

# TREE MANAGEMENT

Des Moines City Council Work Session



# **Guiding Principles**

- **Encourage better tree management on private and public property**
- **Provide incentive for compliance with proposed ordinances**
- **Reduce large scale removals**
- **Do not create “tree police”.**
- **Remain revenue neutral (utilize existing resources)**

# **Existing Policies**

- **The City manages trees by responsible department**
- **Public Works manages trees in public right-of-way**
- **Parks and Recreation manages trees in public parks**
- **Engineering balances necessity for public projects with desire to preserve trees on individual project basis**
- **CD addresses tree management on private property during zoning and development review processes and via Landscape Standards**

# **Benefits of Existing Policies**

- **Minimal additional cost to City**
- **Decisions are made by departments or elected / appointed bodies charged with administration of a review process or approval of a project**
- **Processes are not prescriptive and allow flexibility**
- **Mitigation ultimately decided on a case by case basis**

# **Limitations of Existing Policies**

- **Large scale tree removal prior to subdivision, PUD zoning or Site Plan review is not prohibited and has occurred (ex. SW 9<sup>th</sup> and County Line Road)**
- **Lack of a comprehensive policy**
- **Inconsistency in design and review of private and public projects**
- **Inconsistency in preservation and mitigation required**

# **Input Gathered From**

- **Plan and Zoning Commission**
- **Park Board**
- **Trees Forever**
- **Developer Panel**
- **Public Works, Engineering, Parks, Airport and CD Staff**

# **Recommendations**

- **Urban Conservation Advisory Committee shall work with the Park and Recreation Board to create a comprehensive Urban Forestry Plan for the City of Des Moines .**
- **This work will lead to refinements and changes to this Ordinance and recommendations on long-term Urban Forest Management.**

# **Recommendations (cont.)**

- **Adopt interim tree management ordinance**
- **Require a permit from CD when 5 or more mature trees are to be removed from a parcel that is at least 40,000 square feet in size (private and public property); or within an internal approval system for on-going operations within the City, such as street tree maintenance and airport grounds operations**

# **Recommendations (cont.)**

- **Mature trees are 12-inches in diameter or greater**
- **Mitigation is required when cumulative removal results in a loss of at least 10,000 square feet of tree canopy area or 10% of tree canopy area on the site, whichever is less (based upon aerial photography)**

# Recommendations (cont.)

- Mitigation ratios if permit obtained prior to removal

<u>Removal (diameter)</u>	<u>Replacement (# of 2" trees)</u>
12-18"	1
18-23"	2
23-29"	3
each 6" over 29"	1

# Recommendations (cont.)

- Mitigation if trees removed without a required permit:

**1 tree for every 700 square feet of canopy removed**

(2.5 to 3 x more than if a permit had been obtained)

# **Recommendations (cont.)**

- **Plantings required by Landscape Standards do not count toward mitigation planting requirements**
- **Mitigation plantings can be required off-site with the receiving property owner's consent**
- **Give preference to off-site planting locations that are in close proximity to the locations where the removals occur**

# **Recommendations (cont.)**

- **Allowable species of mitigation plantings to include street tree list and other native species**
- **No agricultural exemption**
- **Allow City to obtain a temporary restraint or injunctive relief to enforce the provisions of the ordinance**