

Tuesday – March 24, 2020- 5:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting

Present: Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding (participating via speaker phone); Vice-Mayor Gwen C. Wisler; Councilman Brian D. Haynes; Councilman Vijay Kapoor; Councilwoman Julie V. Mayfield; Councilwoman Sheneika Smith (participating via speaker phone); Councilman W. Keith Young (participating via speaker phone); City Manager Debra Campbell; City Attorney Brad Branham; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Mayor Wisler led City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Vice-Mayor Wisler thanked the residents for complying with emergency mandates and thanked staff for working hard to keep vital services happening. She hoped the residents will help City staff stay safe by complying with social distancing. She also urged the residents to comply with future edicts and for taking this pandemic seriously. We are trying to balance the need of our community to be safe and healthy with the need to keep government business going. Public comment is welcomed and we will continue to explore ways to get public comment while observing smart interaction.

Vice-Mayor Wisler said that 130 public comments were received for this agenda. Ninety-six of the comments were in support of the Urban Forester and Urban Forest Master Plan. Other comments ranged from the Mayor's additional authority to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic to allowing the public comment word limit be raised from 350 to 450 words. All comments have been provided to City Council and will be attached to these minutes.

She asked our residents to be patient with us and with each other while we all navigate this emergency.

I. PROCLAMATIONS:

II. CONSENT AGENDA:

Vice-Mayor Wisler removed Consent Agenda A (1) from the Consent Agenda in order that only the City Council members present to vote on that motion.

A. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

MOTION TO ALLOW REMOTE PARTICIPATION BY UP TO THREE COUNCIL MEMBERS DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS DURING THE DURATION OF THE LOCALLY DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda in order to allow only those City Council members present to vote on this matter.

MOTION TO DELEGATE TO THE CITY MANAGER THE AUTHORITY TO CANCEL ANY REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL DURING THE DURATION OF THE LOCALLY DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE CITY COUNCIL RULES REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENT TO RECEIVE ALL PUBLIC COMMENT DURING CITY COUNCIL

MEETINGS DIGITALLY ON ALL ITEMS, INCLUDING INFORMAL DISCUSSION PERIODS; HOWEVER, (1) ANY PUBLIC COMMENT MUST BE SENT IN BY 5:00 P.M. THE DAY BEFORE THE MEETING TO THE GOOGLE FORM OR BY CALLING IN TO 259-590 AND LEAVING A VOICEMAIL; (2) EMAIL MUST HAVE THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT OUTLINED; AND (3) MUST BE NO MORE THAN 350 WORDS

City Clerk Burleson read a comment from the public to raise the word limit from 350 to 450 words.

- B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MARCH 10, 2020; AND THE CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL RETREAT MINUTES OF MARCH 13, 2020**
- C. RESOLUTION NO. 20-54 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT TO THE EXISTING TRANSIT CONSULTANT CONTRACT WITH INFRASTRATEGIES, LLC.**

Action Requested: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an amendment to the existing Transit Consulting Contract between the City of Asheville and InfraStrategies, LLC.

Background:

- Carolyn Flowers, Managing Principal of InfraStrategies, LLC was retained by the City
- during February 2019 to provide transit operations consulting services for the Transit Division of the Transportation Department.
- The original contract was for \$49,000.
- This contract amendment seeks to add \$60,000 to the contract, which was already budgeted in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Transit Operations Budget.

Vendor Outreach Efforts:

- N/A - this is a current contract.

Council Goal(s):

- Transportation and Accessibility

Committee(s):

- N/A

Pro(s):

- This action will continue to support implementation of the 2018 Transit Master Plan by providing additional technical and professional support to City staff.

Con(s):

- Funding is currently budgeted in the FY 2020 budget.

Fiscal Impact:

- Funding for this contract amendment was approved by the City Council as part of the FY 2020 budget process and is currently included in the Transit Operations budget.

Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an amendment to the existing Transit Consulting Contract between the City of Asheville and InfraStrategies, LLC (Carolyn Flowers).

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 41 - PAGE 260

D. RESOLUTION NO. 20-55 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH KIMLEY-HORN & ASSOCIATES TO PERFORM ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS AREA 7

Action Requested: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign a contract with Kimley-Horn & Associates for engineering services in the amount of \$828,800 for the Neighborhood Enhancement Projects Area 7. Funds from the City of Asheville Water Resources Department Capital Improvement Project budget are available for this project.

Background:

- The Water Resources Department has prioritized this waterline replacement project for the current fiscal year and is seeking engineering design and project management assistance for this project.
- The project will replace approximately 24,500 linear feet of existing substandard and failing water lines with predominantly 6-inch and 8-inch water lines and appurtenances designed and constructed in accordance with the City of Asheville standards.
- The water lines prioritized for replacement as part of the Neighborhood Enhancement Projects Area 7 are within and along the following various neighborhoods and streets: Beacon Village area, Rainbow Ridge area, Barnard Avenue, Sevier Street, Hill Street, Joyner Avenue, Pearson Bridge, and Thompson Street.

Vendor Outreach Efforts:

- Through a qualifications based selection process beginning in August 2014, the City of Asheville selected four consulting firms to provide on-call professional services for Water Distribution and Storage Projects.
- Kimley-Horn & Associates was one of the selected firms due to their expertise in areas of water distribution projects, water system analysis, and project development.
- The City of Asheville entered into a master agreement with Kimley-Horn & Associates on May 11, 2015 for on-call professional services for Water Distribution and Storage Projects. The agreement had a three year term with the option to renew for two additional years. Then on April 19, 2018, the City of Asheville executed a renewal master agreement with Kimley-Horn for the additional two years of on-call professional services.
- If approved, the proposed engineering services will be developed into a subcontract under the conditions of the master agreement.
- City of Asheville Water Resources staff determined that utilizing the on-call professional services for Water Distribution and Storage Projects was the best method to deliver this project and Kimley-Horn & Associates was specifically qualified to provide the required engineering services.
- No other vendor outreach was performed.

Council Goal(s):

- A Financially Resilient City

Committee(s):

- None.

Pro(s):

- This project is aligned with the City and the Water Resources Department goal of continued investment and improvement of the City's water system through Capital Improvement Projects in order to provide safe and reliable service.
- Kimley-Horn & Associates has successfully provided engineering services for other water system improvement projects. Their experience with our water system and expertise in water distribution projects will lead to a successful project with lesser negative impacts to customers and the City's water system.

Con(s):

- Failure to award an engineering services contract would prevent the Water Resources Department from completing the Neighborhood Enhancement Project in a timely manner and delay the replacement of the existing aging water system.

Fiscal Impact:

- The funding needed for the professional services agreement is currently allocated within the Water Resources Capital Improvements Project Fund.

Motion:

- Move to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a professional services contract with Kimley-Horn & Associates to provide engineering design services for a waterline replacement project known as Neighborhood Enhancement Projects Area 7 for an amount not to exceed \$828,800.

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 41 - PAGE 261

F. RESOLUTION NO. 20-56 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 SECTION 5339 (b) BUSES AND BUS FACILITIES DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDS PROGRAM, AND IF SUCCESSFUL, TO ACCEPT THE GRANT FUNDS AND SIGN ALL THE APPROPRIATE AGREEMENTS WITH THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION, FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a grant application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the FY 2020 Section 5339(b) Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Grant Funds Program, and if successful, to accept the grant funds and sign all the appropriate agreements with the FTA, Federal and State agencies. This grant program is a competitive program and receipt of funds is not guaranteed.

Background:

- In January 2020, the Federal Transit Administration published Notice of Funding Opportunity for the FY 2020 Section 5339(b) Buses and Bus Facilities discretionary grant program.
- The grant is competitive and discretionary, whereby the FTA solicits project proposals from applicants, and awards funding to successful applicants for eligible capital projects through a competitive process.
- The Buses and Bus Facilities Funding program can be used for the purchase or lease of buses, related equipment, as well as to rehabilitate, construct or lease bus-related facilities. Funds awarded for both grants may include incidental costs related to acquiring buses, construction of facilities and infrastructure, workforce development and training activities, and project administration.
- The City plans to submit an application in the amount of \$1,250,000 to continue the City's bus stop improvement program. The funding will be used to provide curb-ramp improvements, sidewalk connections, shelters, seating, solar lighting, and digital signage at bus stops with the top 15% ridership, as well as locations serving vulnerable populations, such as the Veterans Restoration Quarters, Mission Hospital, the Veterans Administration Hospital, public housing locations, etc.
- The application deadline for the Buses and Bus Facilities grant is March 30, 2020.

Council Goal(s):

- Transportation and Accessibility

Committee(s):

- None (Finance & Human Resources cancelled)

Pro(s):

- Project funding will enable the City of Asheville to use federal funds to help fund additional high-priority bus stop improvements.

Con(s):

- The match for the Buses and Bus Facilities grant is 20%, however improvements related to ADA and facilities have only a 10% match, which a significant portion of the grant will likely qualify for. The maximum match amount assuming a 20% match would be \$250,000, and assuming a 10% match would be \$125,000.

Fiscal Impact:

- The local match is included in the Transit Capital Projects Fund budget.

Motion:

- Motion to approve a resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a grant application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the FY 2020 Section 5339(b) Buses and Bus Facilities Grant in the amount of \$1,250,000 and if successful, to accept the grant funds and sign all the appropriate agreements with the FTA, Federal, and/or State agencies.

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 41 - PAGE 262

G. ORDINANCE NO. 4795 - ORDINANCE DELEGATING ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY TO THE MAYOR TO ISSUE REGULATIONS BY PROCLAMATION AS NECESSARY TO RESPOND TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Action Requested: Adoption of an ordinance delegating to the Mayor of the City of Asheville the authority to regulate by proclamation any activities or conditions the control of which may be reasonably necessary to maintain order and protect lives or property during the state of emergency that has been declared in relation to the spread of COVID-19.

Background:

- N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.31(b) authorizes municipalities to adopt five categories of regulations in times of a declared state of emergency.
- Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.31(a), the Asheville City Council has delegated portions of its authority to enact emergency regulations to the Mayor, through its adoption of Section 2-2 of the City Code of Ordinances.
- As written, Section 2-2 of the City Code does not authorize the Mayor to issue by proclamation regulations pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.31(b)(5), which broadly allows municipalities to regulate any activities or conditions the control of which may be reasonably necessary to maintain order and protect lives or property during a state of emergency.
- Given the need to be able to respond quickly to the threats posed by the novel corona virus known as COVID-19, it is desirable to allow the Mayor to issue all regulations needed to address the outbreak via proclamation.

Council Goal(s):

- Well Planned and Livable Community

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- Will allow the Mayor to regulate by proclamation any activities or conditions the control of which may be reasonably necessary to maintain order and protect lives or property during the state of emergency that has been declared in relation to the spread of COVID-19

Con(s):

- None

Fiscal Impact:

- None

Motion:

- Motion to adopt an ordinance delegating to the Mayor of the City of Asheville the authority to regulate by proclamation any activities or conditions the control of which may be reasonably necessary to maintain order

and protect lives or property during the state of emergency that has been declared in relation to the spread of COVID-19.

