



Department Source: Community Development - BSD

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: November 19, 2018

Re: An Ordinance Creating a Tree Board

Executive Summary

Attached for Council consideration is an ordinance creating a City of Columbia Tree Board. In 2017 a Community Tree Task Force appointed by the City Council issued its final report. The report included a recommendation that the City Council appoint a permanent tree board to assist the city in its stewardship of urban forest resources.

Discussion

The final report of the Tree Task Force (2017) recommended the creation of a permanent tree board with duties as follows:

3. Create a Permanent Tree Board

The Tree Task Force has been able to accomplish a lot in a relatively short period of two years. The Ordinance Review was a serious endeavor that took up a lot of hours and effort. The purpose of creating a permanent tree board is:

- a. Provide guidance for the tree ordinance throughout the process of being voted on by city council.*
- b. Provide assistance and offer feedback during the creation of the city's new Urban Forest Master Plan.*
- c. Additional educational opportunities available like expanded Arbor Day events, educational mailers, volunteer tree planting, public education, increased stormwater management opportunities, etc.*
- d. An independent liaison between the public and City staff regarding tree related issues.*
- e. Review landscaping and tree preservation variance requests.*
- f. Facilitate a unification for urban forestry related activities across all City departments including Community Development, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Sustainability, and Water & Light.*

The Tree Board will have a number of resources to work with. The City has an Urban Forest Management Plan and it has tree preservation and landscaping requirements in the Unified Development Code. The city has a street tree survey and the city regularly applies for TRIM grants through the Missouri Department of Conservation. The city's Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) include a Natural Resources Inventory that documents the extent and quality



of tree and vegetation cover. Several departments employ forest management professionals, including a City Arborist in Community Development, and Foresters in Parks and Recreation and Utilities, and an Ecologist in Sustainability.

The proposed ordinance does not create a regulatory role for the Tree Board. Of the review functions in item e above, staff understands that the review would be as directed by City Council, or as an interested party in Planning & Zoning or Board of Adjustment cases.

The draft ordinance proposes duties and responsibilities that are an adaptation of the roles recommended by the Task Force. A membership of seven is proposed with meetings to occur at least quarterly or at the call of the chairperson. Qualifications are stated in general terms as persons with "interest and experience" in arboriculture or related fields. Council may add qualifications that ensure jurisdictional or institutional representation as it may see fit.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Additional staff time and expenses will be required for administrative support of the Tree Board, including posting of agendas and minutes, liaison functions, and office supplies.

Long-Term Impact: Unknown

Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

[Vision Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Environment, Secondary Impact: Community Character, Tertiary Impact: Parks, Recreation and Greenways

[Strategic Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Economy, Tertiary Impact: Operational Excellence

Legislative History

Date	Action
June 19, 2017	Delivery of the final report of the Tree Task Force to Council
April 4, 2016	Resolution Amending 32-15A (establishing Community Tree Task Force)
February 16, 2015	Resolution 32-15A Establishing a Community Tree Task Force

Suggested Council Action

Approval of the amendment to Chapter 2 establishing a Columbia Tree Board. The Community Tree Task Force final report summary is attached.