

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



Agenda Date:	May 16, 2016
Action Required:	Presentation
Presenter:	Paul Josey, Chair – Tree Commission
Staff Contacts:	Chris Gensic, Parks and Recreation
Title:	Annual Tree Commission report to council

Background:

The Tree Commission provides an annual report to council on successes from the prior year and anticipated goals for the coming year.

Discussion:

This is an annual update, a copy of the items to be discussed it attached.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Priority Areas:

The Tree Commission supports the City Council's "Green City" by preserving and enhancing a natural and forested area of the City. It contributes to Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan, to be a safe, equitable, thriving and beautiful community.

Community Engagement:

The Tree Commission holds regular meetings open to the public and the Urban Forest Management Plan is developed with public input.

Budgetary Impact:

Report only.

Recommendation:

Report only.

Alternatives:

Report only.

Charlottesville Tree Commission Highlights of 2015 Activities

Tree Protection and Planting

- **Initiated and consulted on tree planting** on the new Water St. extended.
- **Provided comments that lead to new tree protection zones and practices** in the Tonsler Park renovations and the McIntire Skate Park plan to maximize protection of major stands of large shade trees.
- **Nominated trees for protection under the city's tree protection ordinance** including 4 landmark oaks in McIntire Park East.
- **Called for enforcement of tree protection site plan requirements** not being followed at a major new building site at 2nd and Garrett streets that threaten a prominent large oak tree.
- **Surveyed and identified tree planting opportunities in city entrance corridors** with insufficient tree canopy. Identified locations were added to the fall 2015 planting plan resulting in over 15 new trees.
- **Worked with staff to initiate an updated Tree Canopy Study** to assess size of canopy and any loss since the last study, and to identify entrance corridors and neighborhoods that lack adequate canopy. Initial findings suggest a canopy loss of about 5-7.5% (350-518 acres) over the past ten years.
- **Initiated discussion on a long-term tree planting plan** for the city based on the canopy study.
- **Initiated a study of the health of the mall trees** by James Urban, a foremost expert on urban tree health, to guide future management of these trees, which are so highly valued by the entire community and are critical to the economic success of the mall.
- **Partnered with the Charlottesville/Albemarle Tree Stewards**, Monticello, VDOT and PVCC to design and plant the first 10 of 70 new trees in the Route 20 entrance corridor from Monticello to the city limits. This is Phase 1 of a larger project to continue planting in this area.

Tree Advocacy

- **Participated in the Streets that Work Project** advocating for shade trees on all city streets, in particular large and medium canopy trees.
- **Commented on the West Main St. rezoning and streetscape plans**, advocating for larger setbacks and planting large and medium shade trees to replace the substantial number of mature trees that will be lost in the street improvement process.
- **Commented on tree planting at several high profile projects** including William Taylor Plaza, and the 250/Best Buy Ramp among others, offering specific suggestions for additional planting sites and species. VDOT has accepted our recommendations for placement and species of trees at the 250/Best Buy Ramp project.
- **Commented on a portion of the redesign of Seminole Square** and encouraged the city to take a more comprehensive view of the re-design and landscaping of this area as part of the Berkmar Drive project to maximize beauty, functionality and connections to surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Consulted with the BAR on tree related issues** at sites on W. High St. and Grady Avenue.
- **Called for maximum tree protection and replanting** as part of the Schenk's Branch interceptor project on McIntire Road.
- **Advocated for \$ 75,000 for urban forest management** in this year's Capital Improvement budget to be able to maintain the current level of tree planting and maintenance work.

Education

- **Cut the ribbon on the small tree arboretum** in the median of Jefferson Park Avenue extended, designed to demonstrate species of small trees that are compatible with overhead utility lines.
- **Attended a presentation by Burnley Moran 4th graders** on how to protect our ash trees from Emerald Ash Borer. At their suggestion prepared an insertion for the utility bill flyer telling people about the ash borer and what can be done to protect trees.
- **Helped survey ash trees** in the city for treatment for Emerald Ash Borer.