

# Cannon Beach City Council

## STAFF REPORT

### TREE CITY USA

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**Agenda Date:** July 14, 2015

**Prepared by:** Brant Kucera, City Manager

#### BACKGROUND

Friends of Cannon Beach Trees is interested in restoring the City's Tree City USA designation and are willing to assist us with the process. There are four criteria for designation, including having a street tree committee, a tree care ordinance, an urban forestry budget of \$2/capita and an arbor day observance and proclamation.

Currently the city meets all of the requirements for designation other than the observance/proclamation.

**Budget Impacts:** No new budget impact. City already budgets \$5,000 annually for street tree care.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends that the Council move forward with a Tree City USA designation.

#### List of Attachments:

"A" Tree City USA Information



## Tree City USA Information



Tree City USA is a national program established and promoted for over 35 years by the Arbor Day Foundation in Nebraska. In Oregon, the Oregon Department of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Program administers the TCUSA program. Tree City USA applications reflect a city's tree-related efforts from January 1- December 31 of the current year. The applications should be completed by mid-December so that ODF staff can review and submit them to the Arbor Day Foundation as soon as possible. TCUSA recognition items for each year will arrive in Oregon by Oregon Arbor Week (first full week of April) of the following year.

TCUSA applications are now easily completed on-line. To get started, go to [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org), click on Programs, click on Tree City USA, and look for a button to start your on-line application. First-timers may need to request a username and password prior to initial entry.

For more information, please call Kristin Ramstad, 503-945-7390 or email: [Kristin.Ramstad@oregon.gov](mailto:Kristin.Ramstad@oregon.gov)



### The Four Standards of a Tree City USA

To qualify as a Tree City USA, a town or city must meet four standards established by The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters.

These standards were established to ensure that every qualifying community would have a viable tree management plan and program.

It is important to note that they were also designed so that no community would be excluded because of size.

1. A Tree Board or Department
2. A Tree Care Ordinance
3. A Community Forestry Program With an Annual Budget of at Least \$2 Per Capita
4. An Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation

#### 1. A Tree Board or Department

Someone must be legally responsible for the care and management of the community's trees. This may be a professional forester or arborist, an entire forestry department, or a volunteer tree board. Often, both a professional staff and advisory tree board are present, which is a good goal for most communities - but is not necessary to certify as a TCUSA. A tree board, or commission, is a group of concerned volunteer citizens charged by ordinance with developing and administering a comprehensive tree management program. Balanced, broad-based community involvement is encouraged. Boards function best if not composed entirely of tree-related professionals such as forestry professors, nursery operators, arborists, etc. Fresh ideas and different perspectives are added by citizens with an interest in trees that is entirely avocational. Limited, staggered terms of service will prevent stagnation or burnout, while at the same time assuring continuity.

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## 2. A Tree Care Ordinance

The tree ordinance must designate the establishment of a tree board or forestry department and give this body the responsibility for writing and implementing an annual community forestry work plan. Beyond that, the ordinance should be flexible enough to fit the needs and circumstances of the particular community. A tree ordinance provides an opportunity to set good policy and back it with the force of law when necessary. Ideally, it will provide clear guidance for planting, maintaining and removing trees from streets, parks and other public places. For tips and a checklist of important items to consider in writing or improving a tree ordinance, see Bulletin #9.

## 3. Community Forestry Program With An Annual Budget Of At Least \$2 Per Capita

Your city's community forestry program must be supported by an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita. At first, this may seem like an impossible goal for some communities. However, a little investigation usually reveals that more than this amount is already being spent by the municipality on its trees, especially if one factors in all the in-kind work that is done on the city trees' behalf. For example, volunteer tree board member or tree planter time can be valued for over \$20/hour per individual. Working toward Tree City USA recognition can be used to re-examine the community's budget priorities and re-direct funds to properly care for its tree resource. Ideally, this standard will be met by focusing funding on an annual work plan developed after an inventory is completed and a report is approved by the city council, but a street tree inventory is NOT required for certification. A simple annual tree plan will address species diversity, planting needs, hazardous trees, insect and disease problems and a pattern of regular care such as pruning and watering.

## 4. An Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation

This is the least challenging and probably the most enjoyable standard to accomplish. An Arbor Day celebration can be simple and brief or an all-day or all-week observation. It can be a simple tree planting event or an award ceremony that honors leading tree planters. For children, Arbor Day may be their only exposure to the green world or a springboard to discussions about the complex issue of environmental quality. The benefits of Arbor Day go far beyond the shade and beauty of new trees for the next generation. Arbor Day is a golden opportunity for publicity and to educate homeowners about proper tree care. Utility companies can join in to promote planting small trees beneath power lines or being careful when digging. Smokey Bear's fire prevention messages can be worked into the event, as can conservation education about soil erosion or the need to protect wildlife habitat. Still another way to develop Arbor Day is to link it with a tree-related festival.

Oregon Arbor Week is observed during the first full week of April (Sun-Sat). National Arbor Day is always the last Friday in April. Your city can choose to recognize and proclaim Arbor Day whenever it wishes. Just make sure to have your mayor sign and date the Arbor Day proclamation every year.

Tree City USA is supported by the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program.

