

Tree Preservation on Public Projects

Report to the Board's Environmental Committee

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
Working for You!



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Board Matter

- Supervisor John Foust Board Matter, September 22, 2015
- Update on status of recommendations in March 22, 2011 Report on Tree Preservation on County Property
- Draft letters to Chairs of Fairfax Water, Fairfax County School Board, and Fairfax County Park Authority
 - Adopt goal of “optimizing tree preservation and planting efforts in the design and construction of public facilities.”
 - Implement county’s Tree Conservation Ordinance

Why Does it Matter?

- Board's Environmental Agenda:
 - Increase tree conservation in land development;
 - Improve air quality through tree conservation policies and practices;
 - Improve water quality and stormwater management through tree conservation; and,
 - Foster an appreciation for our urban forest and inspire County residents to protect, plant and manage trees and forest stands on public and private lands.
- Other sustainability and livability initiatives:
 - Economic Success Strategic Plan
 - Healthy Community Design Initiative
 - Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Initiative
 - Tree Action Plan

Implementation of 2011 Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: Develop a vegetation inventory and mapping standard for County projects.

Implementation:

- Urban Tree Canopy GIS map layer created
- US National Vegetation Classification system adopted by UFMD, Park Authority and Stormwater Planning

- Recommendation 2: Route all 2232 cases (Fairfax County Facilities Review Process) to UFMD for review and comment.

Implementation: UFMD currently reviews all 2232 applications

Implementation of 2011 Recommendations

- Recommendation 3: Include UFMD in the early planning stages to assist with the development of project budgets, site layouts and construction practices.

Implementation:

- UFMD staff reviews plans for County facilities that are processed through Land Development Services.
 - Staff provides consultation directly to County agencies, at their request, during all stages of the design and construction process.
- Recommendation 4: Improve the process used to identify potential tree conservation and landscaping costs and embed these in Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budgets.

Implementation:

- The cost of tree conservation and landscaping is embedded in CIP budgets.
- Focus is on providing natural landscaping that promotes survival of the landscaping with minimal maintenance.

Implementation of 2011 Recommendations

- Recommendation 5: Distribute a list of contacts and services offered by UFMD to help ensure that all County staff and contractors are aware that UFMD is available for assistance.

Implementation: An updated list of UFMD staff contacts and services has been distributed to County agencies.

- Recommendation 6: Develop an outreach program for submitting engineers and in-house project managers to help these groups become more knowledgeable about County policies and guidelines pertaining to tree conservation.

Implementation:

- Ongoing presentations are made to industry and Site Development and Inspections Division.
- Presentations are scheduled for in-house project managers and engineers in Stormwater Planning, Building Design and Construction Division, and Utilities Design and Construction.

Implementation of 2011 Recommendations

- Recommendation 7: Develop a Tree Canopy Loss Mitigation Policy that:
 - Compliments the County's 30-year Tree Canopy Goal and Tree Action Plan;
 - Provides an opportunity to demonstrate innovative tree conservation practices;
 - Acknowledges that it may be necessary to remove tree canopy during the development and expansion of County facilities;
 - Acts to replenish lost tree canopy through reforestation practices on the same or other County properties ... and;
 - Utilizes funds from the County's Tree Preservation and Planting Fund and/or Environmental Improvement Program to finance related reforestation projects.

Implementation:

- Urban Forester III position created to proactively address urban forest management and tree preservation countywide.
- UFMD has begun work with the Tree Commission to revise the Tree Action Plan.

Tree Preservation and Planting Fund

- Fund established in 2007 to support efforts to “protect, manage and enhance” the urban forest.
- Proffered funds for tree planting; cash reparations for tree preservation violations. \$84,000.
- Recommendation 7 in part to use funds from the County’s Tree Preservation and Planting Fund to finance reforestation projects.
- A proposal to have UFMD utilize the Tree Preservation and Planting Fund for planting projects on County properties.

Tree Preservation and Planting Fund

Proposal:

- Reforest 8 acres over four years for \$75,000
- Projects designed to: foster an appreciation for the urban forest
- Inspire and support planting, protecting and managing tree and forest on public land
- Involve students and emphasize stewardship, sustainability, and raise awareness of benefits
- Utilize volunteers for planting and maintenance
- Receive land use conversion credit for MS4 permit

Tree Preservation and Planting Fund

Proposal:

- Changes to Disbursement Procedure
 - Fund administered by UFMD
 - Revise selection process to create an inter-agency panel to review proposed projects

Implementation of 2011 Recommendations

- Recommendation 8: Examine if the Comprehensive Plan, Policy Plan objectives for developing public facilities could be amended in a manner that increases tree preservation efforts.

Implementation:

- Determined that a Policy Plan amendment was not required to ensure tree preservation during the design and development of public facilities.

Next Steps

- Continued workshops targeted to industry, in-house project managers and County project contractors.
- Proposal for UFMD to utilize the Tree Preservation and Planting Fund for planting projects on County properties.
- County agencies and stakeholders will be convened by the Tree Commission and UFMD to develop specific recommendations and partnerships to advance urban forest management strategies.

Additional Information

For additional information, please contact

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