

City of Fort Worth, Texas

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 04/22/25M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 25-0323

LOG NAME: 06URBANFORESTRYFEEUPDATE

SUBJECT

(ALL) Adopt Ordinance Amending Chapter 2 "Administration," Article XII "Fee Schedules," Section 2-322 "Penalties and Mitigation Fees," of the Code of the City of Fort Worth, to Increase the Civil Penalties for Unauthorized Tree Removal

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council adopt the attached ordinance amending Chapter 2 "Administration," Article XII "Fee Schedules," Section 2-322 "Penalties and Mitigation Fees," of the Code of the City of Fort Worth, to increase the civil penalties for unauthorized tree removal.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this Mayor and Council Communication (M&C) is to increase the civil penalties in Section 2-322 of the City Code for unauthorized tree removal.

These changes are proposed as part of the ongoing implementation of the Urban Forestry Master Plan that City Council approved on June 25, 2024 (Resolution 5975-06-2024). The proposed fee changes have been discussed with the Urban Forest Master Plan Steering Committee and the Development Advisory Committee and presented during the Council Work Session on April 1, 2025. The proposed changes are below.

ADMINISTRATION – Fee Schedule – Penalties and mitigation fees		
	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
a. Civil Penalties		
1. Unauthorized removal of non-significant trees	\$300/diameter inch or \$7.50/canopy sf	\$600.00/diameter inch or \$15.00/canopy sf
2. Unauthorized removal of significant trees	\$600/diameter inch or \$15.00/canopy sf	\$1,200.00/diameter inch or \$30.00/canopy sf
3. Administrative fee assessed on penalties	\$500.00/case	No adjustment
b. Mitigation Fees		
1. Removal of significant trees	\$300.00/diameter inch or \$7.50/canopy sf	No adjustment

It should be noted that in addition to assessing civil penalties, the City can also issue criminal citations for violations of the Urban Forestry Ordinance. As part of the implementation of the Urban Forest Master Plan, City staff is recommending that the City Council increase the maximum fine for criminal citations from \$500.00 to \$2,000.00. The proposed increase to the fines will be presented to City Council for consideration as part of the proposed changes to the Urban Forestry Ordinance.

Definitions:
Significant trees - Protected species trees that measure at least 24 inches in diameter at breast height (dbh), 4.5 feet from the ground. For Post Oaks and Blackjack Oaks, significant trees are 18 inches dbh.

A Form 1295 is not required because: This M&C does not request approval of a contract with a business entity.

The Director of Finance certifies that approval of this recommendation will have no material effect on City funds.

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Expedited