Tree Canopy Code Updates

Public Information Session

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City of Bellevue

Agenda

1. Project Goals
2. Existing Code
3. Code Update Opportunities
   - Retention
   - Replacement
   - Enforcement

4. Q&A
5. Next Steps

Engagement Process

- **Phase 1: Listening**
  - Listening sessions
  - Questionnaire
  - Public information session

- **Phase 2: Review Recommendations**
  - Listening sessions
  - Multiple public information sessions
  - Planning Commission Hearing

- **Phase 3: Action**
  - City Council review and Action

Project Background
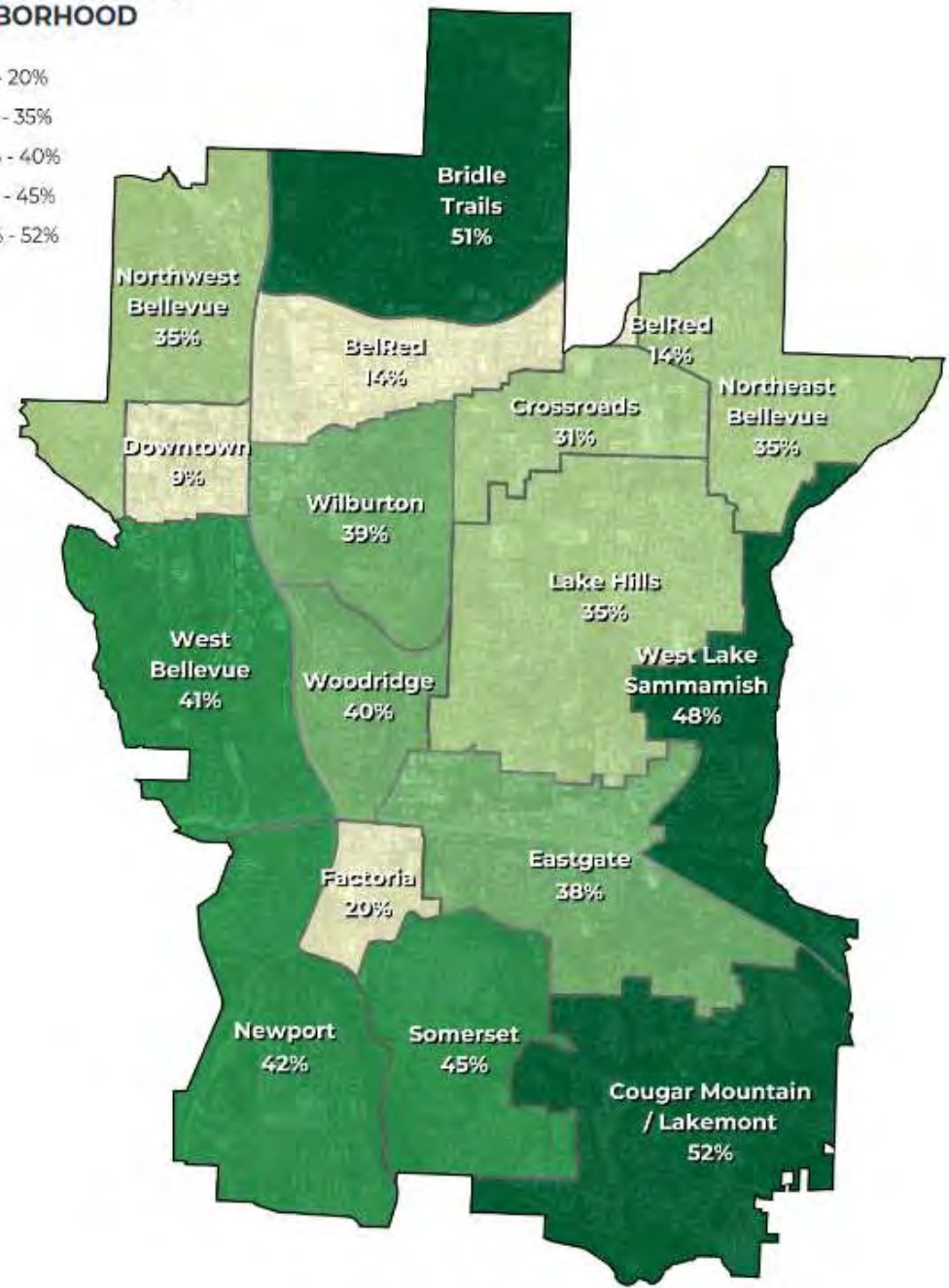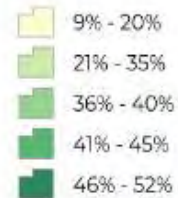
Strategy N.1. Increase Tree Canopy Citywide

