

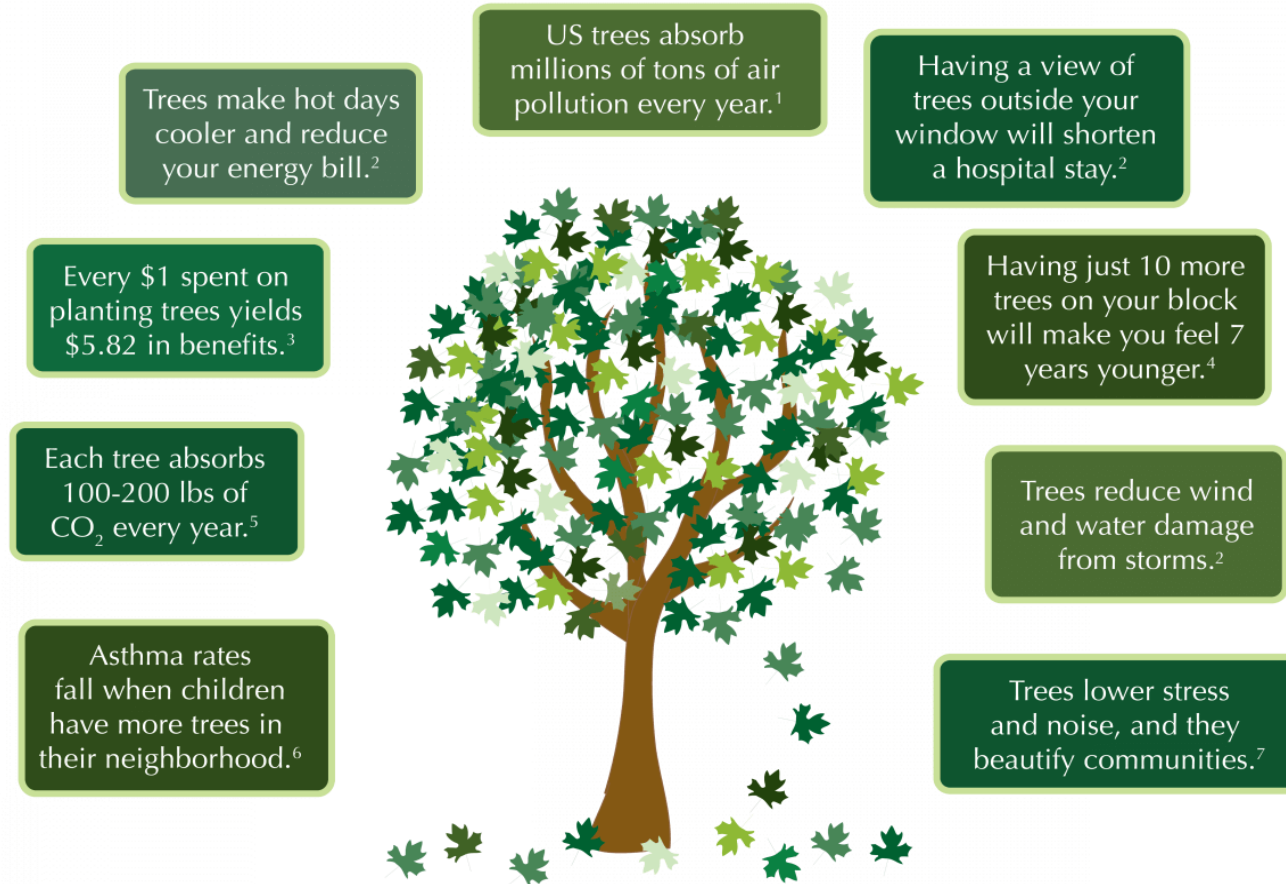
TREE RESOLUTION & ORDINANCE

Takoma Park City Council

July 2020

THE MULTISOLVING POWER OF TREES

Just by planting a tree, you can help solve multiple problems and make your community a better place to live.



References

- ¹ https://www.fs.fed.us/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2014/nrs_2014_nowak_001.pdf
- ² http://www.fs.fed.us/openspace/fote/reports/nrs-62_sustaining_americas_urban.pdf
- ³ <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/06/160614212452.htm>
- ⁴ <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep11610>
- ⁵ http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/programs/uesd/uep/products/cufr_339_APWA_Reporter_August_2003.pdf
- ⁶ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7374078.stm>
- ⁷ <http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2015-5-september-october/green-life/why-urban-trees-solve-so-many-our-problems?>

In Takoma Park:

Carbon Storage:

\$4,278,690

Air Pollution Removal:

\$234,072

Avoided Runoff: \$76,473



climateinteractive.org/multisolving

Process

- Council priorities: revise Tree Ordinance, set tree canopy goals, improve outreach
- Spring 2019: tree canopy assessment, resident survey with 500+ responses, public workshop
- Work sessions on issues June, July, Sept. 2019
- Work sessions on ordinance, Oct. 16, 23, 30 on specific issues
- Ordinance changes discussed Nov. 13, 2019 and Feb. 12, 2020
- July 2020 final work session and votes on ordinance and resolution

