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Tree Preservation Ordinance Public Input Group (TPO PIG)
Public Engagement, Ordinance Development, and Implementation Framework
Final Report and Supporting Documentation

This report summarizes the work of the Tree Preservation Ordinance Public Input Group (TPO PIG) during 2025–2026 and documents the public engagement, discussion, and policy development process that informed the Tree Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance 25-4) and associated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Drawing from public meetings, staff presentations, iterative draft review, and interdepartmental coordination involving Public Works, Parks & Recreation–Forestry, the City Attorney's Office, and related City divisions, the report provides a record of how public input was received, considered, and incorporated throughout ordinance development and implementation.

In addition to narrative meeting summaries, the report includes supporting materials that provide context and transparency regarding the TPO PIG process, including membership and participation records, summaries of meetings and presentations, and an overview of district council engagement related to the ordinance.

The report also includes a synthesis of recommendations developed by the TPO PIG. Organized around the group's core priorities, these recommendations reflect recurring themes related to strengthening tree preservation policy, improving public engagement and accountability, advancing equity and environmental justice goals, and supporting long-term stewardship of Saint Paul's urban forest.

Membership and Meeting Participation……..page 2
Meetings and Presentations…….page 3-4
Meeting Narratives…….page 5-8
Thematic Recommendations and Identified Priorities……..page 9-14
District Council Engagement…….page 15
Questions or Additional Information…….page 15
Ordinance Summary……...page 16
Full Ordinance Text…….page 17-23
Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Summaries……page 24
SOP: Tree Planting and Restoration……page 25-33
SOP: Construction Tree Protection……..page 34-46
SOP: Tree Damage and Restitution……page 47-53
SOP: Tree Public Engagement and Transparency……page 54-58
Initial Roles & Work Flow Associated with the TPO……page 59
Work Flow for the TPO……..……page 60
Parks and Recreation Commission - Transmittal of Resolution…..page 61-66

MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING PARTICIPATION

Name	Org/Connection	5/28	6/30	7/15	7/24	8/11	10/21	11/3	2/12	3/9	4/7	4/21	4/30	5/19	5/28
Bridget Ales	Save Our Street & Pedestrian Advocate	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lindsey Alexander	Third Horizon Consultant	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stacy Becker	Third Horizon Consultant	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PJ Bensen	Community Member	X	Excused Absence	X	X	X	X	X	X	Excused Absence	X	X	X	X	X
Tom Darling	Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Noah DeVlaminck	Community Member	X	X	X	Excused Absence	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Steve Dodge	Saint Paul Department of Public Works - Assistant City Engineer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	X	X
Meg Duhr	Fort Road Federation	X	X	X	X	X	X	Excused Absence	X	X	Excused Absence	Excused Absence	X	X	X
Tim Greenfield	Saint Paul City Council – Chief Policy Officer	-	-	X	X		X	X			X				X
Tom Hagel	Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation - Manager	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X		X	X	X	X	X
Julian Hartland	Student at Macalester College, Sunrise Movement Organizer, & Union Park District Council Community Engagement Associate	-	-	-	-	-	-	X							
Sean Kershaw	Saint Paul Department of Public Works - Director	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X			X	Excused Absence	
Rowan Nordin	Student studying environmental studies at Saint Olaf College, Ward 2 Shadow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	
Theresa Paulson	Saint Paul Parks & Recreation Commission	-	-	-	-	-	X	Excused Absence							
Michael-jon Pease	Saint Paul Parks Conservancy	X	X	X	X	X	Excused Absence	X	X	X	Excused Absence	X		Excused Absence	X
Nick Peterson	Saint Paul Department of Public Works - City Engineer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	X			X
Andy Rodriguez	Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation - Director	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Colleen O'Connor Toberman	Friends of the Mississippi River	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Excused Absence	X	Excused Absence	X	X	X	X
Jacob Walls / Dan Reed	Ramsey Hill Association	X Met 5/27		X											

MEETINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

- May 28, 2025 – Meeting #1: Launched the public input group, gathered initial input, identified early gaps, and discussed draft ordinance language based on the January proposal and public comments received (click here for meeting #1 agenda and notes).

- June 30, 2025 – Meeting #2: Held an in-depth discussion with Third Horizon consultants to review early draft materials and identify key opportunities and areas of concern (click here for meeting #2 agenda and notes).

- July 10, 2025 - Introductory Presentation about the TPO PIG to the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission (click here for provided overview).

- July 15, 2025 – Meeting #3: Debriefed Parks Commission feedback and organized initial ideas into thematic "buckets" for further development (click here for meeting #3 agenda and notes).

- July 24, 2025 – Meeting #4: Finalized and prioritized thematic "buckets" to guide ordinance drafting and identified next steps for advancing the work ahead of the August 27 City Council meeting (click here for meeting #4 agenda and notes).

- August 11, 2025 – Meeting #5: Reviewed and discussed the consolidated TPO PIG work product overview to support development of detailed recommendations ahead of the August 27 City Council meeting (click here for meeting #5 agenda and notes).

- August 27, 2025 – Update Presentation to the Saint Paul City Council (click here for provided overview).

- October 21, 2025 – Meeting #6: Reviewed the City's October 17 draft ordinance, assessed incorporation of prior recommendations, and identified areas requiring clarification for ongoing ordinance and SOP development (click here for meeting #6 agenda and notes).

- November 3, 2025 – Meeting #7: Addressed key legal, procedural, and implementation questions related to the draft ordinance and SOPs, including applicability, enforcement, contractor accountability, replacement, equity, and public notification (click here to meeting #7 agenda and notes).

- November 14, 2025 – Update to the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission (click here for provided overview).

- November 18, 2025 – Introductory presentation about the TPO PIG to the Mayor's Advisory Council on Disabilities (click here for provided overview).

- February 12, 2026 – Meeting #8: Reviewed progress since the December 17 Council update, received a staff update on SOP development, discussed early implementation considerations and interagency coordination challenges, and clarified next steps and timeline leading up to the May 20 public hearing at City Council (click here for meeting #8 agenda and notes)

- March 9, 2026 – Meeting #9: Reviewed existing City tree protection language across Public Works and Forestry contracts and specifications, including MnDOT-based requirements, enforcement tools, and field implementation practices; discussed differences between Public Works and Forestry contract structures, contractor responsibilities, root and grading considerations, and real-world constraints affecting tree protection during construction, and reviewed timeline updates and SOP module development sequencing (click here for meeting #9 agenda and notes).

- April 7, 2026 – Meeting #10: Reviewed Module 1 (Tree Planting Plan) draft materials, including planting standards, boulevard guidelines, and implementation context; discussed how the module aligns with existing Public Works and Forestry practices and contractor language, and explored coordination between tree planting requirements, corridor constraints, and ongoing SOP development within the broader ordinance framework (click here for meeting #10 agenda and notes).
    - Tree Preservation Ordinance – Module 1 Feedback Synthesis Memo.pdf

- April 21, 2026 – Meeting #11: Reviewed Module 2 (Tree Protection and Preservation) draft materials, including implementation challenges at the intersection of utilities, engineering constraints, and arboricultural standards; discussed coordination across departments, feasibility considerations, and how tree protection requirements translate into construction and pre-construction practices within the broader SOP and ordinance framework (click here for meeting #11 agenda and notes).
    - Tree Preservation Ordinance – Module 2 Feedback Synthesis Memo.pdf

- April 21, 2026 – Update to the Mayor's Advisory Council on Disabilities

- April 30, 2026 – Meeting #12: Reviewed Module 3 (Tree Damage, Enforcement, and Restitution) draft materials, including damage assessment, enforcement mechanisms, contractor accountability, and restitution frameworks; discussed how tree impact documentation, field conditions, and administrative processes inform enforcement decisions and long-term implementation within the SOP and ordinance structure (click here for meeting #12 agenda and notes).
    - Tree Preservation Ordinance – Module 3 Feedback Synthesis Memo.pdf

- May 19, 2026 – Meeting #13: Reviewed Module 4 (Public Engagement, Reporting, and Accountability) draft materials, including public communication processes, engagement requirements, reporting frameworks, and transparency measures; discussed how public input is integrated across design and construction phases and how reporting and accountability tools support ongoing implementation of the ordinance and SOP framework (click here for meeting #13 agenda and notes).
    - Tree Preservation Ordinance – Module 4 Feedback Synthesis Memo.pdf

- May 28, 2026 – Meeting #14: Conducted final review of the consolidated Tree Preservation Ordinance and SOP package prior to Parks Commission submission, including confirmation of final ordinance language, integrated SOP framework, and cross-departmental coordination; discussed alignment between ordinance and implementation materials, incorporation of prior TPO PIG feedback, and readiness for advancement to the formal public review process (click here for meeting #14 agenda and notes).
    - Tree Preservation Ordinance – Final Review Meeting Feedback Synthesis Memo.pdf

MEETING NARRATIVES

ESTABLISHING THE FRAMEWORK: PUBLIC INPUT AND INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS (FEBRUARY–AUGUST 2025)

Following the introduction of a proposed citywide Tree Preservation Ordinance on January 15, 2025, Council President Rebecca Noecker convened the Tree Preservation Ordinance Public Input Group (TPO PIG) in response to significant community interest and engagement. The group first met on May 28, 2025, bringing together residents, neighborhood representatives, local advocates, and technical experts to help shape Saint Paul's approach to tree preservation during development and public projects.

Through regular meetings during 2025, the TPO PIG identified a set of recurring priorities that guided ordinance development and would continue to influence both the ordinance and associated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):

- Clarity and Strength: Use prescriptive, enforceable ordinance language supported by clear accountability mechanisms
- Early and Inclusive Planning: Integrate tree preservation at the outset of projects and ensure accessible public input
- Balance and Flexibility: Establish core protections in ordinance while delegating technical detail to SOPs
- Transparency and Trust: Improve communication through multilingual notifications and clear timelines
- Equity and Environmental Justice: Prioritize canopy protection in underserved and heat-vulnerable neighborhoods
- Full Lifecycle Stewardship: Emphasize preservation, maintenance, replacement, and long-term canopy health

TRANSLATING THE FRAMEWORK: DRAFT REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION REFINEMENT (OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2025)

As the ordinance development process advanced, the TPO PIG transitioned from establishing guiding principles to reviewing draft ordinance language and accompanying Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). This phase focused on evaluating how earlier recommendations were translated into policy language and implementation frameworks.

Across meetings in October and November 2025, the group reviewed working drafts of the ordinance and identified key areas for clarification, including applicability standards, enforcement mechanisms, definitions, replacement requirements, and interagency coordination.

Members emphasized the need for:

- Stronger enforcement clarity and accountability mechanisms
- More precise definitions of technical terms (e.g., "construction," "impact," "critical root zone")
- Equity considerations in tree replacement and canopy outcomes
- Clearer standards for exemptions, variances, and utility conflicts
- Stronger transparency and public-facing project communication

By December 17, 2025, the ordinance returned to City Council as an update rather than for final adoption. The Council voted to lay the ordinance over until May 20, 2026, providing additional time for refinement, stakeholder engagement, and continued development of implementation tools.

At the same meeting, City staff reported that several core elements of the proposed ordinance were already being incorporated into ongoing projects, including arborist review, tree surveys, preservation planning, and updated planting standards. Staff also noted that accompanying Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were under development and would play a key role in guiding implementation.

The layover marked a transition from ordinance drafting to implementation-focused development, with increasing emphasis on operational procedures, project integration, and long-term administration.

TRANSITION TO IMPLEMENTATION: SOP DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATED REVIEW (FEBRUARY–JUNE 2026)

Following the Council layover, the PIG entered an accelerated implementation phase focused on SOP development, ordinance consolidation, and final readiness for Parks Commission review. Across Meetings #8–#14, the group engaged in iterative review of draft SOP modules and evolving ordinance language through a structured, module-based process.

This phase functioned less as a linear sequence of drafts and more as overlapping workstreams, with ordinance drafting and SOP development occurring in parallel across departments including Public Works, Parks & Recreation-Forestry, and the City Attorney's Office.

Across this phase, the group consistently engaged with several core implementation themes:

- Translation of ordinance intent into field-ready SOP procedures
- Balancing ADA compliance, infrastructure constraints, and tree preservation goals
- Defining and applying "feasibility" in real-world project contexts
- Clarifying arborist roles, enforcement authority, and inspection protocols
- Improving transparency in tree mapping, removal communication, and reporting
- Strengthening interagency coordination across utilities and external jurisdictions
- Aligning public engagement timing with design and construction realities

A recurring theme was the tension between aspirational policy goals and operational feasibility, particularly in constrained rights-of-way where utilities, accessibility requirements, and transportation infrastructure must all be accommodated alongside trees.

FROM MODULES TO INTEGRATED SOP FRAMEWORK (MARCH–MAY 2026)

As work progressed, the City transitioned from standalone SOP modules into a consolidated implementation framework covering tree planting, protection during construction, damage and restitution, and public engagement.

Construction Tree Protection and Field Implementation

The group spent significant time reviewing how tree protection standards function in real-world construction settings, including:

- Tree protection zones (TPZ) and modified TPZ concepts
- Root protection thresholds and excavation practices
- Construction staging and contractor compliance expectations
- Use of consultant arborists for inspection and oversight
- Enforcement mechanisms, including corrective action timelines and payment holds

Participants emphasized the importance of aligning enforcement tools with field realities, particularly in complex projects involving multiple contractors and utility coordination.

