



Legislation Text

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TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

FROM: Peter D. Lear, CPA, CGMA, City Manager

TITLE: Discussion of Tree Protection Regulations from Other Jurisdictions (TXT-19-001)

Recommended Action

Discuss and provide direction to staff by consensus

Background Information

On February 27, 2018, the Commission directed staff to schedule two public meetings for input on the City's existing tree protection regulations, and to include information from a Commission work session on tree regulations that was held on May 25, 2017. Then staff were directed to follow-up by bringing input from the public meetings, along with the information the Commission requested in May 2017, to another work session.

In early March 2018, under the direction of the Planning Manager, an interdepartmental project team was formed with staff from Neighborhood Development Services-Planning, Neighborhood Development Services-Arborist, City Manager's Office-Communications Team to develop and implement a plan to seek broad community input on the City's tree protection regulations. The team reviewed the minutes from the May 25, 2017 Commission Work Session, developed a webpage for outreach and input, advertised on social media, developed and posted a community survey, and scheduled and held two community workshops.

The community input thus far has provided insights about the community's issues and concerns about trees, as well as the challenges in regulating the protection of trees in the city. For example, 79% of the survey respondents are concerned about clearcutting and tree removal in North Port, but 52% feel that homeowners should be allowed to have trees cut down on their own property without any restrictions or review. Given that many of the trees you see in the city are on platted residential lots that will eventually be developed, if everyone could cut trees down without any restrictions, the tree canopy will dramatically diminish over time.

This matter also went before the Environmental Advisory Board at their November 5, 2018 meeting. A memo containing their recommendations is attached.

Staff came back to the Commission at a work session on December 3, 2018. The outcome of that workshop was direction to prepare a side-by-side comparison of the City's Tree Protection regulations with those of Gainesville, Jacksonville, Sarasota County, and Tallahassee.

Strategic Plan

Historical, Cultural, and Environmental Preservation: Protect and promote our natural, cultural, and historical heritage that help define the City's identity, contribute to the economy, maintain balance, and improve quality of life.

Strategic Objective: Promote the City's historical, cultural, and natural environment

Neighborhood Enhancement: Support the beautification and revitalization of our neighborhoods.

Strategic Objective: Lead efforts to partner with residents and community agencies to revitalize and beautify neighborhoods.

Efficient & Effective Government: Develop and promote City governance that fosters trust and utilizes departmental strengths and innovative philosophies to facilitate effective and efficient provision of all City services.

Strategic Objective: Update the Unified Land Development Code and City code to reflect best practices, current priorities, and legal compliance.

Attachments:

1. Tree Protection Regulation Summaries
2. ULDC Chapter 21 - Landscaping Regulations and Chapter 45 - Tree Protection Regulations
3. Gainesville - Protection of Resources
4. Jacksonville - Landscape and Tree Protection Regulations
5. Sarasota County - Tree Regulations
6. Tallahassee - Tree Protection and Removal Standards
7. December 3, 2018, Commission Workshop Minutes
8. November 8, 2018, Environmental Advisory Board Memorandum
9. May 25, 2018 Staff Report to CM
10. Matrix Worksheet

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