

# Planning for the Future of Rocklin's Urban Forest



Prepared for  
**City of Rocklin**  
**Community Development Department**  
Prepared by  
**Phytosphere Research**

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## Executive Summary

This document provides an overall framework for managing Rocklin's urban and natural forest resources. It is based on the condition of the forest in 2003 and an analysis of trends that have shaped Rocklin's urban forest to date and will continue to influence it in the future. The major portions of this document are described below.

**1. Management plan for Rocklin's urban forest.** This section discusses issues and trends that are likely to impact Rocklin's tree resources over at least the next 25 to 50 years. These include:

- Tree canopy cover increased from 11% in 1952 to 18% in 2003 (a 63% increase), due to protection of existing oaks and growth of both new and existing trees. Current and future issues related to overall tree canopy include low canopy cover in commercial parking lots and along most residential streets and long-term sustainability of native oak woodlands.

- Most of the current urban forest canopy is relatively young and in good health. However, the overuse of some species and the relatively uniform age distribution over much of the City could lead to problems in the future that would affect a large portion of the urban forest.

- The cost of maintaining both public and private trees will increase as these trees age

The management plan also presents community-based goals for managing and protecting Rocklin's tree resources. Objectives and guidelines for managing and protecting Rocklin's urban and natural tree forest are provided for each goal. Major goals of the plan include:

- Establishing and maintaining target levels of tree canopy throughout the City.
- Promoting conservation of existing tree resources.
- Developing an urban forest canopy that is stable over the long term
- Promoting efficient and cost-effective management of publicly-owned urban and natural forest resources.

- Fostering community support for the local urban forestry program and encouraging good tree management on privately-owned properties.

**2. The current state of Rocklin's urban forest and tree management practices.** This section presents the results of surveys and other evaluations of Rocklin's urban forest. The information is organized into six subject areas.

- **Overall tree canopy changes from 1952 to 2002** - The increase in canopy cover over this time is largely due to growth of conserved oaks and new tree plantings, primarily in residential developments.
- **Oak woodland open space lands** - The City-owned oak woodlands include both riparian and upland stands, which differ with respect to management issues. Current tree condition is generally good, but regeneration is an issue in upland stands while invasive species are a bigger concern in riparian areas.
- **Trees in parks** - Most planted park trees are in good condition, but conserved oaks in some older parks are declining. Pruning to improve tree structure and safety is the most common maintenance need.
- **City-maintained parkway trees** - In 2004, the City maintained an estimated 10,000 trees along about 28 miles of streets. Most of these trees were in good condition but



were generally young. Maintenance needs and costs will rise as the tree population ages.

- **Private trees along residential streets** – Private trees constitute the overwhelming majority of trees along Rocklin streets, although most are planted too far from the street to shade pavement. Most of the private tree population is relatively young and healthy, but many conserved oaks are in decline.
- **Trees in commercial parking lots** - Levels of tree shade in most parking lots is low, with very few spaces being even half shaded. Although trees were young in many lots, older lots did not necessarily have higher levels of shading due to the loss of planted trees over time.

**3. Involving residents in the care of Rocklin's urban forest.** City residents play a major role in the planting and maintaining the majority of Rocklin's urban forest. Through public education and outreach programs, the City can help improve the selection and care of trees on residential properties and can increase the involvement of community volunteers in the restoration of native oak woodlands on City lands. The appendix includes a public information package on basic tree selection, planting, and care.

**4. Funding sources for urban forestry.** This section lists a number of external funding sources available to the City and to citizen groups to help fund urban forestry projects, including tree planting, environmental restoration, and community outreach and education. These sources of funding can help augment, but will not replace, the City's need to provide funding from internal sources, including assessment districts, the Oak Tree Preservation Fund, and the General Fund.

**5. Technical guides for urban forest management.** Section 6 of this document and several of the appendices are technical guides that describe the management actions needed to maintain Rocklin's urban forest in a manner consistent with the goals that have been identified. Major elements include a list of recommended tree species and associated planting, placement, and maintenance guidelines.