City Clerk Burleson said there were nine public comments regarding the Mayor's additional authority during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ORDINANCE BOOK NO. 33 - PAGE 58

H. RESOLUTION NO. 20-57 - RESOLUTION REGARDING THE N.C. DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION I-26 CONNECTOR TIP PROJECT I-2513

Summary: Councilwoman Mayfield presented this resolution which will serve as City Council's comment on the final Environmental Impact Statement for I-26. Staff will be preparing a more technical letter. The following is the portion of the resolution: "NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT: (1) The City of Asheville calls on NC DOT to continue collaborating with the I-26 Working Group to develop improved designs for the east side of the Patton Avenue Corridor and the Jeff Bowen Bridge and incorporate those into the Record of Decision or the Request for Proposals; and (2) The City of Asheville further calls on NC DOT and its future design-build contractor to further reduce the size and impact of the project by: (a) tightening the footprint of all urban intersections throughout the project corridor, specifically including the Haywood Road interchange; (b) reducing the number of lanes on the new I-26 bridge over the river and continuing north to the Broadway exit; (c) reducing the height and radius of the I-240 flyover bridges; and (d) reducing the visual and auditory impacts on Riverside Cemetery and the adjacent Montford neighborhood; and (3) The City of Asheville further calls on NCDOT, with regard to the Request for Proposals and Aesthetic Recommendations, that: (a) NCDOT evaluate the design team qualifications, not only for multi-disciplinary representation to include urban planning, bridge design, structural engineering and landscape architecture, but also for demonstrated experience implementing creative transportation solutions that are contextually sensitive to both the natural environment and the urban character of a scenic destination city such as Asheville; (b) Substantial weight be assigned in RFP evaluation criteria to the qualifications of the responder's design team as described above; (c) NCDOT include in its RFP an Aesthetics Scope of Work ("ASW") reflecting the Aesthetics Recommendations; (d) NCDOT include the City in the RFP development and revision process; (e) the proposals submitted be evaluated on the degree to which they achieve the goals and objectives of the ASW and any additional improvements and betterments; and (f) the City be allowed to review and comment on the responses to the RFP; and (4) The City further calls on NCDOT and the design-build contractor to consider any new land use, greenway, or other plans or design proposals developed after the Record of Decision is signed that impact or relate to the project; and (5) The City further calls on NCDOT and the design-build contractor to utilize local businesses and residents to the greatest degree possible in the construction of the project; and (6) The City of Asheville further calls on NCDOT to work together to determine a suitable use for land underneath new bridges in the project so that land is put to use for the benefit of Asheville residents; and (7) The City of Asheville further calls on NCDOT to support the City's acquisition of available right of way in the Patton Avenue Corridor in a "development-ready" state to further the redevelopment of that corridor as envisioned by the City; and (8) The City of Asheville be considered a key partner with NCDOT and the design-build contractor and that NCDOT consult with the City during the contract period on all aesthetic and design modifications, giving full consideration to the City's views.

Councilwoman Mayfield thanked the NCDOT for their close collaboration over the last 4 years on this project. We have improved this project immeasurably and appreciate the efforts and resources that the NCDOT in Raleigh and the local division have put forth in making this a better project. She said that the City will be a critical key partner in this project.

City Clerk Burleson read five public comments regarding the I-26 Connector.

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 41 - PAGE 263

Vice-Mayor Wisler said that members of Council have been previously furnished with a copy of the resolutions and ordinances on the Consent Agenda and they would not be read.

Councilwoman Mayfield moved for the adoption of the Consent Agenda. This motion was seconded by Councilman Kapoor and carried unanimously.

ITEM REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION TO ALLOW REMOTE PARTICIPATION BY UP TO THREE COUNCIL MEMBERS DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS DURING THE DURATION OF THE LOCALLY DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY

Vice-Mayor Wisler moved to allow remote participation by up to three Council members during public meetings during the duration of the locally declared state of emergency. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously by those present (Vice-Mayor Wisler, Councilman Haynes, Councilman Kapoor and Councilwoman Mayfield.)

III. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS:

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

City Clerk Burleson read a comment that thanked Council for preserving good governance in this time by postponing hearings on the controversial Collier Avenue Land Use Incentive Grant and the still-depated open space amendment. Both should wait until in person public comment and board/commission meetings can safely be restored, since they are not dependent on external deadlines.

A. PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A LAND USE INCENTIVE GRANT FOR TRIBUTE DEVELOPMENT COLLIER AVENUE APARTMENTS

Councilman Kapoor moved to continue the public hearing to consider a Land Use Incentive Grant for Tribute Development, Collier Avenue Apartments, until April 14, 2020. This motion was seconded by Councilman Haynes and carried unanimously.

B. PUBLIC HEARING CONSIDER ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS THE LEWIE MULLER GRIFFITH HOUSE, LOCATED AT 65 WOODLAND ROAD, AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Councilman Kapoor moved to continue the public hearing on adoption of an ordinance designating the property known as the Lewiw Muller Griffith House, located at 65 Woodland Road, as a local historic landmark until April 14, 2020. This motion was seconded by Councilman Haynes and carried unanimously.

C. PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO AMENDING THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE TO UPDATE OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Councilman Kapoor moved to continue the public hearing amending the Unified Development Ordinance to update open space requirements until April 14, 2020. This motion was seconded by Councilman Haynes and carried unanimously.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 4794 - ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED CONDITIONAL ZONING (ORDINANCE NO. 4602) FOR THE RAD LOFTS PROJECT LOCATED AT 146 AND 179 ROBERTS STREET TO REVISE CONDITIONS RELATED TO AFFORDABILITY

Vice-Mayor Wisler said that the public hearing regarding Ordinance No. 4794 was conducted on March 10, 2020, and no public comment will be taken at this second and final reading.

Councilman Young moved to continue the second and final reading of Ordinance No. 4794 until April 14, 2020. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Smith and failed on a 2-5 vote, with Councilwoman Smith and Councilman Young voting “yes” and Mayor Manheimer, Vice-Mayor Wisler, Councilman Haynes, Councilman Kapoor and Councilwoman Mayfield voting “no.”

Councilwoman Mayfield moved to adopt Ordinance No. 4794. This motion was seconded by Councilman Kappor and carried on a 4-3 vote, with Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Smith and Councilman Young voting “no.”

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VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ONE BUNCOMBE FUND

Community & Economic Development Director Sam Powers said that this is the consideration of participation in the One Buncombe Fund; set date of April 14, 2020, for public hearing for participating in One Buncombe Fund.

Background:

- In response to the COVID-19 crisis, our local governments in Buncombe County, business community and other stakeholders are coming together to create a single point of donations to help individuals and businesses impacted by COVID-19.
- This effort will be branded as the “One Buncombe” campaign. A donation page will be hosted by Buncombe County with funds deposited to the Buncombe County Service Fund (BCSF), which is an existing Non Profit organization created by Buncombe County.
- Funds placed into the BCSF will be managed by a seven person board, which will include members of local governments including the City of Asheville, businesses, and philanthropic organizations. Funds will be used for individuals and small businesses that have been impacted by COVID-19.
- *Funds for individuals* who have lost employment due to COVID-19 will be delivered via the Buncombe County Health and Human Services (HHS) existing General Assistance (GA) program.
- Funds will be used for life essential needs caused by the COVID-19 public health crisis, such as utility bills, deposits, fuel oil, kerosene, natural gas, propane, wood, mortgages, etc.
- Funds will be paid to the service providers, not directly to individuals. Individuals will be screened and referred to other HHS programs as needed.
- *Funds for small businesses* impacted by COVID-19 will be provided through loans of up to \$10,000 with an initial 6-month period of no payments of any kind.
- Interest will accrue at 5.5% during that period, but this is not paid, and rolls up into the loan at the end of the 6-month period.
- Loans will be designed to provide low cost “bridge funding” to help businesses stay open and limit job losses until businesses can apply for longer term disaster funding from SBA or other sources. The BCSF will contract with a third party to administer this business program.
- The City Attorney has advised that this initiative meets the Economic Development requirements or the Community Development requirements in North Carolina. A public hearing is required as per N.C. Gen. Stat. 158-7.1.
- Both individuals and businesses will be encouraged to donate.

Council Goal(s):

- Financially Resilient City
- Equitable and Diverse Community
- Thriving Local Economy

Committee(s):

- None.

Pro(s):

- Provides immediate disaster assistance from a centralized fund, administered by existing experienced program management agencies.
- Supports both individuals and business community members in Asheville.

Con(s):

- The magnitude of this crisis may require additional resources, and the City is limited in the funding available.

Fiscal Impact:

- This economic development appropriation is not in the current adopted budget.
- The appropriation of \$100,000 would come from the City Fund Balance.
- A budget amendment would be required and would be considered at the April 14, 2020, meeting along with the public hearing.

In response to Councilwoman Mayfield, Mr. Powers said that the Board of Directors is being built but will include local government, banking, business and philanthropic community. As the committees evolve, there will be opportunities for involvement.

Councilwoman Mayfield appreciated the leadership of the City, County and the Buncombe County Service Foundation, also with the other organizations that have come together.

In response to Councilman Kapoor, Mr. Powers said that if the Program can get the fund established with a base amount, their goal is to start receiving applications.

When Councilwoman Smith asked if the program will include grant assistance, Mr. Powers said that the Buncombe County Health & Human Resources will screen applicants to ensure all other potential sources are exhausted.

Councilman Kapoor moved to direct staff to advance the concept of the City of Asheville's participation in the Buncombe County Service Foundation (BCSF) One Buncombe Fund; to consider an appropriation of \$100,000 from City Fund Balance; and to set the public hearing for consideration of the economic development appropriation to the BCSF One Buncombe Fund for April 14, 2020. This motion was seconded by Councilman Haynes and carried unanimously.

VII. INFORMAL DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC COMMENT:

City Clerk Burleson reiterated that 96 public comments received were in support of the Urban Forester and Urban Forest Master Plan.

Councilman Kapoor encouraged citizens to sign up for alerts from Buncombe County or check the County's website regularly as things change very quickly.

Councilman Young urged City Council to consider funding for Pisgah Legal Services; and allocating bond money to the Housing Trust Fund for an emergency eviction program and rental assistance program.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Mayor Wisler adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR

Public Comments via Phone - March 24, 2020

Danielle Martin:

Hi, my name is Danielle Martin. I live in the city of Asheville. I'm calling about Agenda Five A, which shouldn't even be considered right now, considering where we are in this city with the coronavirus and still not being able to have affordable housing. More housing going up that people can't afford makes absolutely no sense.

Speaker 1:

Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I'm making an informal or public comment for informal discussion regarding the need for an urban forest in Asheville. There's been numerous studies to show the rate of the loss of the tree canopy in Asheville, and that it is getting worse each year. So what I'm asking right now is that the city put funds for an urban forester who can address the problems before we lose the beauty of the city, which is such an important part of what attracts people to come to Asheville.

