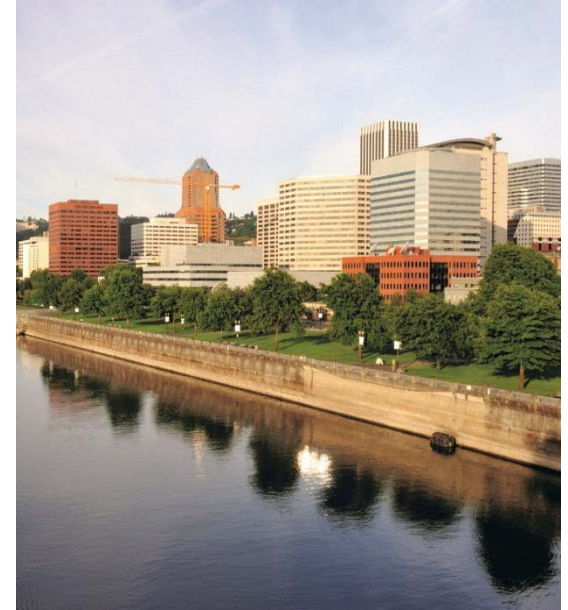


Report to Council Year One Implementation Citywide Tree Project

March 30, 2016

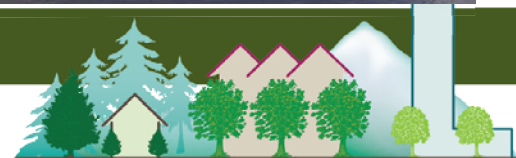


CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON - PORTLAND TREES

Bureau of Development Services • Portland Parks & Recreation

1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 5000 • Portland, Oregon 97201

Phone: 503-823-TREE • www.portlandoregon.gov/trees



Overview

- Title 11, Trees became effective Jan 1, 2015
- Joint BDS and Parks Urban Forestry report on 1st year of implementation:
 - Implementation activities and accomplishments
 - Data report findings
 - Challenges
 - Next steps
 - Resource needs



Overview

In the packet:

- Report to Council Memo - Year One Implementation of Citywide Tree Project
- Exhibit A: Outreach Plan Summary and Outreach Log
- Exhibit B: Tree Code Oversight Advisory Committee Recommendations Report
- Exhibit C: Citywide Tree Project Data Report, January 1 – December 31, 2015

Implementation Activities & Accomplishments



Staffing, Coordination, and Program Development

- **Bureau coordination and customer service improvements** — Single point of contact created, Parks UF staff located at 1900 building to provide tree expertise for inspections and development review
- **New Parks UF programs** — CIP processes, agency programmatic permits, and on-line street tree pruning
- **Major staff training effort** — 30+ sessions, 6 bureaus

Implementation Activities & Accomplishments

Public Outreach

- Training sessions held – 22 sessions held for neighborhood and other groups, development customers, tree care providers, other agencies
- Outreach plan developed and implemented
 - Tree website (www.portlandoregon.gov/trees) and hotline (503-823-TREE)
 - Press releases and articles
 - Letters and phone calls to historically underrepresented communities
 - Fact sheets, including translated versions
 - A “Call before you cut” refrigerator magnet
 - Ad displays in community newspapers
 - Social media posts
 - Tabling at various community events

See *Exhibit A* for details.

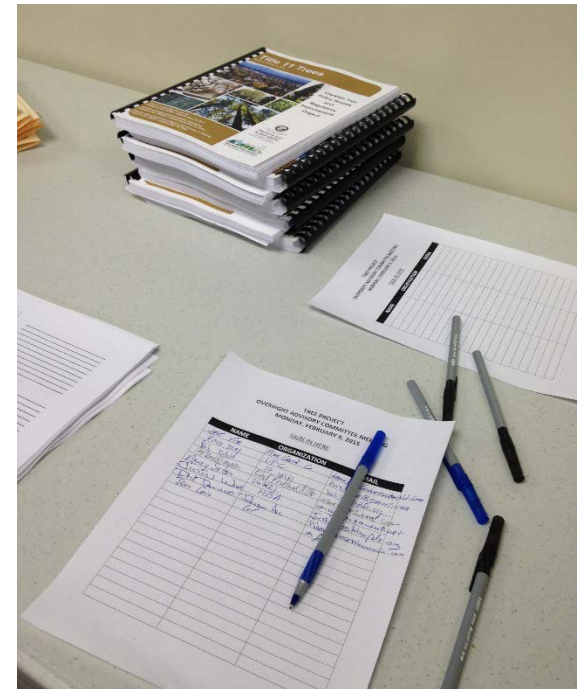


Implementation Activities & Accomplishments

Tree Code Oversight Advisory Committee

- Formed by Commissioner Fritz; jointly staffed by BDS and Parks UF
- Held 14 public meetings (Dec 2014 – Dec 2015)
- Recommendations Report issued Feb 2016:
 - Implementation successful – notable improvement in customer service and clarity in regulations
 - Outcomes have not met community expectations; call for code amendments
 - Primarily reflects views of final 8 members

See Exhibit B for details.



Implementation Activities & Accomplishments

Administrative Rule and Code Amendments

- Administrative Rule: *Replanting Requirements for Tree Removal on Private Property, City-Owned and Managed Sites, and Public Rights-of-Way*, filed October 19, 2015.
- Title 11 code amendments - Preservation of large trees in development situations (private property), City Council March, 2016
- RICAP 8 – Includes technical and clarification Title 11 code amendments, expected at City Council October, 2016

Implementation Activities & Accomplishments

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Code Issue Tracking – Joint bureau tracking of code questions and issues to inform current and future code updates
- Data Collection and Reporting
 - Increased capacity through TRACS programming and other tracking efforts
 - Citywide Tree Project Data Report (1/1/15 – 12/31/15) – Exhibit C
 - Development Permits on Private Property
 - Non-Development Tree Permits
 - Parks UF Development Reviews and City Property Development
 - Parks UF Customer Service

Data Report Findings



Development Permits – Private Property

- Code applies to relatively low % of permits overall (15.7%) and commercial permits (3.9%)
- More significant for residential permit subtypes: new construction (63%), additions (27.6%), demolitions (34.2%)
- About 1/5 of residential sites exempt from tree preservation due to site size (< 5,000 sf); 1/3 of commercial sites exempt due to zoning
- Rate of planting and preservation similar for new single family construction pre- and post-Title 11
 - 2014 NSFR permits: 86.1% had planting, 21.8% had preservation
 - 2015 NSFR permits: 85% had planting, 19.7% had preservation

Data Report Findings

Development Permits – Private Property

- On permits with preservation or planting requirements, payment in lieu highest on residential demolition permits
 - 43% of residential demolitions paid fee in lieu of preservation (86 permits)
 - 18% of new single family residential paid fee in lieu of preservation (17 permits)
 - 2% of new single family paid fee in lieu of planting (7 permits)
- Low % of large canopy trees planted (13%), vs. small and medium canopy (87%)
- Approx 60% of inventoried trees were preserved (1,677 trees)
- Average size of trees preserved and removed was 17 inches DBH



Data Report Findings

Non-Development Tree Permits

- Significant increase in tree permit activity in 2015
 - Increase of 34% in permit applications; 26% increase in public inquiries
 - Private tree removal applications increased more than 4 times from 2014 (470 applications) to 2015 (2,193 applications)
- Type A (non-discretionary) permits accounted for over 95% of private and street tree removals in 2015
- Type B permits often require less than tree-for-tree replacement
- Large canopy and evergreen trees often replaced with smaller, deciduous species
 - Private tree removals: net loss of 1,051 large canopy trees; net gain of 556 small canopy trees; net loss of 748 evergreen species
- Parks UF pursued 699 code compliance complaints; 22 resulted in violations (enforcement was “soft” during first 6 months)

Data Report Findings

Customer Service

- UF intake staff met response goals for 99% of public inquiries
- UF Tree Inspectors met goals for initial inspections on tree permits at least 60% and as much as 86% of the time, depending on type of permit (similar to 2014, despite significant workload increase)
- Customer Service Survey (Dec. 2015) – focused on non-development tree permit customers
 - 60% rated customer service good or outstanding, vs. 23% rated poor or needs improvement
 - Most said improved from prior experience



Challenges



Overall Canopy Impacts

- Data suggest that trees being planted will not fully replace tree canopy lost, resulting in long-term canopy implications.
- Questions about ability of tree preservation standards to incentivize preservation of high-quality trees.
- Data to assess long-term effects of Title 11 on the urban forest are limited.

Challenges

Implementation Challenges

- Applicants are relied upon to provide accurate tree plans for most development permits (no arborist report required).
- Building inspectors are expected to confirm tree-related information on development sites.
- Possible unintended incentives to remove trees during demolition phases.
- Compliance is largely complaint-driven in non-development.
- Parks UF staff workloads result in response rates at less than acceptable levels in some cases.

Resource Needs



Established positions

- Council authorized one permanent BDS Associate Planner position
- Council authorized 2 Parks UF Tree Technicians and 2.5 Parks UF Tree Inspectors
- Additional temporary Parks UF staff: one Tree Technician and 2 Tree Inspectors

Future needs

- Additional Parks UF Tree Technician, Tree Inspector, and policy staff needed for work volume

Next Steps



- Parks UF review of planting compliance for tree permits (currently complaint driven)
- BPS led future code amendment package

Amendment Project



- BPS-led code amendment project
 - with Parks and BDS
 - Bureau and public stakeholders

- Central project staff funding from Urban Forestry Trust funds
 - No additional budget request

Amendment Project

Categories for possible amendments (handout)

- Tree removal (non-development)
- Tree preservation (development)
- Consistency between development and non-development code/rules
- Mitigation requirements
- Consistency and interaction with other codes
- Technical items and minor changes

Recommendation

Accept Report to Council on Year One Implementation of the Citywide Tree Project

- Report Memo
- Exhibit A - Outreach Plan Summary & Log
- Exhibit B - Oversight Advisory Committee Report
- Exhibit C – Data Report

