**REVIEWER INTRODUCTION TO THE GOLD LEVEL TREE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**

**The Chicago Region Trees Initiative, Trees and Green Infrastructure Work Group has developed three tree preservation ordinance templates for your consideration. It should be noted that these ordinances in no way reflect tree preservation or planting requirements that would be included in a “landscape or development” ordinance. They are for tree preservation within the built environment. Following is a description of each tree preservation ordinance level.**

**Bronze –**

1. The Bronze Level Tree Preservation Ordinance is the foundation upon which the other tree preservation ordinances are based.
2. This basic ordinance assumes the community does not have an urban forest management plan.
3. The Bronze Level Tree Preservation Ordinance regulates trees on public property only - with the exception of potential risk trees.
4. This ordinance sets goals for the community to help it move to the Silver Level Tree Preservation Ordinance.

**Silver –**

1. The Silver Level Tree Preservation Ordinance is based on a community urban forest management plan.
2. The Silver Tree Preservation Ordinance regulates trees on public property only – with the exception of potential risk trees.
3. The objective is to have the urban forest management plan provide the structure for the community forestry program.
4. The management plan can be updated and amended more easily than an ordinance so changes can be made as needed.
5. The Silver Level Tree Preservation Ordinance will reference back to the urban forest management plan as the foundation for the community urban forestry program.

**Gold –**

1. The Gold Level Tree Preservation Ordinance is based on a community urban forest management plan.
2. This ordinance level regulates trees on public and private property. Approximately 70% of the trees within a community are located on private property.
3. This ordinance preserves, protects and enhances the urban forest infrastructure as a whole.

CHAPTER 1

TREE PRESERVATION

SECTION 1

1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1.2 DEFINITION

1.3 PRESERVATION

1.4 PLANTING

1.5 URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.6 TREE PROTECTION

1.7 LEGACY TREE PROTECTION

1.8 TREE REMOVAL

1.9 TREE REPLACEMENT

1.10 SPECIAL RULES FOR CONSERVANCY OR PRESERVATION AREAS

1.11 TREE PRESERVATION AND/OR REMOVAL PLAN FOR SIGNIFICANT REMOVALS

1.12 POTENTIAL RISK TREES

1.13 INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL

1.14 TREE PLANTING CREDITS

1.15 TREE BOARD

1.16 TREE PERMIT PROCEDURE

1.17 PERMIT ISSUANCE

1.18 CASH BONDS

1.19 FINAL INSPECTION

1.20 COMPLIANCE

1.21 PENALTY

1.22 EXCEPTION

1.23 APPEALS FOR VARIANCE

1.24 CIVIL REMEDIES

1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

 This Section of the Code is structured to preserve, protect and enhance critical infrastructure – our urban forest. This Section will regulate trees as a collective resource for the Governmental Entity on public and private property.

The purpose of this Section is to recognize the services and function that trees provide as a collective asset to the entire community and to state the goals of the Governmental Entity with respect to the protection, preservation, care and planting of trees on public and private lands.

We recognize that trees:

1. Protect, preserve and enhance the quality of life and general welfare of the Governmental Entity and its property owners, and conserve and enhance the Governmental Entity’s natural, physical and aesthetic environment.
2. Preserve and protect trees to ensure that trees are properly planted and maintained within the Governmental Entity so that trees can protect, enhance and preserve the quality of life for people within the Governmental Entity.
3. Recognize that trees are an integral part of the infrastructure of the Governmental Entity and as such are preserved, protected and cared for as other critical Governmental Entity infrastructure. Trees provide the following services and benefits:
	1. Trees absorb pollution from the air;
	2. Trees absorb and sequester carbon dioxide;
	3. Trees absorb and filter pollution from stormwater run-off;
	4. Trees produce oxygen;
	5. Trees reduce flooding;
	6. Trees stabilize soils and reduce erosion;
	7. Trees cool the surrounding area helping to reduce impacts due to heat islands;
	8. Trees reduce energy consumption by shielding structures from harsh winds and sun;
	9. Trees provide a buffer and screen against noise, light and pollution;
	10. Trees improve property values;
	11. Trees improve commercial district traffic and purchasing;
	12. Areas with trees have lower crime rates;
	13. Areas with trees have higher levels of community interaction;
	14. Trees provide important habitat for birds and other wildlife; and
	15. Trees protect and enhance our quality of life.
4. Trees provide collective Governmental Entity benefits not limited to property or community boundaries.

