

Boston issues an RFP for its first urban forest plan

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On September 28, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department announced that they were seeking a consultant to manage the growth and expansion of the city's urban tree canopy under a new Urban Forest Plan. Applicants have until October 28 to submit their qualifications to the city.

"As we plan for our city's future, we're working to ensure Boston is an equitable, safe city for all residents," said Mayor Walsh in the project announcement. "We know how critical trees are as we fight climate change and improve the quality of life for all residents. This urban forest plan is the first of its kind in Boston, and is an opportunity to ensure every neighborhood has the resources they deserve and need. Boston is committed to strengthening our environmental work, and creating a brighter, greener future for all."

The Urban Forest Plan, which has already been budgeted for \$500,000, is intended to supplement the 2016 Climate Ready Boston plan. The city is searching for someone to identify existing canopy loss and reverse it, including mapping where trees fall across public and privately-owned land, and develop a tree protection plan for climate change-related environmental hardships.

The benefits of expanding tree cover in Boston are numerous, including increasing shade for residents and cutting down on the urban heat island effect, boosting biodiversity by creating a more robust habitat for the city's native fauna, and breaking up hard landscapes to create additional stormwater retention opportunities. In the same announcement, Mayor Walsh revealed that the city had already doubled its plans to plant 1,000 trees a year to 2,000.

It's important to note that whoever is selected won't be solely responsible for maintaining the city's trees; that will still fall on the Parks and Recreation Department. The city is more searching for a firm to work across agencies to identify underserved neighborhoods and to reach out to stakeholders about how to best manage and expand their tree cover.

For those looking to apply, a virtual session with more information is being held tomorrow, October 8.

Source: <https://www.archpaper.com/2020/10/boston-issues-rfp-for-an-urban-forest-plan/>
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