So if you'll consider funds for an urban forester or someone who can specifically work on this job, that would be wonderful. Thank you. Bye.

Helen:

My name is Helen Rae Charbonneau, H-E-L-E-N R-A-E C-H-A-R-B-O-N-N-E-A-U. (864)-884-9146. I'm a lifelong resident of Asheville, North Carolina, and I would be very interested in seeing in our city hire an Urban Forester to preserve and protect the trees that we have now and to plant more trees just about everywhere we can, because I'd like Asheville to be known as a cool green city. Thank you very much. Bye-bye. Oh, I live in Fairview, North Carolina. Thank you. Bye.

Jared Leno:

Hi, my name is Jared Leno. I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest of Asheville. A recent climate symposium in Asheville's urban tree canopy study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 70% over the last 10 years, but we have lost more than that in our underserved neighborhoods that were redlined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is now to correct this for all of Asheville. And we asked you to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. No city steps adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance and how you manage urban forests. Put funds for an urban forest serve in a plan to address these problems in the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before. Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville. Thank you very much.

Amy Cantrell:

Hi, this is Reverend Amy Cantrell. I am wishing to make a public comment on unfinished business, letter A, the [Radloff 00:00:12] Project, and to ask that council ensure that gentrification in our traditionally, historically black neighborhood of Southside is not happening and that people are not being pushed out, particularly our African-American community who have lived there historically for decades and decades, that that community has been decimated enough. And we need to be really clear about the results of urban renewal and to ensure that we're not perpetuating urban renewal 2.0 via projects like the Radloff. And so I hope that council will pay attention to that in terms of their votes on this project

and what they're seeing in terms of this project and that there might be some guarantees put into place for residents in that neighborhood that would help stem the tide of gentrification. Thank you so much.

Susan Sertain:

Hello. My name is Susan Sertain. That's S-U-S-A-N S-E-R-T-A-I-N, and I am commenting, I'm in the public comment section of the agenda, and I've lived in Nashville for over 20 years. I just want to say that being keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and the tree canopy, I feel that I need to make some statements regarding the decision that was made to not include the urban forester in the master plan on the budget again this year.

I know that there have been plenty of letters to the editor about it and I know at our climate symposium that we had last year, there were many of you there and we came highly aware of the dilemma that we're in that's even created, it's made more difficult by this climate crisis that we're in. With the development and the gentrification that's happening, it's making our neighborhoods that are suffering already even more endangered, because trees are being cut, the heat island is getting hotter because of the loss of trees as well as the climate, and there's going to be some terrible results as far as health and the mental health and physical health of our lower income communities as well as ourselves.

We need the trees for our sanity just for the calming nature. Scientists have proved that this is a fact. We know that our children deserve so much more than our disregard for the trees. And I'm thinking mostly about the mature trees. I know that we feel like it's okay to cut down the mature trees because we know we're going to plant young trees or Collamer trees. But if we think about it, we know that that is absolutely not going to be a good replacement for those trees, those mature trees. It takes over 50 years for them to really be able to do a good job for us with the water sequestering, the oxygen, the air, cleaning the air.

There's so much that the trees do for us, the mature trees do for us. I know we're in the middle of a pandemic. I know it's going madly on its way and we don't have a way to stop it, it seems. And I wonder if, because we've cut so many trees all over the globe, have we messed up ecosystems that could have caused the planet to have a ... be healthy enough to be able to handle it within ourself.

I know that there was a decision to hold back on the urban forester, but an urban forester is someone who is professional, a degreed staff member who does far more than what a city arborist can fit into their day. Our city arborist is completely overworked. And when we think about these new ordinances, which I do appreciate there being updates going in there, especially that you'll even be voting on. I don't think it's official yet. But anyway, it's being considered, and I am very grateful of that being involved with the Treasure Tree program here in Asheville.

Knowing that these trees need to be protected, and I'm very grateful for that, but I know that if we don't do something ... If we think that we can take care of these ordinances, the new ordinance that might be put in place with just in-house procedures going through different staff members that are already in place, we'll soon find ... I believe that you will soon find that that person is also overworked.

And the same things that are happening now where developers can get policies passed because people are not trained, there's not a systematic guideline that needs to be in place that an urban forester can do, that can also monitor whether this has been followed, can fine people who ignore it, who think they can get away with it, or even who didn't know, it's an opportunity for them to be trained.

I think that it's just going to be a situation that we're still remaining in, that we're in now, we will remain in it, because we're trying to take care of something that is so much bigger than us, with just dealing with it in-house. It's just, I don't believe it's going to work. And I really, I'm asking you to reconsider, to really think about putting that in place, that

person in place, that plan in place, so that we can have the Asheville that we want to be proud of and that we know is a healthy place to live.

Thank you for considering this, for reconsidering this, and I hope that you make a decision that heads us in that direction. Thank you.

Susan Loftis:

Hi, this is Susan Loftis. I'm a planner who lives in Asheville and I'm working on the aesthetics committee and have been as the liaison to NCDOT for the committee. And I am commenting on the resolution for this for tomorrow evening concerning the I-26 corridor. And my name, again, is L-O-F like Frank, T like Tom, I, S like Sam.

My general comment on the resolution is that we need to clarify that the current configuration of the [4B 00:00:41] river crossings is not consistent with the intent of the Asheville design center. And the designers who originally came up with that content, who originally came up with that concept, are of the opinion that it is not recognizable in its current state and it needs to be redesigned.

My second comment has to do with urban forestry. We need an urban forest canopy plan, and we need an urban forester. And I am advocating that we prioritize the allocation of funds for the urban forest, urban forester position as soon as possible. Thanks again, Susan Loftis. (404) 545-4815. Thank you.

Alison Ormsby:

Hello, my name is Alison [Ormsby 00:00:00]. I'm a resident of Asheville. I'm calling you to leave a message about the item, informal discussion and public comment, Sub item A and I just wanted to say that I really support the proposal for an urban forester and urban forest master plan.

It is really shocking how much canopy cover we've lost and it's really making our city not climate resilient. As a tree city, we should really live up to that designation. So please put funds for an urban forester and an urban forest plan in the city budget. This is something that is important to all residents and it's important to the future of Asheville.

Thank you very much. Bye.

Tamara:

Hello, my name is Tamara Trexler and I am a resident at Asheville. I live right here on Broadway downtown and I am calling in regards to... I am in support of funding for the proposed Urban Forester and Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan and this year's budget and the Tree Protection Task Force. I'm very concerned about the developments within the city and on the outskirts where things are just rapidly being denuded. Trees just are being trashed and clear cut, and just want to make sure that this was paid attention to. And I think an Urban Forester and a Master Plan and funding for that is a good way to make sure that that's being monitored and redeveloped. As things change, we're going to need to redevelop and making sure that it's animal friendly as well. There's not just people that live in the cities.

There are critters and we enjoy our critters. We are a mountain city and we are not Charlotte and we are not Orlando and we are not Raleigh. We want to keep Asheville mountainous and beautiful with fresh green spaces and air and home for critters and birds and keep things that are native and sustainable, not just mass produced bulk trees that don't add to the environment. There's so many issues and it just really makes sense. If we're going to spend money on

putting up trees and protecting them, we need to have somebody in charge who knows what they're doing. So we need to address this problem and solve it. Thank you.

Jo Ellen Wade:

Hey there. My name is Jo Ellen Wade, W-A-D-E, and I live in Candler, North Carolina. I'm calling to make a comment for the city council about my serious concerns that we need an urban forest and an urban Forester and an urban forest master plan. Trees are critical to our environment and the city and county could do well to have many more of them. They filter the air that we breathe and they are critical to maintaining the health of our environment. More trees, more trees, more trees, and we need an urban forest master plan and a professional to guide us in developing that master plan. And not to mention that more trees are very welcoming to our critically needed tourists. Thank you very much, bye-bye.

Florrie Funk:

Hi, my name is Florrie Funk. That's F-L-O-R-R-I-E F-U-N-K. I live in Asheville and I'm calling for, this is for informal discussion. I'd like to leave a comment for the City Council meeting. My comment is, Asheville needs an urban forestry master plan and a knowledgeable urban forester to manage it. It is urgent to maintain and increase our tree canopy in the city of Asheville with native species trees. We are losing our canopy at a dramatic rate, and this is something that needs to be addressed immediately. We need an urban forestry master plan and an urban forester. Thank you very much.

Susan Smith:

Hi, this is Susan Smith. My number is (828)-230-2500. I was calling because I wanted to make a comment for the city council meeting that I believe we should set up funding for the Urban Forester and the Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan and this year's budget and would love to see that done. Please make note. I appreciate it. Thank you. Bye.

Speaker 1:

Yes, my name's Nancy Cromer, N-A-N-C-Y Cromer, C-R-O-M-E-R, and I live in Nashville. And this is a comment for informal discussion. And my comment was about, I know that there was some talk and a couple of the council people were promoting a tax increase this year. You never know if it's still under consideration, but I just wanted to say under the current circumstances, you've got a lot of old people living in Asheville on fixed incomes. Those incomes are being decimated by the current financial situation. You have people losing their jobs because we're very much a service economy. And so I just think it's wise to put off any consideration of a property tax increase until this all settles out and until Asheville's economy, which is taking a hit, rebounds. I think it's reckless, reckless to consider a tax increase at this time. Thank you. Bye.

Dixie Deerman:

I'm Dixie Deerman, D-I-X-I-E D-E-E-R-M-A-N, also known as lady passion, a long time Asheville resident and activist. I asked council to respond to NASA data and allocate funds to hire an urban forester and include community generated plans to preserve Asheville's decimated tree canopy in the city's master plan.

Please add my comments and desires to the official minutes of the upcoming city council meeting. You may contact me at 251-0343. I live at 113 Clinton Avenue in West Asheville. Thank you.

Carol Diamond:

Hi. My name is Carol Diamond. That's D-I-A-M-O-N-D. I'm a resident of Candler, and I'm calling about the Asheville Urban Forester position, and the comprehensive urban forest master plan in this year's budget. I would very much like to see that happen. Trees give us so many benefits. I would like to see some of our money spent on that. Thank you.

Veneet Allen:

Hi, this is Veneet Allen. I'm a resident of Asheville and I'm calling because I'm very concerned about the urban forest in Asheville. We're losing our canopy at the rate of about 7% over the last seven, 10 years. And it's just not sustainable and it's creating a lot more heat in the area. So I strongly urge you to hire an urban forester and to come up with a strategic plan for managing the urban forest here. So please do that. Thank you. Bye bye.

Marcia Schroeder:

Hello. I'm Marcia Schroeder, M-A-R-C-I-A, S-C-H-R-O-E-D-E-R and I'm a resident of Asheville and I'm calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville.

