



COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: June 23, 2026
CATEGORY: Unfinished Business
DEPT.: Community Services
TITLE: **Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan Adoption**

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

BACKGROUND

On [April 28, 2026](#), the City Council held a Study Session to review the draft Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan (Plan) and provide feedback prior to adoption. The Plan updates and expands the City's 2015 Community Tree Master Plan into a broader framework focused on biodiversity, urban forestry, habitat connectivity, climate resilience, and community well-being.

The Plan was developed with San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) and a cross-departmental City Project Team through a multi-year process that included technical analysis, extensive community engagement, interdepartmental collaboration, and review by the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) and Environmental Planning Commission (EPC). Public outreach included workshops, multilingual engagement opportunities, pop-up events, surveys, a stakeholder meeting, and neighborhood-based activities.

At the April 28, 2026, Study Session, Council expressed overall support for the Plan and provided feedback related to implementation accountability and staffing; adaptive management and ongoing reporting; integration of Plan concepts into City projects, roadway design, green infrastructure, and budget development processes; expanded use of native planting where feasible; and opportunities to support partnerships, volunteer efforts, and community-based implementation. Council also directed staff to consider input received from community partners and stakeholder organizations.

Staff and SFEI subsequently refined the Plan in response to Council direction and additional stakeholder input. Updates made to the draft Plan are highlighted in yellow throughout Attachment 1 for ease of reference and review.

DISCUSSION

Implementation and Accountability

The updated Plan strengthens the implementation framework to support long-term coordination, accountability, and adaptive management. Revisions include identifying a designated staff lead to oversee the cross-departmental City Implementation Team and coordinate plan execution, monitoring, and reporting efforts across departments.

Additional revisions expand the existing reporting framework beyond the Parks and Recreation Commission to include annual progress updates to City Council and the public, as well as additional community-facing updates and engagement opportunities. The updated language also strengthens the Plan's Adaptive Management discussion to support ongoing implementation refinements and responsiveness to evolving funding sources, scientific knowledge, community priorities, and lessons learned over time.

Integration into City Projects, Policies, and Funding

In response to Council feedback, the Plan further clarifies that it is intended to serve as a foundational City policy document that helps guide City decision-making, capital project delivery, and budget development across departments.

The updated Plan also includes language supporting the integration of Plan concepts, guidelines, and associated Guides into future objective development standards, roadway design approaches, green infrastructure strategies, and other implementation tools where feasible and appropriate. Additional revisions recognize opportunities to incorporate greening, urban forest, and green infrastructure improvements into future Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects and broader infrastructure investments.

Biodiversity and Urban Forest Enhancements

The updated Plan includes refinements related to native and regionally appropriate planting, including clarification and refinement of the definition of "near-native" species, as well as climate resilience, biodiversity-supportive landscaping, sustainable native plant sourcing practices, and mature tree retention. The revised language recognizes the importance of expanding the use of native and regionally appropriate species where feasible, while balancing urban conditions, site constraints, biodiversity goals, maintenance considerations, and long-term species diversity.

Additional revisions strengthen language related to habitat protection and the protection and retention of existing mature trees, habitat features, and ecological resources where feasible alongside expansion and enhancement efforts.

Partnerships, Stewardship, and Community Science

The updated Plan reinforces language related to stewardship opportunities, volunteer coordination, community science partnerships, and community-based implementation, including biodiversity monitoring and public engagement where appropriate. As implementation moves forward, staff will also explore future funding opportunities to support these collaborative stewardship efforts.

Staff also considered and incorporated select recommendations from community partners and stakeholder organizations, including GreenSpacesMV, Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning, Bird Alliance, and other community members, as reflected in the revisions summarized in this section.

Next Steps

Following adoption, staff will begin implementing the Plan by establishing the cross-departmental City Implementation Team. Early implementation efforts will focus on coordinating across departments, advancing Actions identified as “In Progress” and “Upon Plan Adoption,” integrating Plan concepts into ongoing City projects and programs, establishing baseline metrics and performance indicators, and developing monitoring and reporting procedures to support long-term progress tracking and adaptive management.

As one of the initial implementation efforts, staff will continue working with the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) to develop a web-based Tree Selector Tool for Mountain View. Funding for the tool is proposed as part of the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget request, which is being considered by Council concurrently with Plan adoption. The tool will help identify appropriate tree species for specific sites based on factors such as site conditions, biodiversity support, climate resilience, and ecosystem service benefits, and is intended to support future City projects, development, and community tree planting efforts.

FISCAL IMPACT

Project 23-37, Biodiversity Strategy, is funded with \$1.0 million from the CIP Reserve. No additional appropriation is requested as part of the recommended action to adopt the Plan.

The Plan includes planning-level cost estimates intended to illustrate the scale of long-term investments needed to expand, maintain, and enhance biodiversity and the urban forest throughout the City. Existing funding sources—including the General Fund, Capital Improvement Program (CIP), Tree Mitigation Fund, grants, partnerships, and limited reserve funds—support ongoing operations and incremental implementation efforts but are not sufficient to fully achieve all long-term Plan actions and objectives.

Implementation of the Plan will occur incrementally over time through existing resources, integration with current projects and programs, future budget processes, external funding opportunities, partnerships, and other potential funding sources.

LEVINE ACT

California Government Code Section 84308 (also known as the Levine Act) prohibits city officials from participating in any proceeding involving a “license, permit, or other entitlement for use” if the official has received a campaign contribution exceeding \$500 from a party, participant, or agent of a party or participant within the last 12 months. The Levine Act is intended to prevent financial influence on decisions that affect specific, identifiable persons or participants. For more information, see the Fair Political Practices Commission website: www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/pay-to-play-limits-and-prohibitions.html

Please see below for information about whether the recommended action for this agenda item is subject to or exempt from the Levine Act.

EXEMPT FROM THE LEVINE ACT

General policy and legislative actions

CONCLUSION

The Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan establishes a comprehensive, long-term framework to guide biodiversity, urban forest, habitat, and climate resilience efforts throughout Mountain View. The Plan reflects extensive community engagement, interdepartmental collaboration, technical analysis, and review by City advisory bodies, and is intended to help guide future City decision-making, projects, policies, and investments.

The updated draft incorporates City Council feedback received during the April 28, 2026, Study Session and strengthens the Plan’s implementation, accountability, monitoring, adaptive management, and community engagement framework. Adoption of the Plan will position the City to advance biodiversity and urban forest goals through coordinated, long-term implementation across City programs, capital projects, partnerships, and community initiatives.

The Plan also builds on Mountain View’s broader sustainability and resilience efforts and positions the City as a regional leader in advancing integrated biodiversity and urban forest planning. As implementation progresses, the Plan may also serve as a model for other agencies and communities seeking integrated approaches to biodiversity, climate resilience, and urban greening.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Provide other feedback for the final Plan.
2. Do not recommend the Plan for adoption.
3. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

In addition to the standard agenda posting, notice for this meeting was posted to the City website and project website, BiodiversityMV.com. Notice was also provided to stakeholder groups, neighborhood associations, community organizations, and interested parties who participated throughout the planning process.

Prepared by:

Brenda Sylvia
Assistant Community Services Director

Lindsay Wong
Senior Management Analyst

John R. Marchant
Community Services Director

Approved by:

Kimbra McCarthy
City Manager

- Attachments:
1. Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan (with yellow highlights)
 2. Summary of Plan Updates