



TREE COMMISSION

September 18, 2024

TO: Tree Commission Members and Staff
FR: Curtis Hart, Chair, Jacksonville Tree Commission
RE: **Task Force on Jacksonville Urban Tree Planting Best Practices**

The Jacksonville Tree Commission is charged as a coordinator for programs, projects, and activities related to planting projects and the health of the tree canopy between all public and private entities in the City of Jacksonville. Chapter 94, *Ordinance Code*. A healthy, sustainable tree canopy requires adherence to the principle, “right tree, right place”. The restoration of Jacksonville’s tree canopy necessarily includes the planting, or re-planting, of trees in urban areas, including downtown, which often requires enhanced site preparation and planting specifications that may not be supported by current Ordinance Code or City landscape design requirements. As such, to escalate the effective planting of trees in urban Jacksonville, certain planting policy and Ordinance Code provisions may need to be revised.

For these reasons, pursuant to §94.104(b), *Ordinance Code*, I am hereby creating a Jacksonville Tree Commission Task Force on Urban Tree Planting Best Practices (“Urban Tree Task Force”).

As used herein the term, “urban”, refers to planting in an environment that is within or otherwise constrained by hardscape, including but not limited to, concrete, asphalt, pavement or brick.

The Urban Tree Task Force shall address the following:

1. Review current code provisions and related procedures and policy affecting the planting of trees in urban environments, including but not limited to, Chapter 656, Part 12, Subpart C (Landscaping Requirements), *Ordinance Code*, and the Land Development Procedures Manual, to identify and make recommendations to encourage the planting of trees and improve the outcome of planted trees. Consideration should be given to findings related to urban tree planting made by the Subdivision Standards and Policy Advisory Committee (SSPAC) LDPM Subcommittee, and the findings by the Context Sensitive Streets Standards Committee. The recommendations of this Task Force are not bound by findings of these Committees/Subcommittees.
2. Review and provide recommendations on initiatives and strategies on the planting of trees on urban public land in the City, including recommendations on practices, policy and procedure within the City of Jacksonville, Public Works, regarding the planning and

design of tree plantings to promote the maintaining of existing trees, the planting of additional trees, and to improve the outcome of planted trees.

3. Review and provide recommendations on initiatives and strategies on the planting of trees on urban public land in the City, including recommendations on practices, policy and procedure within JTA regarding the planning and design of bus stops to promote the maintaining of existing trees, the planting of additional trees and to improve the outcome of planted trees.
4. Consider methods to incorporate the Tree Commission in the planning and design process of agencies or entities of the City, including but not limited to the above named, to promote the planting of urban trees and to appropriately apply Tree Fund dollars to enhance and promote a healthy, sustainable tree canopy in the City.

The Task Force is NOT tasked to create or implement an Urban Forestry Master Plan, rather to consider current obstacles and best practices for the City to accelerate the appropriate planting of trees in urban Jacksonville and to enhance the stewardship role of the Tree Commission in the development of a healthy, sustainable tree canopy in the City.

Pursuant to §94.104(e), *Ordinance Code*, The Urban Tree Task Force includes the following:

Members (3 required for quorum):

Susan Fraser, Tree Commission Member, Chair
Nina Sickler Tree Commission Member, Vice-Chair
Curtis Hart, Tree Commission Member
William Burke, Tree Commission Member

Non-member recommended attendees/advisors (non-voting; non-quorum):

Jonathan Colburn, Urban Forestry Manager, Tree Commission Advisor
Anne Coglianese, Chief Resilience Officer, COJ
Kathleen McGovern, Parks Development Coordinator, COJ
Jill Enz, Chief of Natural and Marine Resources, COJ
Representative, Scenic Jacksonville, Inc.
Representative, Greenscape of Jacksonville

I would like to thank Tree Commission Member Susan Fraser for chairing this Task Force.

Staff: All meetings of the Urban Tree Task Force shall be noticed and open to the public. Meeting frequency, dates and times shall be decided by the Task Force Chair. The Director of Public Works shall designate a Public Works employee as the staff person who shall be responsible for all meeting notices and minutes. At the discretion of the Task Force Chair, an allotment of time for public comment (up to three minutes per person per meeting) may be provided at each meeting.

Deadline: A report describing recommendations for policy, practice or law amendments, or a request for an additional term shall be delivered to the Tree Commission Chair on or before **December 31, 2024.**

Cc: Tree Commission Members and Staff / Mayor's Office / Electronic Notice Kiosk – 1st Floor City Hall