I understand that we've lost almost 7% of the urban forest in the past 10 years. I also understand that we have currently no professional guidance on how to manage our urban forest and protect it. I am asking to be put under the informal discussion and public comment on your agenda and I'm asking for you to approve funds for an urban forester to come up with a plan for these problems and add this to our city budget.

I think it's the right thing for Asheville and I think it's extremely important.

My number is (828) 277-1009 if you have any questions. Thank you.

Kristen McCloud Johnson:

Hi, my name is Kristen McCloud Johnson. I'm calling from Asheville. I live here in 28805. And I am calling to comment about the proposal for the urban forester and the comprehensive urban forest master plan. I definitely want that put into this year's budget. I feel like that is a critical issue for our city. We need as many trees as possible for the health of the city as a whole, and also the health of the people in the city. That is what makes Asheville beautiful. The urban canopy is very important to keeping the air clean. It beautifies the city. It's beneficial to humans, animals, the Earth as a whole. Anything we can do to promote more trees in our city and keeping our beautiful city green and as healthy as possible.

So I would like that to go into the budget. That is my comment. And I thank you so much for hearing it. I think it's important that we have an urban tree canopy in Asheville. And I want that to be put into our budget so we have people in place that can help make that a reality. Thank you so much. And I don't know if you need my phone number but it's 828-424-7727. And again, my name is Kristen McCloud Johnson. Thank you so much. Bye-bye.

Dawn Chavez:

This is Dawn Chavez, D-A-W-N C-H-A-V-E-Z, and I am an Asheville city resident. I am calling for public comments. I'd like to comment on the need for the city to include in this year's budget, this upcoming year's budget, funding for an urban forester and an urban forest master plan. As is without including these two items in the budget, our urban forest, which has already lost almost six and a half percent of it's urban tree canopy, will lose even more. This is even in spite

of the new proposed tree ordinance to protect trees from sites that are under development. The city does not have the capacity at the moment without an urban forester to adequately enforce this new ordinance, nor will it have the capacity to plan for the future of its urban forest. Thank you for including my comments this evening.

Public Comment via Google Form - March 24, 2020

3/21/2020 20:44:29	Consent Agenda	F	<p>Consent Agenda Item F needs to be approved, I just pray the mayor uses these new powers with even greater skill and her ethical example of emergency power is good enough to be recognized and replicated. Most leaders need to do those things right now. With examples like Trump and Sen. Burr, we are seeing there are plenty of low quality leaders out there. I basically trust our mayor 10X more than Trump or people like Burr. We need to pray the leaders we need now are much more the case than the frequent failings that do make the news.</p> <p>Item F should also be about mitigating crisis stressors which lead to poor citizen morale. Morale needs to be part of what the local COVID 19 response and recovery is about, as well as modeling for the state and national level. For example we are going in with things like a noise ordinance that still forces citizens to use the ludicrous COA Noise Ordinance Appeals Board process. People staying as serene as possible and not being nuisances is actually a big behavioral thing if this crisis lasts as long as it might. Use these powers wisely. Feel free to direct APD to maintain order in an effective and just manner.</p> <p>The noise ordinance is just an example of all the policy and resource issues we are starting out with that may soon seem impossible to work with in past ways. A) There will likely be no Noise Ordinance Appeals Board meetings for a while. B) In any case, who would be able to add going through the Noise Ordinance Appeals Board in order to keep our community in some sort of state of wellness as COVID 19 unfolds? Noise isn't going to be our only challenge. But more noise is part of a bad crisis endurance outlook.</p> <p>Next is thinking of continuity in as just and as effective a manner as possible in a low resource environment. Asheville noise pollution was not taken seriously. Recognizing and working with noise includes a new outlook.</p>	Grant Millin (2nd attempt)
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3/22/2020 11:13:48	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	<p>Aside from seeking more testing and personal protective equipment, how is the City collaborating with the County and State to implement Coronavirus strategies that appear to have been effective in Asia? The following two seem particularly important in addition to what is already being done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Separation of COVID-19 patients from other patients in different wings of hospitals or designation of entire hospitals for COVID-19 treatments only; * Establishment of facilities where those who test positive for COVID-19, but are not critically ill, can be isolated from the non-positive public, including their families, e.g., now empty or much-less-used school buildings, churches, hotels, etc.? 	Imke Durre, imke.durre@gmail.com
3/23/2020 9:23:25	New Business	Other	<p>Why are not city essential personnel getting compensated like other surrounding county/city utilities? such as double time, time and a half, time off, or something. Coming out to risk a higher chance of getting infected that could come back to there families is a real risk. If the city cares like they say whats being done about this. I understand that there are people being re-purposed which is awesome but what about the others that get to stay home and get paid how is that fair to the essential personnel?</p>	Dustin Hickman
3/23/2020 10:35:54	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	<p>Earlier this month Mayor Manheimer, Buncombe Board of Commissioners Chairman Brownie Newman, and a representative from the Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association made an announcement at a CIBO meeting that they'd almost reached a deal on reforms to the occupancy tax to propose to the state legislature for the upcoming short session.</p> <p>Since then, Newman scheduled public comment on these reforms, which was canceled due to COVID-19. He also shared his stance at a commissioner meeting and via Facebook. In contrast, the Mayor and council have been noticeably silent outside of that announcement.</p> <p>City residents deserve the chance to give input before a proposal is sent to Raleigh. We are opposed to a process that includes negotiating with a brand new hotel lobbying group, but does not include public comment on the specifics being agreed on with them.</p> <p>I understand that the Mayor feels we must propose reforms which fit within the legislation as it stands, and that</p>	Ami Worthen

			<p>are amenable with hoteliers who have significant pull with our legislators. This will not get the results we need.</p> <p>This moment has brought to light the inherent un-sustainability of tourism. It is exposing the low wages and lack of benefits for workers. It is showing us that hotel-driven over-tourism has led to a proliferation of businesses reliant on out-of-town visitors, rather than resilient local economies. This crisis makes the need for an overhaul of the occupancy tax all the more apparent.</p> <p>If insufficient reforms are proposed and passed, we could be stuck with them for years.</p> <p>If getting what we want is not possible at this time, the commissioners can repeal the occupancy tax until we can.</p>	
3/23/2020 12:39:52	Public Hearings	A	<p>I am deeply concerned for the urban forests in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years. In addition, we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.</p>	Ursula Murphy ursulam@gmail.com
3/23/2020 12:42:32	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	<p>We need to increase the number of trees in Asheville. Trees are great for tourism! Who wants to come to the mountains and see pavement and buildings? Tourists with lots of \$ to spend need shade to rest their sore feet after pub crawling.</p> <p>Thanks for your considering my statement. I appreciate all you do,</p> <p>Sincerely, Naomi Palmer</p>	Naomi Palmer 828 484 1059 twigmother@yahoo.com

3/23/2020 12:45:57	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	As a resident of Asheville, we are aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. WE need trees in Asheville. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. We understand there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes or a part of the tree save are on a zoning plan. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you	Mike Lovoy 828-545-5393
3/23/2020 12:49:06	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	I urge you to fund an Urban Forester for Asheville. Asheville's title of "Tree City USA" is under urgent threat due to continual loss to our tree canopy, a trend which is leading to a hotter city and more CO2 emissions. It's bewildering that the city funded a study of our tree canopy loss but is not now taking action? Why? Why waste money on a study that proved that our canopy depletion has been rapid over the past ten years and not fund an Urban Forester? Why declare a Climate Emergency and not take one of the MOST economically efficient steps of increasing our tree canopy with an Urban Forester?	Brooke Heaton
3/23/2020 12:52:24	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	Urban forests are important for mitigating the urban heat island effect, reducing stormwater run-off, uptaking urban pollutants, creating habitat for urban animals, reducing stress, and improving property values, among many other things. The city of Asheville should hire an Urban Forester full-time, especially considering that the city has lost about 6.4% of its tree cover in the last decade. Not only do we need to increase our urban tree cover, but we need someone who understands how urban trees work, which species are best suited to which areas, and where our urban canopy needs to grow. Thank you for considering this request!	Andrew Laughlin, 504-444-2098
3/23/2020 12:52:26	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	I would like to voice my adamant support for including the Urban Forester and Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan in this year's budget. Not only are Urban Forests beautiful and make a significant contribution to a community's psychological, physical, ecological, and emotional health, they are also a wise investment in the economic future of a city. Since our city government - for better or worse - has invested SO MUCH in making this	Melissa Scheiderer Thalman, Melissa.thalman@zo ho.com

			place a desirable tourist destination, it would be unwise to allow a decline in the Urban Forest to threaten the stability of that industry by making Asheville a less desirable place to visit. As it stands now, our existing Urban Forest is a strategic economic advantage. By including the two items above in the budget, you as city leaders ensure that this is preserved and strengthened for the future well-being of our city.	
3/23/2020 12:52:46	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I request that you include funding for the Urban Forester and Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan in this year's budget. It's imperative that Asheville protect our trees NOW. Without trees there is no clean air, oxygen, cool spaces and so much more. Now is the time to listen and begin to care for our world as a whole. Thank you.	Roni Hidalgo 108 W Fox Chase Rd, Asheville NC 28804
3/23/2020 12:54:35	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	C	I support an urban forester	Roy Harris
3/23/2020 12:55:58	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	E	I support an urban forester	Roy Harris
3/23/2020 12:56:20	New Business	Other	I'm expressing support for appointing an Urban Forester and implementing an Urban Forestry Plan for Asheville and hopefully Buncombe County. The need for mature trees throughout the city is a no brainer as there is abundant scientific research proving the benefits of trees in an urban environment. Thank you for being smart in forming your decision.	Donald Dawson
3/23/2020 12:56:30	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	I strongly urge City Council to hire a professional urban forester and fund a comprehensive urban forest master plan. It is time for the city to embrace a science-based approach to managing our urban forest, to reverse the decades-long loss of canopy. Our urban forest is our first line (and most cost effective) local defense against climate change. Asheville is one of the last cities of its size in the Southern US without professional expertise on staff to help steward this precious resource. Its time to join the 21st century, and City Council, its time for you to do your job and protect our natural environment, and the health and well being of Asheville's Citizens. Thank you.	Edward Macie
3/23/2020 12:57:44	Public Hearings	F	Asheville needs an urban forester to protect, preserve & heal our valuable trees. Please add this to the new budget.	Karen Crutchfield 828-633-6614

