

Support the Community Forest Management Plan Item# 5.1

Carol Watts, President LWVSJSC <president@lwvsjsc.org>

Fri 12/10/2021 8:43 AM

To: Liccardo, Sam <sam.liccardo@sanjoseca.gov>; Jones, Chappie <Chappie.Jones@sanjoseca.gov>; Cohen, David <David.Cohen@sanjoseca.gov>; Davis, Dev <dev.davis@sanjoseca.gov>; Carrasco, Magdalena <Magdalena.Carrasco@sanjoseca.gov>; Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; Esparza, Maya <Maya.Esparza@sanjoseca.gov>; Foley, Pam <Pam.Foley@sanjoseca.gov>; Peralez, Raul <Raul.Peralez@sanjoseca.gov>; Jimenez, Sergio <sergio.jimenez@sanjoseca.gov>; Arenas, Sylvia <sylvia.arenas@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; climatechange@lwvsjsc.org <climatechange@lwvsjsc.org>; vicki.alexander [REDACTED]

📎 1 attachment (93 KB)

LWV Support of CFMP Item 5.1.pdf;

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In the attached letter, we make several recommendations for plans going forward during the implementation of the CFMP. Please vote yes to support this plan on December 14.

Thank you for serving on the Council.

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Carol Watts, President, League of Women Voters of San Jose/Santa Clara

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P.O. Box 5374
San Jose, CA 95150
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December 10, 2021

To: Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, and Councilmembers Jimenez, Peralez, Cohen, Carrasco, Davis, Esparza, Arenas, Foley, and Mahan
cc: San Jose City Clerk

Subject: **Item Community Forest Management Plan; Agenda #5.1**

The League of Women Voters of San Jose/Santa Clara supports the key findings and strategic work plan as outlined in the Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP). We have read the DOT staff report on the CFMP and find that it points out many of the challenges that the CFMP faces. We appreciate the DOT perspective that the CFMP is a living document, and look forward to following the plan as it evolves.

We recommend that the Plan as implemented undertake direction for 100% of San Jose's tree canopy rather than just street trees and trees on City-owned property. We were distressed to learn that the City's tree canopy has been decreasing. Therefore, a concerted effort and cooperation with other organizations, community groups and volunteers involved with tree planting and maintenance will be required to turn around that decline.

We ask for the following direction as the City moves forward with a revised CFMP:

1. The majority of San Jose's trees are planted and maintained by external groups and private landowners, and for the CFMP to be meaningful, it needs to include **all** trees within San Jose. The database and planning should be created using resources from the many City departments, non-profits (such as Our City Forest), corporations, school districts, local arborists and services, and others who have trees or who have planted / maintained trees. We encourage regular and meaningful planning and coordination that includes all stakeholders. We are pleased to see the formation of an Urban Forest Advisory Committee mentioned in the staff report, and we urge you to accelerate its formation. We also recommend the formation of a Stakeholder Working Group composed of experts in the field of urban forestry practices.
2. The League is committed to advancing equity in all of its work. We are especially concerned because the CFMP shows marked inequities in tree canopy in some San Jose neighborhoods. As the CFMP evolves, we expect to see more analysis and more concrete examples of how to address these shortcomings, including input from these underserved communities. We recommend that the inventory database of trees constituting the urban forest be made public.
3. We appreciated reading the information on current governance structure regarding our community forest. As an organization devoted to good government practices, we encourage you to explore different structural approaches based both on examining how other cities implement their community forest plans as well as options within the

City of San Jose to facilitate inter-departmental cooperation as part of an overall climate resilience strategy.

4. As mentioned above, the CFMP is a living document. As another example of good government practices, we ask that staff provide semi-annual reports to the City Council including updates and recommendations from the Advisory Committee and the Stakeholder Working Group
5. We encourage the City Council to provide adequate staffing and other budget items so that San Jose's community forest can thrive. The community forest is an integral part of San Jose's climate resilience strategy, and increased funding for management of our community forest will lead to a healthier San Jose for us all.

The League has strong positions on the management of natural resources and on the importance of combating climate change. **San Jose's CFMP is a critical part of our city's efforts to create a more livable city and to increase our climate resilience.**

Sincerely yours,



Carol Watts, President, League of Women Voters of San Jose/Santa Clara
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Virginia Holtz & Judy Chamberlin, Co-chairs of Climate Change Committee
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