



Legislation Text

File #: 0385-2022, **Version:** 1

Background: This ordinance will authorize the modification of an existing contract with Davey Resource Group to continue citywide street tree assessment and inventory associated with the Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) Project. The modification amount being authorized by this ordinance is \$300,000.00.

In April of 2021, the Columbus Recreation and Parks Commission voted in support of and Columbus City Council passed a resolution to support the Columbus Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) and its immediate implementation. By authorizing the implementation of the Urban Forestry Master Plan, the Forestry Section of the Recreation and Parks Department can implement key recommendations through hiring staff, purchasing equipment, procuring tree service contracts, inventorying the City's street trees, designing a new facility for Forestry's North Zone, and engaging urban forestry consultants. The Columbus Urban Forestry Master Plan is the first citywide strategic plan to invest long-term in Columbus' trees. Over the next decades, the UFMP will guide the entire Columbus Community to prioritize, preserve and grow our tree canopy.

Proposals for citywide street tree assessment and inventory services were originally advertised, in accordance with City Code Section 329, in September 2020 as one of the first critical phases of the Urban Forestry Master Plan Project. In accordance with City Code, a selection team evaluated the proposals and recommended that Davey Resource Group be selected to perform the work. The firm was chosen based on their referenced projects, experience, qualifications, availability, timeline, and project approach. Davey Resource Group has been very effective at delivering these services so far. As a result of the positive progress achieved and ongoing assessment needed citywide, this contract has already been modified twice to advance the ongoing assessment and inventory without delay, as funding has become available. Davey Resource Group has the necessary experience to provide ongoing services and it is in the best interest of the City to modify the contract again to ensure that the street tree assessment and inventory can be completed as soon as possible, allowing for the continued implementation of the Urban Forestry Master Plan and its next steps. A future modification of this contract is expected, as more funding becomes available, in order to complete the assessment and inventory phase of the overall project.

Emergency Justification: Emergency action is requested for continuity of services in 2022, furthering the implementation of the Urban Forestry Master Plan and allowing the existing contractor to continue their progress uninterrupted.

Benefits to the Public: Trees provide tangible benefits to Columbus residents. As the 15th largest city in the nation, Columbus is home to over 898,000 people. Columbus had the 8th most intense urban heat island effect of major US cities impacting health, energy use, and water quality. The recently published Columbus Climate Action Plan recommends planting trees as a solution. Street trees are the workhorses as they clean our air, reduce heat, and absorb stormwater. In an Ohio summer, trees provide the shade that makes walking outside bearable. Trees should be equitably distributed across the City so all residents benefit.

Community Input/Issues: Hundreds of stakeholders helped create the Urban Forestry Master Plan. Industry experts, universities, nonprofits, developers, community leaders, city staff and leadership, regional partners, landscape architects, and many others served on two stakeholder groups consisting of a Project Team of about 30 members and an Advisory Group of about 100 members. All members are listed in the Acknowledgments section of the UFMP and on the website (<https://www.columbusufmp.org>). These groups met periodically throughout the course of the plan's creation to provide input. The public was also engaged through an online survey, an open house, small-group presentations, and interviews. A final public comment period on the draft Urban Forestry Master Plan was held from February 16, 2021 to March 31, 2021 and public presentations were made to the Recreation and Parks Commission

Area(s) Affected: Citywide (99)

Master Plan Relation: This project supports the department's Master Plan by conserving, protecting, and enhancing the city's natural resources and overall environmental health, benefitting current and future generations.

Fiscal Impact: The expenditure of \$239,250.00 was legislated for the Street Trees - Site Assessment and Inventory 2020 Project by Ordinance 2336-2020. The contract has been modified and increased two times, in the amounts of \$46,350.00 and \$300,000.00, as authorized by Ordinances 0641-2017, 2817-2018, 2615-2019, and 2040-2021. This ordinance will authorize the modification the previously authorized amount by up to an additional \$300,000.00. The aggregate total amount authorized for this contract, including this modification, is \$885,600.00. The \$300,000.00 needed for this modification will come from the Auditor's Certificate already established by 2040-2021 for the Urban Forestry Master Plan Project.

To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to modify an existing contract with Davey Resource Group, Inc. to continue citywide street tree assessment and inventory associated with the Urban Forestry Master Plan Project; to authorize the expenditure of \$300,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$300,000.00)

WHEREAS, it is necessary authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to modify an existing contract with Davey Resource Group, Inc. to continue citywide street tree assessment and inventory associated with the Urban Forestry Master Plan Project; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the expenditure of \$300,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of the Recreation and Parks Department in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to modify an existing contract with Davey Resource Group, Inc. for continuity of services in 2022, furthering the implementation of the Urban Forestry Master Plan and allowing the existing contractor to continue their progress uninterrupted, all for the preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare and, **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the Director of Recreation and Parks be and is hereby authorized to modify an existing contract with Davey Resource Group, Inc. to continue citywide street tree assessment and inventory associated with the Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) Project as described by this ordinance.

SECTION 2. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 3. That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this ordinance.

SECTION 4. That the City Auditor is hereby authorized to transfer the unencumbered balance in a project account to the unallocated balance account within the same fund upon receipt of certification by the Director of the Department administering said project that the project has been completed and the monies are no longer required for said project.

SECTION 5. For the purpose stated in Section 1, the expenditure of \$300,000.00 or so much thereof as may be necessary

to pay the cost thereof, be and is hereby authorized from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702 in object class 06 Capital Outlay. This expenditure is authorized from the Auditor's Certificate already established by 2040-2021 for the Urban Forestry Master Plan Project.

SECTION 6. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.