

Austin's Urban Forest and CodeNEXT

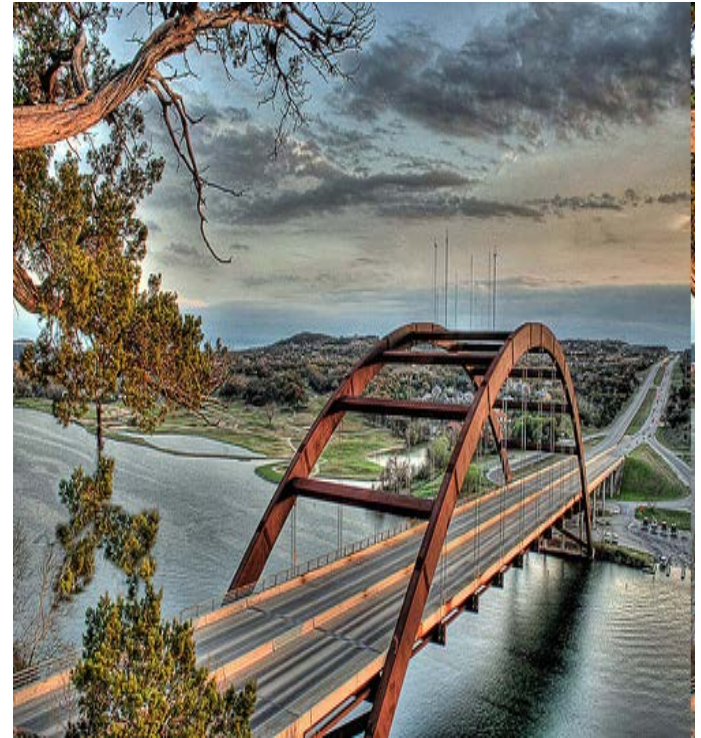
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Urban Forestry Subcommittee
Environmental Commission

Keith Mars, City Arborist



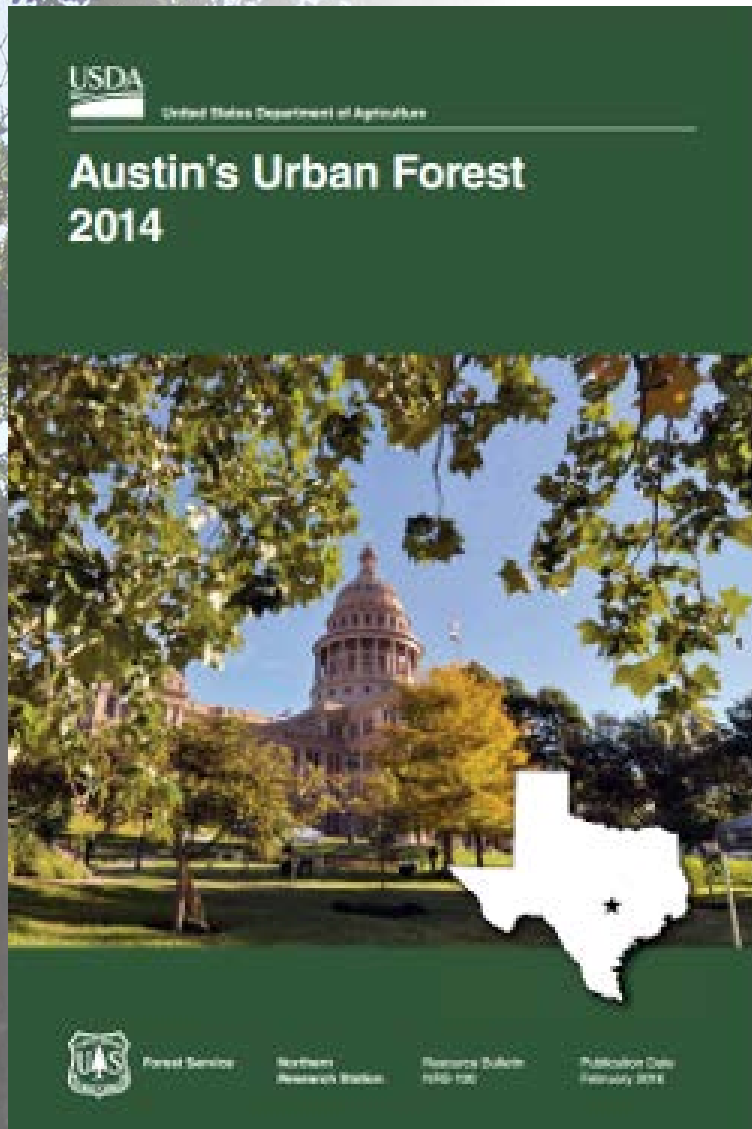
Tree Ordinance History

- First adopted in 1983- Protected Tree Ordinance
- 2010 Heritage Tree Ordinance



Preserve the character of Austin's urban forest,
protect its current health, and increase it's longevity

Seeing the Forest as Infrastructure



- Paradigm shift –beyond aesthetics
- First-of-a-kind study
- Urban forest structure/value
 1. 34 million trees
 2. 31% canopy coverage
- Compensatory value \$16 billion
- Less than 1% of all trees are Protected size or larger

Existing Code Challenges

1. Code is unorganized, lacks clarity, and has redundancy.
2. Administrative process is cumbersome.
3. Applicability of code is unclear.
4. Public tree code is another code chapter.
5. Code undervalued importance of small existing trees.

Solutions

Code Clarity, Administration, and Organization

- The proposed code includes:
 - An intent statement, clearly stated applicability, and simplified organization.
 - Reduces needless wording and language that could be perceived as conflicting.
 - Consolidated into three easy-to-follow sections: General Provisions, General Administration for Regulated Trees, and Heritage Trees.



Solutions

Public Trees

- Public trees previously addressed in Chapter 6-3 of City Code has been consolidated into the Land Development Code and clarified.

Smaller Existing Trees and Planted Trees

- Codifying that existing trees less than 19 inches in diameter will be counted towards satisfaction for mitigation on single-family property.
- Trees 8-18 inches in diameter are recognized as Keystone Trees as they represent the majority of our trees in the city and need to be preserved when possible.



Questions?



**<http://austintexas.gov/departments/city-arborist>
Keith.mars@austintexas.gov
(512) 974-2755**