Public Engagement, Transparency, and Reporting

The Public Engagement SOP was reviewed as a framework for ensuring consistent communication across project phases, including:

- Early project notification and open house engagement
- Multilingual and accessible communication standards
- Design-phase integration of tree preservation planning
- Construction-phase updates and escalation pathways
- Annual reporting to City Council and continuous improvement mechanisms

A key outcome of this discussion was recognition that SOPs function as “living documents,” designed to evolve based on implementation experience, while the ordinance serves as a more durable policy framework.

Tree Planting, Canopy Equity, and Establishment

The group also reviewed tree planting standards and long-term canopy considerations, including boulevard constraints, species selection, and establishment care. Key discussion themes included:

- Integration of planting standards with infrastructure constraints
- Equity-focused canopy expansion in under-served neighborhoods
- Public education on watering and establishment responsibilities
- Exploration of community partnerships and volunteer support models
- Recognition of long-term maintenance and survivability challenges

Participants emphasized that successful tree preservation requires not only protection during construction, but sustained investment in establishment and maintenance.

FINAL INTEGRATION AND READINESS REVIEW
(MAY–JUNE 2026)

By May and June 2026, the PIG entered final review of the consolidated ordinance and SOP package in advance of submission to the Parks Commission. This phase focused on confirming alignment across all components, including:

- Ordinance 25-4 final draft language
- Integrated SOP package (Modules 1–4 consolidated)
- Interdepartmental consistency across implementation guidance
- Readiness for Parks Commission and City Council review

Participants and staff reviewed final coordination updates, including City Attorney revisions, Public Works implementation feedback, and Parks & Recreation’s compilation of the full package. Throughout this phase, discussion centered on ensuring the ordinance established a clear, enforceable framework for tree preservation, supported by transparent communication and realistic implementation capacity.

Across the full eighteen-month process, the TPO PIG engaged in sustained, iterative work to reshape how tree preservation is integrated into City infrastructure planning, design, and construction. The group’s work evolved from foundational policy framing to detailed implementation design, resulting in

a consolidated ordinance and SOP framework balancing environmental stewardship, infrastructure and accessibility requirements, operational feasibility, equity and canopy justice, and transparency and public accountability.

While not all perspectives were fully reconciled, the final product reflects extensive collaboration among residents, advocates, technical experts, and City staff across multiple departments, and a shared commitment to strengthening Saint Paul's urban forest through clear, enforceable, and implementable policy.

THEMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS AND IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES

Throughout 2025, the TPO PIG identified a set of recurring themes and policy priorities to guide development of the Tree Preservation Ordinance and supporting Standard Operating Procedures.

These priorities emerged through facilitated meetings, consultant input, and iterative review of draft materials, and provided a consistent framework for both ordinance drafting and implementation planning.

The recommendations that follow synthesize these discussions and highlight the group's key priorities related to tree preservation policy, public engagement, equity, accountability, and long-term urban forest stewardship across both policy and operational practice.

Scope and Applicability

The group recommends the ordinance focuses on protecting trees located on city-owned land (including boulevards, rights-of-way, parks, and trails) while supporting future efforts to extend protections to private property. Due to jurisdictional complexity, especially where state or county land overlaps city boundaries, clear definitions are needed to distinguish areas (e.g., boulevard vs. trail vs. park) and clarify which department (Public Works vs. Parks) has responsibility. Members also raised concerns about equity and consistency in areas managed by state or county agencies, noting that without broader adoption of tree protections, neighborhoods along state or county roads may face inconsistent or lower standards despite experiencing greater environmental burdens. The group recommends the ordinance acknowledge this gap and identify it as an area for further study and future collaboration with MnDOT, Ramsey County, and other external partners.

In terms of scope, the ordinance should explicitly carve out restoration and invasive species projects to avoid unintended constraints on ecological management. To strengthen implementation and accountability, the group also urges the removal of vague terms like "feasible" or "reasonable," advocating instead for binding language paired with a transparent public process that allows internal decisions to be reviewed and challenged when necessary.

In terms of implementation, the group emphasized the importance of clear guidance on how the ordinance will apply to projects already underway. While broad applicability to City projects is preferred, flexibility for exceptions is recommended, as members expressed concern that too narrow a definition of "underway" could lead to projects being accelerated to circumvent new requirements. One suggested threshold is to apply the ordinance fully to projects less than 50% through design, while considering partial implementation (such as tree protections) for later-stage projects.

The group also highlighted the need for public understanding and awareness of this new ordinance, noting that outreach components like yard signs and postcards will require time for planning, budgeting, design, and manufacturing. As a result, these public notice measures may require a staggered rollout. Tree protection measures, however, should be implemented immediately wherever feasible.

Tree Definitions and Thresholds

A member of the group recommends updating the City's 2010 canopy report, which is outdated and no longer reflects current conditions. A new assessment would provide accurate, ward- and district-level data on existing canopy cover, opportunities for canopy expansion, and areas unsuitable for planting. This data is critical for informing equitable investments and supporting location-specific, evidence-based decisions.

The group also supports retaining existing definitions for “heritage” and “significant” trees, while recommending the creation of a new category, “locally significant trees,” to capture trees with high value based on context. These may include smaller trees that provide critical canopy in under-canopied or heat-vulnerable areas. Suggested criteria for this designation include block-level canopy loss and equity indicators, such as location within the least-canopied neighborhoods. This approach ensures that environmental justice and local conditions are meaningfully reflected in tree protections citywide.

Preservation Planning Requirements

The group believes that it is imperative that tree preservation plans be developed early and used to guide project design. They should not be completed after key decisions are made. A two-phase approach was proposed: first, identify at-risk trees and site constraints; second, determine how to avoid or mitigate impacts on all existing trees - especially significant and heritage trees. Plans should be publicly shared before final decisions are made, and outreach should go beyond minimal notice using multiple meetings, varied formats, and targeted communication to affected neighborhoods. The group emphasized that early, accessible engagement can build trust, prevent conflict, and reduce the likelihood of residents feeling forced to take legal action to protect trees.

Protection During Construction

The group identified enforcement during construction as a critical gap and strongly supports clear, enforceable requirements to protect trees on active job sites. Recommendations include using protective fencing around trees and root zones and preventing root damage from heavy equipment, not just surface coverings. Members cited successful examples where close collaboration between foresters and contractors preserved trees even in constrained spaces. To ensure compliance, the group calls for real-time accountability, including on-site supervision, feedback loops, and follow-up audits throughout construction.

Tree Replacement & Mitigation

The group emphasized that tree protection must extend beyond planting to include full-cycle stewardship: removal, replacement, and long-term establishment. Members expressed deep concern about the number of trees that die after the initial one-year warranty period due to lack of follow-up care. To address this, they recommended that the ordinance requires measurable post-planting maintenance and clear accountability for tree health, while allowing for flexibility in how care is provided. What qualifies as “reasonable maintenance” should be defined based on location and context. For example, distinguishing between a high-traffic median and a residential boulevard.

The group agreed that tree removal during construction should be avoided if at all possible and must automatically trigger replacement, not just documentation. In cases where replanting on-site isn’t possible, replacement trees should be planted in under-canopied neighborhoods to advance equity. They also discussed how tree replacement ratios should reflect both ecological value and feasibility. While some supported tying replacement requirements to the diameter of the removed tree, others warned against overly high ratios that might lead to poor-quality or “jump” trees. Members supported referencing publicly available national or international standards to avoid overly prescriptive local rules and promote consistency, particularly for smaller trees under 12 inches in diameter, which are often overlooked in current policy.

To prevent a common pattern in which trees are removed, grates are left empty, and no replanting occurs for years, the group emphasized the importance of full-cycle planning and compliance checks. Ultimately, their goal is to ensure that replacement trees not only get planted but survive and thrive to maturity - contributing to a healthy, resilient, and equitable urban forest.

Oversight and Accountability

The group emphasized the importance of maintaining direct, city-led engagement for projects involving potential tree removal, strongly recommending against outsourcing these activities. A centralized point of contact or a dedicated forestry staff role, potentially an ombudsman-like position focused on tree protections, was suggested to streamline communication, oversee public engagement, and ensure consistent ordinance implementation. While acknowledging financial and staffing constraints, the group noted that investing in dedicated coordination could improve project delivery, leverage community support where available, and prevent future costs, including legal disputes. This approach frames outreach and enforcement not as an added expense but as a cost-saving measure that supports both long-term urban forest health and fiscal responsibility.

The group further emphasized that accountability must be built into every phase of tree protection, from planning to implementation. They called for ordinance language that is strong, clear, and enforceable - not vague or open to internal interpretation. Phrases like “too expensive” or “not feasible” should not be used to dismiss tree protections without a transparent process that allows for scrutiny and challenge. The group stressed that tree protection plans must be proactive rather than aspirational. It’s not enough to say “we’ll try to save them”; instead, plans must anticipate potential impacts and commit to specific strategies for avoiding harm to trees.

Clear public communication was also a recurring theme. Residents and stakeholders should be informed about what will happen, how, and when - particularly when it comes to tree removal, replacement, and maintenance. The group advocated for rooting decision-making in expert guidance, supporting the use of professional standards such as ANSI A300 and recommending the involvement of at least two qualified arborists to ensure balanced, technically sound input. Members also emphasized that the standards and criteria used should be publicly available to ensure transparency and build trust in the process.

Finally, members raised concerns about follow-through. “Tree holes” (the empty spaces left when removed trees are never replaced) were cited as ongoing sources of frustration and safety risk in neighborhoods. To address this, the group urged the city to establish clear timelines, enforceable commitments, and visible accountability measures so that tree protections are not just promised on paper but delivered in practice.

Equity and Environmental Justice

Equity and environmental justice were central themes in the group’s recommendations. Members emphasized that a strong tree preservation ordinance advances equity by making protections the default, reducing the burden on residents to advocate, navigate complex systems, or rely on insider knowledge to benefit from a healthy urban forest. The group stressed that protections and investments must be the norm, with historically under-canopied or heat-vulnerable neighborhoods receiving equal, or greater, attention. If tree planting priorities are developed, members stressed the need for clear public communication about both the rationale and intended outcomes.

One guiding principle emerged clearly: “hold harmless” the areas that already have substantial canopy, while investing deeply in places where canopy is lacking. At the same time, the ordinance’s fundamental purpose is to preserve and protect trees citywide. When removal is necessary, it should require clear, enforceable replanting plans (with specific timelines and locations) not vague promises. Where new planting is concentrated in particular neighborhoods, that prioritization should be backed by publicly available data and criteria to build trust and understanding.

To ensure fairness, the group called for consistent and automatic enforcement of protections, so that benefits don’t skew toward those with more resources, time, or connections. Lowering barriers to

protection is itself an equity strategy - ensuring that all neighborhoods and residents, regardless of income or capacity to engage, benefit equally from healthy tree coverage.

The group also discussed potential tensions between tree preservation and accessibility requirements, such as ADA-compliant ramps or sidewalks. Rather than treating these goals as contradictory, members encouraged a balanced approach that recognizes the cooling benefits trees provide, especially for people with disabilities. They observed examples of sidewalks meandering around existing trees, which preserves trees while maintaining accessibility, and noted that some trees pre-date sidewalks, highlighting how creative placement can balance public infrastructure needs with tree protection. The group emphasized the importance of considering ADA accessibility in tree and sidewalk planning. They recommended consultation with ADA experts and possibly including ordinance language that affirms both environmental and accessibility priorities.

Public Process and Transparency

The group emphasized that public engagement around tree protection must become more accessible, equitable, and effective. Although the existing petition-based review process is intended to empower residents, members observed that it often benefits individuals with greater resources, legal knowledge, or district council support, while those without such resources are left without relief. This disparity can lead to inconsistent outcomes across neighborhoods. To address this imbalance, the group supported a hybrid model that retains the petition option but significantly strengthens proactive, city-led notification and engagement.

There was strong interest in ensuring that the city fulfills its responsibility to keep residents clearly, consistently, and accessibly informed in a timely manner about tree-related projects. Notices should use plain, multilingual language and be delivered through multiple channels, including postcards, signage, and online platforms. On-site signage was especially popular as a visible, low-cost, and trustworthy way to reach people directly affected by nearby tree removals or construction. Supporting materials should help bridge the gap between technical documentation and everyday understanding by using QR codes, timelines, maps, and straightforward summaries explaining how and when residents can get involved.

The group also expressed support for objective, threshold-based triggers (such as the number of trees involved, project size, or budget) to require automatic reviews or public notifications, rather than relying solely on petitions. Whether triggered by petition or criteria, independent review processes were viewed as essential to building public trust and accountability. Even a small number of trees removed in a limited area can be as detrimental as larger removals in bigger projects.

Another recurring theme was the importance of early involvement by forestry staff. Too often, staff are brought into city projects after critical decisions have already been made, limiting their ability to influence tree outcomes. The group recommended codifying early forestry engagement in the ordinance, alongside clearer enforcement roles and stronger accountability mechanisms, especially during construction.

Ultimately, the group acknowledged that building transparency and trust will take time, and that progress may need to be incremental given the history around this issue and current staffing constraints. Still, even small improvements (like clearer notices or better online tools) can make a meaningful difference. The ordinance should be designed not only to inform residents, but to empower them, especially those who may not otherwise have the time, language access, or insider knowledge to participate in shaping their urban forest.

