2024

Edgewater

URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN

SUMMARY

The Plan
Summary

Edgewater's urban forest—made up of a mosaic of trees growing along the city's streets and in parks and private landscapes—provides essential environmental, economic, and social benefits that support the quality of life for the Edgewater community.

In 2023, the City of Edgewater began the process to develop this plan, the city's first comprehensive urban forest master plan (UFMP/Plan). The UFMP provides a framework to develop a healthy, resilient, and sustainable urban forest by proactively managing, preserving, caring for, and growing Edgewater's trees. The Plan highlights the current state of Edgewater's urban forest and outlines recommendations and actions to manage it as a sustainable community asset.
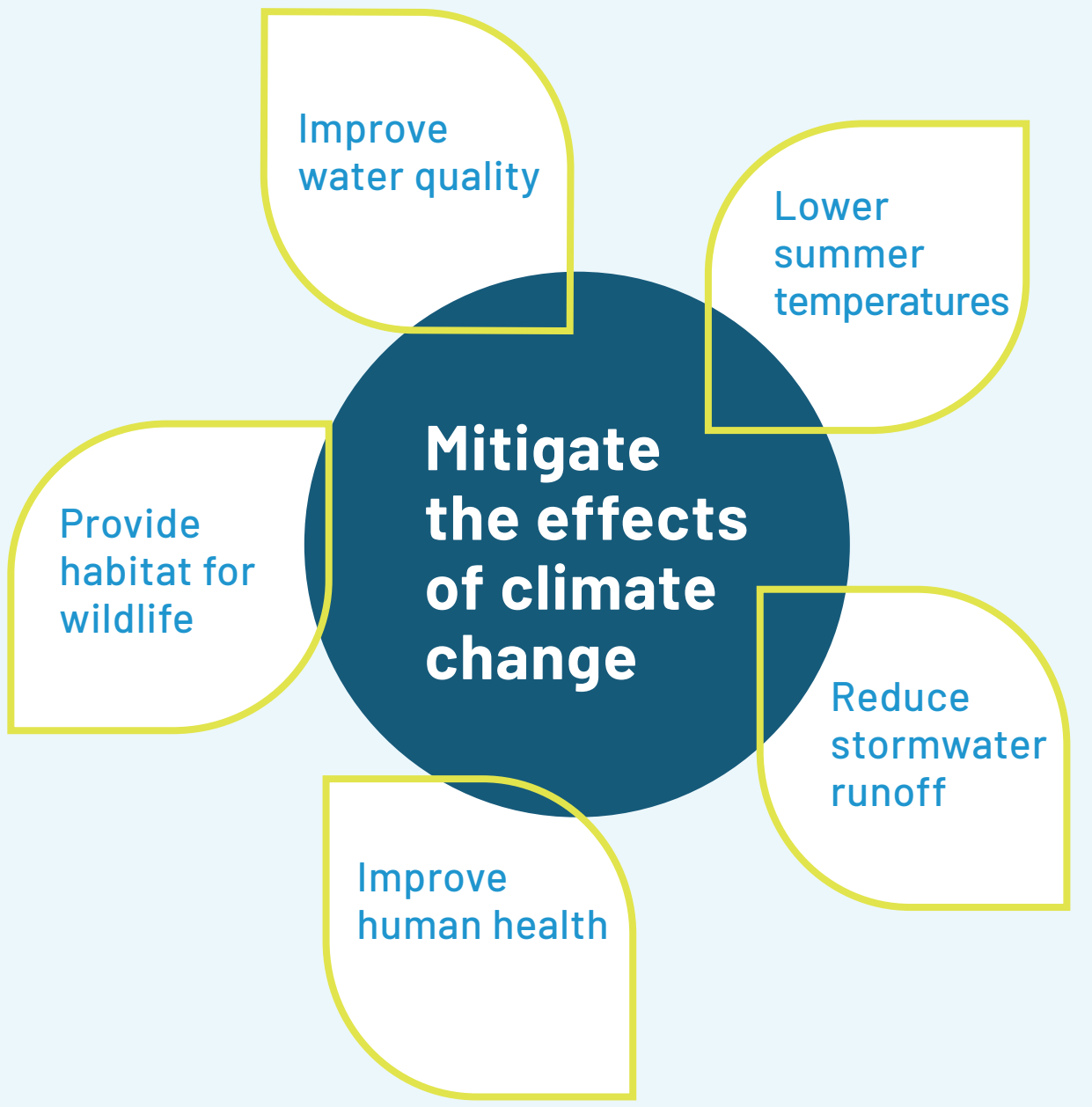
PLANNING PROCESS

The development, organization, and structure of the Edgewater UFMP is based on the principles of adaptive management, an approach commonly used for resource planning and management. This approach provides a conceptual framework by answering four key questions:

- What do we have?
- What do we want?
- How do we get there?
- How are we doing?

