

**From:** Madison Canopy Street Trees [info@madisoncanopystreettrees.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 07, 2017 5:04 PM  
**To:** Park Commission  
**Cc:** MadisonCanopy@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** In support of Resolution 41986, agenda item 12 at 6/8/17 meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Board of Parks Commissioners,

Madison Canopy Street Trees is a coalition of residents from around the city working to preserve and promote canopy trees in our public right-of-way. Our primary concern is to preserve the existing canopy, plant canopy for the future, and discover and rectify city policies which prevent canopy trees from being preserved and replanted.

Madison Canopy Street Trees is writing in support of Resolution 41986

Part 3 of the EAB Plan recommendations state:

“Remove ash street trees designated in poor condition or that are under power transmission lines during infrastructure maintenance projects... No ash trees under power lines or in poor condition will receive chemical treatments.”

We believe a more prudent approach is needed in regards to this part of the EAB policy. To preemptively remove so many trees is short-sighted because we are not replacing these trees with canopy trees. Many of the ash trees under power lines have 40+ years of city investment in them.

The current EAB Plan does not acknowledge or factor in the benefits that these ash trees provide which will be lost permanently because current policy only allows replanting of low-growing small stature trees under power lines.

By moving healthy ash trees (the ones that meet the criteria for treatment and have less than 30% canopy decline) from the “remove” group to the “treatment” group where they will be monitored- residents will continue to receive the benefits of these trees every year that they are deemed healthy. The benefits these trees provide far outweigh the cost of treatment.

#### Additional information

In regards to the health of ash trees under power lines and MG&E pruning, here are a few key points to consider:

During the Jenifer Street Reconstruction project of 2016, of the 43 trees slated for removal on the five block project 39 were ashes. Of those ashes, 24 were marked for removal because of their location under the primary power line. On-the-ground inspection from Madison Forestry Staff concluded that 9 of those 24 were deemed healthy enough by every measure of size, structure, branching habit, and intact canopy to be treated. Since then, 2 additional trees were added to the list of trees healthy enough to preserve.

Of the 11 trees on Jenifer Street that have been moved onto the treatment list, all of them were pruned by MG&E (upper branches) and City Staff (lower branches) in 2016 before the above mentioned inspection and they still met the canopy criteria for treatment.

Ash canopy trees give real dollar value benefits both to adjacent properties and the community as a whole in the areas of property value, stormwater retention, CO2 capturing, overall air quality and energy savings. iTree software values this benefit at nearly \$200 per mature ash tree.

All across the country, communities have had to manage tree trimming with power lines. With training and constructive trimming – policies that exist in some cities – there could be a better coexistence of trees and power lines.

There are currently efforts underway to modify policies to favor the planting and maintenance of canopy trees. The Street Tree Working Group, a subcommittee of the Sustainable Madison Committee, is working on recommendations for a comprehensive tree policy including taking a close look at all the ways different city departments affect the urban forest. Madison Canopy Street Tree members have been and will continue to actively participate in these efforts and in the outreach and organization of concerned residents.

Save the Canopy - Bury the Lines!

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