Rulemaking vs. Legislative Detail

The group focused on finding the right balance between what should be codified in the ordinance and what should be addressed through administrative rulemaking. There was strong support for a hybrid approach: establishing clear values and guardrails within the ordinance while delegating technical implementation and evolving best practices to staff-driven rulemaking - provided that such rulemaking includes meaningful opportunities for public input. Importantly, rulemaking must never be used to weaken the tree protections that form the ordinance's core purpose. This balance was seen as key to ensuring both clarity and adaptability, especially given long-term factors like climate resilience, infrastructure changes, and shifts in forestry best practices.

A recurring theme was the importance of putting tree preservation experts at the right point in the process. Members cautioned against overly prescriptive ordinance language (for example, listing physical symptoms of tree stress) arguing instead for referencing professional standards that can be updated more easily over time. By grounding technical decisions in expert judgment rather than legislative minutiae, the ordinance can remain responsive to changing conditions without sacrificing transparency or accountability.

Communication and public notification were viewed as baseline expectations, regardless of project size. The group expressed support for simple, accessible notifications (like postcards) for even minor projects, especially where tree impacts might otherwise go unnoticed - such as routine utility replacements. Scaling communication and tree protection strategies to match project complexity was another important consideration. For large developments, tree-related updates should be built into existing public engagement processes; for smaller or piecemeal projects, online logs or public records could provide a lightweight form of notice and transparency.

Group members also raised questions around thresholds and what qualifies a tree as significant enough to warrant heightened protection or mitigation. There was interest in defining categories such as "notable," "locally significant," or "champion" trees, especially to safeguard older or unique specimens that offer substantial ecological or cultural value.

Saint Paul's existing Tree Preservation District, located south of Lower Afton Road in the Highwood Neighborhood, was referenced as a model. The district's purpose is to preserve the area's natural, wooded character by ensuring that development minimizes the loss of existing trees and, in some cases, requires planting replacement trees. Within this district, a Tree Preservation Plan must be submitted and approved before the City will authorize any grading permit, lot split, plat, or site plan (unless the applicant can demonstrate that no existing trees are within the limits of disturbance) or any building permit that involves removing a tree with a diameter of 12 inches or more.

The structure and timing of rulemaking also came up, with some group members referencing past Council discussions. While some favored concurrent rule development alongside ordinance adoption, others supported a phased approach as long as staff had a clear mandate, and public input was built into the process. Members expressed differing views on the level of detail appropriate for the ordinance text itself. Some cautioned that too much specificity could reduce flexibility and erode public trust if it leads to delays, legal challenges, or difficulty adapting over time. Others felt that greater detail could help build public trust by increasing clarity, transparency, and accountability.

Throughout the discussion, group members emphasized the importance of accessible, ongoing engagement. Examples like the Grand Avenue office hours were held up as good models for transparent, responsive city practice. At the same time, frustrations were voiced about gaps in existing protections, especially for mature trees lost during major infrastructure projects like West 7th. These stories reinforced the group's overarching belief that a transparent, expert-informed, and adaptable ordinance is necessary to rebuild public trust and ensure the long-term health of Saint Paul's urban forest.

Creative Ideas

The group explored creative strategies to engage residents and local businesses in supporting Saint Paul's urban forest, with a focus on voluntary programs that enhance equity, stewardship, and community pride. One key idea was to offer tax credits or other incentives for residents (especially property owners with the capacity to contribute) to plant and water trees, including those on public property adjacent to their homes. These programs would not replace public responsibility but rather complement it by encouraging private investment in tree care where resources are more available. This approach could help expand the urban canopy, reduce the burden on City maintenance crews, and foster a broader sense of shared responsibility while ensuring that City-led efforts remain concentrated in neighborhoods with the greatest canopy needs.

The group also expressed strong interest in launching a local version of Minneapolis' "Brewing a Better Forest" initiative in partnership with Saint Paul breweries. The program, which engages neighborhood taprooms to promote tree care and raise funds for public tree planting, was seen as a promising model for combining environmental action with community gathering spaces. Members envisioned hosting tree-themed events, sharing tree-watering tips with patrons, and directing proceeds to areas with low tree cover and heightened climate vulnerability. By tapping into local business networks and cultivating a culture of collective care, this strategy offers a way to blend environmental justice with creative civic engagement, building a greener, more resilient Saint Paul in the process.

DISTRICT COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the TPO PIG process, outreach was conducted through Saint Paul's District Council system to gather broader neighborhood perspectives on the Tree Preservation Ordinance. Feedback from these conversations helped inform and reinforce the themes and priorities reflected in the ordinance development process.

Over a ten-month period, the Ward 2 office extended invitations to all 17 District Councils. Where invited, staff attended regularly scheduled meetings to provide updates on ordinance development, share progress, and gather input ahead of Council consideration.

These engagements provided a structured channel for neighborhood input to be incorporated into ordinance drafting and implementation planning.

The table below documents all 17 District Council meetings attended, including dates of engagement and, where available, recordings or related materials.

DATE	DISTRICT COUNCIL	WARD 2 STAFF IN ATTENDANCE
September 11	Summit Hill Association	Council President Rebecca Noecker
September 29	Highland District Council	Council President Rebecca Noecker
October 13	West 7th / Fort Road Federation	W2 Legislative Aide Megan Jekot
October 27	West Side Community Organization	Council President Rebecca Noecker
October 28	Payne-Phalen Community Council	W2 Legislative Aide Megan Jekot
November 5	Como Community Council – *link to recorded presentation*	Council President Noecker & W2 Legislative Aide Megan Jekot
November 13	Macalester-Groveland Community Council	Council President Rebecca Noecker
November 17	Union Park District Council & Hamline Midway Coalition – *link to recorded presentation*	Council President Noecker & W2 Legislative Aide Megan Jekot
November 18	CapitolRiver Council	Council President Rebecca Noecker
November 19	Greater East Side Community Council – *link to podcast recording*	Council President Rebecca Noecker
November 24	Southeast Community Organization	Council President Rebecca Noecker
February 12	St. Anthony Park Community Council	Council President Rebecca Noecker
March 10	Frogtown Neighborhood Association	Council President Noecker & W2 Legislative Aide Megan Jekot
March 23	North End Neighborhood Organization	Council President Noecker & W2 Legislative Aide Megan Jekot
April 14	Summit University Planning Council	Council President Rebecca Noecker
June 15	Dayton's Bluff Community Council	Council President Rebecca Noecker

QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For questions regarding this report or the Tree Preservation Ordinance development process, please contact Megan Jekot, Senior Legislative Aide to Saint Paul City Council President Rebecca Noecker, at megan.jekot@ci.stpaul.mn.us

ORDINANCE SUMMARY

This ordinance amends Title IV of the Saint Paul Administrative Code to establish a new Chapter 92, Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects. The purpose of the ordinance is to strengthen the protection, preservation, and restoration of the City's urban tree canopy during City-funded and City-managed construction activities, while aligning infrastructure delivery with the City's environmental, climate resilience, and equity goals. It recognizes trees as essential public infrastructure that provide critical benefits including air quality improvement, stormwater management, urban heat reduction, carbon storage, public health protection, and neighborhood livability.

The ordinance responds to documented canopy loss and inequities in canopy distribution across Saint Paul, particularly the impacts of Emerald Ash Borer and long-standing disparities in tree cover that contribute to urban heat island effects and environmental injustice. It is informed by an 18-month Tree Preservation Ordinance Public Input Group (TPO PIG) process involving residents, technical experts, advocates, and staff across multiple departments. The resulting framework emphasizes consistency, transparency, enforceability, and equity-centered implementation, with a focus on ensuring that tree preservation outcomes do not depend on informal discretion or variable practices across projects.

The ordinance applies to all City-sponsored construction projects with bid-letting dates after June 30, 2026, with limited exceptions for emergency work, certain infrastructure maintenance activities, and projects under other governmental jurisdictions. It establishes standardized requirements for tree surveys, construction planning, and preservation planning, including the use of certified arborists, coordinated review by the Forestry Unit, and adherence to recognized industry standards such as those developed by the International Society of Arboriculture and ANSI A-300 tree care practices. It also formalizes definitions, including critical root zone protection, tree protection zones, and trunk diameter methodology, to ensure consistent application across projects.

Key operational requirements include the integration of tree preservation plans into all relevant construction designs, mandatory tree protection measures during construction, and clear protocols for damage reporting, mitigation, and restitution when tree loss occurs. The ordinance also establishes requirements for replacement planting and canopy restoration when preservation is not feasible, prioritizing long-term canopy outcomes over simple tree counts and directing the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Works to develop standardized operating procedures for implementation.

Overall, Chapter 92 establishes a comprehensive and systematized approach to tree preservation in City construction projects, embedding environmental stewardship, equity, and accountability into core infrastructure delivery practices across the City of Saint Paul.

FULL ORDINANCE TEXT

Amending Title IV of the Saint Paul Administrative Code to add Chapter 92, titled Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects.

SECTION 1

WHEREAS, trees provide essential public benefits including improved air quality, carbon storage, urban heat reduction, stormwater management, erosion control, wildlife habitat, contributions to public health, and improve public safety and neighborhood livability; and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul's tree canopy has been significantly degraded by the spread of Emerald Ash Borer, with resulting long-term impacts on environmental quality and equitable access to these benefits; and

WHEREAS, urban heat islands disproportionately affect areas with lower tree canopy cover, resulting in higher temperatures, reduced air and water quality, increased energy burdens, and elevated public health risks; and

WHEREAS, these impacts are concentrated in neighborhoods with higher proportions of low-income households and historically underinvested communities; and

WHEREAS, advancing climate resilience requires intentional, equity-centered investment in tree canopy restoration, preservation, and maintenance in areas most affected by environmental harm and historic disinvestment; and

WHEREAS, the Tree Preservation Ordinance Public Input Group (TPO PIG) conducted an eighteen-month collaborative process involving residents, advocates, technical experts, and City staff across multiple departments to evaluate and refine tree preservation policy and implementation; and

WHEREAS, this process resulted in a consolidated ordinance and Standard Operating Procedures framework intended to be clear, enforceable, and operationally implementable while advancing environmental stewardship, accessibility, and infrastructure compatibility; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations developed through this process prioritize strengthened tree preservation policy, improved public engagement and accountability, and consistent, transparent implementation across City systems; and

WHEREAS, the TPO PIG emphasized that equity and environmental justice require reducing structural barriers to tree protection so that preservation outcomes do not depend on individual capacity, technical knowledge, or access to informal decision-making processes, but instead reflect consistent public standards; and

WHEREAS, the group further recommended that tree protections be applied consistently and systematically across all projects and geographies to ensure equitable outcomes not shaped by differential resources, procedural complexity, or variability in implementation; and

WHEREAS, the group emphasized a “hold harmless” approach in which existing high-canopy neighborhoods are maintained and protected while historically under-canopied and heat-vulnerable neighborhoods receive prioritized investment; and

WHEREAS, these findings support adoption of a Tree Preservation Ordinance and accompanying Standard Operating Procedures that embed equity, consistency, accountability, and environmental justice in the preservation and expansion of Saint Paul’s urban forest; and now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the City of St. Paul does hereby ordain:

SECTION 2

Title IV – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES of the Saint Paul Administrative Code is hereby amended to add Chapter 92, titled Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects as follows:

Sec. 92.1. Statement of Legislative Intent.

The purpose of this chapter is to:

(a) Recognize that trees are a vital part of the City’s infrastructure.

(b) Enhance, protect, and restore trees and the tree canopy on City property whenever City-sponsored construction and development activities take place.

(c) Implement the goals and policies of the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the Climate Action & Resilience Plan as they pertain to the City’s urban tree canopy.

(d) Recognize that conflicts between trees and grey infrastructure are inherent in urban settings where space is limited and develop management practices that best preserve trees while ensuring the City can maintain safe sidewalks that meet ADA requirements.

Sec. 92.2. Definitions.

For the purposes of this chapter the following words and phrases shall have the meaning respectively ascribed to them by this section.

American National Standards Institute A-300 Tree Care Standards Manual ("ANSI A-300 Standards"). The most recent ANSI A-300 Standards manual containing generally acceptable standards for the care and maintenance of trees, shrubs, and other woody plants. The ANSI A-300 Standards manual sets the minimum standards for the care and maintenance of City trees,

shrubs, and other woody plants and is herein adopted by reference as the City's minimum standards for tree care practices.

Certified arborist. An individual engaged in the profession of arboriculture who, through experience, education, and related training, possesses the competence to provide for, or supervise the management of, trees and other woody plants and who holds a valid and current certification (such as the International Society of Arboriculture, ISA) confirming they meet certain standards of knowledge, skills, and ongoing education.

City-sponsored construction project. A public-improvement project where the City performs any work and contributes any funding on City right-of-way. This definition excludes projects led by other jurisdictions on roadways that are not under the jurisdiction of the City.

Critical root zone. Area of soil around a tree where the minimum amount of roots considered critical to the structural stability or health of the tree are located. The determination of the Critical Root Zone will be based on the trunk diameter method as defined in this chapter.

Diameter at breast Height. A standard measurement in inches used for a tree taken 4.5 feet above the ground.

Forestry tree work permit. A permit issued by the Forestry Unit constituting certification that any tree activity authorized by the permit has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of this chapter and that the work so authorized must be performed as required under the permit.

Forestry Unit. The division within the Department of Parks and Recreation responsible for the management of trees, tree planting, tree pruning, tree removal, stump removal, tree disease and pest management in parks, parkways, and public rights of way.

Limits of construction/disturbance. Specific outer limits of all construction activities for the entire project.

