

CITY OF LOWELL  
ARBOR BOARD AGENDA  
MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016 AT 12 NOON

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL
2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)
  - a. February 8, 2016 – Regular Meeting
  - b.
4. REVIEW FINANCIAL REPORTS
5. CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA
6. OLD BUSINESS
  - a. 825/829 Lafayette – Tree Removal – (tabled)
  - b. Comprehensive Tree Plan – 2016-2017 Recommendation to City Council
  - c. Consider Business Selection for Arbor Day Tree
7. NEW BUSINESS
  - a. Grant Request – Englehardt Fund
8. BOARDMEMBER COMMENTS
9. ADJOURNMENT

**ARBOR BOARD OF LOWELL**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2016**  
**12 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL**

The Meeting was called to order at 12:06 p.m. by Chair Reagan and the roll was called.

Present: Diane LaWarre, Melissa Spino, Jim Hodges and Chair Reagan.

Absent: Tamela Spicer

Also Present: Sue Ullery, Greg Pierce and Ron Woods

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

IT WAS MOVED BY HODGES and seconded by LAWARRE to approve the agenda as presented.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.**

IT WAS MOVED BY LAWARRE and seconded by SPINO to approve the regular minutes of the November 9, 2015 meeting as written.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

4. **REVIEW FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

IT WAS MOVED BY SPINO and seconded by LAWARRE to approve the financial reports as presented.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

5. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.** No comments were received.

6. **OLD BUSINESS.** Hodges commented on the grant request made to the Look Fund. He encouraged the board to keep applying.

7. **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. **Election of Chair.** By general consensus, the board elected Jim Reagan as Chair.

b. **Approve 2016 Meeting Dates.**

IT WAS MOVED BY HODGES and seconded by LAWARRE to approve the 2016 meeting dates as presented.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

- c. Comprehensive Tree Plan – 2016-2017 - Recommendation to the City Council. The Comprehensive Tree Plan will be presented to the City Council at its March 21, 2016 meeting.

Hodges suggested the board think about the upcoming road construction that will be completed and what trees may compliment the projects.

- d. 825/829 Lafayette – Tree Removal. LaWarre did not see much of a difference in the trees since last year. Hodges noted the roots are bringing the ground up some but felt it could be looked at again down the road. Spino suggested tabling the item. Pierce stated the trees are not threatening the power lines.

Reagan stated it is important to remember the reason why the Arbor Board was created.

IT WAS MOVED BY HODGES and seconded by SPINO to table the tree removal until further consideration.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

8. BOARDMEMBERS COMMENTS.

The board discussed applying to the LCTV Endowment Fund, Arbor Day Tree and which business might be awarded the “Arbor Day Tree”. The health food store and S. Monroe parking lot were brought up.

Suggestions for spring plantings included Pebble Beach and the walking park near Walgreens. Spino felt four to five trees could be planted near Walgreens and suggested Red Buds.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAWARRE and seconded by SPINO to adjourn at 12:30 p.m.

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James E. Reagan, Chair

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Susan Ullery, Recording Secretary



**TREE FUND 7/01/2015-6/30/2016**

<b>TREE FUND BEG. BALANCE</b>	<b>\$2,381.75</b>	
<b>Revenues received 10/31/2015</b>	<b>\$4,000.00</b>	transfer from General Fund
<b>Revenues received 11/17/2015</b>	<b>\$4,000.00</b>	Grand Rapids Foundation g
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$10,381.75</b>	
<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$10,381.75</b>	

# Arbor Board

## Official Comprehensive Tree Plan 2016-2017

### Report to the Lowell City Council

#### Introduction

An urban forest is a valuable asset to any city. Trees improve the quality of our air and water, reduce our energy costs by providing shade, they reduce noise pollution, increase our property values, and make a neighborhood a more attractive and desirable place to live, work, and shop.

Trees have other benefits, too. Especially in an urban environment, tree canopies filter and absorb toxic gases including carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide. Trees have also been shown to be very effective at trapping fine dusts and toxic particles, the trapped dust being washed to the ground by rain.

