

City of Gainesville
Advisory Board/Committee Workplan

Board/Committee Name: Tree Advisory Board

FY 2008 - 2010 WORKPLAN PROJECTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Project Title

Status

Code Change:

2004-present

Proposed changes have been reviewed by City staff (Community Development, Public Works, Gainesville Regional Utilities) and the public (Gainesville Builders, community-wide meeting at the Community Design Center, Sierra Club, League of Women Voters and others). After each meeting, the Board considered changes. The plan is to present the changes to the City Commission with the request that they refer the proposed changes to the Plan Board. Of special interest to the Board has been

(1) Providing real protection for Heritage trees in all zoning classes (including giving the City Commission's Advisory Board authority to recommend financial mitigation under very specific circumstances for very valuable trees),

(2) Creating sufficient space for young trees by adjusting the build-to line requirements in all zoning districts to create a place for trees and by requiring minimum 9' tree lawns between curb and sidewalk in new subdivisions to reduce future infrastructure maintenance costs for curb and sidewalk repair/replacement.

(3) Eliminating conflicts between Gainesville Regional Utilities line separation requirements, Public Works clear zone safety requirements, and required trees in street buffer areas by making it clear that all three are essential and of equal importance in developing Gainesville so that our community will have shaded streets and thoroughfares.

(4) Diminishing the vulnerability of Gainesville's urban forest to Southern Pine Beetle epidemics by encouraging post-development spacing of pines at 25', a distance diminishes the insects' capacity for rapid and relentless population increase.

(5) Clarifying the roll of the Tree Advisory Board and the Tree Appeals Board, especially with respect to potential financial mitigation decisions that might result from the proposed Code changes.

(6) Bringing tree protection, planting, and invasive exotic control efforts required in Gainesville into alignment with the practices that yield the best results based on information from scientific research.

(7) Updating the Gainesville Approved Tree list first assembled by the Board in 1976.

Comprehensive Plan Compliance: The Tree Advisory Board is concerned that the City is not in compliance with Environmental Management Goal 3: Improve urban spaces through preservation and enhancement of the urban forest. Maintain the City's commitment to preservation of the urban forest and street trees as a defining feature of our community. Specifically the City is not meeting the objective that states "The total percentage of tree canopy coverage within the City shall not fall below the 1994 percentage of tree canopy, as estimated by the City Manager or designee, except in the event of natural catastrophe." Research by the University of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation documents the canopy coverage at 50.6%. The 1994 canopy coverage in Gainesville was 60.9%.

Diseases threatening Gainesville's Urban Forest:

On-going

Southern Pine Beetle Suppression – Insect at slightly elevated levels.

Laural Wilt – Threatens to kill all *Persea* (Red Bays and others in Lauraceae, but not Camphors). The fungus that causes the damage is carried by an exotic beetle; each insect has the capacity to infect as many as 10,000 trees. The prognosis is grim. Some Red Bays in neighborhoods are fairly isolated and may escape infection.

The Florida Division of Plant Industry is the lead agency in regard to this disease. Of special concern to them is the potential impact on the commercial avocado crop.

OUTSTANDING REFERRALS (as of December 1, 2007)

<u><i>Date of Referral</i></u>	<u><i>Referral Description</i></u>	<u><i>Status</i></u>
2004, 2006	Update Land Development Code	Completion expected 1/1/09

**ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES
FY 2009-2010 SPECIAL PROJECT/ACTIVITY BUDGET REQUEST**

BOARD/COMMITTEE NAME: Tree Advisory Board

Project Priority Funding Request No. _____ of _____

FY 2008-2010 Proposed Project

Project Title

No funding is requested.

Summary Description of Project

Expected Benefits:

