

Attachment C3– Urban Forestry Funding Information

Urban Forestry. An additional \$451,130 (above the currently proposed budget) would fund all costs associated with contracted tree pruning, stump grinding, removal, and planting. This budget increase would enable the Urban Forestry Program to prune, plant, and remove trees at a rate (and in a manner) that will adequately support the health and safety of the City's current urban forest infrastructure. This additional funding would **not** result in the capability to achieve the ideal level of tree maintenance, however, it would result in a major improvement to the level of tree maintenance that the Urban Forestry Program can accomplish.

Within the \$451,130 figure provided, there is \$78,000 for additional tree planting, with an average cost of \$300 per tree. The 260 new trees that would be planted with this money ($300 \times 260 = 78,000$), combined with the 740 trees that can be planted with the currently budgeted \$222,000, would result in 1,000 new trees being planted. Also within the \$451,130 figure is \$373,130 for additional contracted tree maintenance. This money (combined with existing funding for contracted tree maintenance) will provide enough funding for 2 additional contracted crews. Half of that amount (\$186,565) would pay for 1 additional crew. Providing funding for 1 crew would essentially put the Urban Forestry Program back to the contracted crew level it was at in Fiscal Year 2016 (prior to the current year's budget cut). However, it must be noted that FY16's crew level was **not** providing adequate tree maintenance to sustain the city's 85,000+ tree population.

For reference, more than a decade ago, the Urban Forestry Program ran eight contracted tree maintenance crews (twice as many as the 4 crews we are funded for currently). Securing funding for 2 additional crews would greatly increase the Urban Forestry Program's tree maintenance capacity and would substantially improve the health of our urban forest.

The Administration states, "It is important to note that Salt Lake City does not so much have a tree planting deficit problem, as it does an insufficient tree maintenance problem. Replacing or adding trees will not improve the health and sustainability of an urban forest that is not being adequately maintained. Therefore, an effective and efficient solution to the City's diminishing urban forest must focus not on planting more trees, but rather on removing less trees. If the City can consistently commit to maintaining (through pruning and other management) more trees each year, the overall health of our urban forest will stabilize and begin to improve. Consequently, our trees will live longer, grow bigger, and provide greater benefit to the residents of Salt Lake City. Furthermore (in a healthier urban forest), the rate of tree removal will decline and normalize. Only upon achieving an adequate maintenance schedule can the City begin to steadily and effectively optimize our tree population through planting efforts."