Project review

11. ADJOURNMENT- *Chair Bleier* adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular Urban Forest Committee meeting of June 10, 2024 as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

Cathy Bleier, Chair or, Catherine (Cassie) Hughes, Vice Chair

Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison



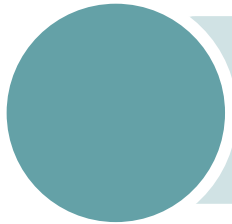
HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan

Karineh Samkian and Stephen Prée
August 2024

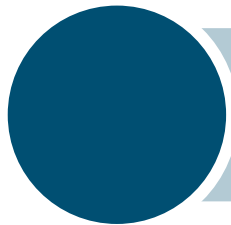




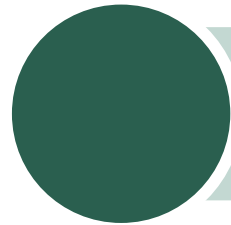
Overview



Plan Development Process



Major Recommendations



Next Steps

Background

- Hillside Natural Area (HNA) is ~106 acres.
- City has implemented fire fuel reduction activities
- Volunteers have removed invasives and identified native plants
- City awarded State Coastal Conservancy grant



Plan Development Process



- City Council authorized contract with LSA Associates, Inc.
- Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) established
- Assessment:
 - Biological
 - Cultural
 - Fuel and fire hazard
 - Trails
- Public Input:
 - 2 SAG meetings
 - 2 public workshops
 - Survey
 - Council presentation

Plan Phases

Engagement touchpoints

Phase 1: Studies and Input
(Completed)

Oct 2023-Jan 2024

- SAG meeting #1
- Public workshop #1
- Community survey



Phase 2: Draft Development & Review

Jan-Sep 2024

- Meetings with City committees & commissions
- SAG meeting #2
- Public online draft review
- Public workshop #2

Phase 3: CEQA Review and Final Plan

Sep 2024-Mar 2025

- Planning Commission
- City Council

Throughout the process:

- ✓ City webpage
- ✓ City newsletters

Proposed Recommendations

Highest Priority

1. Create defensible space within 100-ft of residential structures immediately adjacent to the Hillside Natural Area

High Priority

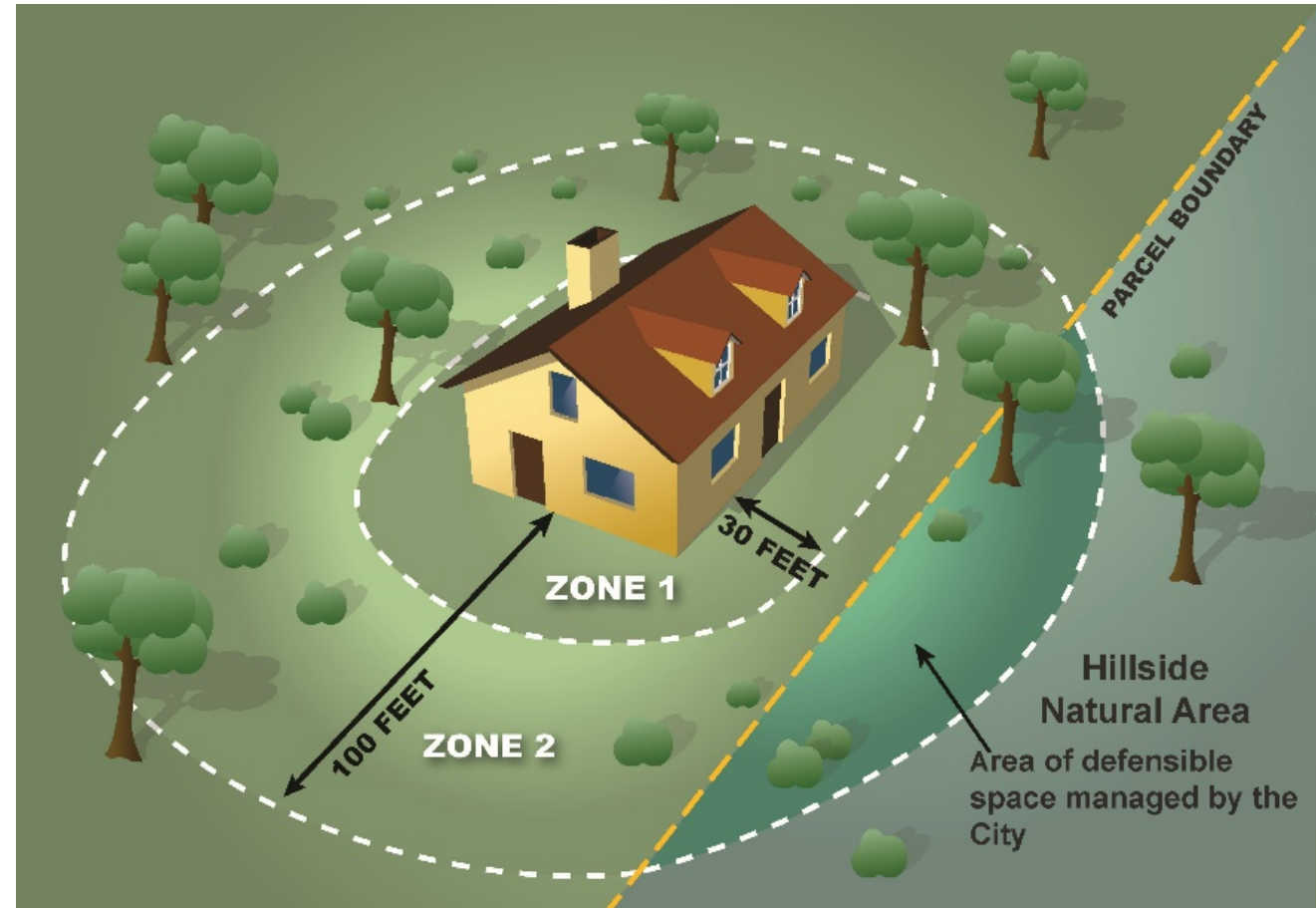
2. Establish fuel breaks
3. Remove eucalyptus and non-native conifers
4. Create a sustainable system of fire roads

Medium Priority

5. Actively manage threats to native oak species
6. Remove invasive shrubs and herbaceous species
7. Restore and re-establish native species
8. Monitor key performance indicators

Highest Priority

1. Create Defensible Space
 - Within 100-ft of structures adjacent to HNA



High Priority

2. Establish Shaded Fuel Break
 - 100 feet along HNA perimeter from property line.
3. Remove Eucalyptus & Non-Native Conifers
 - 1. Motorcycle Hill, 2. Quarry Hill, 3. Kent Drive and Buckingham, 4. Madera property, 5. the Ken Smith grove.
4. Create System of Fire Roads & Trails
 - Improve road at Potrero Ave and King Ct, add access to Motorcycle Hill, and improve other roads.



LSA



SOURCE: Contra Costa County; Esri.

J:\20231296\GIS\MXD\Bio Report\Figure 14_Eucalyptus Groves and Landing Sites.mxd (2/23/2024)

LEGEND

- Project Site
- Stream/Drainage
- Vehicle Accessible Trail
- Foot+Bike or Foot-only Trail

- Eucalyptus Grove/ Pine trees
- ★ Landing/Processing Site

FIGURE 4

Hillside Natural Area
Wildfire Resilience and Forest Conservation Plan
El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, California
Eucalyptus Groves and Landing Sites

Medium Priority



5. Manage Threats to Oak
6. Remove Invasives
7. Restore and Re-establish Natives
8. Monitor Key Performance Indicators

Next Steps

- **Public Comments** – Due August 25, 2024
 - www.el-cerrito.org/hillside
- **CEQA Review & CEQA Public Comment** – Fall 2024
- **Plan Consideration by City Council (anticipated)** – Early 2025





Questions?

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