

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Staff Presentation Worksheet

Presentation Date: **12/14/10** Time: **10:45** Length: **15 minutes**

Presentation Title: **Establishing a Tree Planting Program for Clackamas County**

Department: **DTD/WES/Parks/Forestry/Oak Lodge Sanitary District**

Presenters: **Laurel Butman, Cam Gilmour, Sasha Pollack**

POLICY QUESTION:

The Board has directed staff to establish a tree planting program. How should staff proceed to consolidate, codify and fund a program that would incorporate current tree-planting programs in Clackamas County and expand to increase tree canopy and coverage specifically throughout the urban unincorporated areas of Clackamas County?

ISSUE & BACKGROUND:

During the process to establish a tree cutting ordinance the Board of Commissioners expressed an interest in establishing a coordinated tree planting program. We have begun by compiling a list of current tree planting programs within the County. Clackamas County currently runs tree planting programs in various departments and through partnerships with non-profit organizations.

Water Environment Services (WES)

WES has a well established tree planting program that focuses on improving riparian zones and increasing tree canopy cover. The work is completed via partnership agreements with watershed councils, local school districts, SOLV and Friends of Trees. These projects are mainly on private land. In 2009 WES and its partners planted approximately 7000 trees. They have historically spent about \$100,000 annually on tree planting activities in areas within the Clackamas County Service District #1 boundary which includes much of the urban unincorporated area of the county. Their hope is to increase activity on riparian zone restoration substantially over the next several years in order to meet the goals of the Watershed Action Plans.

North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District (NCPRD)

NCPRD has a program that was established in 2008 which plants trees within their designated park lands. The data below reflects park lands which are within the unincorporated urban area of Clackamas County. In FY 2009-10 they planted a total of 335 trees and their estimated outcome for FY 2010-11 is 690 trees. Dependent on funding, they plan to continue a similar level of planting as they see the need for increased trees on park lands.

Clackamas County Forestry Program

The "Community Forest Partners" program was funded from 2001-2008 by Title III of the Secure Rural Schools Act (SRSA). When SRSA was reauthorized, the Community Forestry Category was eliminated. A decision was made by the Program to continue the tree planting program on a reduced scale and fund it through the general Parks & Forests budget. In addition, since 2003, they have had an agreement with SOLV to purchase plants for some of their "Team Up for Watershed Health" projects in the county. When the Title III funding was lost, the agreement was changed to purchase plants only for work on County-owned properties. The future of this program is unclear as it may require additional funding. ****Note - these trees are being planted on designated "Forestry" land and are therefore perhaps outside the scope of a program that would focus on unincorporated urban areas.****

Oak Lodge Sanitary District (OLSD)

OLSD does not currently have a tree planting program but is working on a Strategic Plan which will include strategies and goals for improving tree canopy over streams and other measures which will involve tree planting. The District would like to be included in any tracking and reporting program that the County moves forward with and will keep us posted on their steps forward on their Strategic Plan. The District contact is Michael Read, General Manager. Their goals will be similar to those of WES and related to stream canopy cover and water quality.

Department of Transportation and Development (DTD)

DTD has extensive experience in tree planting through landscape designs that have been incorporated into dozens of lineal miles of urban arterials (Sunnyside Road, Highway 212, Sunnybrook Boulevard, Bob Schumacher Road, 172nd, and other projects). These projects were completed by consultants and subcontractors. DTD has not previously had a program directed at specific tree canopy coverage goals.

SUMMARY TABLE

Department	Trees Planted FY 2009-10
WES	~7000
NCPRD	335
Forestry	2380
TOTAL	~ 9515

POSSIBLE NEW PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES:

I-205 project opportunity: Friends of Trees is currently in the 2nd of 3 years of plantings along the I-205 multi-use path. They are currently working in conjunction with Metro, ODOT and Multnomah County. If Clackamas County chose to partner with them in the next year (and potentially additional years) they would plant 250 trees along this path for a \$20,000 investment by the County. ODOT has committed to the maintenance of these trees (mowing grass), however, after the initial year, additional funds would be needed for watering, which could cost approximately

\$3,000 or more a year. Friends of Trees is also available to take on similar projects on other public lands for comparable costs.

Grant opportunity: There is an ongoing ODOT grant opportunity for storm water retrofit projects in the urbanized parts of the Willamette valley. Planting trees is an identified project option. The total grant funding is \$8.4 million; the next deadline is spring of 2011. See attachment for additional information on this grant opportunity. WES has offered to facilitate the grant application process as the project is storm water related and would take place within their service district.

Action Plan/Goals:

A variety of other jurisdictions currently have tree planting programs in place. These are often guided by Action Plans and goals similar to the two examples outlined in the attachment.

QUESTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

- How should staff proceed in establishing an organized and coordinated tree planting program for Clackamas County?
- Who should be responsible for the coordination of the tree planting efforts?
- What additional budget resources are available to the departments for this endeavor?
- Should Clackamas County establish an action plan in conjunction with the tree planting efforts?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends creating a coordinated tree planting program with a brand, logo, web presence and a community involvement component. This program would consist of the County's existing urban tree planting programs and investment in new tree planting programs if funds are made available through the budget process, especially focusing on those for which partnership opportunities and grant funding are available such as the I-205 project. Further, the new tree planting program should include coordination of these efforts by creating an action plan, identifying desired species, setting goals for number of trees planted per year and tracking planting outcomes particularly those that are completed by non-county contractors.

Additionally, opening pathways for citizens to increase tree planting on their own land could be supported and encouraged by county staff outside of the delineated and funded programs.

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval _____

County Administrator Approval SW

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact: Sasha Pollack @ 503-742-5915