



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor & City Council

**From:** Howard Koontz, City Arborist

**Date:** September 10, 2012

**Subject** Dunwoody's Inaugural Comprehensive Tree Inventory & Assessment Plan

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### Summary

Dunwoody has roughly 150 miles of public rights of way, replete with a dense tree canopy consisting of a mix of native pines and hardwoods, as well as some invasive plant materials and nuisance trees. Dunwoody also has 190 acres of parks and other public property, which accordingly features mature trees, mature stands of trees, and forested areas.

As there has been no comprehensive plan for the care of these up to now, during the Comprehensive Land Use Planning process of 2009 Dunwoody recognized a need to complete a tree inventory and assessment of the urban forest, and create and implement a best management plan to promote the long-term survivability of this valuable natural resource.

This need was documented in the Comprehensive Plan as an action item in the Short Term Work Program section, near the end of the chapter entitled "Community Assessment":

"The Short Term Work Program (STWP) identifies specific implementation actions that the local government intends to take during the first five years of the planning period. In Dunwoody, the Short Term Work Program covers activities to be undertaken from 2010-2015. These include any ordinances, administrative systems (such as plan review, code enforcement, etc.), community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or projects to be undertaken to implement the plan...

...While the STWP designates department and government authorities as completing the action items, the elected Council of the City of Dunwoody bears ultimate responsibility for implementation of the adopted Comprehensive Plan." – *Dunwoody Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2010*

The Dunwoody Comprehensive Tree Inventory & Assessment is the result of this continuing action item plan, recorded as STWP item CF31. This report will also lend itself to creating a long-range plan for care of the urban forest, an action item listed in the STWP as CF32.



## **Background**

Before a plan of care could be established for Dunwoody's urban canopy, the composition and condition of the existing forest had to be established. For that the City of Dunwoody contracted with Arboguard Tree Specialists, in partnership with Ecological Planning Group and AEC, Inc., to first locate and identify trees along the City's roadways and inside the parks and other public property. Each of Dunwoody's eight parks, other public property, and all 150 linear miles of roadways were inspected by forest type, species composition, and the presence of invasive plants.

Once identified, characteristics of the trees were recorded, such as location, size, relative health and vitality. These records were noted and ranked in a spreadsheet, and later mapped into GIS map worksheets. The data was collected, collated, and further analyzed for creating vegetation management specifications.

These specifications lead directly to the creation of a Short Term Work Program for the care of Dunwoody's urban forest canopy. As appropriate, recommendations have been provided for individual trees or for woodland management or improvement. Some areas are recommended to remain unmanaged while other recommendations include control of invasive plant material, removal of hazard trees, pruning of limbs for safety or clearance, plant health care treatments, soil amendments, Integrated Pest Management inspections, or other specific or general actions to improve the health, safety, and survivability of the trees. These actions are summarized in the tree care budget recommendations for each chapter, which display options for creating an annual tree care program based on the information in the report along with associated cost projections.

## **Recommendation**

Staff would recommend to the City Council that this Tree Inventory and Assessment project be incorporated by reference into the city's adopted Comprehensive Plan, so that the information presented and associated recommendations for care and conservation can be assimilated into the city's plan for the built development.

**STATE OF GEORGIA  
CITY OF DUNWOODY**

**RESOLUTION 2012-XX-XX**

**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE TREE INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT  
AND INCORPORATE AS PART OF THE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE  
PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dunwoody's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, adopted in 2010, provides and vision and direction for the City of Dunwoody and laid the foundation for more detailed Tree Assessment plans; and

**WHEREAS**, during the Comprehensive Land Use Planning process, the City recognized the need to complete a tree inventory and assessment of the urban forest, and create and implement a best management plan to promote the long-term survivability of this valuable natural resource; and

**WHEREAS**, this need was documented in the Comprehensive Plan as part of the Short Term Work Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Tree Inventory and Assessment Plan provides recommendations for individual trees and woodland management or improvement, control of invasive plant material, removal of hazard trees, pruning of limbs for safety or clearance, plant health care treatments, soil amendments, pest management and other actions to improve the health, safety and survivability of the trees; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dunwoody wishes to adopt the Comprehensive Tree Inventory and Assessment Plan as a guide to the future management of the City's valuable urban forest resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dunwoody wishes to maintain its Comprehensive Land Use Plan to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Tree Inventory and Assessment Plan and therefore wishes to incorporate same as a minor amendment to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Dunwoody that by passage of this Resolution the City of Dunwoody Mayor and City Council adopt the Comprehensive Tree Inventory

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and Assessment Plan and incorporate it as part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan as a minor amendment pursuant to the Department of Community Affairs Regulations.

**SO RESOLVED AND EFFECTIVE**, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2012.

Approved:

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Michael G. Davis, Mayor

Attest:

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Sharon Lowery, City Clerk

(Seal)