Main Topics for Tonight

- Tree resolution
- Racial equity -- ensuring equity is addressed
- Legislative findings (12.12.010)
- Reports to Council (role of UFM) (12.12.140)
- Tree replacement/replanting scheme (12.12.100/chart) and implications for long-term tree canopy citywide

Council Priorities

- Review and improve tree ordinance
 - More user-friendly and easier-to-understand process
- Establish tree canopy goals
 - Support maintenance and growth of urban forest through programs and education
 - Identify opportunities for tree retention, maintenance, and growth
 - Greater maintenance of mature trees
 - More plantings on City and private property

First, Review of Previous Discussions

- October 2019 Work Session 1:
 - Clearer & Faster Process and Information
 - Tree Impact Assessment
 - Tree Protection Plan
 - Appeals
- October 2019 Work Session 2:
 - Hazardous Trees and Permit Process
 - Tree Rating Chart, Replanting Requirements
 - Replacement Species
 - Tree Canopy Goals
- October 2019 Work Session 3:
 - Fees
 - Pre-planting Programs & Incentives
 - Education/Outreach
 - More Planting & Better Maintenance
 - Funding
 - Reporting & Evaluation

Some Key Choices to Date

- Bring permit process online
- Focus on urban forest, not just tree permits
- Focus more on native, climate resilient species, redo species list
- Allow branch trimming 10% not 5%
- All tree removals get a permit -no more waivers—and some have no replacement requirement
- Entire tree is hazardous if hazard cannot be corrected
- Revised factors (criteria) for tree removal permit decision and appeals
- Revised tree rating chart, first step in replacement requirements

Tree Resolution

- Move from regulating individual trees to more comprehensive focus on urban forest protection
- Budget implications: UFM position is full time with permit load; outreach may require different skills
- Resolved clauses:
 - Urban forest goals
 - Principles
 - Implementing actions

Urban Forest Goals

- No net loss of the urban forest canopy (about 60%)
 - Increased biodiversity (such as species, size)
 - Increased planting of native and climate-adapted species
 - Increase tree canopy coverage in neighborhoods and focus on more equitably distributed tree canopy over time, to extent feasible
-
- **Tree canopy assessment recs:** 60% is robust for this area; preserving existing canopy is critical; residents hold the key; continue mapping and inventory

Principles

- Important role of urban forest in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience
- Recognize ecological services provided
- Trees and tree canopy are community resources as well as responsibility
- Focus on addressing inequities in tree planting and coverage
- Expanded resident collaboration and outreach, education, and engagement
- Specific proactive efforts to protect and improve the tree canopy

Implementing Actions

- Reassess canopy every 3 years with LIDAR
- Update species planting list and plan for periodic review
- Align urban forest plans and actions with climate, housing, public space, racial equity efforts
- Assess public and private programs and target planting efforts to promote robust tree canopy
- Pilot project, collaborating with community in area of lesser tree cover, to increase tree health and coverage
- Move forward as quickly as practical, given budget and staff capacity

Racial Equity Considerations

- Unequal tree canopy distribution in the city -- lower tree canopy in Wards 4 and 6 (52% and 44%, respectively). Other wards range from 58% to 68%, with most around 60%
- Neighborhoods with more single-family homes generally have more canopy compared to neighborhoods with more multifamily and commercial properties
- Ward 4, 5, and 6 have the highest percentages of people of color in the city
- National-level research showing inequities in tree canopy distribution – fewer trees and hotter temperatures in neighborhoods with lower incomes and more people of color, racial inequities in distribution of trees on public land
- Benefits of trees (health, property values, air quality, lower energy costs, etc) – also burdens (allergies, maintenance and removal costs, etc)
- 75% of tree canopy survey respondents were from Wards 1, 2 , and 3

Initial Proposals to Improve Equity

- Emphasis on racial equity in the ordinance (legislative findings)
- Emphasis in the resolution's goal, principles, actions
- Prioritize neighborhoods with more residents of color and fewer trees
- Greater collaboration and listening to these residents about their needs and next steps
- Pilot project focused on increased outreach, opportunities for planting, collaborative planning
- Focus on and encouragement of public and private plantings in neighborhoods with fewer trees
- Use of bulk buy, other strategies to reduce cost and encourage planting

Purpose of Ordinance (Legislative Findings)

- Legislative findings aligned with tree canopy goals
- Racial equity as priority
- Diverse, resilient, sustainable urban forest
- Community and individual stewardship
- Focus on natives and climate-adapted trees
- Community value and ownership of urban forest