3/23/2020 12:58:55	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	We need an urban Forrester immediately! Follow Green Works suggestion!	Roberta Wall
3/23/2020 13:00:18	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	Hi, my name is Shelly Hawk. Over the last few years I have become keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest in Asheville. Letters to the editor appear regularly about this and community members have often spoken at council meetings to express concerns. The recent Climate Symposium indicated that we have lost nearly 7% of our canopy in the past decade, with even higher percentages of canopy loss in populations living below poverty level. This is environmental injustice and our community deserves better. The City of Asheville needs the expertise and guidance of a professional urban forester to strategically manage, replenish and protect our forest for all residents. We must look ahead for the sake of Asheville's future generations. I implore you to make 2020 the year that we invest in a comprehensive urban forestry program for Asheville and the long term health of our community. Thank you for listening.	Shelly Hawk 609.306.3155
3/23/2020 13:00:52	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	P	Asheville does not deserve a designation as "Tree City USA." We are in dire need of an urban forester in Asheville. The City of Asheville needs the expertise and guidance of a professional urban forester to strategically manage, replenish and protect our forest for all residents. We must look ahead for the sake of Asheville's future generations. I implore you to make 2020 the year that we invest in a comprehensive urban forestry program for Asheville and the long term health of our community.	Lynn Cox coosa@mac.com
3/23/2020 13:01:17	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	As a resident of Asheville since 1983 and former member of the Tree Commission, I am keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Trees not only provide environmental benefits, they also cool our city and make it more attractive to residents and visitors. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. The coronavirus may be dominating our attention right now, but meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, and prevent continued loss. Sadly, there are	Phyllis Stiles, phdstiles@gmail.com

			NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes and makes prioritizing our urban forest urgent. We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.	
3/23/2020 13:02:46	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	This pandemic is changing everything in our lives, and yet, we must carry on. The City Council and City Manager must work on a budget for this coming year despite this crisis, and I am writing to strongly urge that you include funding for an Urban Forester and master forest plan for Asheville. Vijay Kapoor in last week's ACT stated that this is not the year to create an urban forest master plan (ACT, 3/18/20). Yet, there are not enough resources or staff to prevent any further loss of our tree canopy, nor provide the skilled forestry management leadership within the existing staff to do this. Put this into this year's budget. Thank you.	Cathy Walsh
3/23/2020 13:14:25	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Asheville needs an Urban Forester and Urban Forest Master Plan! We needed it 20 years ago, but now is a second best time. We need a strong tree ordinance that is enforceable as well.	Royce Clay - roycestreeservice@gmail.com
3/23/2020 13:19:05	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Hello, I am citizen of Asheville and I am concerned about the rapid loss of the tree canopy in Asheville. Forest preservation and canopy preservation are very important to me and I would ask that City Council make hiring an Urban Forester and creating a Master Plan for preserving and creating greenspace a top priority this year as part of the budget. Thank you	KARI FERNANDEZ, KARICITA50@HOTMAIL.COM
3/23/2020 13:19:12	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	As a resident of Asheville, I have been keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Wow - if we don't stop this bleeding, we will have fewer trees, an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional	Sally Jones gertarg@yahoo.com

			plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.	
3/23/2020 13:21:11	New Business	A	As a resident of Asheville, I have been keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Wow - if we don't stop this bleeding, we will have fewer trees, an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you. Robert Stephen Biggerstaff	Robert Biggerstaff Stephen.biggerstaff@charter.net
3/23/2020 13:21:44	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I am concerned about the loss of urban forest and trees in general in Asheville. As with most issues, we need a comprehensive plan to save and restore the tree canopy. As a nearly 20 year resident of Asheville (and nearly lifelong WNC resident), I find the decreased number of trees noticeable both visually and in regard to temperature. I live now in a wooded location, and when I go into downtown, I can instantly feel a significant difference in temperature. As you of course know, trees are also crucial to reducing CO2 emissions. We position ourselves as a city with environmental consciousness, and re-establishing an urban forest canopy is crucial.	Margaret Vestal
3/23/2020 13:22:24	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I would like to see Asheville create a permanent position for an Urban Forester. And to allocate the funds needed to make this a long term priority.	Aaron Maret

3/23/2020 13:22:46	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	As an Asheville Homeowner, I have been aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, because we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an pandemic and as much as we must fight this existential threat today we have to also fight longer term against an even more devastating outcome due to climate change. The aesthetic appeal of Asheville depends on our trees. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. Friends from less "enlightened " urban areas even in TEXAS are appalled when they hear this! It's wrong and you know it's wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you, Troy and Sara Guglielmina	Troy and Sara Guglielmina Homeowners - Taxpayers - 7 Debra Ln. Asheville
3/23/2020 13:23:25	Consent Agenda	A	Speakers were previously allowed 3 minutes. At a normal speaking rate of 140-160 wpm, that would be 420-480 words. I therefore suggest that the proposed 350 word limit be increased to 450 words. One can read 450 words in less than 3 minutes so 450 words should not be an undue burden on the council members.	Charles Warner, CLW@comcast.net
3/23/2020 13:26:40	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I would like the City to hire an Urban Forrester to come up with a plan to address our accelerating reduction in tree cover as a result of disease and development. I see a lot of trees getting cut down and not enough being planted. Trees are beautiful, help keep us cool, provide habitat for other living creatures, and keep our air fresh. Our Urban forest needs to grow!	Nancy Hyton, nancyhyton@gmail.com
3/23/2020 13:27:17	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Our city needs an urban forester and an urban forest master plan. We need to be planting trees in ways that are compatible with our growth plan, so that our efforts can have the best and longest-lasting effects. We want our town to grow, and also our trees, so that our children can have better air quality and we can leave the earth a better place.	Katherine McDaniel
3/23/2020 13:34:33	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	Hello, I am writing in support of including funds for a city Urban Forester permanent staff position and for development and adoption of an Urban Forest Master Plan	Benjamin Gillum 828-989-2815 96 Holland St. 28801

			with accompanying regulations to reverse the rapid tree loss in our city and care for existing trees.	
3/23/2020 13:35:13	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	There have been many complaints in past meetings about tourism "ruining" the character of our town, with some people wanting to limit the number of tourists and to stop building new hotels. Well, we can now see the effects of severely limiting tourism: empty hotels, small shops closing (some of which will not reopen), empty store fronts, rising unemployment, and reduced tax revenue for the city. The current tourism shutdown will eventually be lifted, but how long will it be before the tourist industry recovers, if ever, to its former level? This is not just an academic question - the livelihood of many people depends on it. I suggest that now is the time to consider how much tourism the city wants to embrace, and to work toward obtaining that level as quickly as possible so as to minimize the number of shops that are permanently closed and the number of people who are forced to seek work elsewhere.	Charles Warner. CLW@comcast.net
3/23/2020 13:36:19	Public Hearings	A	I totally support to hire a urban forest master plan and an arbolists.	Ana Boza
3/23/2020 13:39:01	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Hello, City Council Representatives and Mayor Mannheim! I'm a resident of South Asheville and I am writing because of my increasing concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville and for future generations. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester (who will provide professional guidance and a plan to address these problems) into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - NOW is the time to do the right thing for Asheville! Thank you.	Judith A. Gifford, 12 Pebble Creek Drive, Asheville 28803 715-308-5860
3/23/2020 13:41:37	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Please consider adding an Urban Forester and funds for an Urban Forest Plan to this year's city budget. The recent Climate Symposium outlined our 7% canopy loss and the need for citywide tree management. I served six years on the Asheville Planning Commission and I saw firsthand how difficult it is to protect mature trees and enforce adequate long-term care of new pantings. The air quality	Billie Buie, 2 Horizon Hill Road. bhbuie@gmail.com

			improvements and contribution to climate change reversal that cities can make through tree management are significant. Please allow Asheville to do its part in this effort.	
3/23/2020 13:47:47	Public Hearings	A	Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.	Hannah Anderson
<u>3/23/2020</u> <u>13:49:22</u>	<u>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</u>	A	I am an Asheville resident who attended last fall's Climate Symposium at A-B Tech. I have also read the Urban Tree Canopy Study, so I understand that the city where I live lost 7% of its tree canopy in the past decade. Not surprisingly, neighborhoods that have suffered the injustice of red-line tactics now experience tree loss at even greater rates. It's clear to me that the city won't be able or willing to address the effective management of our urban forest without an Urban Forester with the professional credentials needed to preserve and extend the tree canopy that has in the past kept our climate a refuge of moderation for residents and visitors alike. So, put the funds into the next budget for an Urban Forester who can devise, execute, and enforce ordinances and associated planning to keep our trees in the ground and out of the wood chipper.	<u>Philip Blocklyn,</u> <u>blocklynp@gmail.com</u>

<p>3/23/2020 13:50:14</p>	<p>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</p>	<p>Other</p>	<p>Dear Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers: I am writing to implore you to find ways to make it possible to hire an expert urban forester with a proven track record of not only protecting but restoring our city's tree canopy.</p> <p>When I first moved to Asheville in 2002, this city was lush with green life. In the last 18 years, the city has transformed in such a way that areas rich in vegetation have been replaced with parking lots and buildings, many of which are hotels. The loss of trees has been palpable and we've seen and felt the economic burden of erosion from aggressive tree removal for the sake of development. It is important that I mention the significant value of trees: they are inherently beautiful; they clean our air and make us more resilient as we face the deeper challenges of climate change; stop erosion (which saves our city from cost-prohibitive remediation efforts); and they are living beings that support other life including birds and pollinators which have experienced dramatic decreases in their numbers in the last decade.</p> <p>Asheville is long overdue for a comprehensive urban forestry program. This is a propitious investment in our city's future.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to consider my comment.</p> <p>Sincerely, Gloria Shen</p>	<p><u>Gloria Shen</u> <u>(828)417-7020</u></p>
<p>3/23/2020 13:50:43</p>	<p>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.</p>	<p>Samantha Trueman</p>

3/23/2020 13:54:17	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	U	<p>Hi, my name is Frank Russo. I have become aware of the loss of our urban forest in Asheville due to new building and investment in tourism. This information appears regularly in Letters to the Editor. As you are probably aware, the recent Climate Symposium indicated that we have lost nearly 7% of our canopy in the past decade, with even higher percentages of canopy loss in populations living below poverty level. The City of Asheville needs the expertise and guidance of a professional urban forester to strategically manage, replenish and protect our forest for all residents. After all, that is one reason I moved here. I thought Asheville was ahead of the game on environmentalism. Show this by making 2020 a year we invest in a comprehensive urban forestry program for Asheville. We not only need to be concerned about our health but also the long term health of our environment. Please move forward on funding this issue. Thank you.</p>	Frank Russo
3/23/2020 13:55:22	Public Hearings	A	<p>I am long time resident of Asheville and moved here because at the time Asheville had an environmental awareness and seemed to care about nature. Over the years as tourism become more important I have seen the city officials allow actions that aren't as environmental friendly as the candidate platform they ran on. The Climate Symposium was valuable and insightful. It is horrible that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in just 10 years! Climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. Yes, we need to address the pressing issues of this pandemic and we need to pro active in creating options that will off set future crisis such as rising temperatures in our city. We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.</p>	Mary Love