- 40% goal
- Ensure sufficient code provisions
- Incentivize the right tree in the right place
- Identify opportunities for tracking data

Tree Canopy

- Citywide tree canopy estimated at 39%

- 3.4% increase from 2011-2019

- Opportunities for improvement remain

URBAN TREE CANOPY %
BY NEIGHBORHOOD

- 9% - 20%
- 21% - 35%
- 36% - 40%
- 41% - 45%
- 46% - 52%

Bridle Trails 51%

Northwest Bellevue 35%

BelRed 14%

BelRed 14%

Northeast Bellevue 35%

Crossroads 31%

Downtown 9%

Wilburton 39%

Lake Hills 35%

West Bellevue 41%

Woodridge 40%

West Lake Sammamish 48%

Eastgate 38%

Factoria 20%

Newport 42%

Somerset 45%
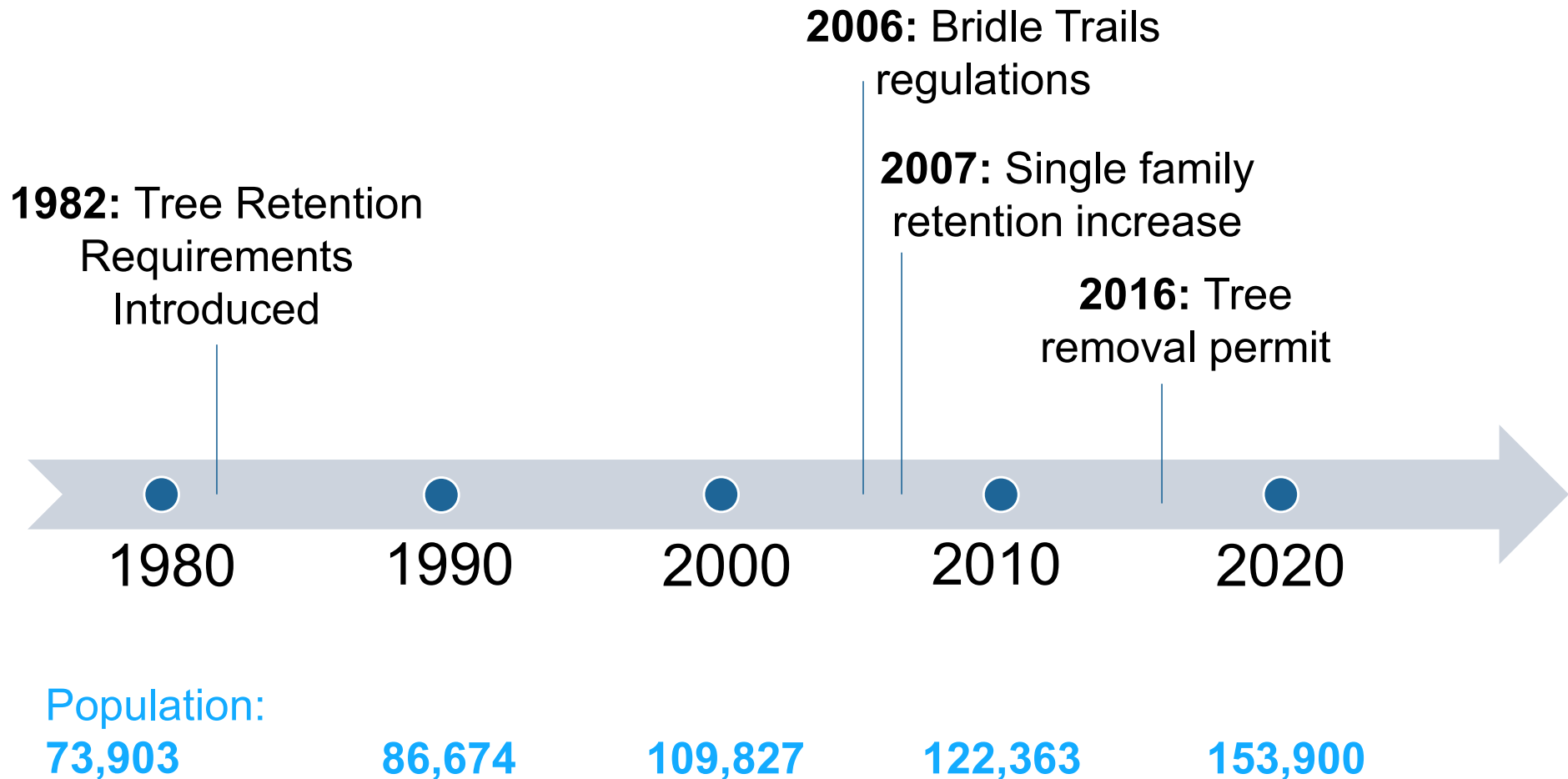
Cougar Mountain / Lakemont 52%