If you look out your window and see a tree, do you know what kind of a tree it is? Do you know how healthy it is? Do you know how old it is? Does it matter?

**Benefits of Community Trees:** As architectural elements, trees create interest with their ever changing colors and textures. They act as unifiers, pulling together disparate elements in the urban landscape. They serve to soften and smooth (or de-emphasize) harsh angles and lines of individual buildings.

As articulators, trees help to clarify, delineate, and emphasize areas. Because of their natural beauty, trees help to humanize harsh city landscapes by encouraging people to stop, reflect, and relax. Trees modify the urban climate by slowing wind movement, reducing irritating noise levels, controlling glare and reflection from buildings, cooling city streets in summer, and purifying air as they filter out pollutants and add oxygen to the immediate environment.

Properly placed trees can reduce residential heating and cooling costs by an estimated 20 to 50 percent. Trees also have real estate value. According to the U.S. Forest Service, trees increase property values by 10 to 15 percent.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

The general powers granted to the City of Lowell through its charter define the role of the City Council, the Arbor Board and the City Manager (and staff). Generally, the charter states the following under Section 3.1:

*Providing for the control over all trees, shrubs and plants in the public streets, highways, parks, or other public places in the City, all dead and diseased trees on private property and trees on private property overhanging the street, sidewalk, or public places, including the removal thereof and assessing the cost thereof against the abutting property as a special assessment.*

**City Council:** The City Council has overall responsibility for setting policy and vision and ensuring that activities of the Arbor Board and the City Manager relating to trees support the overall vision and mission. Specifically the City Council:

- Consents to appointments to the Arbor Board as directed by the Mayor.
- Approves an annual plan submitted to the Council by the Arbor Board.
- Approves a budget that appropriates resources to implement the annual plan and for other tree-related activities.
- Sets fees and special assessment districts for removal and replacement of trees.

**City Arbor Board:** The Arbor Board was organized in 2007 in response to citizen concerns that action needed to be taken to offset the impact of trees being removed through infrastructure growth and improvements. At the time, the city was lacking an overall policy pertaining to the removal and replacement of trees within the community. With the creation of the Arbor Board there is greater interaction between citizens and city staff that results in the creation and implementation of a long-term plan.

The duties and responsibilities of the Lowell Arbor Board are defined in Chapter 23 of the Code of Ordinances for the City of Lowell. Specifically the Arbor Board:

- Shall study, investigate, counsel, and develop, annually update and administer a written plan for the care preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal or disposition of trees and shrubs in public parks, along public streets and roads, within public right-of-ways and within other public areas.
- At the request of the City Council, consider, investigate, make findings, and report and make recommendations on any matter or question within the scope of its work.
- Work with the City Manager and staff to administer the Comprehensive Tree Plan.

**City Manager and Staff:** The City Manager has specific duties outlined in the City Charter relating to trees and carries out these duties with the assistance of qualified staff. Specifically the City Manager must:

- Provide technical assistance to the Arbor Board and ensure that the Comprehensive Tree Plan is implemented.
- Accept application from any person desiring to plant shade or ornamental trees in any public right-of-way and make a determination providing whether or not such trees may be planted.
- Authorize trimming of trees standing in or that may overhang any highways, streets, avenues, or which in any manner obstruct the public lighting of the city.

- Authorize the removal of an existing tree, shrub or other woody plant located in the street right-of-way, a city park, or other city-owned property.
- Authorize the planting and spacing of new trees in accordance with prescribed planting practices. See attached guidelines.
- Ensure that provisions of the City Code of Ordinances relating to noxious shrubs, weeds and grass are enforced.

## Comprehensive Tree Plan for the City of Lowell

**The Vision Statement:** It is the intent of the Arbor Board to seek input from the community as to the direction and accomplishments to be pursued by the Arbor Board. This can be done through community meetings or on-line surveys utilizing the city website. One significant goal should be for the planting and the continuing maintenance of trees along West Main Street. The preferred plan is to locate trees within the highway right-of-way, placement on private property would be an acceptable alternative. Although the economy has been slow to recover Lowell is fortunate to have the financial support of our local foundations for our continued support.

