

1. Ordinance Goals

A Issue Background

The 2010 Strategic Plan calls for greater protection of existing trees and a plan for new plantings to maintain or increase the city's tree canopy. The city's current canopy coverage is approximately 45%. Adopting a tree ordinance that regulates the damage and removal of trees during the site disturbance process is one way the city can protect and enhance the tree canopy. The City Commission has requested that staff prepare a new tree ordinance for adoption in January 2014.

B Policy Questions

1a: What do you think should be the goals of the new tree ordinance?

1b: Do you think the community should do more to conserve existing trees?

2. Tree Canopy Measure

A Issue Background

The current tree ordinance measures trees and calculates tree values based on tree density units (based on the tree trunk's diameter at breast height). A more accurate measure of a tree's ecological benefits is obtained by using a tree canopy measurement (the size of the crown of the tree). Establishing tree canopy coverage goals and requirements enables the city to measure the impact of its ordinances on tree conservation and planting requirements.

Existing Tree Ordinance:

Measures trees by tree density units (the size of the tree trunk)
Requires a set amount of tree density units per site

2008 Draft Tree Ordinance:

Measure trees by tree canopy size: small, medium, large
Establishes tree canopy coverage requirements for each site

B Policy Questions

2a: Should the city establish a citywide tree canopy goal?

The current canopy coverage is 45%.

- Which goal do you think is best? 45% 50% 55% 60%

2b: Do you think the community should do more to conserve existing trees?

3. Tree Conservation



A Issue Background

There are many activities that can damage a tree including building materials storage on tree roots, soil compaction, utility line trenches, irrigation system installation, landscape renovations and increased impervious surface on a property. One way to prevent the loss of canopy due to these activities is to require a permit to remove existing, healthy trees - especially large trees.

Existing Tree Ordinance:

Currently, homeowners can remove any tree from their lot without a permit as long as they are not in a local historic district or the removal is not part of a construction project. The ordinance defines specimen trees and requires that they are replaced with a similar tree if they are removed as part of a construction project.

B Policy Questions

3a: If the city sets a citywide canopy goal then each zoning district (e.g. R60 Residential, C2 General Commercial etc.) will have established canopy coverage requirements. Should the city establish an individual lot canopy coverage goal of 60% for residential and 50% for commercial?

3b: Should the city require a tree removal permit when a homeowner wants to remove a healthy tree 12 inches diameter or greater on their property?

3c: Should the city identify and define large trees that should be protected from removal? For example, a Landmark Tree would be 30 inches or greater diameter with at least 15 year life expectancy.

4. Boundary Trees



A Issue Background

Many times trees and their root systems spread across more than one property. Site disturbance activities on one property may impact the health of a tree located on the adjoining property.

Existing Tree Ordinance:

Does not identify or have requirements to protect boundary trees

B Policy Questions

4a: Should the city define boundary trees in the ordinance and require that they are protected during site disturbance?

4b: Should the city allow the canopy of a boundary tree to count towards the canopy requirement on an adjoining property?

5. Other Ideas



Policy Questions

5a: Are there any best management practices for tree conservation, maintenance and plantings that the city should consider?

5b: The city would like to provide the community with information and training that will help you care for your trees.

- What kind of information would be useful for you to know?
- In what format would you like to receive this information?