Project Goals

- **Comprehensive** code review
- Support tree **preservation, retention, replacement,** and **protection**
- **Balance** housing production needs
- Improve the function and **clarity** of code
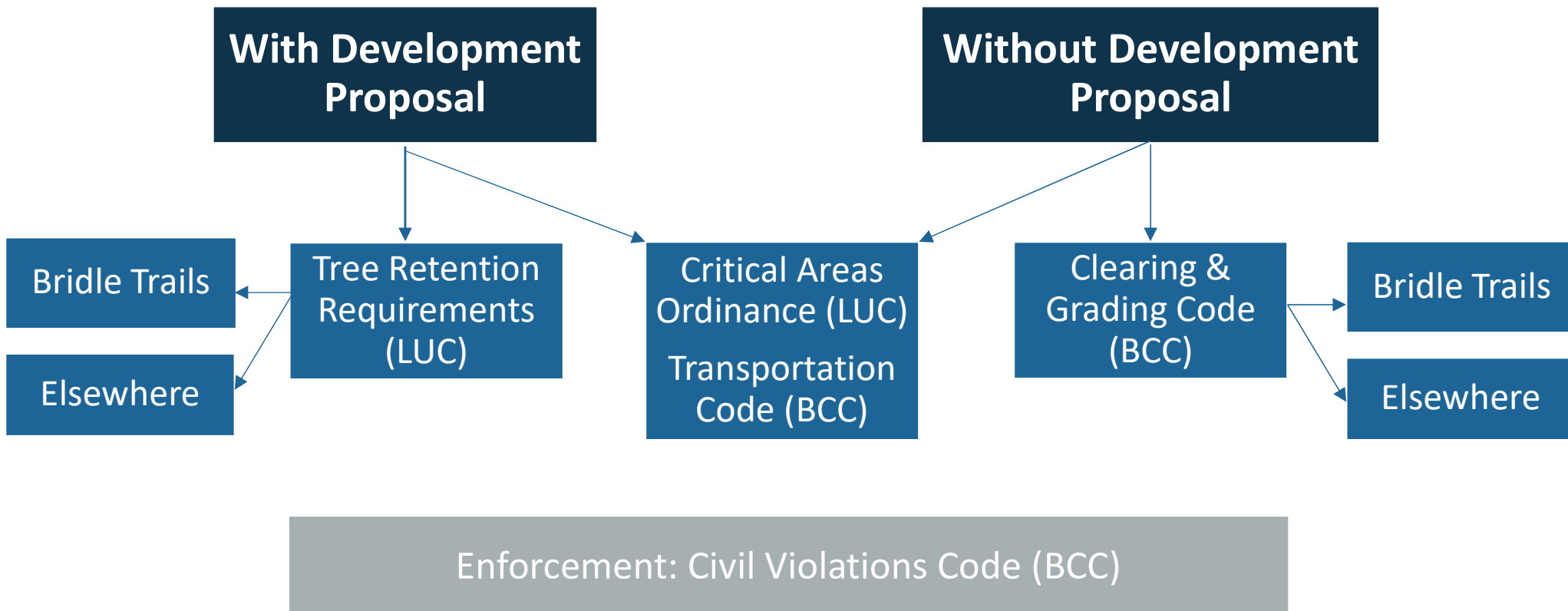- Capture better **data**

Existing Code History

2006: Bridle Trails regulations

2007: Single family retention increase

2016: Tree removal permit

1982: Tree Retention Requirements Introduced

1980   1990   2000   2010   2020

Population:
73,903   86,674   109,827   122,363   153,900

Existing Code

How do we regulate trees?

