

City Tree Policy, Bob Lambert, Mayor, City of Horseshoe Bay

At its meeting on May 17, 2011 the City Council approved a Tree Policy. This article is to provide some information related to the Tree Policy and solicit input on a couple of matters. The Tree Policy deals with trees in major streets (not trees in cul-de-sacs) and is necessary because the City is very close to putting the planned street improvements in the Fairways and HSB South out for bid.

The City Council adopted the policy statement that generally provides that trees on City owned property should be preserved. We are making major efforts to see that the Street Improvement Plan does not damage any trees, but, unfortunately, we cannot be certain that damage will not occur.

With respect to the overall Street Improvement Program, it is the present intention to remove all trees recommended by the Police Department. The present number so recommended is five out of the 74 trees in the streets. The five trees are located at Saddle Gun and Mt. Dew, Mt. Dew at Mausoleum (second tree going south), 309 Island Drive, Hi Stirrup and Out Yonder, and Black Stallion and Mt. Leather. If there are alternative ideas to removal, the City Council would appreciate receiving your suggestions. The City Council would also like to know of any other trees that you believe should be removed for safety reasons. The present focus is on the 2011 plans. As other areas are scheduled for improvement, all trees in the major streets will be analyzed in detail, and your input will be considered at that time.

The two mesquite trees on Big Spur and the tree at Saddle Gun and Mt. Dew are planned to be removed as part of the 2011 street improvement. Mesquites are just not as desirable as oaks, and these mesquite trees do not seem very healthy or attractive. If you have any input regarding these three trees, the City Council would like to receive it.

Reflective pads will be placed (and maintained) around each area with trees as designed by the Police Department.

All trees in the areas in the streets will be trimmed for general appearance and health of the tree before the street improvement project is started. Tree trimming will be an ongoing part of street maintenance.

The trees in the areas in the streets and individual property owner's trees will be trimmed such that they are not obstructions for trucks, etc. Property owners will be notified of the City's intention and given the option of having the trees on their property trimmed before the City does so. The City will bear the cost of all trees that it trims.

With perhaps a rare exception or two, already existing curbs or retaining walls around trees will be left as is. No curbs or retaining walls will be added during the initial street improvement work. The City Council will consider additional curbs or retaining walls sometime after the 2011 work is complete.

The Street Improvement Plan and the Tree Policy can be found on the City's website, www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov and emails can be sent to me at mayor@horseshoe-bay-tx.gov. All emails sent to me will be given to all members of the City Council. Trees are an important aspect of improving the streets, and we are making progress on this issue and several others and believe completing the Fairways and HSB South in 2011 is realistic.