3/23/2020 13:56:31	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>As a resident of Asheville, I am so aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. I attended the recent Climate Symposium which indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. We must stop this bleeding or we will have fewer trees, an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.</p>	Anne Winter
3/23/2020 13:57:28	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>After seeing my new neighbor on Grandview Dr. 'butcher' 150 foot trees (on Duke Power land) so they could have a "better view from their deck", and learning that is was 'perfectly legal', it just drives home the need for better forest management within the city limits. A comprehensive plans needs to be funded and put in place to ensure this type of activity cannot continue. Please act quickly to fund the Urban forester and Comprehensive Urban Forest Management Plan in THIS year's budget.</p> <p>Respectfully, Andrew Pardue</p>	<u>Andrew Pardue - as.pardue48@gmail.com</u>
3/23/2020 14:01:52	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been</p>	<u>Bonnie Blackley</u>

			asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.	
3/23/2020 14:03:13	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	As a resident of Asheville, I have been keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Wow - if we don't stop this bleeding, we will have fewer trees, an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.	<u>Lucy Morris,</u> <u>Lucy@phoenixpossibilities.com, PO</u> <u>Box 710, Asheville</u> <u>NC 28802</u>
3/23/2020 14:04:24	Public Hearings	Other	RE: An Urban Forester for the city. Asheville has been my home for the past 22 years. More and more, particularly in the last 3-4 years, I have watched as huge swatches of land with dense patches of trees are plowed under for apartments, hotels, and businesses. While growth can be good for a community, blatantly denuding our surrounding landscape does permanent damage to what makes Asheville a wonderful place to live. Before it is too late, please hire or bring in an Urban Forester to help preserve our natural river and mountain canopy. Thank you!	Teresa Imfeld, timfeld@buncombe. main.nc.us
3/23/2020 14:10:31	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Please fund an urban forester and support staff as needed to address the restoration and sustainability of the Asheville urban tree canopy. Also please please commit to coordination with the tree trimming and removal practices done around power lines. We can do better! Stay healthy and thank you for all your efforts!	Ann Prescott 828 747-7719
3/23/2020 14:12:46	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I am a citizen of Asheville and fully support Greenworks' plan for our urban forest and forester. Please do the right thing and protect our invaluable trees. Thank you for your service.	Matthew Milling 8179887690

3/23/2020 14:21:36	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Please strongly consider adding an Urban Forester position and the adoption of a formal Urban Forestry Master Plan. I attended the recent Tree Symposium hosted by Asheville Greenworks and appreciate the grave need for a master plan to put rules in place that will halt the disturbing trend of tree loss in Asheville. Aside from the obvious aesthetics considerations and associated mental health benefits trees provide, there are real and numerous climate change implications linked to loss of tree canopy. Asheville and Buncombe County are taking brave and aggressive steps to address environmental concerns...protection of our surviving tree canopy ought to also be front and center in crafting any environmental policy going forward. Thank you for your attention to this subject and your serious consideration of these measures.	James DeGrave
3/23/2020 14:22:44	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.	Richard Moseley 321-626-9163
3/23/2020 14:25:11	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am writing because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been	Nelson Copp 828-200-5007

			asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.	
3/23/2020 14:26:22	Consent Agenda	G	I support the adoption of the resolution on the I-26 Connector Project (TIP-2513). This adoption will move the project forward, but gives the City and the French Broad MPO the latitude to ensure that the projects meets the needs of all types of transportation -- not just cars and trucks.	Keith Bamberger
3/23/2020 14:31:57	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	As a former transportation planner and someone who works in planning for the State of North Carolina, I think it is vital to the City of Asheville to hire an urban forester and create an Forest Plan for the city. The benefit of trees to neighborhoods, health, energy use, and the general welfare are all well documented and know. The Asheville Urban Forest plan could maximize these benefits for both short term, but especially long term gain for all the people of Asheville.	Keith Bamberger
3/23/2020 14:34:02	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I'm Dixie Deerman, also known as Lady Passion — a long-time Asheville resident and activist. I ask Council to respond to NASA data and allocate funds to hire an Urban Forester and include community-generated plans to preserve Asheville's decimated tree canopy in the city's Master Plan. Please include my desires in the official minutes of the upcoming Council meeting.	<u>Dixie Deerman</u> <u>(Lady Passion)</u> <u>251-0343 113</u> <u>Clinton Ave.</u> <u>Asheville NC 28806</u>
3/23/2020 14:37:24	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	G	I support the Council's resolution regarding the NC DoT I-26 Connector TIP Project I-2513. Please include my public comment in the official minutes of the upcoming Council meeting.	<u>Dixie Deerman</u> <u>(Lady Passion)</u>
3/23/2020 14:42:11	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	Asheville does need to be concerned about our urban forest. We need an urban forester to assist city in care of our urban forest. We do need an urban forest master plan to implement care of our forests. Please consider that our forests have a real need to be cared for wisely.	<u>Jean Pinkston</u> <u>828-775-6448</u>
3/23/2020 14:42:36	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I was so excited and proud when I read a few months ago that the City of Asheville was looking to hire an Urban Forrester and develop a Comprehensive Urban Forest Master plan to manage and help protect the natural beauty of our rapidly developing city. As a citizen of downtown Asheville, I enjoy seeing the effort our city has thus far put into maintaining greenery throughout the city, but fear that rapid development may permanently destroy much of the urban canopy that helps make our city so lovely, and a healthier place to live. Studies have shown the social, health, and economic benefits of urban forests to the general population of a city, and I hope City Council will	<u>Kimberly Dal Santo</u>

			take the findings of such studies to heart, so our beautiful community may continue to be a place where it's citizens thrive. I encourage, and request as a citizen, the Asheville City Council and City Manager put funding for the proposed Urban Forester and Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan in this year's budget.	
3/23/2020 14:43:05	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	M	Why is the Asheville mall open.	<u>Lori</u>
3/23/2020 14:46:02	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Pls support the protection, maintainance, and replanting of the Asheville urban forests! Such a simple and easy action, plant a tree, or better yet, don't destroy one!! Please fund a vivacious and desperately needed Urban Forest program. Thank you.	<u>Paul Allen</u> <u>224-406-4204</u>
3/23/2020 14:47:44	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I recently returned back to North Carolina where I was born and lived the first twenty-four years of my life. Moving from Colorado, I was struck by the lack of public recreational spaces and specifically the lack of tree canopy in the downtown areas. Trees provide so many societal benefits including climate relief, aesthetics, shade, etc. If we want to preserve Asheville as a place people want to visit, we must create an Urban Forest Initiative and fund it accordingly with a Urban Forester role. This initial investment will not only serve our current resident and tourist population but it will serve future generations. Please consider the long-term advantages to having a urban forest plan.	<u>Ashley Pendergrass</u>

3/23/2020 14:50:39	Public Hearings	A	<p>Dear Mayor Manheimer and City Council Members,</p> <p>I'd like to first thank you all for all you are doing for our community during this challenging time. Your leadership is recognized and appreciated.</p> <p>I'd like to comment on the need for an Urban Forrester. I'm not sure where it is on the agenda, but I understand it is in the budget and it is being discussed today.</p> <p>I have lived in Asheville for almost 31 years and I am distressed by what seems to be an increasing loss of our oldest and largest trees, many that were perfectly healthy (ie. - no rot apparent in the remaining stump.) All along Edwin Place and Kimberly and throughout North Asheville, 80+-year-old trees have been brought down in the past 8 months.</p> <p>Last August, Duke Power unnecessarily took down a stand of older trees at the YWCA. It was reported to be a "mistake," on behalf of the contracting company. How many more trees are being mistakenly removed? A trained Urban Forrester would better know what trees need to come down and hold contractors accountable.</p> <p>I further recommend that our city explore the research done in Durham by the Durham Rotary which mapped the historic lack of urban tree infrastructure in lower-income and historically African American neighborhoods. Racial equity must extend to which neighborhoods get trees and this should be a priority for Asheville as well.</p> <p>While I am sad to see the loss of trees in my neighborhood, I also believe that the city can find a way to ensure equitable tree distribution for all of our health and well being. Investing in a trained Urban Forrester and staff and making sure they have racial equity as a priority in their efforts will be an important step forward for all of us, our community and our planet.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration of my comments.</p> <p>Beth Maczka</p>	<p><u>Beth Maczka 828</u> <u>273-1688</u></p>
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3/23/2020 14:56:44	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	B	<p>Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.</p>	<u>Sam Trueman</u>
3/23/2020 14:56:51	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>As a resident of Asheville, I have been keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Wow - if we don't stop this bleeding, we will have fewer trees, an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.</p>	<u>David Byers</u>

<p>3/23/2020 15:01:45</p>	<p>Consent Agenda</p>	<p>G</p>	<p>Please support the I-26 FEIS resolution unanimously. The fact that Asheville's government and citizens have wrung such concessions as we have from NC-DOT is almost as astonishing as the fact that a state that already has more miles of road pavement per capita than any other refuses to slow its 20th-century highway-building juggernaut, even though the induced sprawl development and fossil-fuel pollution it encourages are primary contributors to our 21-st century climate eemrgency. If all we can do is continue to advocate point-by-point for minimizing destructive impacts and adding the benefits we have been seeking, then that's exactly what we need to do.</p> <p>One concern I have is that in my explorations of the FEIS, I've found that this massive monument to bureaucratese is laced with descriptions of archeological impacts in West Asheville and elsewhere, such as the partial burying (with markers) of the remains of what historians of Asheville describe as "the first hydroelectric plant in the world to furnish power for a private commercial trolley line". This historic site -- a potential candidate for National Register of Historic Places recognition -- is part of the Hominy Creek Greenway. In communicating this impact to Greenway volunteers and advocates, I realized that we do not know and (unless I'm missing something) have not been told what further impacts the I-26 Connector Section A construction will have on the Hominy Creek Greenway. If that's true of this greenway, it's probably true of others. I hope the City can assign staff to research this aspect of the project.</p>	<p><u>Steve Rasmussen,</u> <u>828-242-5859,</u> <u>stevencrasmussen</u> <u>@gmail.com</u></p>
<p>3/23/2020 15:04:17</p>	<p>Consent Agenda</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>Thank you for preserving good governance in this time of crisis by postponing hearings on the controversial Collier Ave. LUIG and the still-debated Open Space amendment. Both should wait till in-person public comment and board/commission meetings can safely be restored, since they are not dependent on external deadlines.</p>	<p><u>Steve Rasmussen,</u> <u>828-242-5859,</u> <u>stevencrasmussen</u> <u>@gmail.com</u></p>
<p>3/23/2020 15:05:54</p>	<p>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>Greetings. I'm a resident of Asheville and I'm submitting a public comment regarding Asheville's urban forest. I learned at the recent Climate Symposium that Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that we lost 7% of our tree canopy in the last 10 years, much of it in under-served neighborhoods. This rate of loss is alarming as is the fact that no meaningful steps have been taken to address this. Furthermore, no city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. I'm urging you to please BUDGET</p>	<p><u>Sarah Fraser</u></p>