Private development projects. Development or redevelopment projects undertaken by private parties whose project must undergo site plan review as specified in Section 61.402 of the Legislative Code.

Standard Operating Procedures ("SOP"s). The standard procedures that will be developed by the Departments of Public Works and Parks and Recreation for appropriate tree preservation during construction.

Tree preservation plan. A written plan detailing the location, botanical name, and Diameter Breast Height of all existing trees within the right-of-way; the intent to preserve, relocate, or replace each tree; and measures to be taken to protect new and mature trees during construction, and to protect roots and soil during construction, following best management practices and ANSI A-300 Standards.

Tree protection zone. A defined area within which certain activities are prohibited or restricted to prevent or minimize potential injury to designated trees, especially during construction or development. For the purposes of this chapter, the TTree Protection Zone shall be the Critical Root Zone unless such a Tree Protection Zone would prohibit intended construction activities. In that situation modified Tree Protection Zones may be specified by the Forestry Unit based on specific site restrictions.

Tree Table. A spreadsheet, plan, map, or diagram that indicates the preservation/protection, removal and/or removal/replacement, including the reason for removal, of all public trees within the limits of construction or disturbance.

Trunk diameter method. A method used to locate the Tree Protection Zone as a radius in feet from the center of a tree's trunk by multiplying the diameter at Diameter Breast Height, measured in four and a half (4.5) feet from the ground, by a factor of one and two-tenths (1.2).

Sec. 92.3. Applicability.

(a) The requirements of this chapter apply to all City-sponsored construction projects let after October 31, 2026.

(b) *Exceptions.* This chapter will not apply to City-sponsored construction projects where prohibited by state and federal funding requirements or where expressly exempted below:

(1) Projects located within City boundaries that are under the jurisdiction and authority of other agencies, including but not limited to the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Ramsey County, or the Metropolitan Council. City staff serving as liaisons to outside agencies will advocate for adherence to the provisions of this chapter.

(2) Emergency situations which threaten public safety or welfare.

(3) Management of trees within City infrastructure easements, flood mitigation projects, and water quality improvement facilities (including but not limited to stormwater ponds, infiltration systems, the Levee system, and other water quality facilities).

(c) Projects that (1) replace infrastructure on a property-by-property basis for health and safety purposes (for example, water service lines, sewer service lines, and sidewalk panels) or (2) private projects impacting the public right-of-way shall comply with the Tree Protection section of this chapter, including the Standard Operating Procedures developed pursuant to that section, but are not required to comply with the Tree Survey and Construction Plan sections of this chapter. (d) This City shall establish, through the Master Contract process, a list of qualified certified arborists to carry out the work specified in this chapter.

Sec. 92.4. Tree Surveys

(a) Two surveys shall be conducted prior to design of any project subject to this chapter:

(1) One survey shall be a land survey conducted by the Department of Public Works for the purpose of determining existing site conditions, including the location of all right-of-way and publicly owned trees within the limits of construction or those adjacent to the right-of-way that may be disturbed by construction.

(2) One survey shall be conducted by a certified arborist for the purpose of verifying the location and identifying the size, species, and condition of trees. The Forestry Unit will review, suggest any revisions, and approve the certified arborist's final survey.

Sec. 92.5. Construction Plans

(a) Construction plans shall include:

(1) Design options that preserve mature trees or any other individual tree determined by the Forestry Unit to be of substantial value due to its species, size, age, form, and/or historical significance.

(2) A tree table and/or diagram specifying which trees are to be removed and replaced and the reason for removal. This table will be updated at the conclusion of the project. The table will be developed in consultation with a certified arborist. The Forestry Unit will make the final determination on whether a tree needs to be removed or not.

(3) If the Forestry Unit determines that a tree within the limits of construction is in poor or declining health and that the tree is unlikely to survive the construction process, removal of the tree is unlikely to survive the construction process, removal of the tree, its stump, and any debris associated with removal shall be included in the project construction process and undertaken as part of the City-sponsored construction project.

Sec. 92.5 Tree Preservation Plans

(a) To recognize the important value of trees and the conflicts that may arise when space for infrastructure is limited, all City-sponsored construction projects subject to this chapter must include within the construction plans a tree preservation plan as provided below.

(b) A Tree Preservation Plan shall be developed by the agency responsible for the project, in consultation with a certified arborist. Tree Preservation Plans must be approved by the Forestry Unit. Tree Preservation Plans shall be updated as changes are made during the design and construction process. Tree Preservation Plans shall include:

(1) The identity of the City department or departments responsible for the project.

(2) Delineation of existing buildings, structures, impervious surfaces, utilities, and other site improvements situated in the limits of construction/disturbance of the City-sponsored project.

(3) Delineation of all areas to be excavated, graded, and otherwise subject to land disturbance in the limits of construction/disturbance of the City-sponsored project.

(4) Location, species (botanical name), Diameter Breast Height, and Critical Root Zone of all tress located within the limits of construction/disturbance.

(5) The Tree Protection Zone for each tree intended for preservation must be noted on the Tree Preservation Plan.

(6) Tree protection measures as outlined in Sec. 92.6 of this chapter.

Sec. 92.6. Tree Protection During Construction

(a) The Department of Public Works and the Forestry Unit will develop Standard Operating Procedures for the appropriate use of tree protection during construction. The SOPs shall address construction fencing, tree protection signage, erosion control, watering, root cutting, mulching/protective mats, remediations in the event roots are disturbed or damaged, construction techniques such as air spading and trenchless technologies, staging and cleaning of construction equipment, storage of materials, areas where construction vehicles are not allowed, and the use of tree growth regulators in advance of construction.

(b) A certified arborist will be consulted on the procedures specified for each project and will monitor the project throughout construction for adherence.

(c) Contractors working in the right-of-way will receive pre-construction instructions regarding protocols and expectations to ensure adherence with this chapter and any SOPs developed pursuant to this chapter.

Sec. 92.7. Tree Damage During Construction

(a) *Notification required*. The Forestry Unit must be notified in writing:

(1) Immediately following any damage to a tree located on public property occurring during construction.

(2) Prior to severing any tree roots two inches (2”) diameter or larger.

(b) *Restitution for trees damages during construction*. Trees that are intended to be preserved but are damaged during construction and cannot be preserved are subject to the appropriate restitution requirement under Sec. 176.07 of the Legislative Code. Restitution for trees damaged during construction will be determined by the Manager of the Forestry Unit. Restitution will be computed according to the tree replacement cost formula authorized by the International Society of Arboriculture. The possessor of the

Forestry Tree Work Permit shall pay computed restitution to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

(c) *Removal of damaged trees; requirements*. If the Forestry Unit determines that a tree is damaged during the construction process and requires removal, the removal of the tree must follow the Forestry Tree Work Permit process. The computed cost of removal shall be made to the Department of Parks and Recreation by the possessor of the Forestry Tree Work Permit.

Sec. 92.8. Tree Planting and Restoration.

When tree preservation is not feasible as determined by the Forestry Unit, tree planting and/or restoration will be required for all City-sponsored construction projects. Tree planting, unless otherwise approved by the Forestry Unit, will be managed and approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation via master contract with funding from the City-sponsored construction project. The Forestry Unit will determine the final species and location of trees to be planted. The goal of such plantings shall be to establish adequate mature canopy as opposed to the number of trees planted. Joined planting beds will be recommended whenever deemed practicable by the Forestry Unit.

The City-Sponsored Construction Project shall strive to maximize the planting area, aiming to preserve planting spaces that allow for a one-to-one ratio for replacing any trees lost. Where replacement of one-to-one is not possible, a nearby public area may be identified by the Forestry Unit where additional trees may be planted.

The Forestry Unit, in consultation with the Department of Public Works, shall developed SOPs for tree planting, which will strive to meet best practices as specified by the ANSI A-300 Standards.

SECTION 3

This ordinance shall take effect and be in force thirty (30) days following passage, approval, and publication.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) SUMMARIES

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Tree Planting and Restoration

This SOP establishes the coordinated process between Public Works and Parks-Forestry for integrating tree planting into city construction projects under Ordinance 25-4. It requires early design integration to ensure adequate planting space, soil volume, and species selection, with Parks-Forestry retaining final approval over feasibility and compliance. The SOP sets standards for construction, seasonal planting, inspection, and contractor warranties to ensure trees are properly installed and maintained through establishment. It also defines post-planting maintenance and replacement responsibilities to support long-term tree survival and canopy growth.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Construction Tree Protection

This SOP sets requirements to protect public trees during city construction projects under Ordinance 25-4 through early planning, Tree Preservation Plans, and defined Tree Protection Zones approved by Parks-Forestry or a certified arborist. It requires contractors to install and maintain tree protection fencing, restrict work and equipment near protected trees, and use approved low-impact construction methods to avoid root damage. Parks-Forestry provides ongoing oversight through inspections and reporting during construction. Final project closeout and payment are contingent on verified compliance and successful completion of all tree protection requirements.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Tree Damage and Restitution

This SOP establishes the process for identifying, reporting, and addressing damage to public trees during city construction projects under Ordinance 25-4. It requires immediate notification to Parks-Forestry when damage occurs and establishes a restitution process based on ISA appraisal standards, making contractors financially responsible for tree removal, replacement, or loss of value resulting from construction impacts or noncompliance. Parks-Forestry oversees evaluation and corrective actions for above- and below-ground damage, including pruning, root and soil remediation, and potential tree removal. All tree work must be authorized through a Forestry Tree Work Permit, and unauthorized or improper work may trigger full appraised-value restitution. Final project closeout and payment are contingent on completion of all required tree damage and restitution obligations as determined by Parks-Forestry.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Tree Public Engagement and Transparency

This SOP establishes requirements for transparent public engagement on city construction projects affecting trees under Ordinance 25-4. It ensures timely, accessible, multilingual notice to residents and property owners and provides structured opportunities for input throughout project design, including early engagement, review of alternatives, and review of tree preservation plans at key milestones through final approval. It also requires advance notice of tree removals and ongoing communication when tree impacts change during construction, ensuring continued public awareness and input opportunities. After construction, the SOP requires reporting on tree impacts and ordinance implementation, including an annual City Council summary of outcomes, challenges, costs, and recommended improvements.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Tree Planting and Restoration

Purpose:
To provide the Departments of Parks & Recreation and Public Works staff with clear procedures for tree planting as directed by Ordinance 25-4, Tree Preservation.

Scope:
This SOP applies to all city-sponsored construction projects per Ordinance 25-4.

Related Documents:

- Tree Preservation Ordinance 25-4
- Parks & Recreation-Forestry—Citywide Tree Planting Specifications (latest version)
- Parks & Recreation-Forestry—Boulevard Tree Planting Guidelines
- Parks & Recreation-Forestry—Recommended Boulevard Species List (latest version)
- ANSI A300—Planting and Transplanting
- ISA Best Management Practices—Tree Planting (latest version)
- Public Works—Governing Specifications (latest version)
- Public Works—Standard Plate 6000C, Tree Planting

This SOP is organized according to project phase including:

- Design/Planning Phase
- Pre-Construction Phase
- Construction Phase
- Boulevard Restoration/Tree Planting Phase
- Establishment Phase

Design/Planning Phase

Minimum Standards:

It is important to note that minimum standards are not optimal for tree establishment and long term health, but rather the minimum design required to plant trees. Among the goals

of each project should be to provide the largest planting space and soil volumes possible to achieve maximum canopy coverage.

The Project Manager will work with Parks Forestry to ensure minimum standards for tree planting locations are met during the design/planning phase, including:

- Planting beds shall have a minimum width of five (5) feet from back of curb.
- The soil type, organic or structural, will be specified during the design process and approved by Forestry.
- For non-grass boulevards the following soil volumes will be required in order for trees to be planted:

Infrastructure	Planting Bed	Organic Soils	Structural Soils
Designed/New	Single Tree Bed	800 cu feet	1200 cu feet
	Multiple Tree Bed	600 cu feet	900 cu feet
Existing	Single Tree Bed	500 cu feet	750 cu feet
	Multiple Tree Bed	300 cu feet	450 cu feet

Minimum Standards Unfulfilled:

If the above minimum requirements cannot be met due to above or below ground conflicts, tree planting may not be advised. If trees cannot be planted to meet the 1:1 ratio for replacement, Forestry will determine suitable locations near the project area to be planted using project funds.

Preparation of Contract Specifications:

The Project Manager will ensure that all bid materials, contract specifications, and plan documents are consistent with the language in Ordinance 25-4, accompanying Standard Operation Procedures, and include or reference the *Citywide Tree Planting Specifications.*

Design Considerations:

- The Project Manager and Parks Forestry will work collaboratively to determine the most suitable hardscape surround for tree openings (grates, pavers, etc.).
- Plans should be developed utilizing the *Boulevard Tree Planting Guidelines* to maximize space available for tree planting.

- Trees are a central part of a thoughtful design, thus considerations such as snow storage, rain garden locations, and any other amenities to be placed within boulevards should be accounted for early in the design process so that planting spaces remain.