E. Recognize the historic significance of legacy trees and preserve and protect them within the

 Governmental Entity.

F. Eliminate nuisance trees that constitute a threat, danger or nuisance to the public or property in the

Governmental Entity or that may be dangerous to the health of other trees and vegetation in the Governmental Entity as determined by the Governmental Entity.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

6” GROUPING OR STAND

of TREES Any grouping of two or more trees that have a combined diameter at breast height of 6” or greater. Every six inches of such a grouping shall be the equivalent of a 6” tree. For removal purposes, this grouping definition shall apply if two or more trees are removed within twelve months of each other.

APPLICANT An owner of a lot, parcel or tract of land for which an application has been filed for a permit, subdivision, or any activity requiring the issuance of a permit. A contractor is an agent, acting on behalf of the Applicant – the landowner.

ARBORIST Any individual experienced in the profession of forestry or a related field and is licensed or certified in forestry by an accredited forestry industry body, e.g. International Society of Arboriculture.

BUCKTHORN An undesirable exotic invasive ornamental shrub introduced to North America. This species inhabits woodlands and savannas where it dominates the landscape prohibiting the development of native trees and plants. There are six species of buckthorn listed in the Illinois Exotic Weed Act, which prohibits the sale, distribution or planting of this species, Rhamnus cathartica, davurica, frangula, argula, utilis, and japonica.

BUILDING ACTIVITY

AREA The portion of a property within which development activity, including grading, excavation, storage of materials, construction access and construction of both main buildings and unattached structures.

CANOPY The upper portion of a tree sometimes called the crown. This section of the tree usually contains branches and leaves.

CONSERVANCY OR

PRESERVATION AREA

(EASEMENT)

 An area under legal restriction within which the following requirements are enforced:

 1. Any area within which all existing vegetation shall be preserved for the purpose of retaining the natural character or special environmental state or control.

2. Any area with a special designation providing screening from adjacent uses or a public or private street.

3. No plant material shall be removed from or planted in a Conservancy or Preservation Area without a permit from the Governmental Entity authorizing removal or planting.

4. Conservancy or Preservation Areas may be established as part of the subdivision process or through the issuance of a special use permit.

5. No undesignated structures, including fencing shall be located in a Conservancy or Preservation Area.

6. In all instances the approved language on the plat shall prevail.

CRITICAL ROOT ZONE An area on the ground extending out from the trunk of the tree in all directions a distance of at least one foot for every inch DBH

CUTTING 1. Felling or removal of a tree, or any procedure that results in the death or substantial destruction of a tree.

 2. Cutting does not include normal pruning or trimming of trees consistent with good forestry practices.

DAMAGE Impact to any tree including but not limited to removal, root compaction, root removal, girdling, soil contamination, topping, pruning more than 20% of the trees, canopy removal, bark removal, poisoning and or/ actions resulting in the decline or death of a tree.

DECIDUOUS TREE A deciduous tree is one that loses most or all of its leaves for part of the year.

DEVELOPMENT Any proposed change in the use or character of land, including, but not limited to the replacement of any structure or site improvements, e.g. irrigation installation, driveway replacement, installation of a retaining wall among others. When appropriate to the context, development may refer to the receipt or necessity of any building, tree or site work permit. (See the Landscape Ordinance for more information.)