> **Learn character from trees, values from roots, and change from leaves.**
>
> —Tasneem Hameed

Improve water quality

Lower summer temperatures

Provide habitat for wildlife

Mitigate the effects of climate change

Reduce stormwater runoff

Improve human health

What Do We Have?

EDGEWATER'S TREES

The City of Edgewater conducted an urban tree canopy assessment in 2020 to capture a perspective of the city's tree canopy and land cover. This assessment approximated a

15% canopy cover in Edgewater.

Additional analyses were conducted as a part of the UFMP to identify priority planting areas (based on stormwater, social equity, and urban heat island benefit) and to quantify the ecosystem services provided by Edgewater's urban forest.

Over their lifespans, Edgewater's trees have collectively removed more than

2,000 tons of carbon from the atmosphere, valued at $390,865.

And each year, they provide benefits totaling more than $32,700 in quantifiable benefits—including:

7,200 pounds
of pollutants removed.

922,000+ gallons
of stormwater intercepted & absorbed.

59 tons
of carbon dioxide (CO_2) sequestered.

In addition to their environmental benefits, trees **increase property values**, **reduce energy costs**, **lower crime rates**, **help create more successful business districts**, and **support physical and mental health**.

MANAGING EDGEWATER'S URBAN FOREST

Edgewater's urban forestry responsibilities are divided among various City departments and property owners. Adjacent property owners are responsible for street tree maintenance (tree pruning, tree removal, and stump removal). The City of Edgewater is responsible for enforcing this street tree maintenance with the goal to mitigate risk to the public. The City also plants and cares for trees in parks and other public spaces.

As with other infrastructure, like roads, bridges, and utilities, City-managed trees require proactive and routine maintenance to ensure a resilient, safe, and sustainable resource. The Plan serves as a guide for Edgewater to improve tree management throughout the city.

Priority Level
- Very Low
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Very High
- City Boundary

N

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
Miles

COMPOSITE PRIORITY PLANTING MAP.

What Do We Want?

ENGAGEMENT

Three main groups were engaged during the plan development process to determine the vision, goals, and recommendations of the UFMP.

- **Project Team** was made up of City of Edgewater staff and the Davey Resource Group consultant team and worked together to structure the plan development process, gather technical information, and form recommendations.
- **Stakeholders** were engaged through participation in a Technical Advisory Committee and Community Advisory Committee. These groups consisted of different individuals and organizations that were interested, involved, or whose work impacts the urban forest. Discussions included feedback on issues, challenges, and opportunities around Edgewater's trees.
- **Edgewater Community (public)** was engaged to understand their values, needs, and priorities related to Edgewater's trees and urban forest. Edgewater community input was gathered through a community open house, survey, and photo contest.

Of all survey respondents:

96% strongly agree
that trees are important to Edgewater.

THEMES AND PRIORITIES

The engagement and outreach activities identified a set of themes and priorities that were used in the development of the plan's vision, goals, and recommendations.

- Community Values Trees.
- Communication, Education, Outreach, and Engagement.
- Tree Preservation and Protection.
- Tree Policies and Ordinances.
- Best Management Practices and Standards.
- Tree Data.
- Urban Forestry Program Improvements.
- Canopy Loss.
- Tree Planting.
- Tree Maintenance.
- Budget.
- Species Selection/Climate Change.
- Partnerships.
- Regional Collaboration.