With Development Proposal	Without Development Proposal

Bridle Trails

Tree Retention Requirements (LUC)

Critical Areas Ordinance (LUC)

Transportation Code (BCC)

Clearing & Grading Code (BCC)

Bridle Trails

Elsewhere

Elsewhere

Enforcement: Civil Violations Code (BCC)

Existing Code

What trees are regulated?

- Significant Trees – "healthy", minimum 8" diameter

- Landmark Trees – minimum 24" diameter

- Only variation for alders and cottonwoods

Opportunities

- *Evaluate Significant Tree Definition*

- *Evaluate Landmark Tree Implementation*

Without Development Proposal

Tree Removal

- Permit required to remove:
  - Any Landmark Tree (Interim Ord)
  - More than 5 significant trees within 3 years
  - Any significant tree in Bridle Trails R-1 district
- Replacement only required in limited cases

Opportunities

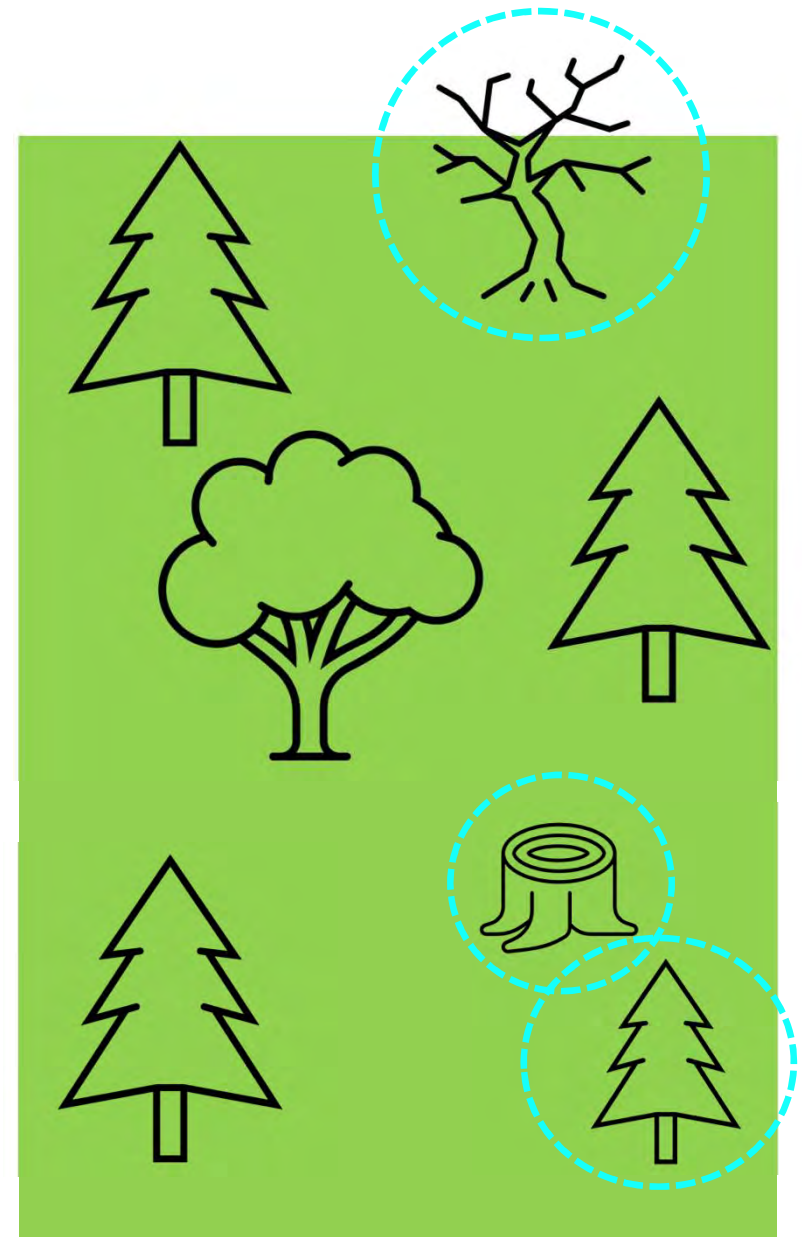- *Evaluate Removal Limits*
- *Evaluate Replacement Requirements*

