



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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October 31, 1997

Robert W. Healy
City Manager
City Hall
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Insurance coverage maintained by City;
Council Order #059 of 10/20/97

Dear Mr. Healy:

The City Council asked for a report on how much insurance coverage the City maintains on its "grounds, buildings, roads, bridges, water and sewer systems, parks and other facilities," and whether the level of insurance is adequate. The Council inquiry arose out of the federal government's possible elimination of disaster relief to states and cities for the loss of trees and other natural features on public grounds, parks, and recreational facilities.

The City is self-insured for losses at the listed locations.

The City Treasurer informs me that the City's free cash balance could be used to mitigate the effects of a severe natural disaster. One of the purposes of free cash is to provide the City with flexibility to respond to emergency situations. Also, the City has the ability to do tax exempt financing at a low interest rate to obtain funds as needed. The Treasurer believes that these sources are adequate for the City's needs, regardless of the possible unavailability of federal disaster relief funds.

Very truly yours,

Russell B. Higley
Russell B. Higley



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL 349-4300
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5.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

November 17, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 19, regarding a report on the amount of insurance coverage maintain by the City, received from City Solicitor Russell B. Higley.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #5

S-702

Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number
Nineteen, regarding a report on the
amount of insurance coverage maintain
by the City.

In City Council November 17, 1997

PLACED ON FILE

**Proposal for
A Comprehensive Scheduled Tree Maintenance Program for
The City of Cambridge**

Why does the City of Cambridge need a scheduled tree maintenance program?

The three most important reasons are to protect public safety, preserve the existing tree population, and ensure new trees live to grow to their full life span.

What kind of program does Cambridge currently have?

Our program revolves around a Work Order System at Public Works that funnels service requests from a variety of sources i.e. City Departments, residents, utilities, etc. The reality of dealing with these requests does not allow the Forestry Division to fully concentrate on a systematic tree maintenance plan. There is, I believe, a more efficient system.

What would a scheduled maintenance program consist of?

The City would be pruned neighborhood by neighborhood. The increase in efficiency would permit us to trim each City tree once every four years. This four-year pruning cycle would dramatically reduce the number of requests for tree service. Requests that were not emergencies would be deferred until scheduled as part of the pruning cycle.

What would a scheduled maintenance program require?

Two independent tree crews, so that fifteen trees could be pruned each day (the required number to prune all City trees in four years). In order to stay on schedule production levels must stay consistent. Pruning standards adapted from the Massachusetts Arborist Association would give our program credibility and our work style consistency and professionalism. Public notification would inform the public of why and when trees in their neighborhood would be pruned.

What resources would be required for scheduled maintenance?

To achieve a four year cycle we must trim an average of fifteen trees per day. That would require the following:

- Two bucket trucks
- Two chippers
- Two forepersons
- Four tree trimmers
- One water truck driver/young tree trainer

Our current resources consist of the following:

- Two bucket trucks (one obsolete)
- Two chippers
- Two forepersons
- Two grounds persons
- Three trimmers

In order to make our program complete we need:

- One trimmer (a position has opened in the budget)
- One water truck driver/young tree trainer
- One new bucket truck
- One ton dump truck with stake bed

These additions will enable us to achieve a four year pruning cycle and all the advantages that it brings, and continue to respond to justifiable requests from citizens in a timely fashion. We can hang banners, assist other divisions, and continue making the necessary progress to assure our trees are appropriately maintained.

What would be the cost?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| • One bucket truck | \$80,000. |
| • One water truck driver MEO 1 | 30,700. |
| • One ton dump truck | 24,000. |

TOTAL	134,000.
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However, before this maintenance program can succeed, we have some catching up to do.

What would it take to catch up?

Two contracted crews, each working one neighborhood at a time. This would bring the tree population into a manageable condition in *two years* and would free our in house crews to handle emergencies, special projects, and service request backlog.

How much would this cost?

Approximately \$500,000.00 (\$125,000 per contract crew per year)

What would happen if the maintenance program were implemented without catching up first?

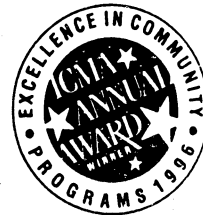
The level of hazards and service requests would continue to rise at an ever increasing rate and the investment in equipment and personnel would be wasted on putting out fires. Block after block of City streets and sidewalks would remain lined with trees that have not been pruned for many years. Consequently, visibility of signs, street lights, and traffic signals would continue to be obscured. Windows, gutters, and house exteriors would be damaged by branches. Large dead branches and old decayed trees would continue to be a common sight. The longer we wait to resolve these conflicts, the further behind we will get. Large numbers of justifiable requests for tree service will continue to come through my office.

Trees in Cambridge represent a considerable investment. The initial cost of planting and maintaining trees is small compared to the substantial economic, environmental, and aesthetic benefits they provide over their life spans. Planting and caring for trees is our assurance of a livable City many years into the future.



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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

November 17, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report Item No. 7, regarding a report on the establishment of a City-tree maintenance program, Public Works Commissioner Ralph Dunphy reports the following:

The proposal for a comprehensive scheduled tree maintenance program for the City of Cambridge has been reviewed by the Public Works Department and the City Manager's Office. Because of the tremendous budgetary impact, this program will be discussed during the FY99 Departmental Budget Hearings.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachments

Consent Agenda #8

S-703

Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number
Seven, regarding a report on the
establishment of a City-tree maintenance
program.

In City Council November 17, 1997

Referred to Public
Service on motion
of Councillor Huebner

Copy
sent
me
11-19-97