



Legislation Text

File #: 90484, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

The City of Madison's 2026 Executive Operating Budget anticipates \$7,608,870 in revenue from the Urban Forestry Special Charge, an increase of \$81,914 (1.1%) over the 2025 budgeted revenue of \$7,526,956. The proposed resolution sets the charge per dwelling unit at \$7.63 per month in 2026 (\$7.58 in 2025). The 2026 rate recovers the City's costs associated with its urban forestry services. These expenditures are budgeted in the 2026 Streets Division operating budget. Activities supported by these services include stump removal, tree removal and replacement, and general maintenance of the City's urban forest. Additionally, the 2026 Operating Budget includes \$21,083 in General Fund support to cover the Urban Forestry portion of the Mad-CAP program rebate.

Title

Approving the 2026 Urban Forestry Special Charge

Body

Preamble

In 2014, Section 4.095 of the Madison General Ordinance was created to establish an Urban Forestry Special Charge. The ordinance created the urban forestry special charge in the City based upon the authority granted the City by Wis. Stat 66.0627, pursuant to Sec. 4.09(13) MGO. The costs of the program that will be recovered include all urban forestry costs incurred by the City to the City to maintain, protect and grow the City's urban forest. The charge will only recover for services actually performed by the City, and the amount imposed may be adjusted throughout the year to account for greater or lesser expenditures. The urban forestry program serves all real property in the City and the charges are apportioned based upon the Urban Forestry Special Charge Policy, as originally approved on July 7, 2015 by RES-15-00597 (Legislative File ID No. 38644), amended on May 17, 2016 by RES-16-00368 (Legislative File ID No. 42706) and amended on May 15, 2018 by RES-18-00396 (Legislative File ID No. 51421).

WHEREAS, on October 21, 2014, the Common Council adopted Ordinance ORD-14-00162, File 35038, creating Section 4.095 of the Madison General Ordinances, which ordinance established an urban forestry special charge in the City of Madison; and,

WHEREAS, the intent of the urban forestry special charge is to recover the costs to the City to maintain and manage the City's urban forest through its urban forestry program, which program provides a service to all real property in the City; and,

WHEREAS, the special charge is administered pursuant to the Urban Forestry Special Charge Policy (2018 Update) (Legislative File ID No. 51421); and

WHEREAS, following the Council's directive in RES-21-00692, the Madison Water Utility sought and obtained approval from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) to establish the Madison Municipal Services Customer Assistance Program (Mad-CAP), as a two-year pilot program. The PSC is currently reviewing the Mad-CAP program in the Water Utility's pending rate case, with a decision not expected until late 2025 or early 2026. Under this program, eligible municipal service bill recipients who earn less than 50% of the area median family income will be eligible for a \$20 or \$30 rebate on their monthly bill, with the Water Utility, Sewer Utility (including Landfill Remediation), Stormwater Utility, and Streets Division (Urban Forestry and Resource Recovery Special Charges) separately funding a portion of the monthly rebate. Additional information and background about Mad-CAP is contained in a staff memo attached hereto; and,

WHEREAS, the 2026 adopted operating budget calls for \$7,608,870 in net revenue to the City from the Urban Forestry Special Charge; and,

WHEREAS, the Urban Forestry Special Charge rates need to be updated to reflect the net revenue target established with the adoption of the 2026 Operating Budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the 2026 Urban Forestry Special Charge rates provided in Attachment A are hereby adopted in accordance with Section 4.095 of the Madison General Ordinance and the Urban Forestry Special Charge Policy (2018 Update), based upon the net revenue target established by the 2026 adopted operating budget;
2. That the date by which such special charges shall be paid in full is October 31, 2026; and,
3. That these approved Urban Forestry Special Charge rates shall continue until a new schedule is approved by the Common Council, unless actual service costs during the year are found to be lower than expected, in which case the rates may be adjusted downward following notification to the Finance Committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Madison Municipal Services Customer Assistance Program (Mad-CAP) is hereby extended to the Urban Forestry and Resource Recovery Special Charges in the amounts indicated on the rate schedules attached to this resolution, the Council separately funding that portion of the rebate attributable to these services directly from the general fund.