

Parks and Recreation Department
Special Event Organizer Access and Use Submittal – Urban Forest Impact Assessment

Purpose

Urban Forest Impact Assessments are required for all special events that occur on parkland in order to prevent unintentional negative impacts to public trees.

Goal

Trees are included on the forefront of event planning with the goal of an overall sustainable urban forest.

General tree preservation information

1. Trees in parks that are larger than two (2) inches in diameter when measured at four and a half (4.5) feet above grade are protected by City of Austin ordinance.
2. Individuals whom cause damage are liable to the city for the loss of value of the tree and/or the cost to repair damage. Damage is defined as injury to a tree, including its critical root zone.
3. Pruning trees is not allowed.
4. The critical root zone (CRZ) is defined as a radius around the tree trunk equal to one foot of ground for every one inch of tree trunk diameter when measured at four and a half (4.5) feet above ground.
5. The following are impacts which are not allowed within the CRZ:
 - a. Soil compaction, which can occur through some of the following activities:
 - i. Storing materials
 - ii. Driving vehicles
 - iii. High volume of foot traffic
 - b. Soil cut, which can occur through some of the following activities:
 - i. Digging
 - ii. Trenching
 - iii. Excavating
 - c. Soil fill, which can occur through some of the following activities:
 - i. Placement of excess soil
6. Events that propose or may potentially impact the CRZ must supply information regarding how the impacts are to be proactively mitigated.

Example Conflicts and Example Mitigation Measures

1. Foot traffic may be allowed to route through a CRZ if the portion of the route that goes through the CRZ is mulched with 4" of mulch.
2. Vehicular traffic may be allowed to route through a CRZ if the portion of the route that goes through the CRZ is mulched with 8" of mulch and plywood is laid down over the mulch, and/or superior grounds protection technology such as LD panel or terraplas decking installed with the City Property Manager approval through the site planning process.
3. Tree protection fencing installed around critical root zones.

4. Tent canopies may not make contact with, or must be relocated out of the tree canopy.
5. If vehicular traffic can't proceed down a route due to the presence of a tree canopy, the route must be relocated. The City property manager in many instances has pre-approved access routes for vehicular contact.
6. If high volumes of foot traffic are expected, the CRZ of all trees in the area must be mulched with 4" of mulch.

NOTE – If an event is approved to mitigate such conflicts, the organizer should be prepared to fully remove all mulch post-event, unless otherwise PRE-APPROVED.

Instructions

Event organizers must submit information that allows City Staff to conduct an Urban Forest Impact Assessment. Assessments are to be drawn on cad-like aerial images at appropriate scale to view all required information. Multiple maps may be necessary. See template provided for guidance.

Site plans should be submitted containing the following minimum information:

1. Property boundary or event perimeter line.
 - a. North arrow.
 - b. Scale bar.
 - c. All items on grounds should be documented, for example:
 - i. Tents, stages, trucks, activations, decking, vendors, tables, etc.
2. Aerial image maps should show the location of all existing trees greater than 2" diameter within the anticipated use area.
 - a. Circles drawn concentrically around tree dots which accurately represent critical root zones within the anticipated use area (note that some tree trunks will be outside of the use area but will have critical root zones that extend into the use area)
3. Load in/out route (include width of route).
 - a. Load transport methods (hand cart, delivery truck, etc)
 - b. Notation for vertical clearance needs for both event set up materials/equipment and load transport equipment
4. Materials list for load in/load out (mulch, decking, etc). Superior preferred materials are required and must be approved by the City Property Manager.
5. Material staging location.
6. All activities that might occur within the critical root zone must be specified.