CCM-101

City of Cambridge

23.

IN CITY COUNCIL
September 29, 1997

COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
VICE MAYOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR REEVES
MAYOR RUSSELL
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to review and adopt the attached proposal for a comprehensive scheduled tree maintenance program for the City of Cambridge.

In City Council September 29, 1997.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy; D. Margaret Drury

ATTEST:-
D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

#23.

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 tree work is driven by citizens' requests for tree service. Both citizens and city government expect rapid response. This is an inefficient use of our urban forestry resources. Consequently, most city trees remain unpruned, large numbers of safety issues remain unresolved, and the number of citizen requests for tree service grows over time. Thus, the amount of work that needs immediate response is beyond the capacity of our current urban forestry resources.

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 till 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 remain consistent. Pruning standards adapted from the National Society of Arboriculture and 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 fore persons
- two grounds persons
- 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 fore persons
- 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 1 ton dump truck with stake bed

These additions will enable us to achieve a four-year pruning cycle and all the advantages that 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 I	$ 30,700
• one ton dump truck	$ 24,000
Total	$ 134,000

This maintenance program would be sufficient to protect public safety, preserve the existing tree population, and allow new trees their full life span *if the trees of Cambridge had been so maintained previously. **But they have not.*** Many are hazardous; many are dying; many are dead. 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. ($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 the cost of 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.

Councillor Toomey

Ordered:

That the City Manager be and hereby is
And Adopt
Requested to review the attached proposal

For a comprehensive Scheduled Tree Maintenance

Program For the City of Cambridge; ~~and be it~~

~~Further~~

Ordered

~~That the City Manager be and hereby~~ is

Requested to report back to this City Council

on this ~~Comprehensive Program.~~

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9/25/97 8300

MS

Richard Ring Full obit in 9/26/97 newspaper.

Councillor Sullivan

All

Resolved

That the City Clerk be and hereby is Requested to prepare A suitable resolution on the death of Richard Ring.

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IN CITY COUNCIL

September 29, 1997

COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to review and adopt the attached proposal for a comprehensive scheduled tree maintenance program for the City of Cambridge.

Entire Membership

Consent Order #23

CM-619

Councillor Toomey re: A comprehensive scheduled tree maintenance program for the City of Cambridge.

In City Council Septmeber 29, 1997

ORDER ADOPTED