**The Plan Area:** For the purposes of defining the plan area the City of Lowell is divided into several geographical areas. The Flat River will define the East and West boundaries of the city and Main Street will define the northern and southern boundaries. Additionally, we can further define Lowell by designating generic “Downtown Shopping Areas” and “West Main Shopping Areas.” If any additional areas are to be defined, they will be outlined by utilizing common street names.

**The Goal(s):** To maintain, at a minimum, and to improve on the Urban Forest Canopy within the city proper. To date, we have not been restrictive in our areas of involvement, placing trees where we found areas of need. This includes residential neighborhoods, city park properties and commercial districts. Recently, significant amounts of trees throughout the community have been devastated by insect infestation, thereby causing the loss of tree cover and inventory. A significant cost will be incurred in the coming year(s) and may curtail some of the planting progress. Fortunately this is being offset by progress in the past few years.

To date, the Arbor Board has authorized the installation of 701 trees of various varieties throughout the community. Tree selections and tree planting has been accomplished through the use of selected contractors, under the direct supervision of the Department of Public Works.

This has been done with the financial participation from the City of Lowell through Lowell Light and Power, the LCTV Fund, and the Look Fund and the very generous support of the Lowell Area Community Fund. It will be our intent to continue to utilize funds from these various community sources on, at least, an annual basis.

## **Comprehensive Tree Plan Areas by Zone**

### **Zone 1 – North / East Side Lowell**

1. Removal of selected dead trees from street parkways.
2. Selected thinning and pruning of pine forest at Washington Street city property.
3. Maintain and trim trees and remove along ROW and offer replacement trees to be planted on residential properties as budget permits.

### **Zone 2 – South / East Side Lowell**

1. Maintain and trim trees along ROW when needed.
2. Maintain and trim trees and remove along ROW and offer replacement trees to be planted on residential properties as budget permits.

### **Zone 3 – Downtown/Riverwalk**

1. It is suggested that the Arbor Board take over the responsibilities of planting from the DDA, allowing the DDA to concentrate on development, and to provide the Arbor Board with coordinating planting activities throughout the community. It is also intended to coordinate all planting efforts with the Showboat Garden Club to minimize duplication of effort.
2. Maintain and add trees where appropriate along Riverwalk Extension.
3. Assist with landscaping at library as budget allows.

### **Zone 4 – West Main Shopping Area**

1. Annual budgeting should include tree planting in this area. Our hope is that we will eventually be allowed by the state and county, to plant within the right-of-way. In the meantime, we should concentrate on planting on private property fronting Main Street.

### **Zone 5 – North / West Side of Lowell**

1. Add trees along trail/extension – Litehouse pipeline to bio-digester.

### **Zone 6 – South / West Side of Lowell**

- 1.

### **Implementation Tree Plan for 2015**

- 1, Zone 5, Item #3. Add trees along trail/extension – Litehouse pipeline – bio-digester
- 2, It is suggested that the Arbor Board take over the responsibilities of planting from the DDA, allowing the DDA to concentrate on development, and to provide the Arbor Board with coordinating planting activities throughout the community. It is also intended to coordinate all planting efforts with the Showboat Garden Club to minimize duplication of effort.



**Projected Budget:** It is anticipated that a budget of \$10,000 will be needed in order to carry out the Implementation Plan for spring 2016.

**Submitted by the Lowell Arbor Board**

**Jim Reagan, Chair**

**Jim Hodges**

**Diane LaWarre**

**Tamela Spicer**

**Melissa Spino**

## **Design Tips & Guidelines: Spacing**

Many neglect to space their trees properly which leads to overgrown, crowded conditions. This is detrimental to your trees' nutrient intake and overall health.

- For trees which mature greater than 60 feet, plant a minimum 20 feet from a building and 40 feet apart.
- For tree which mature between 30 and 60 feet, plant a minimum 15 feet from a building and 35 feet apart.
- For trees which mature less than 30 feet, plant a minimum 10 feet from a building and 15 feet apart.
- Plant trees no less than 15 feet from a driveway, 10 feet from a utility pole, and 30 feet from an intersection.
- Do not plant trees that grow over 20 feet tall under power lines.