



MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 10, 2015

TO: Michael G. Herring, City Administrator

FROM: James A. Eckrich, Public Works Director / City Engineer *JA*
Mindy Mohrman, City Arborist/Urban Forester

RE: 2015 Contracted Street Tree Removals- Update

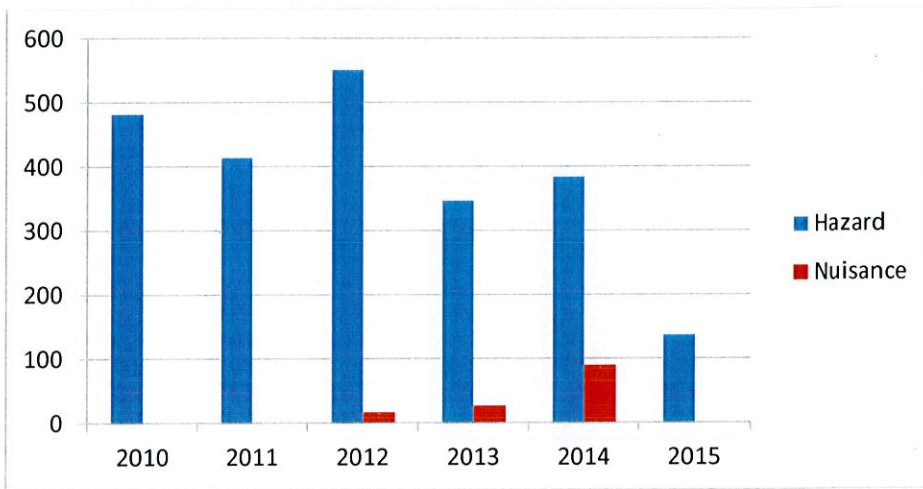
As was directed by the Planning and Public Works Committee, we have prepared an update on the status and costs incurred for tree removals in 2015. You may recall that staff previously reported that City tree removals, both hazardous and nuisance trees, were limited by budget. Although the budget is sufficient to continue removal of those right-of-way trees that have been identified to be imminently hazardous, the budget does not allow us to remove those trees which are identified as nuisance, or where residents have requested a tree removal due to deteriorating disease. In anticipation of this situation, the PPW Committee specifically directed staff to provide a fall update relative to the quantity of tree removals which the City has not been able to satisfy.

To date, the City of Chesterfield has spent approximately \$110,000 on the removal of 137 dead and/or hazardous (Hazard) street trees in 2015. It is anticipated that the remaining \$15,000, along with under-runs in other Miscellaneous Contractual (001-072-5251) expenses, will provide the budgetary funding necessary to remove Hazard trees for the remainder of the year. However, additional funding will not be available to remove any Nuisance trees. For the purpose of this memorandum, Nuisance trees are comprised of Sweet Gum Trees and Oak trees infested with Horned Oak Gall, which have yet to deteriorate to the point where they would be considered a Hazard tree.

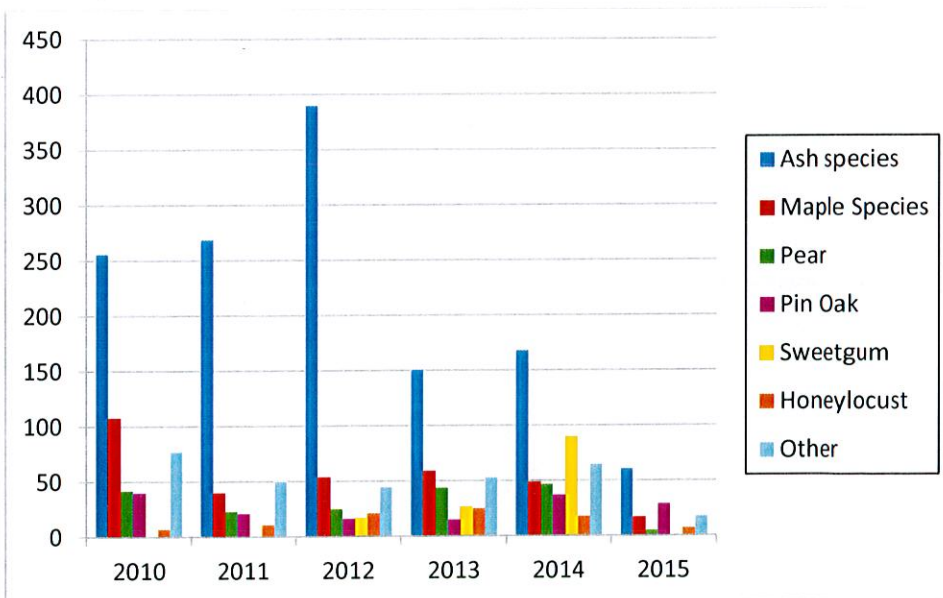
The Nuisance tree removal program was implemented in 2012 and continues to be very popular with City residents. We regularly receive requests to remove Nuisance trees, which are typically restricted to Sweet Gum Trees. However, as you may remember, and as reported to the PPW Committee previously, the City of Chesterfield has a number of Oak trees diseased with Horned Oak Gall which are a nuisance to residents but have yet to deteriorate to the point of being a Hazard tree. Horned Oak Gall is a pervasive and progressive disease. The diseased trees will deteriorate over the course of several years before they die or becomes hazardous.

No Nuisance trees have been removed thus far in 2015. There are currently 36 sweetgum trees that have been approved for removal through the Nuisance tree program, at an estimated cost of \$28,800. Additionally, the City has turned down requests for the removal of 21 trees infested with Horned Oak Gall, at an estimated cost for removal of \$16,800. Because the year is roughly 2/3 complete, we could reasonably project an additional 20 Nuisance Trees (both Sweet Gum and Horned Oak Gall) at an estimated cost of \$16,000. This results in an expected total expenditure for Nuisance trees of \$61,600.

Total Tree Removals since 2010



Tree Removals by Species since 2010



The Department of Public Services can remain within the 2015 budget by solely removing dead and hazardous trees. However, in order to remain within budget we would not remove any Nuisance Trees in 2015. This not only does not address the Sweet Gum trees which are bothersome to many of our residents, but it postpones the inevitable removal which will be required of trees infested with Horned Oak Gall.

In order to be able to continue the removal of Hazard Trees, as well as begin the removal of Nuisance Trees in 2015, **I recommend that an additional allocation of \$70,000 be authorized for 2015 tree removals. This allocation would allow the issuance of a Purchase Order to Timberline Professional Tree Care (the 2015 low bidder) for the removal of Nuisance and Hazard trees in 2015.**

Please note that the figures detailed above only address trees that are requested for removal by residents and that meet the City's removal policy. Additional funds above the \$70,000 could be used to continue to realize the City's goal of proactively reducing the ash population and meeting Emerald Ash Borer preparedness goals, for which the City has received very positive recognition state-wide.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

Action Recommended

This matter should be presented to the Planning and Public Works Committee for consideration. Should the PPW Committee desire to continue tree removal in the current manner, with the addition of the removal of Nuisance Trees, it should recommend the use of \$70,000 from General Fund – Fund Reserves for this purpose. The matter should then be forwarded to City Council for formal approval.

If the PPW Committee does not wish to recommend the use of General Fund – Fund Reserves for this purpose, then City Staff will prioritize hazardous tree removals to remain within Budget, and no Nuisance trees will be removed in 2015.

CONCURRENCE:



Craig White, Finance Director

Cc: Michael O. Geisel, Director of Public Services

OK'D
MGG
8/11/15