			<p>FUNDS for an Urban Forester and a plan to address this issue in the city budget for the coming year. I believe climate change could deliver a blow to our society and community that is as profound as COVID-19. Now is the time to act to prevent catastrophic impacts. Preserving our urban canopy is one important way to absorb CO2 and also combat the urban heat island affect making our community more resilient in a warming world.</p>	
3/23/2020 15:16:12	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	<p>As a resident of Asheville for over 20 years, I have been keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade.</p> <p>That is an incredible loss and if we continue removing healthy mature trees as we have been, resulting in fewer trees, we will have an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future.</p> <p>Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees, our mature trees more so than the young saplings, are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change offering everything needed for our health and sanity.</p> <p>This pandemic has been able to grow and spread forcing us into hiding, meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem of our planet as well as the health and aesthetic appeal closer home, our own city and neighborhoods of Asheville.</p> <p>Knowing that plans continue to be made to cut more trees and that steps are not being put into place for the thorough overseeing of a professional and focused plan to plant, maintain and care for an Urban Landscape is beyond my comprehension. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest and prevent continued loss.</p> <p>From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! I know that some important updates are being made but monitoring those ordinance inserts is going to be a monstrous challenge in-house.</p>	Susan Sertain

			<p>We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the time, knowledge and focus to solving this problem.</p> <p>Thank you. Susan Sertain</p>	
3/23/2020 15:18:45	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	<p>I am writing to request that City Council fund an Urban Forester position in the upcoming budget year. Asheville is rapidly losing its tree canopy and needs a comprehensive plan to address how to protect our remaining trees and replenish the urban forest. Our climate is rapidly changing and preserving our tree canopy can help with the urban heat island effect, intercept some rainwater to reduce flooding, and improve the aesthetics and quality of life in our neighborhoods. It is a balancing act to promote infill development along with tree preservation so a dedicated Urban Forestry position and a Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan is essential to guide the City in the future.</p>	Mary Weber
3/23/2020 15:20:21	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	<p>Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.</p>	Bobby Beebe, 513-304-4355
3/23/2020 15:22:27	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am calling because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional</p>	Lena King

			guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville.	
3/23/2020 15:32:54	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I know these are extraordinary times with added stresses to the city budget, but I believe our tree canopy reduction will not be corrected unless we put in the budget funds for an urban forester as a permanent position and make a commitment to developing a urban forest plan for the next 5 - 10 years at least. Our city and county both need to sharpen up our long-term planning skills and strategies. No short-term fixes; no talk without action and commitment of funds and personnel. Thank you for considering my views.	Mary Goodkind, mary@lindleyg.com
3/23/2020 15:33:34	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	As a resident of Asheville, I believe the City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we manage our forests and prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.	Marie English, meenglish22@gmail.com
3/23/2020 15:36:52	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	As a resident of Asheville, I have been keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Wow - if we don't stop this bleeding, we will have fewer trees, an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.	Garrett Martin, garrett@venturelifefilms.com

3/23/2020 15:45:01	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Is there an approximation of how long businesses such as hair salons are going to be forced to shut down? What is the criteria that would allow them to reopen? This is forcing money to be taken to other counties outside the area and services to be done illegally in homes and in unsanitary conditions.	Crystal Linville cclinville@gmail.com
3/23/2020 15:45:21	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	I recently read about the old hemlock tree that was set to be removed from the courthouse lawn. It saddened me to see it go because I know very little effort or planning will be done to secure an Adequate replacement. As has been the case for most of the trees cut down throughout the city and county. We need a person in place that cares and who's sole responsibility is to ensure tree health, growth, and replanting within the city. Let's not loose the natural live beauty that is Asheville.	Nick Cargo 828-776-9547
3/23/2020 15:49:01	Public Hearings	A	Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am writing because of my concern for the urban forest in Asheville. The recent Climate Symposium and Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study revealed that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. No city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance in how to manage an urban forest. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before - Now is the time to do the right thing for Asheville, and for the planet. Please be part of the solution. Our health as people is interdependent with the health of the biosphere. Trees are a big part of that. Take a look around... there's more concrete than trees. We need to restore balance in our community. Now.	Paula Sellars paula@phoenixpossibilities.com

<p>3/23/2020 15:53:28</p>	<p>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>Why are urban-forest advocates insisting that the city must address its canopy-loss crisis by spending scarce funds to hire an Urban Forester instead of delegating UF responsibilities to existing staff? Here's why:</p> <p>Although there are inside staff planners who are able to preview a plan for compliance re: our new ordinance 7-19-1., there are not enough outside inspectors to handle the current work load with all of the new developments being built. There are none that are qualified to understand the horticultural or urban-forestry science behind maintaining the health of the trees or understanding the science behind it.</p> <p>Since someone will have to be hired regardless, it may as well be someone qualified, who would also be able to do other administrative duties such as TRC, community outreach, education programs, and so forth. Right now, the flood of tree-clearing requests by developers coming through TRC alone is handled by an inhumanly overtaxed volunteer member of the Urban Forest Commission.</p> <p>The Arborist is working to his absolute capacity on Public Trees and has no jurisdiction over private trees. A UF can assist the load of the City Arborist. The Office of Sustainability has nothing to do with the Ordinance enforcement. And frankly, the City Manager may not realize this, but the delegation she is proposing would be just one more example of the continual short-sighted postponement of dealing with our city's self-created ecological crisis that's gotten us to this point.</p>	<p>Steve Rasmussen, 828-242-5859, stevenrasmussen@gmail.com</p>
<p>3/23/2020 16:06:05</p>	<p>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>As a resident of Asheville, I have been keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest and tree canopy. Letters to the editor appear weekly about this, and the recent Climate Symposium which I attended indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade. Wow - if we don't stop this bleeding, we will have fewer trees, an Asheville that is less attractive and cool for tourists to visit in the not too distant future. Our children deserve a better future than this. Trees are a key component in fighting the negative effects of climate change. Yes, we are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO</p>	<p>Abi Snow, alsnow68@gmail.com</p>

			ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.	
3/23/2020 16:17:26	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	Hi, I'm a resident of Asheville and I am commenting because of my concern for the dwindling urban forest in Asheville. I attended the recent Climate Symposium was saddened to learn from Asheville's Urban Tree Canopy Study that not only is Asheville losing our tree canopy at the unsustainable rate of almost 7% in the last 10 years, but we have lost more of it in our underserved neighborhoods that were red lined in the past. This is not fair, and the time is NOW to correct this for all of Asheville. You were asked to address this last year, but no meaningful steps have been taken. NO city staff can adequately deal with this problem without professional guidance from an urban forester. Put funds for an Urban Forester and a plan to address these problems into the city budget for the coming year. You have been asked for this before. We need to fund an urban forester to help mitigate effects of climate change as well as keep our city cool for our communities and tourists. Thank you.	Veronica Crane-Lindsey Veronica.lindsey@att.net
3/23/2020 16:20:11	Unfinished Business	A	The gentrification of our community must stop! How many generations will Asheville be responsible for destroying in the black community? It is time for you all to walk the walk of equality for the people. Stop hurting the Black Community. We don't want this!	Zakiya Rogers
3/23/2020 16:23:53	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Asheville needs to hire an urban forester and a professional plan for the maintenance of Asheville's tree canopy which is disappearing at an unsustainable rate, creating a heat island and destroying the unique beauty that people buy property here to enjoy.	Tao Semko taosemko@gmail.com

<p>3/23/2020 16:24:55</p>	<p>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</p>	<p>Other</p>	<p>My name is Sharon Sumrall, I live on Beaucatcher Mt. I am writing to support the need for an Urban Forester for the City of Asheville.</p> <p>I assume at this point that Staff as well as Council is aware of our tree canopy loss, the urban heat island effect as well as the aesthetic value of trees.</p> <p>We have a new Tree Protection Ordinance in the works, that is offering better alternatives than the existing ones. This is just the beginning for future tree protection ordinances that head us in the direction of no net tree loss. Urban Foresters have the knowledge and science in order to facilitate the technical expert advice that is required to maintain a city's green infrastructure by offering our city new opportunities that can also help the current staff with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. review and serve as technical expertise by evaluating site plans to ensure compliance of all applicable codes, recommend changes as needed for the protection of trees. B. Inspect new construction sites for proper tree protection implementation; evaluate and determine compliance with land development codes and tree ordinances. C. Assist the City Arborist in overseeing field staff or contractors in tree planting and maintenance issues. Mark Foster is working at his absolute capacity and an UF would benefit Public Works as well as DSD considerably. D. Make presentations to Council, Commissions and other departments, develop and administer community outreach and education programs. <p>At this time City Inspectors are also at their maximum workload. Someone is going to need to be hired, and it needs to be someone with the knowledge and science of an UF.</p> <p>Our new ordinance will give us additional funds in the future, and we as a city need to have the foresight to see the importance of an UF for our sustainable future.</p> <p>Thank you, Sharon Sumrall/Urban Forestry Commission</p>	<p>Sharon Sumrall</p>
<p>3/23/2020 16:26:28</p>	<p>Informal Discussion & Public Comment</p>	<p>Other</p>	<p>Trees are one of Asheville's greatest assets. We are a city of trees. I moved to Asheville in 2018 partly due to its beautiful tree-lined streets and squares. Now more than ever the trees of Asheville are necessary for our city to continue as a destination for people.</p> <p>Please make funding to hire an Urban Forester part of the city budget. It's time we as a community take this important step to ensure the future of our urban forest.</p>	<p>Catherine Gilbert 14 Stonebridge Drive 28805 828 273-2322</p>

3/23/2020 16:28:25	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>My name is Karen MacNeil. Over the last few years I have become keenly aware of the loss of our urban forest in Asheville. Letters to the editor appear regularly about this and community members have often spoken at council meetings to express concerns. The recent Climate Symposium indicated that we have lost almost 7% of our canopy in the past decade, with even higher percentages of canopy loss in populations living below poverty level. This is environmental injustice and our community deserves better. The City of Asheville needs the expertise and guidance of a professional urban forester to strategically manage, replenish and protect our forest for all residents. We must look ahead for the sake of Asheville's future generations. The Tree Protection Task Force has recently created a Resolution of Support for a Comprehensive Urban Forestry Program in Asheville. Dawn Chávez, Executive Director of Asheville Greenworks and Ravenscroft Reserve Initiative have signed in support, with more anticipated to join in the near future. I implore you to make 2020 the year that we invest in a comprehensive urban forestry program for Asheville and the long term health of our community. Thank you for listening.</p>	Karen MacNeil karenskyli@gmail.com
3/23/2020 16:29:31	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>My wife and I retired to Asheville from Charleston S.C. three and a half years ago. We felt like we had moved to paradise, and we still feel that way. However, we quickly realized that one of the primary elements that makes Asheville wonderful was under threat. We witnessed many trees being taken down all around the city, and we learned that Asheville has lost 7% of its tree canopy over the past 10 years. We were surprised to find that unlike Charleston and many other southeastern cities, the City of Asheville provides very little protection for existing trees. I urge City Council and the City Manager to stop taking our trees for granted. They provide us with so many benefits, financial, psychological, and aesthetic. Please hire an urban forester to help protect these natural treasures. Thank you. Bob Rymer</p>	Bob Rymer bobrymer111@gmail.com
3/23/2020 16:30:23	Unfinished Business	A	<p>We don't want our neighborhoods being additionally gentrified and built up. This development is not what I want for my community.</p>	Bianca gragg 4106935504
3/23/2020 16:31:58	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>We the people, not just of color do not want any more gentrification of neighborhoods as the city has been allowing for years. Let's really stop with talks of making homes/apartments affordable and put actions within purpose in order. I feel that all are aware that projects for</p>	Thomas Priester