With Development Proposal

Tree Retention: Step 1

- Only applies when significant trees exist

Opportunities

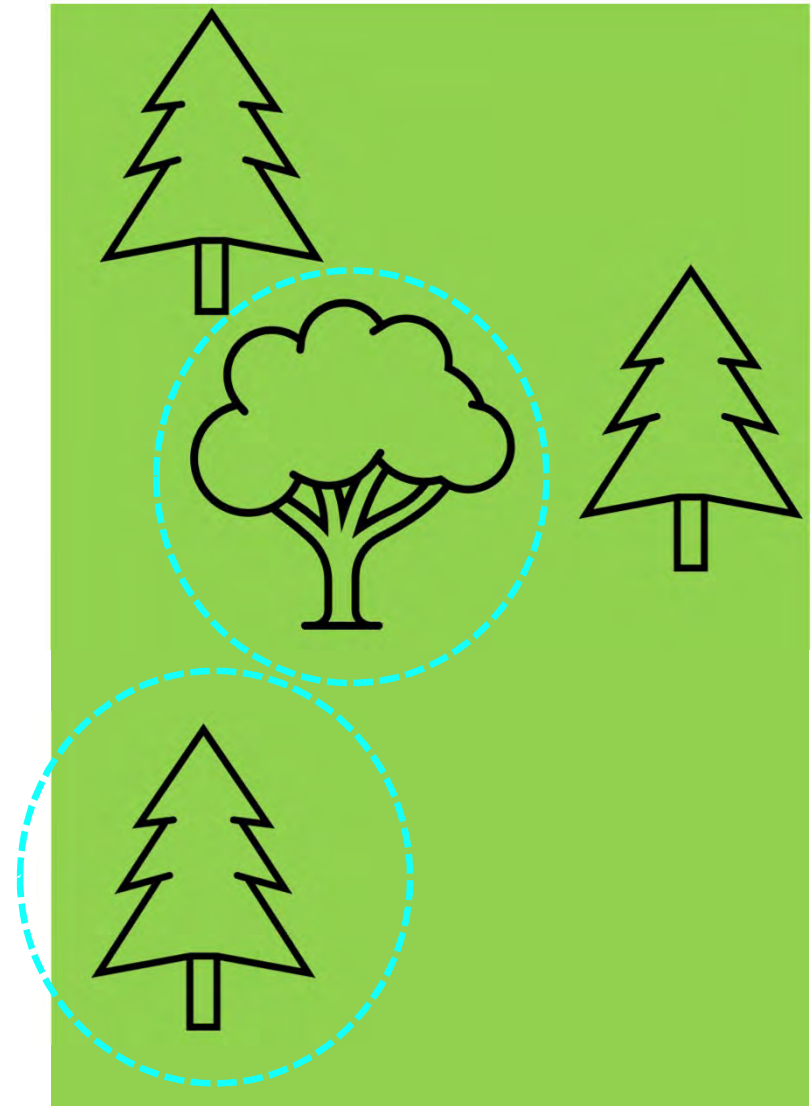- *Counting recent removals*

- *Evaluate establishing minimum*

With Development Proposal

Tree Retention: Step 2

- Retain share of total diameter inches

- Replacement only required in limited cases

Opportunities

- *Improve selection criteria*

With Development Proposal

Tree Retention: Step 3

- Tree protection techniques required during construction

- Retention duration undefined

Opportunities

- *Clarify duration of retention*

- *Codify key protections*

What's Different in Bridle Trails?

Tree Retention

- Must retain all significant trees in perimeter
- Also retain 25% in interior
  - Replacement required when few trees exist

Tree Removal

- Permit to remove **any** significant tree
- Retention requirements can be triggered

Tracking and Enforcement

- Limited data to track removal & retention

- Complaint-driven

- Many unaware of requirements

- Work toward voluntary compliance

Opportunities

- *Improve tracking systems*

- *Assess current enforcement mechanisms*

Summary of Issues

- Evaluating **definition** of significant and landmark trees
- Evaluating **limits on tree removal**
- **Clarifying retention** requirements
- Improving **tracking systems** for tree removal and retention
- Evaluating **expanding replacement** requirements
- Assessing **enforcement mechanisms**
- **Avoiding barriers** to housing production

Next Steps

Phase 1:
Listening, Fundamentals

- *Check in:*
  - ✓PC Study Session
  - 6/26 Council Study Session

Phase 2:
Reviewing & Refining

- *Review Proposal:*
  - PC Study Sessions

Phase 3:
Action

- PC Public Hearing & Recommendation
- Council Study Session & Action

Questionnaire

Technical Analysis

Listening Sessions

Public Info Sessions ★ ★ ★
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