Reports to Council

- Annual report focusing on:
 - Description of urban forest condition and progress meeting goals, including addressing inequities
 - Number of permits, trees removed, trees planted, other
 - Education and outreach efforts
 - Any needed Council actions
- Master plan every 5-6 years, with:
 - Canopy assessment using LIDAR data
 - Planting plans, including for trees removed
- Species list for replanting revised and maintained
- Other issues addressed in resolution

Replanting Requirements

Tree canopy about 58% in 2018-- Significant challenges to trees from climate change/weather effects, infestations

For no net loss of canopy, need to replant canopy to replace trees that die or are removed

Revised Tree Rating Chart (12.12.100D):

- First of two steps to establish replacement requirements
- New chart has 4 factors on a 5 point scale, 0-20

Proposed Replacement Requirements

- No replacement requirement for removal of trees (expansion from waiver system) that are:
 - Dead, hazard, or in active decline (new)
 - Impacting a permanent structure
- Half the replanting requirements for removing undesirable species (no change)
- Higher percentage replanting requirements for healthier trees (same as current ordinance)
- Encourage replantings and donation option offered (not in ordinance)
- Implies shift in focus from individual to community responsibility for some replanting

Fees

- “Fee in lieu” replanting fee: Adjust to reflect actual cost of replacement and 2-year maintenance (12.12.100E)
- Fees set in regulation ; staff propose raising replacement in lieu fee from \$175 to \$300
- One permit fee for all applicants (\$50) – all tree removals, TIA, TPP

Tree Removal Replanting Requirement Recommendations

Existing

Total Rating of Tree to Be Removed	Percentage of Basal Area to Be Replaced	
	Undesirable Species	All Other Trees
6 to 15	0.5%	1%
16 to 24	1%	2%
25 to 30	1.5%	3%

Lowest rating: 6
Highest rating: 30

Proposed

Total Rating of Tree to Be Removed	Percentage of Basal Area to Be Replaced	
	Undesirable Species	All Other Trees
4 to 9	none	none
10 to 16	0.5%	1%
17 to 20	1.5%	3%

Lowest rating: 4 (ratings 4-9 require no replacements)
Highest rating: 20

Potential Impact of Changes

- Eliminating replanting requirements at lower end of range significantly reduces the number of required replantings, and would result in reduction of long-term canopy unless other steps are taken
- Staff estimates indicate about 2/3 of replantings required now would not be required in proposal (based on April 2019-2020 analysis--129 required instead of 382)
- Replacement requirements for higher-rated trees would reduce, but not eliminate, this gap
- One for one replacement of dying (not dead) trees would reduce, but not eliminate, this gap
- A majority of applicants currently pay in-lieu fee rather than replant; higher fee might encourage more private planting

Addressing the Gap

- Address in resolution and in ordinance
- More focus on community ownership of trees
- Explore incentives for more private plantings to meet canopy goals
- If lower replanting requirements are adopted, City could make up the difference through public and private plantings and maintaining health of mature trees to maintain canopy
- This has budget and staffing implications

END OF SLIDE SHOW

Background slides follow

Revised Factors (Criteria) (12.12.080)

- General health and condition of tree
- Age, size, species, or other outstanding quality
- Impact of reduced tree cover on property and neighborhood
- Impact to people or properties or utilities if tree fails
- Compelling reasons for removal such as hardship and lack of alternative
- Necessity of removal to achieve proposed goals

Tree Rating Chart

CRITERION	VALUE			RATING
	5 or 4	3 or 2	1	
<u>Roots and Root Collar</u>	<u>Roots are healthy.</u> <u>Root collar clearly visible and healthy.</u>	<u>Some root damage/decay.</u> <u>Root collar is somewhat buried and/or some root collar damage/decay.</u>	<u>Significant root damage/decay.</u> <u>Root collar is buried and/or significant root collar damage/decay.</u>	
<u>Trunk</u>	<u>Sound and solid.</u>	<u>Sections of bark missing. Some trunk/codominant stem damage/decay.</u>	<u>Extensive bark loss. Significant trunk/codominant stem damage/decay.</u>	
<u>Crown/Branches</u>	<u>Healthy, full and balanced crown.</u>	<u>Crown has some health issues, is not entirely full, and/or is somewhat unbalanced. One major/structural limb is dead/dying and/or several smaller limbs are dead/dying.</u>	<u>Crown has significant health issues, is very sparse and/or is very unbalanced. Two or more major/structural limbs are dead/dying and/or many smaller limbs are dead/dying.</u>	
<u>Tree Health and Species Profile</u>	<u>Tree vigor is high.</u> <u>Foliage is healthy.</u>	<u>Tree vigor is normal. Foliage shows some signs of biotic/abiotic damage. Species is somewhat prone to failure.</u>	<u>Tree vigor is low. Foliage shows significant signs of biotic/abiotic damage. Species is very prone to failure.</u>	
			Total Rating	