

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Tree Task Force was established by City Council by Bill # R 32-15A on February 16, 2015. It consists of seven (7) members appointed by Council and was tasked with providing recommendations to homeowners for caring for and managing trees, developing educational materials for tree care, reviewing the City's current tree ordinances, recommendations for a decennial citywide tree inventory, and to determine if an ongoing tree commission should be established.

**The Accomplishment Report** is a snapshot of what has been accomplished since the Task Force was established.

**The Recommendations to Council** are the Task Force goals and recommendations for the future.

## ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

The Task Force respectfully submits the following accomplishments:

### Monthly Meetings

The Task Force was able to maintain a full quorum for 23 meetings throughout the year.

### Ordinance Review

The Task Force spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the Landscape & Screening Ordinance with regards to increasing tree cover & diversity around parking lots, requirement for a more detailed tree preservation plan, and that the 25% of preserved climax forest remain as an undeveloped lot.

### Updated City's Website

Added several new links to the City Arborist web page located on the City's website. These include topics on emerald ash borer, benefits of trees, existing tree inventory, and ordinances.

### Created MidMOTaproot Series

In partnership with the Missouri Community Forestry Council (MCFC) held a total of 5 workshops aimed at educating homeowners about various tree related subjects. **Had over 150 people** attend with topics on:

- Proper tree selection and planting
- Tree insect & diseases
- Fruit tree pruning
- Maple syrup production

### Support of City's Master Plan Efforts

Drafted a letter and made a presentation to Council in May 2015 asking for the creation of a comprehensive Urban Forest Master Plan. The City successfully entered into a contract for a Master Plan in November 2016.

### Educational Efforts

During the 2016 & 2017 True/False Film Fest tree "price tags" were hung on various trees throughout downtown. These price tags demonstrated the environmental value that trees provide residents of Columbia.

### TreeSource Articles

Initiated a bi-monthly contribution to CitySource on seasonal tree care topics.



## RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

The Task Force respectfully submits the following recommendations to guide City Council on possible next steps:

**1. Create and Maintain a Decennial City-Wide Tree Inventory.**

Maintaining a current up-to-date tree asset inventory is imperative if the City wants to continue to promote the many benefits of urban trees like reducing stormwater runoff, to reducing energy costs, and improving the livability of Columbia. These benefit producing assets also have inherent risk, like all other assets within the City, and need proper maintenance to reduce risk and maximize benefits.

**2. Provide Oversight and Support for Implementation of the Urban Forest Master Plan**

The City has entered into contract for an Urban Forest Master Plan and the many City Departments that will be affected need to be supported. Hopefully this process will identify possible recommendations to improve better communication between all of the City Departments that touch trees on a regular basis. Through increased and better communication the goal should be to increase Columbia's tree canopy in a sustainable and cost effective manner.

**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 endeavour 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 issue.
- 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.

Sincerely,

Ann Koenig - Chair

Josh Behounek - Vice Chair

Jean Sax

Chris Haubner

Scott Ratliff

Lukin Murphy

Darwin Hindman