



# CITY OF COLUMBIA/BOONE COUNTY, MISSOURI



ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMISSION

April 17, 2008

Mayor & City Council  
City of Columbia  
PO Box 6015  
Columbia, MO 65205

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to the Environment and Energy Commission's (EEC) ongoing investigation and research into the land disturbance and the tree preservation ordinances, Lou Phemister, the City Arborist, was invited to speak at the February EEC meeting. At this meeting Mr. Phemister discussed the importance and value of maintaining a healthy urban forest within the core of the city as well as the rapidly expanding city limits.

Mr. Phemister's recommendation was that he would initiate a preliminary Urban Forest report that will outline the value, available resources, and potential future changes to the existing tree preservation ordinances. The EEC feels the City needs to proceed with this Urban Forest report to provide guidance for future modification of the land disturbance and tree preservation ordinances. The preliminary report will cover, but will not be limited to the following topics:

1. Overview of the importance of Urban Forestry.  
(Value of the urban forest along with functional and aesthetic importance of the urban forest).
2. Establish the current baseline of urban forestry in Columbia.  
(Using the Natural Resources Inventory data, existing ordinances and current management of the urban forest and departmental responsibilities to establish a current baseline for the City of Columbia)
3. Urban Forestry in comparable Midwest cities.  
(Comparisons of Urban Forestry planning, policy, management and funding)
4. Discussion on the best solutions for advancing urban forestry within the City of Columbia  
(Modification of existing tree preservation/protection ordinances; creating a new over-arching ordinance dealing with all aspects of tree preservation/protection/placement; creating an urban forestry program to manage all the city's trees).

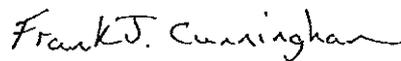
The ultimate goal of this report would be to commission a Community Forest Master Plan to establish a basis for a comprehensive strategy for tree management and regulation.

It is our understanding that city certification by the American Public Works Association requires having a Master Plan for Urban Forestry. Also, the Mayors Climate Change Agreement, action item #11 calls for maintaining a healthy urban forest.

The report generated by Mr. Phemister will also define the scope of work required for a consultant to develop a full scale Community Forest Master Plan as well as the required qualifications of the consultant. The report will also investigate potential grants to pay for the master plan such as from the Missouri Department of Conservation.

The Environment and Energy Commission urges the City Council members to direct staff to support the development of this preliminary report on the City's urban forest. We feel that it will provide valuable guidance to future modifications of the Land Disturbance Ordinance as it relates to tree preservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank J. Cunningham".

Frank Cunningham, Chair  
Columbia/Boone County Environment & Energy Commission

EEC members that have been directly involved in research on the land disturbance issue include but are not limited to: Jean Sax, Bob Walters, Teresa Hunter, Dan Goldstein and Kip Kendrick.