Planting via Project:

During the design phase of the project, Parks Forestry may approve planting to be completed via the project rather than by Parks Forestry master contract. Under these circumstances:

- The Project Manager will ensure all contractors or consultants have and adhere to the following documents:
  - Department of Parks & Recreation *Citywide Tree Planting Specifications* (latest edition)
  - Department of Parks & Recreation *Boulevard Tree Planting Guidelines*
  - Tree Planting Standard Plate
  - Minimum requirements for soils/boulevards as specified above
- The Project Manager and Parks Forestry will work collaboratively to determine species selection utilizing the most updated version of the *Recommended Boulevard Species List,* while factoring in overall diversity goals, location constraints (narrow boulevards, etc.), species attributes and survivability.
- Final determination/approval on species selection by Parks Forestry.
- Planting locations included on landscape plans shall follow the *Boulevard Tree Planting Guidelines* referenced above
  - Landscape plans indicating planting locations shall be considered as the best estimation of location, with final location to be marked and verified in the field by Parks Forestry.

Planting via Parks Forestry Master Contract

Upon request, Parks Forestry will provide a list of potential tree species to be planted in the project area for any outreach materials that are created for the project.

Pre Construction Phase

The Project Manager will ensure that the awarded contractor has and adheres to the

following documents:

- Department of Parks & Recreation *Citywide Tree Planting Specifications* (latest edition)
- Department of Parks & Recreation *Boulevard Tree Planting Guidelines*
- Tree Planting Standard Plate
- Minimum standards for soils/boulevards as specified in the Design/Planning Phase section

Streetscape Infrastructure:

The Project Manager will work with Parks Forestry to identify any existing tree planting related infrastructure, evaluate its' condition and potential for reuse. If materials are to be saved for future use, the Project Manager will work with the Contractor to deliver those materials to the Forestry Facility. Should materials be in poor condition and are determined to be refuse, the Project Manager will work with the Contractor to dispose of those materials.

Construction Phase

Planting Bed Soil Installation:

The Project Manager will provide Parks Forestry with advance notification of at least three (3) business days regarding the installation of planting bed soils.

- Soils shall be installed according to construction plan design details.
- Substitutions for alternative methods of installation shall be at the discretion of Parks Forestry.

Planting via Project:

If trees are planned to be planted via the project rather than through the established Parks Forestry Master Contract, the following additional procedures shall apply.

- **Tree Stock Procurement:** The Project Manager will ensure the Contractor is adhering to the Department of Parks & Recreation Citywide Tree Planting Specifications (latest edition) for procurement of tree stock.
  - Requests for species substitutions must be made to Parks Forestry in writing in advance of the applicable tree planting season.
- **Approved Tree Planting Seasons:** The Project Manager will ensure the Contractor is planning for planting during the approved timeframes per the *Citywide Tree*

Planting Specifications. Tree planting outside of the approved seasons needs prior approval of Parks Forestry.

- Spring Planting Season: April 7 - June 15
- Fall Planting Season: October 1 - November 15

- **Advance Notification of Planting Timeline:** To the best of their ability, the Project Manager shall share projected timelines with Parks Forestry regarding the boulevard restoration and tree planting phase of the project.

Planting via Parks Forestry Master Contract:

- **Tree Order Submission:** Parks Forestry orders tree stock for the spring and fall planting seasons through the Master Contract 2-3 months prior to the planting season. The Project Manager and Parks Forestry will communicate during the Construction Phase regarding estimated timelines for the transition from the Construction Phase to the Boulevard Restoration/Tree Planting Phase so that trees can be ordered based on the timelines provided in the chart below.

Tree Planting Season	Intent to Plant Notification Deadline – Public Works	Tree Order Placed Deadline - Forestry
Spring	November 30	January 15
Fall	June 30	August 15

- **Planting Plan Development:** Parks Forestry will work to identify planting sites, species and quantities for the seasonal tree order during the timeframe between November 30 and January 15 for spring planting and June 30 and August 15 for fall planting. Final quantities and planting locations are subject to change based on above and below ground conflicts.

Boulevard Restoration/Tree Planting Phase

Planting via Project

The Project Manager will work with the Contractor and Parks Forestry to coordinate tree planting.

Utility Locates & Verification Process

- The Project Manager will email Parks Forestry with the intent of entering GSOC tickets ten (10) business days prior to entry.
- Parks Forestry will mark curbs with white paint noting the initial planting location utilizing landscape plans and the *Boulevard Tree Planting Guidelines*.
- Upon completion of the initial marking, Parks Forestry will notify the Project Manager and Contractor.
- The Contractor will enter GSOC tickets and will notify Parks Forestry once they are fully cleared.
- Forestry will mark final planting locations within three (3) business days of utility clearance.
- Forestry will notify the Contractor and Project Manager that final planting locations have been marked and will provide a list of any changes made based on site conflicts.

Planting & Inspections

- The Project Manager or Contractor will notify Parks Forestry of the Contractor's planting start date at least three (3) business days in advance of planting.
- Parks Forestry may inspect tree stock prior to or during installation and reserves the right to reject any stock that does not meet specifications.
- The Project Manager or Contractor will notify Parks Forestry once planting has been completed.
- Parks Forestry will inspect trees following planting within fifteen (15) business days of installation per the *Citywide Tree Planting Specifications*. Any trees or planting methods that do not meet specifications will be added to a punch list for any additional work needed.

Punch List

All punch list items, including tree replacement as deemed necessary by Parks Forestry must be completed at no additional cost to the city by July 1st of that year for the Spring Planting Season and by December 1st of that year for the Fall Planting Season.

Upon completion of all work included on the Punch List, the Project Manager or Contractor will notify Parks Forestry of such completion and an inspection by Parks Forestry will be made to ensure compliance. Once punch list items have been inspected by Parks Forestry and have been found to meet the planting specifications, the tree will receive a satisfactory initial inspection.

Guarantee Period

All trees planted by the Contractor shall be guaranteed by the Contractor to be in good, healthy, and flourishing condition until July 1st of the year following planting for spring planted trees and September 1st of the year following planting for fall planted trees. This period may also be referred to as the Planting Warranty. Trees that are in good, healthy, and flourishing condition as determined by Parks Forestry at the end of the Guarantee Period will be granted Final Acceptance.

Replacements

Before the end of the Guarantee Period Parks Forestry will inspect the trees planted for the project to determine if they are in good, healthy, and flourishing condition. Any tree that is not free of dead branches and twigs, does not bear foliage of normal density, size, and color, and is determined by Parks Forestry to not meet the quality and condition requirements must either be pruned or replaced by the Contractor, as determined by Parks Forestry. No tree will be replaced prior to the end of the Guarantee Period unless authorized by Parks Forestry.

Parks Forestry will provide the Project Manager and Contractor with a list of trees that will need to be pruned or replaced per *Citywide Tree Planting Specifications*. The Contractor shall replace trees under warranty by June 30 for spring planted trees and November 15 for fall planted trees.

Planting via Parks Forestry Master Contract:

The Project Manager will work with Parks Forestry to coordinate tree planting along with other boulevard amenities including final grading, sod installation and hardscape.

Tree Planting Seasons

Trees are installed under the Parks Forestry Master Contract during these timeframes:

- Spring Planting Season: April 7 - June 15
- Fall Planting Season: October 1 - November 15

Sod Installation and Tree Planting

Trees should be installed following the final grade of boulevards, but prior to sod installation.

To coordinate tree planting with sod installation, the Project Manager, Contractor and Parks Forestry will need to be in close communication. The utility verification and marking process included in the *Citywide Tree Planting Specifications* is as follows:

- Parks Forestry will mark curbs with initial planting location
- The Planting Contractor must enter GSOC tickets a minimum of five (5) business days in advance of excavation
- The Planting Contractor must notify Parks Forestry that the submitted locates have been fully cleared for excavation a minimum of three (3) business days prior to planting
- Forestry will mark final planting location

Based on the above timeframes, Parks Forestry would need to be notified of a sod installation date at minimum fifteen (15) business days prior to proposed installation date to allow time for the Planting Contractor to complete any outstanding planting lists that have already been located and marked for planting, as well as time for the utility verification and marking process described above for the project itself. If this lead time is not possible, then planting may be postponed to the following season due to the sod establishment period.

Establishment Phase

Following the guarantee period, Parks Forestry will inspect trees during the annual citywide tree survey. Any dead, dying or damaged trees identified during that survey will be marked for removal.

Parks Forestry will include all newly planted trees in the pruning cycle for that area following the guarantee period.

Project to fund tree watering for a two (2) year period following warranty expiration for all trees planted for the project to ensure long term survival. If funding is not available, Parks Forestry may not replace trees.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Construction Tree Protection

Purpose:
To provide the Departments of Parks & Recreation and Public Works staff with clear procedures for tree protection during construction as directed by Ordinance 25-4, Tree Preservation.

Scope:
This SOP applies to all city-sponsored construction projects per Ordinance 25-4.

Intent:
This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) applies to all public trees identified to be preserved and protected within the limits of construction or disturbance as defined in Ordinance 25-4. Tree protection measures are taken before and during construction to avoid negative impacts to trees and root systems associated with construction activities. Such measures provide guidance and best management practices to the Contractor to protect trees during construction.

Related Documents:
- City Ordinance 25-4 Tree Preservation (update with approved title)
- ANSI A-300 Standards
    - Part 5 – Management of Trees and Shrubs During Site Planning, Site Development and Construction (current version)
    - Part 8 – Root Management (current version)
- International Society of Arboriculture Best Management Practices
    - Managing Trees During Site Development and Construction (current version)
    - Root Management (current Version)
- City Governing Specification for Construction (current version)
- City Standard Plate 6001 Tree Protection (current version)
- MnDOT Specification 2572 Protection and Restoration of Vegetation (current version)
- Federal Public Right-of-way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)

This SOP is organized according to project phase including:

- Design/Planning Phase
- Pre-Construction Phase
- Construction Phase
- Boulevard Restoration/Tree Planting Phase

Design/Planning Phase

Consultant Arborist:

A consultant will be hired during the design phase. The Consultant Arborist must be an ISA Certified Arborist and pre-approved by Parks Forestry. Consultant Arborist work to be funded by the city sponsored project.

Tree Preservation Plan (TPP):

A TPP will be developed during the Design Phase by the department responsible for the project in consultation with the Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist. TPP's will be reviewed by Parks Forestry for approval. The TPP shall include the following and will be incorporated into the construction plans and contract documents:

- The identity of the city department(s)responsible for the Public Infrastructure project.
- Delineation of existing buildings, structures, impervious surfaces, utilities, and other site improvements situated in the limits of construction/disturbance.
- Delineation of all areas to be excavated, graded and otherwise subject to land disturbance in the limits of construction/disturbance of the Public Infrastructure project.
- Location, species (botanical name), diameter at breast height (DBH), condition, and Critical Root Zone (CRZ) of all trees located within the limits of construction/disturbance. The Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) for each tree intended for preservation must be noted on the TPP.
- Tree protection measures as outlined in the Tree Protection Section of this ordinance.

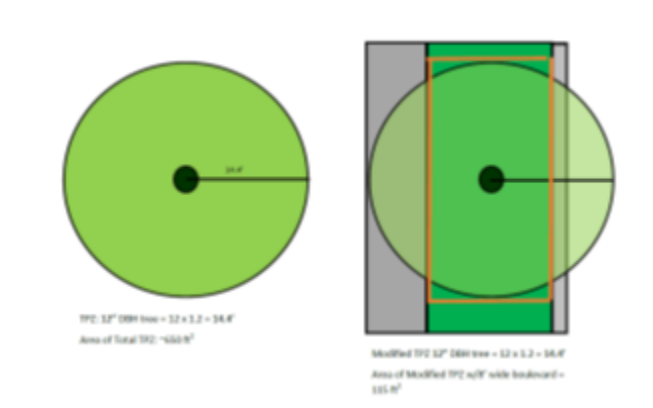
Plant Growth Regulators (PGR):

PGR's may be considered for public trees within the limits of construction/disturbance as designated by Parks Forestry. Any recommended PGR treatments will be applied during the growing season prior to construction and funded by the city sponsored project.

Modified TPZ:

A TPZ that is adjusted in size or shape to accommodate the existing infrastructure, planned construction, and specific aspects of the site, as well as the canopy conformation, visible root orientation, size, condition, maturity, and species response to construction impacts.

Modified TPZ example



Encroachment in TPZ:

Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist will be notified by the Project Manager of any proposed encroachments into the TPZ of any protected tree prior to disturbance.

Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist will make the final determination of allowed encroachment into the TPZ of any protected tree in accordance with the intent of the ordinance and standard operating procedures.

Pre-Construction Phase

Tree Removals:

Trees identified for removal during the Design Phase will be completed by a city licensed tree contractor following the Forestry Tree Work Permit process. The contractor will be hired through the city sponsored project prior to construction. To meet the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources requirements for Northern Long-eared Bat and Migratory Bird protected species, removals will occur November - March, with an April 14th deadline for bats.

Tree Pruning:

Trees designated for preservation will be pruned for standard road clearance and completed by Parks Forestry or a licensed tree contractor. Pruning to be completed by a licensed contractor following the Forestry Tree Work Permit process. Pruning will be performed during the dormant season prior to construction (November–March) to reduce the possibility of disease transmission. ANSI A-300 standards and the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Best Management Practices will be followed. Tree pruning will be funded by the city sponsored project if performed by the licensed tree contractor.

Pre-construction Meetings:

A mandatory In-Person/Teams Meeting will be organized by the Project Manager and include the following attendees: Project Manager, Contractor, subcontractors (i.e. fencing, erosion control, restoration and landscaping), Utility Contractors, Consultant Arborist, and Parks Forestry

- The Consultant Arborist or Parks Forestry will provide required tree protection standards to all parties.
- A mandatory field meeting will be organized by the Project Manager and include the following attendees: Project Manager, Contractor, Utility Contractors, subcontractors, and Consultant Arborist or Parks Forestry
- Onsite meeting to review potential impacts to trees designated for preservation and TPZ requirements.

