

# Memorandum



**Date:** November 27, 2013

**To:** Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** Carlos A. Gimenez  
Mayor 

**Subject:** Report to the Board, Identifying Process and Possible Funding Sources for Expedited Removal of Dead Trees Within County Parks and Rights-of-Way, 130602

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At the May 7, 2013 Board of County Commissioners (Board) meeting, the Board approved Resolution No. R-376-13 (attached) sponsored by Senator Javier D. Souto directing the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to prepare a report identifying a process and possible funding sources for expedited removal of dead trees within County parks and rights-of-way and the replacement of such removed trees with at least two new trees for each tree removed.

## **Street Tree Master Plan**

In March 2007, the Board approved resolution R-231-07 adopting the Street Tree Master Plan (Plan) for Miami-Dade County, establishing policies and guidelines for County agencies and facilitating partnerships with municipalities in managing urban tree resources. The Plan established a policy direction for the management of the County's urban tree resources as a necessary priority. It manages the green infrastructure to address the concerns of trees along streets and highways and to provide a reference for urban street tree resources. The Plan describes the procedures for the planting and maintenance of street trees throughout the County and encourages partnerships with municipalities for the countywide implementation of the Plan for a greener, more livable community.

Initiatives were undertaken to meet the goals of the Plan: establish a street tree working group, educate Miami-Dade citizens on tree canopy issues, promote "right tree, right place," expand inventory coordination of street tree plantings, develop guidelines for the maintenance of the green infrastructure on par with the gray infrastructure, and research of historical habitat and ecology conditions.

## **Right-of-Way Aesthetics and Asset Management Division**

The Right-of-Way Aesthetic and Asset Management Division (RAAM) is currently responsible for the maintenance of over 73,950 trees located throughout the County's road right-of-ways and inspects these trees on a regular schedule. This division reports to the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department (PROS). RAAM fulfills five primary functions: Landscape Maintenance, Roadway Landscape Maintenance, Basic Roadside Safety Mowing, Enhanced Roadside Safety Mowing, and Metrorail/Metromover Landscape Maintenance Services. Right-of-way tree maintenance includes fertilization, watering as-needed, structural trimming and inventory control. These services are supervised by RAAM staff that are currently International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborists and stay abreast with the current industry practices through ongoing training provided by the Miami-Dade Consumer Services Department's Cooperative Extension Division. The Cooperative Extension Service is a partnership between Miami-Dade County and the University of Florida-IFAS. PROS has five tree crews that manage and maintain trees in County parks and County road right-of-ways. Park managers regularly inspect parks and report any dead or dying trees. The tree crews then remove and dispose of trees. The location and species of dead or dying trees in the road right-of-ways is recorded and the trees are removed by the tree removal crew on a service request basis. Road right-of-way trees are replaced depending on funding and the season.

The average cost to plant a 12 ft. to 14 ft. tree including watering is approximately \$300 per tree. The cost to remove a damaged or dead tree varies depending on the tree's size, species, location, and

site conditions and averages \$600 per tree including disposal cost. The average cost to remove a dead tree and replant with two new trees varies, but averages \$1,200. This cost can vary over time as trees are purchased from an existing contract and vendors submit spot market quotes. Typically, trees are planted from April to September, which coincides with the rainy season and thereby increases the survivability of the trees. PROS current tree replacement need on the County right-of-way is approximately 880 trees, resulting in a current tree replacement funding need of \$265,000. Currently, funding to remove and/or replace dead trees along County maintained road right-of-ways is drawn from the Street Tree Replacement Trust Fund.

#### **Street Tree Replacement Trust Fund**

In May 2012 the Board established a Street Tree Replacement Trust Fund (Trust Fund) under resolution R-367-12 to accept funds collected from insurance companies and other entities for the replacement of street trees and other landscaping plantings along County maintained road right-of-ways. The Trust Fund allows funds collected to roll over from one fiscal year to the next, allowing for more efficient and effective use of funds and management of staff and equipment for the replacement, inspection and monitoring of the trees. The majority of the right-of-way tree inventory is located in close proximity to heavily traveled roadways and thereby is subject to damage caused by vehicular accidents. In most cases the funding is received from insurance companies in a lump sum when the claims are closed; however, there have been claims where the funds are received sporadically and in installment payments. A total of 1,627 vehicular accident reports were filed from FY2006-2007 to FY2012-2013, and \$598,904 has been recovered from insurance companies and transferred to the County for tree replacement needs. The RAAM Division performs a field inspection of the damaged tree to verify the species and size for reimbursement. The current balance in the Trust Fund is \$110,472. The difference between the available funds and funds needed for tree replacement is approximately \$154,500.

Other programs and initiatives sponsored by county, non-profit, and community organizations are in place to increase the number of planted trees and tree canopy countywide. These programs and the organizations that sponsor them have also provided information to increase public awareness and citizen involvement toward the goal of improving the tree canopy.

#### **Adopt-a-Tree Program - Regulatory and Economic Resources Department, Division of Environmental Resources Management**

The Adopt-a-Tree program resulted from the input of community groups, agricultural interests and government agencies seeking to improve the depleted tree canopy in the County. The first Adopt-a-Tree event took place in July 2001, and since then, this program has been working to foster a heightened awareness of the value of shade trees in Miami-Dade County. The Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources manages the program, designed to strengthen the condition of the County's tree canopy. Trees selected for adoption are ones that make good shade trees. The program provides both native ornamental shade trees and a variety of fruit trees. Since Adopt-a-Tree's inception in 2001, over 169,000 free trees have been distributed to County residents. PROS has hosted numerous events for the Adopt-a-Tree program throughout the County since the program started. The Adopt-A-Tree website is at: <http://www.miamidade.gov/environment/adopt-a-tree.asp>.

