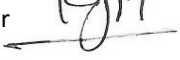


Diane Nichols Tradd
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

Kevin E. Coughlin
Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kevin J. Murphy, City Manager 

FROM: Diane N. Tradd, Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

SUBJECT: UPDATE TO COUNCIL MOTION OF 1/30/18 BY COUNCILOR ELLIOTT
REQUEST CITY MANAGER APPLY FOR FUNDING FROM GREENING COMMUNITIES PROGRAM FROM
THE STATE FOR PLANTING OF TREE PROGRAM

Several questions related to trees were raised by the City Council at the meeting on March 6, 2018 in response to the Greening Communities Program:

- The Department of Public Works (DPW) manages ongoing tree maintenance through in-house staff or through contracted vendors. The DPW Commissioner is the Tree Warden by default. DPW has one Tree Climber on staff; this staffer identifies problem trees, works with the utility companies to coordinate pruning and removals, and provides recommendations for the DPW Commissioner regarding tree removal. DPW Laborers are assigned to assist the Tree Climber as needed. When tree removal is required the average cost per tree is approximately \$1,500, and is often funded through several operational budgets.
- When City trees are identified for removal, DPW will post a tree hearing notice on the tree. The notice is forwarded to the Neighborhood Planner in the Department of Planning and Development, and is forwarded to the neighborhood group leaders where that tree is located and they are asked to share the information with their email lists. This is an attempt to give members of the public the opportunity to attend the hearings and ask questions about the reason for removal and other relevant questions.
- M&M Burbank is contracted for all tree removal, pruning, and spraying that exceeds DPW's in-house capabilities. They are also called in to supplement DPW efforts during times of unprecedented need, such as following the recent severe storms which brought trees and limbs down across the City. Weza Landscaping is contracted for landscaping at City cemeteries. Their contract includes small tree care, removals and plantings.
- When trees are removed, due to deterioration or storm damage, DPW works with DPD and the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust to try and replant new trees if the location is appropriate or plant trees in another location in the City. DPW replaces trees 1 for 1 in accordance with the City's tree ordinance.
- After the recent severe storms many trees and large limbs came down across the City. The downtown area had trees along Palmer and Merrimack Street damaged during the storm with large limbs coming down on several trees. At this time the trees have been inspected by DPW and some still require additional pruning but remain in place. Until the warmer weather arrives it cannot be determined if the trees will survive the damage.
- DPW and DPD will monitor the tree situation in downtown closely and work on a replacement plan as needed. In addition to the trees damaged by the storms this winter, we also have 7 shade trees outside the Leo Roy Garage on Market Street that are in a state of decline and will require replacement this year.

DNT/ns
3/23/18

cc: Jim Donison, DPW Commissioner
Yovani Baez-Rose, Neighborhood Planner