Tree Protection Fencing:

Fencing must be installed by the Contractor and approved by the Consultant Arborist or Parks Forestry through a field review prior to utility work or construction commencing. Installation will follow the Tree Preservation Plan, ANSI A-300 Standards and city Standard Plate 6001 - Tree Protection. Tree protection to be funded by the city sponsored project. Corrections to tree protection will be provided to the Contractor and Project Manager in writing by the Project Manager. The Contractor must make modifications to tree protection fencing prior to continuing the Work or construction near the tree protection area. If the contractor fails to cure the issue within one working day, the City can perform the work and bill the contractor.

Tree Protection Signage:

Signage must be installed on fenced TPZ's. A template will be developed by Parks Forestry and provided to the Contractor by the Project Manager.

Construction Phase

The following must stay out of the modified TPZ of any public tree:

- Equipment and Material Staging Areas
- Storage Areas
- Stockpiles
- Access Routes
- Equipment Cleaning Areas

The following work must be reviewed and approved by Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborists prior to work within the modified TPZ of any public tree:

- Subcontractor work
- Private utility work
- Public utility work

Weekly Construction Meetings:

Meetings will cover compliance with the Tree Protection Plan and tree protection reports, efforts, violations, corrections, and any modifications to the plan. Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist will provide feedback and direction on tree protection efforts.

Contractor to provide two-week outlook on work areas with plans for tree protection. Weekly meeting notes will be documented and shared by the Project Manager with the Contractor, Parks Forestry and Consultant Arborist.

Tree Protection Reports:

Weekly reports will be provided by the Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist, that cover tree protection inspections and required corrections. Any required-changes to the tree protection fencing will be provided in writing and corrected by the Contractor within 1 working day after notification. No work can commence near the Modified TPZ until corrective measures are completed and approved by Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborists.

Essential elements of a tree protection report cover:

- Review of tree protection fencing, identifying needed maintenance or modifications.
- Review Contractor's methods of root protection, exposure and removal.
- Verify that tree damage has been addressed within 1 working day.
- Provide photo documentation of review.

Alternative Construction Methods:

Alternative methods will be considered, such as trenchless technologies, shoring, construction mats, or designated off-site areas. Any methods utilized must accommodate the TPZ, as determined by Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist and Project Manager.

Trenchless Technology Guidelines:

- **Minimum Depth**: Conduits should be installed at a minimum depth of 4 feet below grade.
- **Entry and Exit Pits**: All launch and reception pits must be located outside the TPZ of any public tree.
- **Vertical Clearance**: Boring must occur at least 18 inches beneath the critical root zone (CRZ) to ensure the stability of structural roots.
- **Monitoring**: Use electronic guidance systems to maintain a steady trajectory and prevent borehole collapse or unintended deviations into shallower root-heavy soil.

Root Protection Methods:

Methods to protect roots will include only approved construction methods (i.e. hand digging, low impact methods, or trenchless technology within the TPZ). No roots 2 inches in diameter or larger within the TPZ may be impacted or removed without approval of Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist.

- **Alternative Excavation:** If the TPZ must be entered, when feasible use non-mechanical methods such as pneumatic air excavation (e.g., Air-Spade™).
- **Clean Root Pruning:** When roots must be removed for installation of hardscape, appropriate tools will be utilized including Sawzall with wood blade, sharp handsaw, or other equipment meant for tree pruning.
- **Cut Root Treatment:** Immediately treat cut roots with shellac. Cover exposed roots with clean soil immediately following exposure.
- **Ground Protection**: Use interlocking heavy equipment mats, 3/4-inch plywood, a six-inch layer of mulch, or a combination of the above to distribute the weight of machinery.
- **Supplemental Irrigation**: May be required, as directed by Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist, when tree roots are damaged during construction.
- **Corrective Actions:** For roots that are inadequately protected, as identified by Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist, issues must be corrected by the Contractor within 1 workday of receiving notice. Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist will verify that corrective action has been taken and follows ANSI A-300 Standards.

Boulevard Restoration/Tree Planting Phase

Boulevard Restoration:

Restoration shall be specified by the Project Manager following MnDOT Specification 2571 and approved by Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist.

Boulevard restoration to be completed by the Contractor using construction methods that protect the trees and their root systems. Work within any TPZ will be limited to restoration of disturbance from curb, sidewalk, path installation, or utility disturbances. Restoration work within the TPZ will be completed under the direction of the on-site Consultant Arborist.

Only low impact methods will be allowed within the TPZ of any public tree. Typical low impact methods used:

- Light machinery with rubber tracks or tires, walk behind equipment, and hand labor for grading, landscaping and restoration.
- If soil compaction occurs within the TPZ, Parks Forestry or Consultant Arborist, may require corrective action utilizing an air-spade, loosening soil to a depth of 12" below finished grade, and amending with organic material. This method must be performed by a licensed tree care company.
- Low impact seeding, mulching, or sodding methods utilizing labor, walk-behind equipment, or aerial mechanical placement rather than heavy machinery methods.
- No machinery can be within the Modified TPZ.

Tree Planting:

Following the Tree Planting SOP, new trees shall be installed prior to sod installation. Protective fencing should not be removed until sod installation.

Final Report

The Consultant Arborist or Parks Forestry will provide, in writing, a final report following construction including:

- Number of trees preserved, and by which means;
- trees added, removed or saved as compared to the approved Tree Preservation Plan;
- Final count of number of trees added or subtracted as compared to pre-construction conditions
- Report damages and whether restitution was implemented.
- After action review of the effectiveness of the Standard Operating Procedures, contract documents, and implementation thereof by city, contractors and stakeholders.
- Document extraordinary circumstances and/or measures taken
- Provide suggested updates to SOPs and contract documents

Substantial Completion Payment to Contractor shall not be made until all tree related work and items have been resolved or retainage has been held to cover completion of work or damages. The Project Manager will coordinate with Parks Forestry prior to making substantial completion payment.

Final Payment to Contractor shall not be made until all tree related items have been resolved and final tree health assessment has been performed.

APPENDIX A

SAINT PAUL Parks and Recreation

WEEKLY TREE PROTECTION & COMPLIANCE REPORT

Project Name/ID: _____ **Report**

Date: _____

Contractor: _____ **Correction Date:** _____

Arborist: _____

1. Site Condition Summary

- **Tree Protection Overall Status:** _____
- **Active Work Areas:** _____
- **Weather Conditions (Rain/Temps):** _____

2. Compliance Checklist

Requirement	Status *(Yes/No/NA)*	Comments or Corrective Action Taken
Fencing/Protection: Secure and in correct location?		
TPZ Encroachment: No unapproved equipment or storage?		
Root Pruning: Document location of root cutting and treatments		
Stock/Spoil Piles: Stockpiled outside of TPZ		
Equipment/Staging: Only in agreed-upon locations?		
Utility/Subcontractors: Following tree protection standards?		
Access Locations: Only in agreed-upon locations?		
Grading/Restoration: Signs for tree damage in the TPZ?		
Overall Tree Health: Any signs of stress or mechanical Damage?		

SAINT PAUL Parks and Recreation

3. Root Disturbance & Damage Assessment

- **Unauthorized Activity:** _____
- **Root Exposure:** Yes No *(If yes, was the Arborist present for review?)*
- **Required Remediation:** _____

4. Corrective Actions Required

Note: Per SOP, all corrections must be completed within one (1) working day of this notice.

- **Correction Item 1:** _____ **Due Date:** _____
- **Correction Item 2:** _____ ___ **Due Date:** _____

5. Arborist Recommendations & Observations
(Specific notes on significant trees, upcoming high-risk activities, or necessity for supplemental watering/maintenance)

Prepared By: _____**Title:** _____

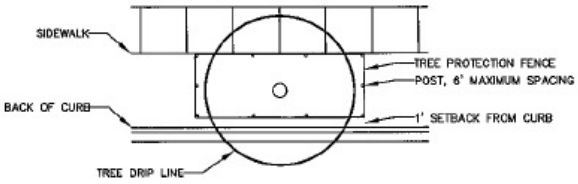
Reviewed by Project Manager: _____ **Date:** _____

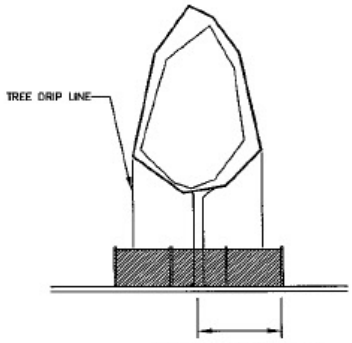
Reviewed by Parks Forestry: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX B

SAINT PAUL Parks and Recreation

TREE PROTECTION STANDARD PLATE





NOTES:

1. TREE PROTECTION FENCING SHALL BE INSTALLED, ACCORDING TO PLAN, PRIOR TO DEMOLITION OR OTHER SITE WORK. CONTACT CITY FORESTER (651.266.6400) PRIOR TO ANY RELOCATION OF THE TREE PROTECTION FENCING TO BE APPROVED BY CITY FORESTER.TREE PROTECTION FENCING SHALL BE MAINTAINED FOR THE DURATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS.
2. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS, STOCKPILES, EQUIPMENT, VEHICLES, AND TEMPORARY FACILITIES SHALL NOT BE STORED OR OPERATED WITHIN THE TREE PROTECTION ZONE.
3. ROOTS OUTSIDE OF THE TREE PROTECTION ZONE EXPOSED OR DAMAGED DURING EXCAVATION OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY SHALL BE CLEANLY CUT AS DIRECTED BY THE CITY FORESTER.
4. ADDITIONAL TREE PROTECTION MEASURES MAY BE REQUIRED.
5. LIMIT GRADING WITHIN THE DRIP LINE OF EXISTING TREES, GRADING WITHIN 5' OF THE TRUNK OF TREE SHALL BE DONE BY HAND OR SMALL EQUIPMENT TO MINIMIZE DAMAGE TO TREE ROOTS.
6. SUPPLEMENTAL WATER IS TO BE PROVIDED DURING PERIODS OF DRY AND HOT WEATHER, TYPICALLY WHEN RAINFALL IS BELOW 1" PER WEEK.
7. SOIL COMPACTION WITHIN THE DRIP LINE OF A STREET TREE, DUE TO CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES, TO BE RESTORED TO THE SATISFACTION OF, AND AT NO COST TO, THE CITY.
8. EXISTING STREET TREES ARE TO BE PROTECTED AT ALL TIMES. TREES DAMAGED OR REMOVED DURING CONSTRUCTION SHALL BE RESTORED OR REPLACED TO THE SATISFACTION OF, AND AT NO COST TO, THE CITY AS DETERMINED BY THE FORESTRY MANAGER. THE CONTRACTOR IS ADVISED TO DOCUMENT PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS PRIOR TO THE START OF CONSTRUCTION.

I hereby certify that this plan, specification or report was prepared by me or under my direct supervision and that I am a duly Licensed Professional Engineer under the laws of the State of Minnesota. Steve W Dodge

Date 2/18/2026 Lic. No. 41933

APPROVED 2/19/2026 CITY ENGINEER	CITY OF ST. PAUL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TREE PROTECTION	Date of Revision FEB. 2026	Standard Plate No. 6001

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Tree Damage and Restitution

Purpose:
To provide the Departments of Parks & Recreation and Public Works staff with clear procedures for tree damage restitution pursuant to Ordinance 25-4, Tree Preservation.

Scope:
This SOP applies to all city-sponsored construction projects per Ordinance 25-4.

Related Documents:

- Tree Preservation Ordinance 25-4
- City Legislative Code—Chapter 176. Preservation and Protection of Trees
- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), Council of Tree & Landscape Appraisers—Guide for Plant Appraisal (latest edition)
- Minnesota Society of Arboriculture—Supplement to the Guide for Plant Appraisal (ISA) (latest edition)
- Parks & Recreation Department—Forestry Tree Work Permit Application
- ANSI A300 Part 8—Root Management
- ANSI A300 Part 5—Management of Trees and Shrubs During Site Planning, Site Development, and Construction
- Public Works—Governing Specifications (latest version)

Restitution

Restitution for damage to public property trees within city sponsored projects will be sought by Parks Forestry for any reason outlined within this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). An invoice for the restitution amount including any labor/materials, loss of future benefits, stump removal and new tree planting (as necessary) will be sent by Parks Forestry directly to the Contractor responsible for the project.

Parks Forestry will utilize the *International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), Council of Tree & Landscape Appraisers—Guide for Plant Appraisal (latest edition)* and *Minnesota Society of Arboriculture—Supplement to the Guide for Plant Appraisal (ISA) (latest edition)* to determine the appraised value of a tree, dependent upon the circumstances as detailed in this SOP.

The Contractor is responsible for payment in full of any invoices for tree damages prior to close out and final payment of the project.

