

Old vs. Proposed Tree Policy: What is different?

Old Tree Policy

- Each tree between 6" and 24" in diameter valued at \$500
- Each tree over 24" valued at \$1,000
- One acre of trees = \$5,000, or, roughly the same cost as 2.5" sapling on each 10-yard line of a football field.
- No provision for watering replacement trees
- Same fee schedule for removal of Significant trees, i.e., Historic, Donated, or Memorial
- No record of trees lost or planted

Meager replanting option for private requests to take down Town-owned trees:

- Between 6" and 24", the petitioner has the option to plant a 2.5" diameter replacement tree in lieu of fee payment.
- Over 24" petitioner may plant two 2.5" diameter trees.
- No resources for planting records, follow up, or enforcement for this option.
- No particular focus on restoring canopy: e.g. A 30" diameter 80' white oak street tree can be replaced with two 2 ½" diameter dogwoods that will grow to only 20 feet tall.
- Removed trees are fed into a chipper, and stored by the contractor in massive piles. This practice generates methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 85 times more potent at trapping heat than CO₂

Proposed Tree Policy

- Trees are valued based on size: \$350/inch in diameter. This is an industry standard for cost to purchase, deliver, and plant trees.
- Value multiplier for larger, more valuable trees. E.g., a 30" tree is reckoned at \$1,050/inch (3 x \$350), or \$31,500.
- All trees are reckoned individually.
- Three-year watering plan required for replacement trees.
- Double mitigation fees for all such trees.
- Trees planted and lost are recorded to aid in planning, management, and care of trees so as to preserve our investment dollars.

Simpler fee and replanting guidelines, with no private option to replant

- Public request to remove Public Shade Trees or Town Trees have the option to replant on the basis of diameter, fee payment, or a combination of both, so long as the diameter basis is observed. See Fee Schedule.
- Funds will be used for replanting elsewhere in Town.
- Incentive added for replanting species that will become large shade trees. Specifically, planting one shade tree will count as planting two trees.
- Section X, RECLAIMING WOOD from TOWN TREES lays out the goal of reclaiming timber through various means, pointing the way forward to a better use of those trees that are taken down, and diverting greenhouse gases.

What stays the same for both the existing Tree Policy and the new Tree Policy?

- Based on guidelines in Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87, Public Shade Tree Law: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXIV/Chapter87>
- Provide a framework and process for the consideration of the removal of healthy Town-owned trees.
- The process is unchanged for hearings, public meetings, and appeals. The focus remains on public discourse, where all parties can be heard.
- Applies only to Town-Owned trees:
 - **Town Tree:** trees on any Town property: parks, schools, municipal buildings, etc.
 - **Public Shade Tree:** Town-owned trees in the Public Right of Way

Does not apply to privately owned trees on private property.

Got questions or comments about the New Tree Policy? Contact us!BedfordArborResources@gmail.com