



**CITY OF COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA ITEM**

AGENDA ITEM: 21-O-09

Prepared By: Brenda Alexander,
Assistant Director DPW

Meeting Date: 07/20/2021

Presented By: Brenda Alexander,
Assistant Director DPW

Proposed Consent: No

Originating Department: Department of Public Works

Action Requested: Introduction of Ordinance 21-O-09

Strategic Plan Objective: Objective #3: Preserve and enrich our environment and natural beauty to attract people and sustain our City's future.

Background/Justification:

A Citywide tree canopy assessment report was completed in April 2019. The findings were presented to the Mayor and Council and identified the following:

- measurable tree canopy loss has been occurring in the City
- preservation of existing canopy, especially on private land, is critical to maintain the City's tree canopy
- the vast majority of the City's tree canopy is located on residentially zoned land

The Council requested the Tree & Landscape Board (TLB) to review the tree canopy assessment report and provide recommendations. The TLB has attended two Council Worksessions to discuss recommendations with the Mayor and Council on 11/19/2019, and 9/1/2020, to propose a new permitting process for tree removal on private property as well as a requirement for planting replacement trees.

TLB also held a community forum on 11/18/2020, as Mayor and Council requested, to obtain community input and feedback related to the proposed tree permitting recommendations. TLB has incorporated concerns raised during the community forum and Strategic Planning process into the revised tree permitting recommendations discussed with Mayor and Council on 4/20/2021.

Mayor and Council formed a sub-committee to work with the TLB to develop a phased-in approach for the tree permitting process. Council sub-committee members met with the TLB on 5/19/2021 and 6/16/2021 to draft phased-in guidelines for the tree removal and replanting permit process. The Council sub-committee approved the phased-in process and recommended an Ordinance be drafted for the Mayor and Council review and approval.

The draft Ordinance was reviewed and discussed at the July 13, 2021 Worksession, and Council proposed to move forward with introduction.

Fiscal Impact:

Unknown at this time. Additional staff time will be required to review, and process permit applications. The cost of an independent tree assessment can range from \$500 - \$1,000.

The Council expressed interest in the creation of a tree maintenance fund for residents to use to defray the costs of tree maintenance on their property.

Council Options:

1. Support the Urban Forest Protection Ordinance and phasing, as drafted, and schedule introduction.
2. Request specific revisions to the draft Urban Forest Protection Ordinance prior to introduction and bring back for further consideration.

Staff Recommendation:

Option #1

Recommended Motion:

I move to introduce the Urban Forest Protection Ordinance 21-O-09 as drafted and schedule a public hearing on August 10, 2021.

Attachments:

1. Draft Ordinance 21-O-09
2. College Park Urban Forest Protection Recommendations from the Tree & Landscape Board dated 6/16/2021