



Date: October 18, 2005
To: Honorable Mayor O'Neill and City Councilmembers
From: Councilwoman Laura Richardson, Sixth District *for CLR*
Subject: Parkway Tree Removal and Replacement

BACKGROUND

Over the past few weeks, numerous residents have expressed concerns regarding the City's policy for the removal of trees for sewer, water and sidewalk repair/replacement. These concerns have centered on several issues, including:

- What constitutes grounds for tree removal, and who makes the final decision?
- How are area residents notified of a pending removal?
- What are the means of protest, and who is allowed to protest?
- What options is available if a protest is successful?
- What liability could the City incur for trees not removed due to protest?
- What liability could the resident incur for trees not removed due to protest?
- Are unpaved or deteriorating alleys under the responsibility and liability of the City?
- If so, what measures are in place to repair or pave these alleys?
- Are departments or agencies other than the Department of Public Works authorized to remove parkway trees? If so, how are residents and other impacted departments notified?
- What are the City's policies in regards to replacing trees that have been removed?
- Is there a policy that deals with "mature" trees and historically tree lined neighborhoods?
- Are more mature trees available for replacement? If so, would a resident be required to pay the difference?
- What mechanisms are in place to resolve disputes regarding tree removal?
- If several "mature" trees along one street of a historically tree lined neighborhood are scheduled for removal, is it possible to remove the trees on a staggered schedule so the trees could be re-established without completely eliminating a neighborhood of its shade protection?

As evidenced by constituent phone calls and inquiries from area neighborhood associations, clarification is needed regarding the City's policies and procedures relating to the removal of parkway trees.

SUGGESTED ACTION

I respectfully request that the City Manager return to the City Council within 30 days with a report detailing city policy regarding parkway tree removal and replacement policies and procedures.