

Public Notification Process

Pertains to impact and or removal of trees growing on City of Austin Parkland

Intent

Citizens, interest groups, Boards and Commissions, and key City of Austin staff should be better informed about impact to, or removal of significant publicly owned trees. The following notification process is intended to supplement existing City Code and policies.

Current Requirements

Policies and procedures must comply with City Code Chapter 6-3 Trees and Vegetation and Chapter 25-8 Subsection B Tree and Natural Area Protection, Division 2 Protected trees and Division 3 Heritage trees. In addition requirements are posted in rules (policies) such as the Environmental Criteria Manual and the Transportation Criteria Manual. Notification processes related to removal of public trees exist with the Urban Forestry Program of the Parks and Recreation Department, the City Arborist Office of the Planning and Development Review Department, and the Code Compliance Department. Processes may include practices such as signage, identification with ribbons and paint, and door hanger notices.

Notification Process Enhancements

The following improvements are recommended:

1. Staff Briefings will be provided to the Urban Forestry Board and other applicable Boards and Commissions that request briefings regarding Heritage trees that are in poor shape and recommended for removal. These trees do not pose an immanent public safety threat.
2. Information for all construction and planning projects summarizing tree impacts will be posted in a publicly accessible internet forum
3. Project managers (of construction projects) will notify key interest groups about project activities that could impact or require removal of trees
4. Administrative approval documents (permits) for work on Protected and Heritage trees will be posted in a publicly accessible internet forum
5. Independent professional opinions may be solicited (contracted, or purchased) by interest groups. All professional opinions that are provided to the Parks and Recreation Department, meet industry accepted standards, and are adequately documented will be posted for public information.

Expected Outcome

It is anticipated that improved communication will result in additional public input and overall transparency in the decision making process.

Decision Process

The following flow chart illustrates how decisions will be made for different forms of notification:

Note: The following flow chart is intended to be utilized as a decision aid only for those trees that are not included in a construction project and do not pose an imminent public safety risk