#### **Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade**

The Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade (Parks Foundation) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization supporting the Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department's efforts to further develop Miami-Dade County's world-class parks system for residents and visitors. Its mission is to create a healthier, more livable and sustainable Miami community by ensuring the

implementation of the Parks Open Space Master Plan and the development of year-round park and recreation programs for local children, adults and people with disabilities.

Through the Parks Foundation, citizens can adopt a tree for placement in one of the County parks. Donors receive a certificate with their name, installation date, memoriam information, the park name where tree is located and a commemorative photograph. The Parks Foundation website is at: [www.miamidade.gov/parks\\_foundation](http://www.miamidade.gov/parks_foundation).

### **Community Image Advisory Board**

The Community Image Advisory Board (CIAB) was created in October 2001 by County Ordinance 01-164 and amended by Ordinance 02-31 and 03-215. The CIAB mission is to develop partnerships, principles, and projects that support the sustainable beautification and greening of the community through scenic vistas, tree lined streets, lush landscaping in high-traffic areas and popular destinations, and livable neighborhoods that reflect a world class image of Miami-Dade County as a sub-tropical paradise. The CIAB has ongoing relationships with other agencies and partners to improve and enhance the County tree canopy. The CIAB website is at: <http://www.miamidade.gov/image/>

### **Million Trees Miami**

The Million Trees Miami Campaign (Campaign) was launched on April 11, 2010 and is a Community-wide effort to plant one million trees by 2020 in order to achieve a 30% tree canopy cover for Miami-Dade County, the minimum canopy cover for urban areas to receive the environmental, economic, and social benefits trees provide. The Million Trees Miami Campaign is a program to implement the Street Tree Master Plan.

The Campaign is managed by the CIAB under the leadership of Miami-Dade Commissioner Dennis C. Moss. Million Trees Miami planting events are free and open to anyone interested in planting trees. Million Trees Miami has partnered with the Parks Foundation to preserve parks and green spaces. Donations fund the purchase and maintenance of trees for Million Trees Miami and directly benefit operational and outreach activities. The Million Trees Miami website is at: <http://milliontrees.miamidade.gov>.

### **Conclusion**

PROS maintains trees in parks and along the right-of-ways with the resources and currently budgeted funding. Funding for a strict two to one tree replacement policy is not currently available. Miami-Dade County through its departments, agencies, boards and partners provides a number of programs and services to plant new trees and to replace dead trees in order to improve and increase the countywide shade canopy cover for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. PROS is committed to working with partners in this effort. If additional information is needed, please contact Jack Kardys, Director, Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department at (305) 755-7903.

Attachment

c: Lisa M. Martinez, Senior Advisor, Office of the Mayor  
Jack Kardys, Director, Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department

## MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(16)

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**TO:** Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** May 7, 2013

**FROM:** R. A. Cuevas, Jr.  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Resolution directing the County  
Mayor to prepare a report  
identifying a process and  
possible funding sources for  
expedited removal of dead trees  
within county parks and rights-  
of-way  
Resolution No. R-376-13

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The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Senator Javier D. Souto.

  
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R. A. Cuevas, Jr.  
County Attorney

RAC/smm



# MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** May 7, 2013

**FROM:**   
R. A. Cuevas, Jr.  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item No. 11(A)(16)

Please note any items checked.

- "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- Budget required
- Statement of fiscal impact required
- Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- No committee review
- Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's \_\_\_\_\_, 3/5's \_\_\_\_\_, unanimous \_\_\_\_\_) to approve
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor  
Veto \_\_\_\_\_  
Override \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(16)  
5-7-13

RESOLUTION NO. R-376-13

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO PREPARE A REPORT IDENTIFYING A PROCESS AND POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES FOR EXPEDITED REMOVAL OF DEAD TREES WITHIN COUNTY PARKS AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY AND THE REPLACEMENT OF SUCH REMOVED TREES WITH AT LEAST TWO NEW TREES FOR EACH TREE REMOVED

**WHEREAS**, Miami-Dade County is a world-class tourist destination based in part on the natural beauty including the trees and tree canopy throughout Miami-Dade County; and

**WHEREAS**, trees on Miami-Dade County property form an important part of the natural environment and tree canopy countywide; and

**WHEREAS**, trees that are dead or dying on Miami-Dade County property, specifically County parks and County rights-of-way diminish this natural beauty and should, within budgetary constraints, be removed as expeditiously as possible; and

**WHEREAS**, trees that are removed should be replaced with at least two new trees in order to promote and grow this natural resource for the benefit of local residents as well as for visitors and tourists to the County,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA**, that the County Mayor or Mayor's designee is directed to prepare a report identifying a process and possible funding sources for expedited removal of dead trees within County parks and rights-of-way and the replacement of such removed trees with at least two new trees for each tree removed. The County Mayor or Mayor's designee shall provide the report required herein to the Board of County Commissioners within ninety days of the effective date of this Resolution.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Senator Javier D. Souto. It was offered by Commissioner **Lynda Bell**, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Sally A. Heyman** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

	Rebeca Sosa, Chairwoman	aye	
	Lynda Bell, Vice Chair	aye	
Bruno A. Barreiro	aye	Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.	aye
Jose "Pepe" Diaz	absent	Audrey M. Edmonson	aye
Sally A. Heyman	aye	Barbara J. Jordan	aye
Jean Monestime	absent	Dennis C. Moss	aye
Sen. Javier D. Souto	absent	Xavier L. Suarez	aye
Juan C. Zapata	absent		

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2013. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
BY ITS BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK



By: **Christopher Agrippa**  
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as  
to form and legal sufficiency.

Alex S. Bokor