Example Tree Appraisal

Tree Appraisal

City of Saint Paul
Department of Parks and Recreation-Forestry

Date:	4/10/2026
Address:	[redacted]
City, State, Zip Code:	[redacted]
Project:	
Description:	Construction Removal

Tree Information

Scientific Name	*Quercus rubra*
Common Name	Oak, Northern Red
DBH (in inches)	17
Tree Location	Front 1
Planting Location	Boulevard
Unit Cost $/sq.in.	$24.00
Species Class adjustment	70%
Condition Class adjustment	81%
Location Class adjustment	67%
Circumference Damaged	100%
Percent Valuation	100%

Labor and Replacement

Labor & Equipment Cost	$0.00
Bill or Repair	$0.00
Tree Benefits Lost	$1,357.61
Replacement Cost	$0.00

Amount Due	**$3,404.41**

Boulevard oak tree removal due to new private property construction, [redacted]. Property to remove tree and stump via an approved Forestry Tree Work Permit. Billing for the appraised value of the tree and tree benefits lost. Property is responsible for planting a new tree per the DSI approved plans via the Forestry Tree Work Permit and its Terms & Conditions. If a tree is not planted, property owner will be billed accordingly for Forestry to plant a new tree.

The valuation for a tree 7" DBH or greater is calculated following the trunk formula method of tree appraisal with regional tree values assigned following the latest edition of the Minnesota Supplement to the Guide for Plant Appraisal (2009). The value for a tree 6" DBH or less is calculated by multiplying the diameter in inches by $125.00.

Date	4/10/2026
Bill To	[redacted]
Billing Code	
Forestry Contact	Brianna Bacher

Notification of Damage

The Project Manager or Contractor will contact Parks Forestry immediately should any public property tree meant to be preserved incur damage during the Pre-Construction, Construction, and Boulevard Restoration/Tree Planting phases of a project.

Failure to Notify—Additional Monitoring Required:

Should damage occur and not be addressed immediately, additional monitoring may be required. Parks Forestry may pursue restitution at a later date, within two years of damage, if the condition of a tree declines due to construction damage, has been found to be infected with a pathogen, or has become infested by damaging insects due to unreported damage or stress resulting from construction activities.

Damage to Trees—Removal Required

If a tree designated for preservation is removed or is damaged to the extent that removal is required, as determined by Parks Forestry, restitution will be pursued in accordance with this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). This applies when removal occurs or is necessitated:

- Due to negligence or error.
- Due to unapproved root cutting or root removal methods that jeopardize the health or structural stability of the tree.
- Without an approved *Forestry Tree Work Permit.*

Damage to Trees—Removal not Required

In the event that a public property tree is damaged during construction, but does not require removal, Parks Forestry will work with the Project Manager and Contractor to determine the corrective action necessary within two workdays.

Above Ground Damage:

Restitution or corrective measures for damages to any part of a tree above ground will follow the procedures as detailed below.

- **Trunk Damage:** Should the main trunk of the tree incur damage from operating construction equipment, or from improperly stored equipment or construction spoils in the tree protection zone, the restitution process will be followed.
- **Canopy Damage:** Should any part of the tree's canopy be damaged by construction equipment, Parks Forestry will first assess to determine whether subsequent removal is required. If so, the restitution process will be followed.
- **Corrective Pruning:** If damage is limited and can be addressed with corrective pruning, Parks Forestry will work with the Project Manager and Contractor to determine which party will complete the pruning and within what timeframe.
    - **Pruning by Parks Forestry:** Parks Forestry will complete all corrective pruning in accordance with ANSI A300 pruning standards and will invoice the Contractor directly for labor and equipment at current rates.
    - **Pruning by Contractor**: The Contractor must obtain an approved *Forestry Tree Work Permit* before completing any pruning and, once approved, will complete all pruning within the agreed upon timeframe. If the Contractor does not complete the pruning within that timeframe, Parks Forestry will complete the work and invoice the Contractor at current rates.

      If the Contractor's pruning does not meet ANSI A300 standards, Parks Forestry will remove any branch stubs resulting from improper methods in accordance with ANSI A300 and will invoice the Contractor at current rates. If pruning results in flush cuts or removal of limbs not approved via permit, Parks Forestry will follow the restitution process and may, at its discretion, require tree removal.

Subsurface Damage:

Pursuant to Ordinance 25-4, the following definitions are applicable to this section:

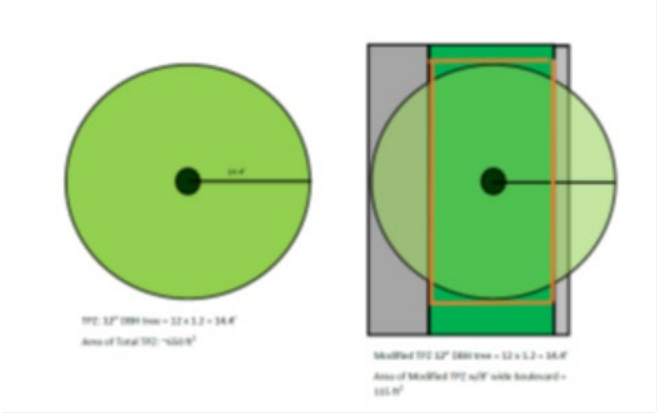
Critical root zone (CRZ): Area of soil around a tree where the minimum amount of roots considered critical to the structural stability or health of the tree are located. Determination of CRZ will be based on the trunk diameter method as defined in this ordinance.

Tree protection zone (TPZ): A defined area within which certain activities are prohibited or restricted to prevent or minimize potential injury to designated trees, especially during construction or development. For purposes of this ordinance, the TPZ shall be the critical root zone unless such a TPZ would prohibit intended construction activities. In that case,

modified tree protection zones may be specified by Forestry based on specific site restrictions.

Modified TPZ: A TPZ that is adjusted in size or shape to accommodate the existing infrastructure, planned construction, and specific aspects of the site, as well as the canopy conformation, visible root orientation, size, condition, maturity, and species response to construction impacts.

Modified TPZ example



Trunk diameter method: A method used to locate the tree protection zone boundary as a radius in feet from the center of a tree's trunk by multiplying the diameter at breast height (DBH), measured in inches at 4.5 feet from the ground, by a factor of 1.2.

Root Cutting:

Pursuant to Ordinance 25-4, Parks Forestry will be contacted prior to the severance of any root 2 inches in diameter or larger.

Should tree roots two (2) inches in diameter or larger be cut without first contacting Parks Forestry, Parks Forestry will determine whether tree removal is required due to structural stability concerns. If a tree that is intended to be preserved requires removal due to structural instability resulting from root severance, the Contractor will be responsible for its removal via the *Forestry Tree Work Permit* process and for restitution of the appraised value of the tree.

Should tree roots be cut using unapproved methods, Parks Forestry will inspect the site and determine what corrective measures are necessary. Parks Forestry will work with the Project Manager and Contractor to complete remediation within one workday of the date of the damage. Remediation may include, but is not limited to, cleanly cutting affected roots, covering impacted roots with four (4) inches of mulch or clean soil, and supplemental watering of the affected tree.

Soil Disturbance and Compaction:

Should construction impact the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) of a public tree in the form of soil compaction, due to improperly stored materials/equipment, or use of heavy equipment within the TPZ without adequate ground cover, the Contractor will be responsible for remediation of the area. This may include radial trenching (to be performed by a licensed tree care company) and the addition of organic material. Parks Forestry will determine what corrective measures are necessary, and work with the Project Manager and Contractor to remediate the damage prior to the project's completion.

Forestry Tree Work Permit

Permit Requirements/Restrictions:

No City department or contractor of the City shall engage in any tree-related activity within public rights-of-way, parklands or parkways without first obtaining a *Forestry Tree Work Permit* from Parks Forestry. A *Forestry Tree Work Permit* application submitted by any company or organization lacking a City of Saint Paul "Tree Trimmer" license issued under Legislative Code Chap. 362 will not be approved.

Corrective Pruning:

Pruning the canopy, crown or living foliage of a tree, in strict accordance with ANSI A-300 Standards and best management practices, as determined by Parks Forestry, may be allowed with an approved *Forestry Tree Work Permit*. The permit's specifications shall be adhered to unless modified in writing by Parks Forestry prior to any change from the original permit specifications.

A Forestry Tree Work Permit will not be granted for tree pruning more than 25 percent of the canopy, crown, or living foliage of a tree or other pruning not in accordance with the ANSI A-300 Standards.

Tree Removal:

The removal of any public tree meant to be preserved shall not be removed prior to receipt of written authorization from Parks Forestry in the form of a Forestry Tree Work permit. Failure to secure a permit prior to a tree's removal may result in the Contractor paying the appraised value of the tree removed as evidence of the need for removal will not have been reviewed in advance by Parks Forestry.

Permit Review:

Upon receipt of a complete application for a Forestry Tree Work Permit, Parks Forestry will review the application which may include a field inspection of the site.

- Parks Forestry will inform the permit applicant of their decision to approve or deny the permit application no later than ten (10) business days following receipt of the application if the application is complete.
- Permit applications deemed incomplete will be returned with instructions to provide additional information when resubmitting the permit application.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Tree Public Engagement and Transparency

Purpose:
To provide the Departments of Parks & Recreation and Public Works staff with clear procedures for public engagement and input during project design and construction phases as directed by Ordinance 25-4, Tree Preservation.

Scope:
This SOP applies to all city-sponsored construction projects per Ordinance 25-4.

Goal:
To ensure that residents have clear, consistent, timely and accessible information about construction projects that impact trees, including information about the means of and opportunities for input.

To provide a means of effectively communicating, receiving public input, monitoring and reporting on implementation of the Tree Ordinance.

Related Documents:

- City Ordinance 25-4 Tree Preservation (update with approved title)
- ANSI A300 Part 5—Management of Trees and Shrubs During Site Planning, Site Development, and Construction

Design Phase Tree Public Engagement and Input

Project Notices:

Adjacent properties to the construction project will receive notification. Notices should use plain language and provide appropriate multilingual communication when necessary. Notification will be delivered through multiple channels, including mailings signage, emails,

project webpage and online platforms. Written notices may be supplemented with QR codes that direct to project webpage for more information.

Initial Project Notices:

Adjacent property owners and residents will receive initial notices about city construction projects. Qualifying projects that impact trees will provide notices that outline the timeline for key phases of public feedback, planning, design, construction and project staff information.

Event Project Notices:

Property Owners and residents will receive notices prior to each opportunity for feedback or public engagement meeting. Types of open houses and public engagement meetings:

- Initial project kick-off meetings with the public which should include the existing tree conditions assessment
- Public engagement and input meetings as the design progresses and the tree preservation plan is developed
- Informational meeting prior to Public Hearing No. 1 to inform the property owners and residents of the city-recommended project and tree protection plan
- Construction informational meeting to inform the property owners and residents of expected construction impacts and receive feedback

Public utilities coordination:

Other public utilities, such as sanitary and storm sewers and watermain, will be coordinated with and invited to public engagement meetings to identify any conflicts with trees. The tree preservation plan will share tree impacts identified by type.

Public Input:

The public will have the opportunity to review and provide feedback on proposed construction designs and tree preservation plans through in-person or online public meetings.

Design Alternatives:

The adjacent property owners and residents will be provided with the opportunity to review and comment on design alternatives at the concept phase if they are considered.

Alternative Methods:

Feasible alternative construction methods, including trenchless technologies, will be considered and identified when used to preserve trees.

Tree Preservation plans:

The residents and property owners will have the opportunity to review and comment on project design and the draft tree preservation plan by the sixty-percent design phase.

Final Review:

Prior to Public Hearing No. 1, Improvement Hearing for Council to consider ordering the project, the residents and property owners will have the opportunity to review and comment on the final tree preservation plan.

Tree Removal Notice:

Trees will be marked for removal and notice will pe provided to the adjacent property owners a minimum of 7-days prior to removal. Tree removals will occur between November 1 and March 30, prior to the improvement project, in order to be in conformance with federal protection for long-eared bats and migratory birds.

Construction Phase Tree Public Engagement and Input

Tree Preservation Plan Changes:

Projects may have unforeseen circumstances that arise and require tree impact or removal that was scheduled to be preserved. When this occurs, staff will notify abutting property owners in one or more of the following ways:

- general project letter the includes tree removal information
- project community engagement meetings
- email update that includes tree removal notice
- project website update with tree removal notice

In addition, staff is available to answer resident or property owner inquiries.

The contractor shall follow Forestry's Tree Work Permit process and notice to the adjacent property owner will be required. A notice to the Tree Ambassadors, managers of Parks Forestry and Public Works Street Engineering, or their supervisors, is required to obtain a resolution on tree impacts and removals that were intended to be preserved.

Post-Construction Phase Reporting

Reporting:

Reporting will be of two types: project specific review and recommended updates to the Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Project Specific Reporting:

After substantial completion and prior to final payments, the project manager, either from Street Engineering or Consultant, will provide a written summary of tree-related impacts and report on any tree impacts that differed from the Tree Preservation Plan, including:

- Number of trees preserved and by which means
- trees added, removed or saved as compared to the approved Tree Preservation Plan
- Final count of number of trees added or subtracted as compared to pre-construction conditions
- Report damages and whether restitution was implemented following International Society of Arboriculture plant appraisal guidelines
- After action review of the effectiveness of the Tree Preservation Ordinance, Standard Operating Procedures, contract documents, and implementation thereof by city, contractors and stakeholders
- Document extraordinary circumstances and/or measures taken
- Provide suggested updates to SOPs and contract documents

Annual Summary Report:

The Department of Public Works and Department of Parks and Recreation shall provide a single report to the City Council in December of each year outlining progress in implementing the Tree Ordinance. The report should include:

- High level summaries of trees added, preserved, removed and replaced
- Field changes to the approved Tree Preservation Plans
- Key challenges or burdens to implementation
- Lessons learned and new methods or procedures utilized to preserve trees
- Cost implications
- Recommended changes to the Tree Preservations Ordinance and Standard Operating Procedures
- Provide a final summary table of trees added, preserved, removed, and planted along with diversity on a per project and year's total
- Key Performance Indicator will be whether the Tree Preservation Plan approved was accurate and followed

Initial Roles & Work Flow Associated with Tree Preservation Ordinance

[1] For this document, responsible indicates who is doing the work.
[2] Tree Team is 2-3 people, one from each department, who help resolve disputes.

