

#19
02-09-06

RESOLUTION NO. 20060209-019

WHEREAS, the urban forest provides significant health, economic, ecological and aesthetic benefits to the City of Austin and its residents; and

WHEREAS, there are a number of stakeholders with an interest in protecting and managing the urban forest, including but not limited to various City of Austin departments, Austin Energy, the Urban Forestry Board, neighborhood groups and associations, and business professionals involved in landscape architecture and landscape maintenance; and

WHEREAS, there is a distinct advantage to having these stakeholders work together in a taskforce format to review, develop and recommend to Council policies and procedures related to the City of Austin's tree trimming and tree removal programs; and

WHEREAS, the Urban Forestry Board has recommended an Urban Forestry Inventory as the starting point for an effective overall Urban Forest Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, insufficient research exists on innovative, cost-effective approaches to protecting trees, burying utility lines and planting new street trees; **NOW THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City manager is directed to assemble a taskforce consisting of stakeholders with an interest in protecting and managing the urban forest, including but not limited to various City of Austin departments, Austin Energy, the Urban Forestry Board, neighborhood groups and associations, and business professionals involved in landscape architecture and landscape maintenance. The goal of this taskforce will be to review, develop and recommend to Council policies and procedures related to the City of Austin's tree trimming and tree removal programs. The City Manager and the stakeholder task force shall present proposals to the Land Use-Transportation Subcommittee within 60 days.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the City Manager is directed to analyze the Urban Forest Inventory Plan as recommended by the Urban Forestry Board and report to the Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee on the costs and benefits of implementing such a plan within 60 days; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to develop a proposal for a national competition to develop the most innovative, cost-effective way to bury utility lines, promote the planting of street trees and protect existing mature urban trees. Funding for the winning competitor may come from funds for burying utility lines that were previously appropriated by the City Council but never spent. The approach presented by the winning team shall be implemented as a pilot project in Austin. The City Manager shall recommend the members of a jury for the competition that should include a representative from Austin Energy, representatives from other utility companies that have above-ground lines, a neighborhood member of the citizen's task force and representatives from national urban planning organizations.

The City Manager and the stakeholder task force shall present proposals to the Land Use-Transportation Subcommittee within 60 days.

ADOPTED: February 9, 2006

ATTEST:

Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk