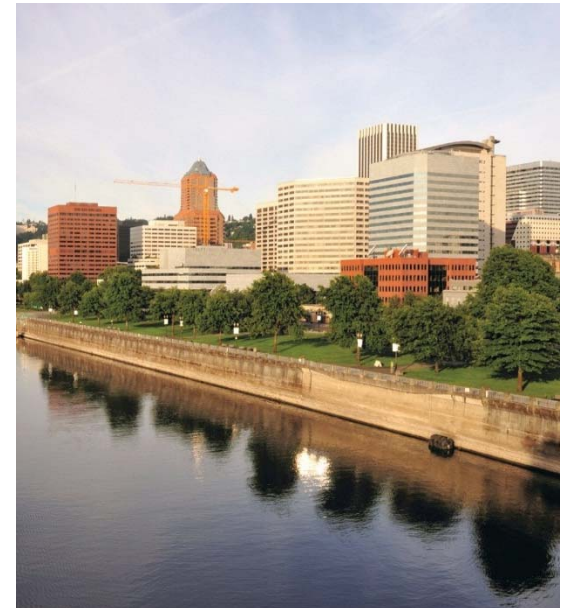


# Draft Report to City Council Year One Implementation Citywide Tree Project

Presented to DRAC & UFC, February 18, 2016

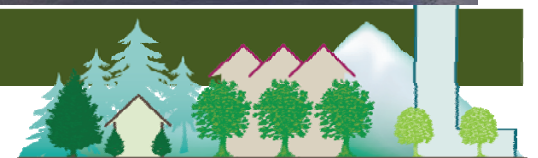


**CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON - PORTLAND TREES**

**Bureau of Development Services • Portland Parks & Recreation**

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

Phone: 503-823-TREE • [www.portlandoregon.gov/trees](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees)



# Overview



- Title 11, Trees became effective Jan 1, 2015
- BDS and Parks Urban Forestry to provide joint report to City Council on 1<sup>st</sup> year of implementation – March 30, 2 pm
- DRAC and Urban Forestry Commission review and comment welcome

# Overview

In the packet:

- Draft report to City Council – Summary of Year One Implementation of Citywide Tree Project
- Attachment 1: Outreach Plan Summary and Outreach Log
- Attachment 2: Draft Data Report
- Attachment 3: Tree Code Oversight Advisory Committee Recommendations Report

# 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 and 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

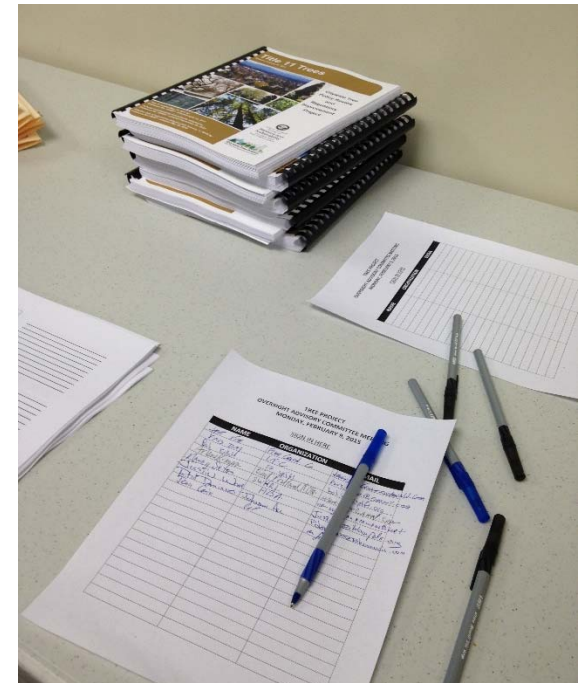
- Training sessions held – 22 sessions held for neighborhood and other groups, development customers, tree care providers, other agencies
- Outreach plan developed and implemented
  - Tree website ([www.portlandoregon.gov/trees](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees)) and hotline (503-823-TREE)
  - Press 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



# 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



# 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 on preservation of large trees, City Council March 3, 2016
- RICAP 8 – Includes technical and clarification Title 11 code amendments, expected at City Council June, 2016

# Implementation Activities & Accomplishments

## Monitoring

- 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
  - Draft Citywide Tree Project Data Report (1/1/15 – 12/31/15)
    - 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 sites exempt from tree preservation due to site size less than 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
- 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
  - Street tree planting: 3,696 trees permitted; 52% small canopy; 94% deciduous
- 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 for 60% of permits (similar to 2014, despite significant workload increase)
- Customer Service Survey - 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.
- Inability of tree preservation standards to incentivize preservation of high-quality trees.
- Limited planting space in rights of way restricts long-term tree health and canopy growth.
- Adequate data to assess long-term trends in the urban forest not currently available.

# Challenges

## Implementation Challenges

- Applicants are relied upon to provide accurate tree plans for most development permits.
- Building inspectors are expected to confirm tree-related information on development sites.
- Compliance is largely complaint-driven.
- Possible unintended incentives to remove trees during demolition phases.
- Parks UF staff workloads result in response rates at less than acceptable levels in some cases.

# Next Steps



- BPS led future code amendment package
  - Tree preservation standards, payment in lieu, and exemptions
  - Incentives for tree preservation and flexible development options
  - Discouraging unnecessary tree removal (minor ground-disturbance and demolitions)
  - Incentives for planting large canopy and evergreen trees
  - Impacts of recently filed Administrative Rule
- Parks UF review of per inch fee in lieu of planting and preservation - currently \$300 per inch, recent estimates are \$600 per inch
- Parks UF review of planting compliance for tree permits (currently complaint driven)

# Resource Needs



## **BDS**

- Received one permanent Associate Planner position for Title 11 implementation
- No additional funding requested

## **Parks UF**

- Received 2 Tree Technicians and 2.5 Tree Inspectors for Title 11 implementation
- Temporary Tree Technician established
- Additional Tree Technician and Policy staff needed for work volume
- Funding for additional staff expected to be from Parks UF permit fees



# QUESTIONS or COMMENTS

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