



MANAGER'S MEMORANDUM

Prepared for: **Naperville City Council**
By: City Manager's office
1/15/2026

A. MANAGER'S MEMORANDUM

Source:	Subject:	Action:
1. Dan Randolph P.E., Director of Public Works	Parkway Tree Trimming Program	FYI

CITY OF NAPERVILLE MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 15, 2026

TO: Doug Krieger, City Manager

FROM: Dan Randolph P.E., Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Parkway Tree Trimming Program

Purpose:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information regarding the Department of Public Works' parkway tree trimming program.

Background:

Naperville's urban forest is a vital community asset, providing environmental, aesthetic, and quality-of-life benefits. With more than 70,000 trees across the city, maintaining this asset requires a structured and sustainable approach. Best practice for urban forestry is to trim trees on a regular cycle to promote health, safety, and longevity. For Naperville, this means trimming approximately 10,000 trees per year to maintain a seven-year trimming cycle.

Maintaining this cycle has become increasingly challenging. As the urban forest matures, trees are larger, more complex, and more costly to maintain. Over the past decade, the parkway canopy has increased by over 40%, and the average tree size has increased, reducing the number of trees that can be trimmed with the same level of resources. At the same time, forestry crews must respond to a growing number of urgent hazards, storm events, and seasonal responsibilities such as leaf collection and snow removal, all of which reduce time available for routine trimming. In 2025, more than 3,400 requests for these types of urgent hazards were submitted. Severe weather only adds to the demand. After a single storm in July of 2025, over 600 emergency requests were submitted, with over 100 requests for trees blocking roadways.

Recognizing these pressures, the City has made a substantial investment in routine tree trimming, increasing the annual trimming budget from \$150,000 in 2021 to \$500,000 in 2025. This investment has nearly doubled the number of trees trimmed annually and has helped move the program toward its long-term goals.

Discussion:

Despite increased funding and improved productivity, the City continues to fall short of the 10,000-tree annual trimming target. A key factor is the ongoing practice of responding to a high volume of individual, one-off trimming requests outside the established trimming cycle. While well-intentioned, this reactive approach is inefficient, disrupts planned work, and diverts resources away from systematic neighborhood trimming.

Going forward, the City will focus its efforts on a fully proactive, cycle-based tree trimming program. Trimming will be conducted neighborhood by neighborhood, ensuring that all trees receive routine maintenance in a predictable, equitable manner. This approach improves efficiency, supports long-term tree health, and allows the City to maximize the impact of its investment to achieve a seven-year trimming cycle.

Under this model, the City will no longer respond to non-emergency, individual trimming requests that fall outside the established cycle. City and contract crews will instead prioritize scheduled trimming, emergency response, and urgent safety hazards. Most routine trimming will be completed by contractors, allowing in-house staff to focus on removals, storm response, and critical safety issues. Residents that have previously submitted a service request for tree trimming should visit the City's website at www.naperville.il.us/maintenance-and-care to see when their tree is scheduled for cycle trimming.

This proactive shift ensures City resources are used responsibly, improves safety across the community, and protects the long-term health of Naperville's urban forest. By committing to cycle-based trimming, the City is making a sustainable choice that benefits residents today and preserves this important asset for future generations.

Recommendation:

I recommend that this information be forwarded to the City Council through the Manager's Memorandum.