



CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE
PARKS & RECREATION
DEPARTMENT

CITY HALL, 710 E Mullan Avenue
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URBAN FORESTRY COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 20, 2026, 8:05 AM
City Hall- City Hall Conference Room 6

Members Present:

John Schwandt
Bob Hallock
JD Reeves
Steve Bloedel
Gabriel Hynes
Bruce Martinek
Will Ahmer

Staff Present:

Monte McCully - Urban Forester

Guests Present:

John Burke
Lee Wayman

Members Absent:

None

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 AM by John Schwandt.

MINUTES

The committee reviewed the January 2026 meeting minutes. Corrections noted included a wording correction in the Coeur d'Alene Avenue sidewalk paragraph ("spade requirements" corrected) and a correction to the number of seedlings ordered for distribution to fourth graders, which was updated from 400 to 2,250 seedlings.

Motion to approve the January 2026 minutes as corrected, by Bob, seconded; all in favor, motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lee Wyman attended the meeting to discuss concerns regarding a large fir tree at 801 E. St. Maries Avenue. The homeowner expressed concern that if the tree were to fall, it could damage a chimney and a nearby gas line. The homeowner indicated willingness to replace the tree with another species if removal were approved.

The committee explained the review process and potential next steps, including an additional tree assessment.

FORESTERS REPORT

Monte went through the Forester's Report. *attached*

Re-Leaf:

Monte ordered the Re-Leaf trees from Garden Gate Nursery and noted there were tree supply issues: Limited availability of Crimson Spire Oaks was reported by the primary nursery supplier. He will seek

alternative sources or substitute comparable oak species.

Riverstone Arboretum:

The committee discussed plans for establishing an Arboretum planting corridor near the Riverstone development. The project was not originally shown in the developer's plans, and a meeting is scheduled with the developer's project manager to discuss implementation.

Initial plans include planting 8–10 species along the trail corridor near the Dolores Junction area with informational signage identifying species for public education. The arboretum is intended to expand gradually with additional species added over time.

Arbor Day Planning:

Three Arbor Day-related events are planned, including the City Arbor Day tree planting, the NIC Arbor Day event, and the Arbor Day North Idaho nonprofit event.

The city plans to plant 18 trees along the City Park seawall using above-ground watering systems due to Army Corps of Engineers restrictions on excavation.

The Arbor Day North Idaho nonprofit will distribute approximately 2,250 seedlings to fourth-grade students throughout Kootenai County. Volunteers will assemble seedling packets at the Idaho Department of Lands fire warehouse.

The NIC event will include local nurseries, tree care companies, community organizations, and seedling giveaways.

A Tree City USA Arbor Day proclamation will be presented at a City Council meeting that week. QR codes are being developed to link seedlings to online tree care information and planting guides.

Committee Membership:

John Burke requested appointment as an official committee member after attending previous meetings. The committee currently has two open positions.

Motion by Bob to approve John Burke as a committee member, seconded; all in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Potential additional applicants may include a representative from Trees Idaho or the new Idaho Department of Lands entomologist.

Tree Removal Requests:

801 E. St. Maries Avenue – The committee reviewed a risk assessment report. The tree received an overall low risk rating. Bird holes were present but did not indicate structural decay. The tree appears healthy.

The homeowner expressed concerns regarding potential risk due to wind exposure and proximity to a gas line. The committee agreed that the homeowner may provide additional input, and the Forester may conduct further inspection, including possible increment core testing. Final decision is deferred to a future meeting.

1121 E. Linden Avenue – A large tree (approximately 36-inch DBH) leaning toward the street and nearby homes was discussed. Key concerns included multiple co-dominant stems, a lean toward neighboring property, and increased wind exposure due to the removal of surrounding trees.

The committee recommended pursuing a Level 2 tree risk assessment. The Forester will consult with the

City Attorney regarding liability considerations, and the issue will be revisited at a future meeting.

Other Tree Removals:

1015 N. 8th Street – A large Silver Maple was approved for emergency removal following storm damage after a major scaffold branch failed and fell onto a house.

Coeur d’Alene Avenue – A maple was removed during townhouse construction after structural roots were severed during driveway excavation.

1002 E. Elm – A box elder tree located in the right-of-way was removed without a permit. The tree was located under secondary power lines, had previously been topped, and contained significant internal rot.

Due to the condition of the tree and the homeowner's cooperation, enforcement action was not pursued. The homeowner was enrolled in the tree replacement program; the stump will be removed, and a more appropriate species will be planted.

Public Education:

The committee discussed improving public awareness regarding city right-of-way boundaries, street tree regulations, and permit requirements for tree removal.

Possible outreach methods include information packets for new property owners, public service announcements, and educational materials distributed with utility bills.

Inspection Requests:

No outstanding inspection requests were formally presented. Monte reported approximately 40 inspection cases currently under review.

Additional Project Discussion:

The committee discussed a potential reforestation effort on Tubbs Hill involving approximately 500 trees. Topics included planting methods, vegetation management around seedlings, and protection from wildlife browsing.

Possible protection strategies include vexar protective tubes, wildlife repellent treatments, and volunteer planting efforts.

Adjournment:

Motion by Bob Hallock to adjourn, seconded by Steve Bloedel, all in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting ended at 9:33 AM.

Next meeting March 20th, 2026.

**Urban Forester's
Report
February 20, 2026**

Requests Received:

11 Requests from abutting property owners

- 4 Removals
- 1 Stump Removal
- 4 Pruning
- 1 Removal without a Permit
- 1 Tree Planting

5 Reports/Request from others

- 1 Complaint of Dying Trees on Honeysuckle
- 1 Complaint of Tree Overgrowth
- 3 Reports of Dead Trees on Cherry Hill

Info Requests:

- 12 Plan Review
- 2 Tree Easements

New UF files since the last meeting: **12**. Total in 2026: **12**. Total so far in 2026: **12**

Residential Street Tree Requirement (RSTR):

Requests for refunds in 2026: 0

RSTR trees planted by the city to date: 2,102

Cost Share Program to date:

January:

5 completed since the last meeting, and 3 new files started

886 trees have been pruned, and 614 poor condition trees have been removed at single-family residential locations (*other approved work pending completion*). City cost share amount = \$212,094.33 (Since 2015).

Re-Leaf: Re-leaf Program – I opened the Re-leaf program last week and have had 39 families sign up for trees and waiting on paperwork from 5 others.

The total trees spoken for so are:

- 13 Chanticleer Pears – 12 left
- 22 Crimson Spire Oaks - 3 left
- 22 Forest Pansy Redbuds – 3 left
- 18 Spring Snow Crabapple – 7 left

The Nursey is short 10 Crimson Spire Oaks and offered Regal Prince or Kindred Spirit instead. I will look for 10 more Crimson Spire Oaks at other nurseries first.

Parks department tree work: The Parks Department cleaned up around 35 trees in Forest Cemetery. We will start planning replacement trees soon. We need to determine replacement species. A tree needs to come down in Riverview Cemetery.

Grant Work: I will apply as soon as it opens up. The Trees Idaho program may not be available in time for spring planting.

Contracted Work: None this month.

Monte McCully
Urban Forester
City of Coeur d'Alene