			affordable housing over the past 10 years or so are not affordable.. if so why are we still having this conversation every year. How can one that does intend to access affordable housing or never lived by those means ..determines the fate or rate of what's affordable. Thank you	
3/23/2020 16:37:56	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Preserving the green space in Asheville is necessary because it is the heart of Asheville and what gives us our identity. This is also important for climate change reasons and striving to keep our earth healthy and pollutant free/ somewhat free.	Harper Bolick - 8287820134
3/23/2020 16:38:08	Unfinished Business	A	As a native Ashevillean, I have seen this town flourish but not in a way that fosters prosperity for all. The gentrification of our Black neighborhoods is akin to the taking of our families home and land to build I-240 etc. decades ago without adequate compensation. The gentrification of our city has created a service industry economy where the people who work here can't afford to live here. Have you not learned that these developers only want to make money and not help the working poor? Let me say it this way: If all of the service industry workers have to move away because they can't afford housing, then who will be here to service these rich, self-entitled Gentrifiers? Vote No.	Kimberly Collins
3/23/2020 16:38:28	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I think we should preserve more green space in Asheville especially with the current climate crisis. We need to do our part in preserving the Earth and air we breathe even if not many other people are doing it now. (I'm from AHS by the way)	Zola Ferraby (715-308-2108)
3/23/2020 16:38:36	Presentations & Reports	A	I want to make sure that trees are considered in all matters that occur with the city of Asheville. This would include the hiring of an urban forest or to oversee the preservation and restoration of our city's trees, I want Asheville to be known as a cool, green city.	Helen Rae Charbonneau, hrcharb@gmail.com, 864.884.9146
3/23/2020 16:38:45	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	E	Please keep Asheville green. Development just hurts the natural areas and the natural parts are what I love about Asheville.	Adele adwilliams@acsgmail.net

3/23/2020 16:41:00	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	<p>Asheville City Council,</p> <p>In the presence of our current crisis stemming from the COVID-19 epidemic, it is more important than ever to show community solidarity and to protect all of our people locally. As the Sunrise Movement, we demand the following health and safety actions from the City of Asheville and Buncombe County to insure a high quality of life for all:</p> <p>House and shelter our neighbors: Open hotel rooms free of charge to houseless people. Place a 2 month moratorium on rent, mortgage payments and utility bills, without expected back pay or interest. Place a 2 month moratorium on evictions.</p> <p>Provide food security: Set up food distribution centers in school districts to provide free, nutritious food for anyone who needs it while public schools are closed. Make free food delivery available for families in isolation.</p> <p>Protect incarcerated people and immigrant communities: Release non-violent offenders from prison and jail, and provide tests and prioritize the health of all remaining incarcerated people. Release nonviolent ICE-detainees and provide tests and prioritize the health of all remaining detained people. Cease any and all collaboration with ICE.</p> <p>Ensure the economic and physical wellbeing of working people: Provide fare free transit for the year. Protect health care workers and provide free health services for all people still working. Provide paid family sick leave to all city and county government employees. Invest in clean energy and local green jobs.</p> <p>Protect democracy: Implement contingency measures at the county level to ensure residents can fully participate in this fall's general election, including but not limited to creating an easier process for mail absentee voting. Create an expanded online system for public input, including but not limited to a virtual 3 minute public comment during Asheville City Council meetings.</p>	Chloe Moore 508-723-2926 griffithquay@gmail.com
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3/23/2020 16:42:13	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Our earth is in great trouble as of right now. We need this green new deal to keep pushing forward and to be one of the top priorities in our Community. I am a high school student at Asheville High School and it is very important to me that we start making a change. This is our change. This is our way to have Asheville be one of the multiple city's that are having early realizations and helping to stop the fall of our world. Thank you,	Quinn Ray (# = 8282808055)
3/23/2020 16:44:36	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	Kudos to the Buncombe County Environmental Health Team for their response to our concern about a restaurant drive thru where the same person who handled money and cards was filling coffee cups and putting on the lids this morning. They got right on it and had them change their procedure so it's two separate people, not one. And they followed up with all the restaurants with drive thru to be sure they are doing it properly to help avoid the risk of passing on the covid-19 virus. Very much impressed, THANK YOU!	Dr. Christopher Pratt
3/23/2020 16:45:17	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	In re Urban Forester and Urban Forest Plan. The creation of an urban forest long range plan is a critical step for the City, an action which has substantial public support. I urge you to appropriate the necessary funds to hire a qualified forester who would be tasked with developing and overseeing implementation of such a plan. John Curry	John Curry jcurryavl@gmail.com
3/23/2020 16:48:50	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I want the city of Asheville to hire an urban forester to preserve and manage our urban tree cover. I want a green Asheville.	Josette Parker Clark
3/23/2020 16:49:43	Consent Agenda	G	I believe the clause regarding to expanding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure by a mere 5 miles is severely inadequate, particularly in regards to the scale of the I-26 expansion project. While I can agree that the road infrastructure is not ideal in many circumstances, the solution to the problem has been overlooked. The solution being, making Asheville and it's surrounding area's more connected via fully separated pedestrian and bicycle pathways. These take up far less room than expanding roads, can be implemented smoothly into existing infrastructure and will lessen the amount of drivers on the road. Imagine if you will that people who live in the southern region of Asheville's metro area had the possibility to bike along a protected cycle path all the way to downtown, or if there were pathways to easily get to a main corridor to utilize a direct bus route that would run more frequently than every 30 min. The number of people	Harris Wagner; phone 917 584 8973

			<p>on the road in cars, would vastly decrease and decrease the traffic load. It is time for Asheville to put it's money where it's mouth is and make itself into a bike friendly area, if smaller municipalities can implement such changes like Brevard then surely this is within reason. When I think of bike friendly places I think of places where there are parks within riding distance from ones home and where one is not intimidated to merely ride across town. Almost every other mecca for biking has these features except for Asheville. (Durango CO, Moab UT, Salt Lake City UT, Missoula MT, Knoxville TN, etc.). Thank you for your time.</p>	
3/23/2020 16:51:09	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>Thank you all for your commitment and service to the residents of Asheville. Seeing the trees taken out for the Haywood Streetscape project was a shocking and timely reminder to me of how much we rely on our trees for quality of life and health. I know that the best way for our community to have a specific and best practices plan for maintaining our urban canopy is to create the position of Urban Forester. We need the expertise and strategic approach a person in that position will bring. Thank you.</p>	Rebecca Lance 8288088636
3/23/2020 16:51:23	Unfinished Business	A	<p>I grow up around this part of Asheville, and I've noticed that most people don't acknowledge or pay attention to this area or the people who live here until it's time to create something that's never going to benefit the people who are already here. Most of these people are African Americans. This part has always been a food desert, but I've never heard or seen anything trying to be done until this new development was in the works. A new development that's only going to benefit white people. If a new apartment complex is going to be made, it needs to be affordable to all.</p>	Jayla Bunn jaylabunn@gmail.com
3/23/2020 16:52:28	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	<p>I think it is vital for the city council to fund an Urban Forester and Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan. The city is approving so many new developments in an effort to address the need for affordable housing for our service industry workers as well as new hotels for our growing tourism industry, both are critical for our local economy, however should not come at the cost of the our environment. The preserved forests that we are lucky to be surrounded by are the reason that so many people come to our city. We must be committed to preserving not only the surrounding forest but also our urban forest in order to do our part in combating global climate change. Yes, We are facing an unknown pandemic; meanwhile, climate change continues to wreak havoc on the</p>	April Morgan

			ecosystem, health and aesthetic appeal of Asheville. The City of Asheville needs professional guidance on how we turn this tide, manage our forest, prevent continued loss. From public meetings that I have attended, I have learned that there are NO ordinances to protect trees in Asheville unless they are on steep slopes. This is wrong! We need to get a professional plan to address this and only the addition of an urban forester can really devote the knowledge and focus to solving this problem. Thank you.	
3/23/2020 16:54:59	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	Other	It seems that the current COVID-19 pandemic has turned our lives upside down. At the same time, as a resident of the City of Asheville, I am calling on City Council and City Manager to stop disregarding the pressing need to act for the benefit of the entire Asheville community and to fund an Urban Forester and a Comprehensive Urban Forester Master Plan in the 2020/21 budget and to expedite the issuance of an appropriately updated tree ordinance that will disallow the removal of any large trees without a well-founded permit. The city has lost too many trees in the past decade, and the loss has not stopped since the publication of the results of the city's tree canopy study. The power of trees in helping mitigate the devastating effects of climate change must be used. It is a crime on Asheville's population if this knowledge continues to be ignored and defied by city staff and council. Inge	<u>Inge Durre</u> <u>ingedurre@gmail.com</u> <u>m 828-989-3976</u>
3/23/2020 16:56:18	Informal Discussion & Public Comment	A	I am a highschool student and I want to preserve the green space in Asheville	Cali Fix. Email: califix03@gmail.com
3/23/2020 16:56:35	Consent Agenda	F	I should hope that this would include power to implement widespread testing for the novel COVID-19 disease. This is a unique opportunity for Asheville to get ahead of the curve of many other cities in the US and show what is possible with greater knowledge and take example from other countries around the world such as South Korea. Please do not let us down, the everyday public who live full time in Asheville are in dire straits.	Harris Wagner; phone 917 584 8973

3/23/2020 16:56:58	New Business	A	<p>As a city resident and homeowner I am distraught at the number of trees we are losing and the apparent lack of a cohesive plan to remain a city with ANY greenery. The clear cutting for the housing development off Biltmore Avenue is so disappointing . Certainly some trees could have been preserved.</p> <p>The current tree clearing on Weaver Boulevard that allows a local builder to build a private home along a beloved greenway is just too much.</p> <p>Yes we need housing but we need sensible, rational permitting with long term thinking.</p> <p>The Weaver Boulevard building is an arrogant project enabled by city permitting.</p> <p>The loss of continuity along that greenspace is priceless. At very least can we make specific recommendations to the builder for replanting the dozens of trees they have eliminated? The entire neighborhood is dismayed at this building and they are paying close attention. Please drive or walk along Weaver Boulevard to witness this for yourself. Was UNCA given the option to purchase this land ??</p> <p>Thank you for reading thus far.</p>	Alisa Hixson ajhixson@gmail.com
3/23/2020 17:04:56	Unfinished Business	J	<p>We need anUrban Forester and Comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan in this year's budget. Or we need a City Government and Manager who can get that done. Not doing this will be one more nail in the Asheville Coffin.</p> <p>Thanks</p>	Dennis White 3 Sunset Vw, Asheville 828.205.1484