Key
- City Forester
- Contractor
- Tree Team[2]
- Community
- City Engineer
- PW Project Manager
- Consulting Arborist

1. Project Approval

2. Land Survey

Initiates
Responsible[1] Surveyor
Approves
Consulted

- Project kick-off letter mailed to adjacent properties prior to geotechnical and survey information being gathered

3. Tree Survey

Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- PM procures Consulting Arborist
- Tree surveys on qualifying projects only (see ordinance for detail)
- PM creates initial proposal for tree preservation and removals based on existing conditions

4. Alternatives Analysis

10-30% Design Review

Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- Public open house meeting
- Possible alternative and tree impacts are shared for public feedback

5. Draft Tree Preservation Plan

60% Design Review

Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- Public engagement: general layout, design decisions, and tree preservation plan are shared for public feedback

6. Final Tree Preservation Plan

90-100% Design Review

Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- Forestry reviews construction specs
- Project Informational Meeting held prior to public hearing
- Final layout, design, and tree preservation plan are shared
- Public Hearing No. 1: City Council considers project ordering

7. Pre-Construction Meeting

Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- Tree removals November 1-March 30 (per federal regulations)
- Pre-construction meeting with contractor
- Pre-construction informational meeting with property owners, residents, businesses

8. Construction: Tree Protection

Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- City Forester provided weekly construction updates
- Consulting Arborist monitors protection measures
- Tree protection installed prior to site disturbance and reviewed by Consultant Arborist

9. Construction: Changes in Plans

Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- Consulting Arborist notified by PM who makes a recommendation to City Forester (or designee) and PM if there is a suggested change to original plan
- City Forester (or designee) makes decision, in consultation with PM
- PM coordinates with City Forester (or designee) to update TPP as needed
- Property owner(s) notified as necessary

10. Tree Planting

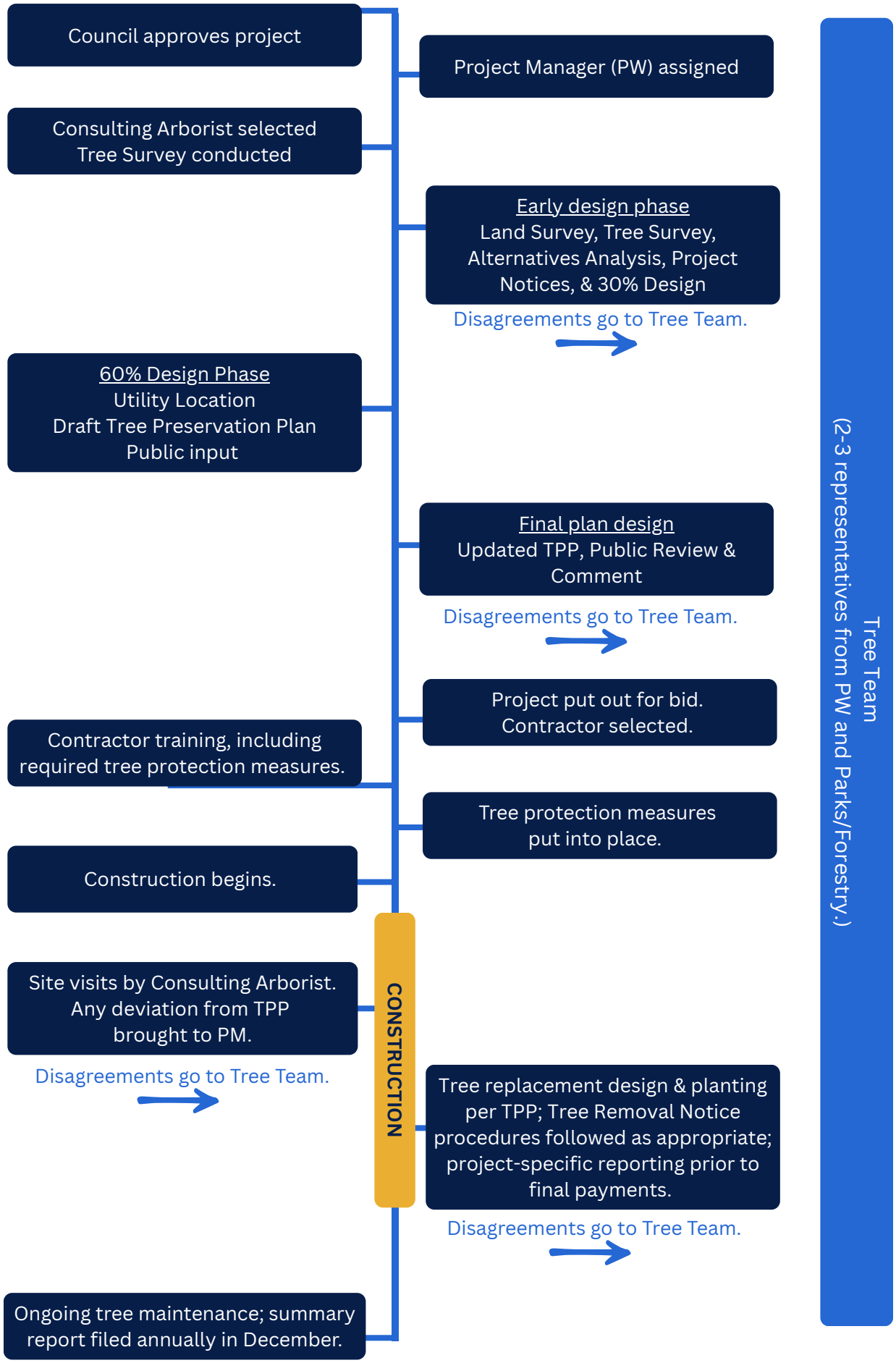
Initiates
Responsible[1]
Approves
Consulted

- General email notification to property owners that trees to be planted
- Preliminary tree and utility locations marked
- Adjustments to tree locations approved by City Forester (or designee)

Additional Agreement
- Forestry will review general specs annually with Public Works

Work Flow for Tree Preservation Ordinance

This graphic represents a broad outline of work flow; actual sequencing may change based on project scope and conditions.



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
JAZMIN GLASER-KELLY, CHAIR

City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Tel: 651-266-6400

June 16, 2026

TO: Kaohly Her, Mayor
Cedrick Baker, Assistant Mayor
Rebecca Noecker, Council President
Nelsie Yang, Council Vice President
HwaJeong Kim, Councilmember
Molly Coleman, Councilmember
Anika Bowie, Councilmember
Saura Jost, Councilmember
Cheniqua Johnson, Councilmember

FROM: Jazmine Glaser-Kelly, Chair

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Commission – Transmittal of Resolutions:

- RES 26-06 Naming Phalen Picnic Island "Tou Ger Xiong Island"
- RES 26-07 WSCO Community Garden License Agreement
- RES 26-09 Recommending Chapter 92 Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects

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On Thursday, June 11, 2026, the Parks and Recreation Commission passed the following resolutions:

- Res 26-06 – Naming Phalen Picnic Island "Tou Ger Xiong Island"
  - The Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends the Saint Paul City Council name Phalen Picnic Island to Tou Ger Xiong Island.
- Res 26-07 – WSCO Community Garden License Agreement
  - The Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends authorizing community garden license agreements between the Parks and Recreation Department of Saint Paul and West Side Community Organization.
- Res 26-08 – Recommending the Saint Paul City Council Amend Title IV of the Saint Paul Administrative Code to add Chapter 92, titled Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects
  - The Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends the Saint Paul City Council amend Title IV of the Saint Paul Administrative Code to add Chapter 92, titled Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects

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RESOLUTION # 26-06
Naming Phalen Picnic Island "Tou Ger Xiong Island"

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission ("Commission") is an appointed body established to advise the Mayor and City Council on city-wide matters related to the Department of Parks and Recreation ("Department"); and

WHEREAS, the Department received a $250,000 grant from the MN Historical Society to design and construct a mural and statue honoring Tou Ger Xiong's life and contributions to the state of Minnesota on an island at Phalen-Keller Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks Conservancy received a $15,000 grant from Year-Round Star Funding to install permanent naming markers; and

WHEREAS, the island is unofficially known as Picnic Island and is located at the northwest corner of Phalen-Keller Regional Park ; and

WHEREAS, the creation of public art and a designated memorial space to honor Tou Ger Xiong alongside Lake Phalen will support the goals of honoring Tou Ger Xiong's legacy as a pillar of the community and continuing his work celebrating Hmong heritage, inspiring future community leaders, and bringing people together; and

WHEREAS, the Department has and will continue to work in close collaboration with several partners on this project, including the Xiong Family, Senator Foung Hawj, Ward 6 City Council Office, and community representatives; and

WHEREAS the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission Policy #7, Naming Parks and Recreation Sites, 2012 Update, provides criteria for naming of parks, and this request follows the purpose of the "Memorial Names" criteria; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends naming Phalen Picnic Island to Tou Ger Xiong Island and that the naming go to the Saint Paul City Council for recommendation for approval.

_____

Adopted by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on June 11, 2026:

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Approved:

Yeas 6
Nays 0
Abstain: 1
Absent: 1

Resolution #26-06

Attested to by: Chelsea A Beary
Staff to the Parks and Recreation Commission

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RESOLUTION # 26-07
Recommending to City Council approval of community garden license agreement between the Parks and Recreation Department of Saint Paul and West Side Community Organization

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission ("Commission") is an appointed body established to advise the Mayor and City Council on long-range and city-wide matters related to Parks and Recreation; and

WHEREAS, the City and the district council West Side Community Organization have established a community garden at Capitol View Park, 386 Cherokee Ave. Saint Paul, MN 55107; and

WHEREAS, members of the Saint Paul community utilize this community garden to cultivate food, be active, and build relationships; and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul Administrative Code requires the licensing of parkland to be approved by the City Council, following a hearing before the Parks and Recreation Commission; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends Authorizing community garden license agreements between the Parks and Recreation Department of Saint Paul and West Side Community Organization.

Adopted by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on June 11, 2026:

Approved:

Yeas	6
Nays	0
Abstain:	1
Absent:	1

Resolution #26-07

Attested to by:

Chelsea A Boary

Staff to the Parks and Recreation Commission

SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
JAZMIN GLASER-KELLY, CHAIR

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RESOLUTION # 26-08

Recommending the Saint Paul City Council Amend Title IV of the Saint Paul Administrative Code to add Chapter 92, titled Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects.

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission ("Commission") is an appointed body established to advise the Mayor and City Council on long-range and city-wide matters related to Parks and Recreation; and

WHEREAS, trees provide essential public benefits including improved air quality, carbon storage, urban heat reduction, stormwater management, erosion control, wildlife habitat, and contributions to public health and improve public safety and neighborhood livability; and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul's tree canopy has been significantly degraded by the spread of Emerald Ash Borer, with resulting long-term impacts on environmental quality and equitable access to these benefits; and

WHEREAS, urban heat islands disproportionately affect areas with lower tree canopy cover, resulting in higher temperatures, reduced air and water quality, increased energy burdens, and elevated public health risks; and

WHEREAS, these impacts are concentrated in neighborhoods with higher proportions of low-income households and historically underinvested communities; and

WHEREAS, advancing climate resilience requires intentional, equity-centered investment in tree canopy restoration, preservation, and maintenance in areas most affected by environmental harm and historic disinvestment; and

WHEREAS, the Tree Preservation Ordinance Public Input Group (TPO PIG) conducted an eighteen-month collaborative process involving residents, advocates, technical experts, and City staff across multiple departments to evaluate and refine tree preservation policy and implementation; and

WHEREAS, this process resulted in a consolidated ordinance and Standard Operating Procedures framework intended to be clear, enforceable, and operationally implementable while advancing environmental stewardship, accessibility, and infrastructure compatibility; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations developed through this process prioritize strengthened tree preservation policy, improved public engagement and accountability, and consistent, transparent implementation across City systems; and

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WHEREAS, the TPO PIG emphasized that equity and environmental justice require reducing structural barriers to tree protection so that preservation outcomes do not depend on individual capacity, technical knowledge, or access to informal decision-making processes, but instead reflect consistent public standards; and

WHEREAS, the group further recommended that tree protections be applied consistently and systematically across all projects and geographies to ensure equitable outcomes not shaped by differential resources, procedural complexity, or variability in implementation; and

WHEREAS, the group emphasized a "hold harmless" approach in which existing high-canopy neighborhoods are maintained and protected while historically under-canopied and heat-vulnerable neighborhoods receive prioritized investment; and

WHEREAS, these findings support adoption of a strengthened Tree Preservation Ordinance and accompanying Standard Operating Procedures that embed equity, consistency, accountability, and environmental justice in the preservation and expansion of Saint Paul's urban forest; and now, therefore, be it;

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends the Saint Paul City Council amend Title IV of the Saint Paul Administrative Code to add Chapter 92, titled Tree Preservation for City Sponsored Construction Projects.

Adopted by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on June 11, 2026:

Approved:

Yeas	7
Nays	
Absent:	1

Resolution #26-08

Attested to by:

Chelsea A Boary

Staff to the Parks and Recreation Commission