City of Austin Draft Cemetery Master Plan
Tree Care Highlights

Definitions

Historic Trees: Individual trees and other plants within the cemeteries are considered historic if they were either growing or planted within the period of significance of a cemetery, or if they are part of a pattern of vegetation from the period of significance.

Protected Trees: Any tree 19" in diameter at breast height, ~4.5' from grade (DBH), regardless of species or condition

Heritage Trees: as having a diameter of 24 inches or more in DBH, and is one of the following species: Texas ash, bald cypress, American elm, cedar elm, Texas madrone, bigtooth maple, all oaks, pecan, Arizona walnut, and Eastern black walnut.

Preservation

- Preserve historic trees by developing a tree protection, preservation, planting, and maintenance plan for each cemetery in collaboration with an ISA Certified Arborist and PARD Urban Forestry
- Fertilize trees annually with a slow release organic fertilizer, preferably compost, as determined necessary by soil testing
- Mulch all trees, covering as much of the Critical Root Zone (CRZ) as possible, while keeping a mulch free area around trunks
- Perform bulk density testing of CRZs to determine levels of soil compaction, then aerate using an air-spade as needed.
- Maintain historic trees, and explore all options for mitigating risk before removal
- If conflicts arise between a tree and a marker, consider the temporary relocation of the marker rather than the removal of the tree
- Inspect cemetery trees after large storms to look for tree damage
- Prune trees only as necessary to reduce risk or improve tree health using the following prioritization levels:
    - 1st Priority – prune for safety
    - 2nd Priority – prune to preserve health of the tree including improving structure
    - 3rd Priority – Prune for aesthetics. Special Note: Topping of crape myrtles shall not be performed.

- Ensure that new construction, markers, and plantings, and regular grounds maintenance activities do not negatively impact root systems of existing trees. Post oaks are called out for extra protection.
- Implement a cyclical tree inspection and maintenance program
- Educate cemetery maintenance staff about the importance of trees and their care

Removals
- Tree removals will only be done for safety reasons when no other solutions are possible
- Removing any tree 3"in DBH or greater, regardless of condition, will require approval from PARD Forestry
- All removals will be documented in the tree inventory for replacement purposes
- Historic trees will be replaced with the same species, when possible, and replanted as close to the original location as possible.
- Replacement trees will be documented with GIS technology, and added to the tree inventory

Planting
- New trees will be planted in locations noted in the plans for individual cemeteries
- Appropriate native or adapted species will be planted for the particular soil types of each cemetery
- Prior to excavation, sites will be investigated for subsurface cultural resources
- Alternative planting methods, such as the mounding technique, may be used to plant in areas where excavation may damage historic or cultural resources

Tree Inventory
- A complete inventory of all trees and stumps in the five cemeteries was completed as a separate part of the master plan process on recommendation from the PARD Urban Forestry Program.
- Attributes recorded included: site type, utilities, species, DBH, multi stem, vigor, structure, observations on any other tree issues, further inspection, and tag number
- Data gathered in this inventory will be used to identify historic trees to preserve, develop maintenance and planting plans, and identify vegetation patterns within individual cemeteries
- Tree condition was recorded, and this information has already been used to develop a scope of work for tree maintenance. This work has already begun.
- The tree inventory data will be updated to reflect changes