How Do We Get There?
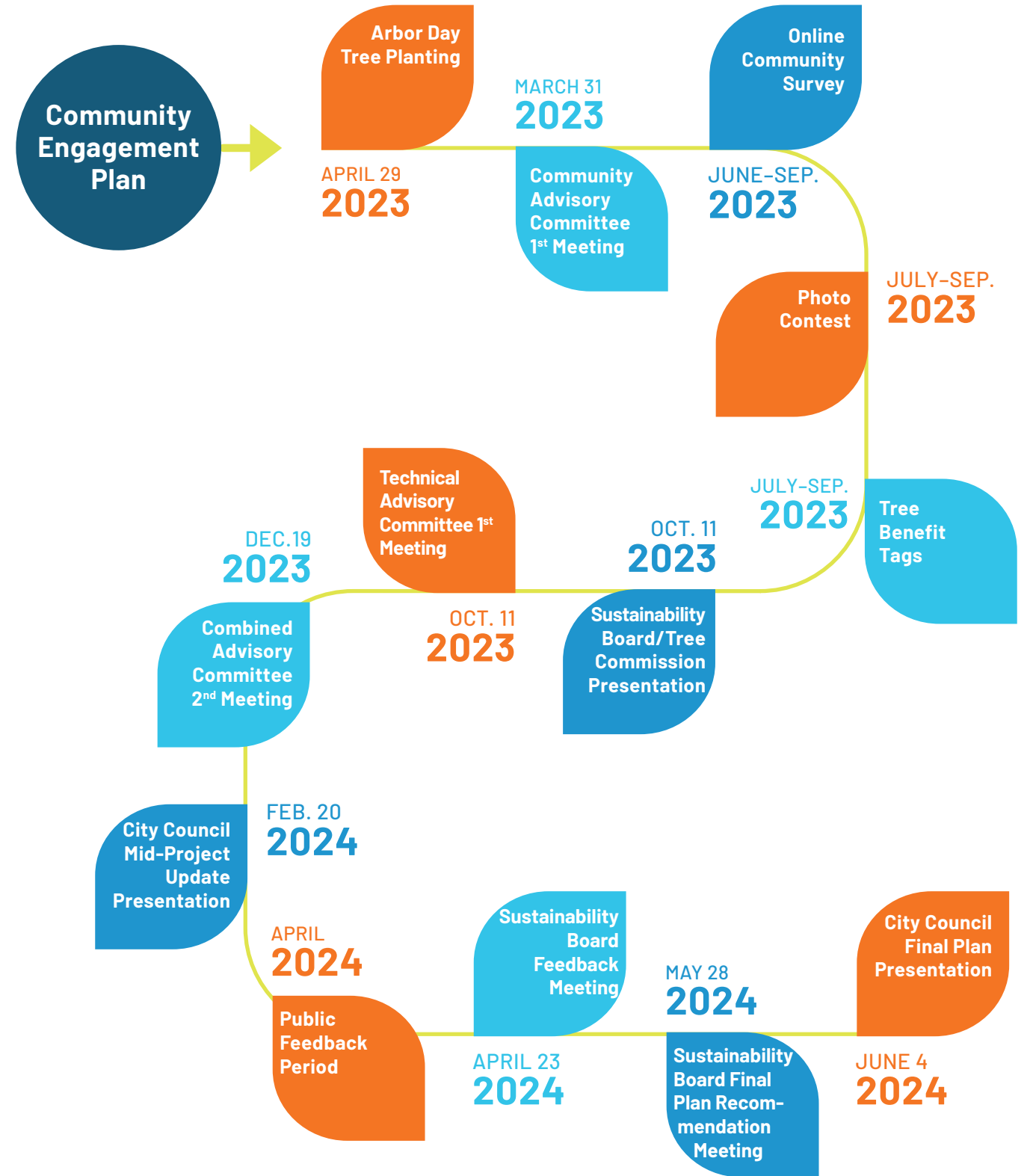
URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The UFMP goals and their corresponding recommendations provide a framework for the proactive management, care, preservation, and growth of Edgewater's urban forest.

- **Preserve and build** a resilient urban forest for the future.
- **Develop** coordinated and aligned forestry management practices for the city.
- **Strengthen** public-private partnerships to improve urban forest stewardship.

The Plan Recommendations are listed by letter for ease of identification. The Plan provides action items for each recommendation along with timeframes and resources that may be needed for completion. While these actions should serve as the basis for implementation of the plan, acceleration in implementation of recommendations and action items is encouraged as opportunities arise.

Recommendations

A. Leverage public and stakeholder support of Edgewater's urban forest to better care for public street trees.

B. Strengthen policies and procedures that preserve and protect trees.

C. Enhance the City's urban forestry services through utilization of internal and external professionals.

D. Take a data driven approach to urban forest management and care.

E. Develop a multi-year tree planting strategy including both public and private property.

F. Build regional partnerships to support urban forestry operations.

Community Engagement Plan

Arbor Day Tree Planting
MARCH 31 2023

Online Community Survey

APRIL 29 2023

Community Advisory Committee 1st Meeting

JUNE-SEP. 2023

Photo Contest
JULY-SEP. 2023

JULY-SEP. 2023
Tree Benefit Tags

Technical Advisory Committee 1st Meeting

OCT. 11 2023

DEC.19 2023

OCT. 11 2023
Sustainability Board/Tree Commission Presentation

Combined Advisory Committee 2nd Meeting

FEB. 20 2024
City Council Mid-Project Update Presentation

APRIL 2024

Sustainability Board Feedback Meeting

MAY 28 2024

City Council Final Plan Presentation

Public Feedback Period

APRIL 23 2024

Sustainability Board Final Plan Recommendation Meeting

JUNE 4 2024

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN TIMELINE

www.edgewaterco.gov/urbanforestplan