DIAMETER AT BREAST

HEIGHT The diameter of the trunk of the tree measured in inches at a point 4.5 feet above ground line. This point or measurement is used for established and mature trees and is referred to as “DBH”. All reference to diameter size shall be to the DBH.

ENVIRONMENTAL

PROFESSIONAL A degreed environmental scientist, biologist, botanist, forester, other similarly degreed and/or licensed plant professional with at least five years’ experience in planting and maintaining native plants and their associated natural ecosystems.

EVERGREEN TREE A tree that retains most of its leaves for most of the year.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

PLAN A detailed plan developed by the Governmental Entity under the direction of a certified arborist or forester which protects this valuable infrastructure and outlines thoughtful strategies for tree planting, selection, care and preservation for the Governmental Entity and complies with recognized national standards.

FORESTER An individual trained and experienced in the profession of forestry who has a forestry degree from an institution of advanced education.

INFRASTRUCTURE The basic underlying framework or features that provide collective services, including but not limited to roads, waterlines, stormsewers, bioswales, and trees.

LANDSCAPE

CONTRACTOR A company or individual contracted to perform landscape services.

LANDSCAPE PLAN A plan approved by the Governmental Entity defining the location and species of plants and associated hardscape including grading.

LANDSCAPE

MANAGEMENT PLAN A plan approved by the Governmental Entity outlining the strategies for care and management of a specific type of landscape.

LANDSCAPE SEASON The period of April - June and September - November each year.

LANDSCAPING

PROFESSIONAL A registered landscape architect, horticulturalist or other similarly degreed, experienced and/or licensed plant professional.

LEGACY TREE Any tree on the Legacy Tree List. These trees are provided special protection from the Governmental Entity whether on public or private property.

NATURAL AMENITY

EXCEPTION A landscape and preservation plan intended as a substitute for the replacement requirements of this Section.

NUISANCE TREES Nuisance trees are trees that may provide potential impacts to other trees, people or structures. This would include, but not be limited to, diseased, infested, structurally unsound trees or known invasive species.

PARCEL A single parcel shall mean any lot of record, zoning lot or any grouping of adjacent lots under single ownership, serving a principal structure or use.

PREFERRED TREE LIST A listing of tree species, located in the Governmental Entity Urban Forest Management Plan.

PROPERTY OWNER An individual or organization who owns property located within the corporate limits of the Governmental Entity.

REAR YARD Rear yard as used in this Section, shall have the same meaning as ascribed to in the Zoning Code.

REGULATED ARTICLES Any insects at any living stage of development, any quarantined materials such as wood products including, but not limited to chips, limbs, lumber, firewood, contaminated soils, or any other product or means of conveyance which may be determined by Federal or State departments of agriculture to pose a risk of spread of any infestation or infection.

SIGNIFICANT TREE

REMOVAL Removal of a Legacy Tree or grouping/stand of trees.

SIMPLE TREE REMOVAL Removal of a tree without other associated site impacts or other site improvements.

SITE That parcel of land for which a permit for landscaping or tree removal is sought.

STREET TREE Any tree located on or within the public right-of-way or right-of-way easement.

TRANSPLANTING The removal of any tree for replanting elsewhere.

TREE Any self-supporting woody plant, together with its root system, trunk and canopy; growing upon the earth usually with one trunk, or a multi-stemmed trunk system, supporting a definitely formed crown.

TREE BANK A bank account established to receive and hold deposits for trees which were damaged and/or removed. These funds, if not returned to the Applicant, may be used to purchase and care for trees throughout the Governmental Entity.

TREE PERMIT A written authorization from the Governmental Entity authorizing the applicant to conduct work which may or may not impact a tree.

TREE PRESERVATION

PLAN A document, required by a permit, which identifies, by common name and/or scientific name, certain species of trees of a specified DBH within a particular area. The plan shall list, all existing and proposed trees and shall specifically state how each tree is proposed to be destroyed, relocated, replaced, preserved at its present location, introduced into the site from an off-site source, and whether the tree is to receive remediated actions due to construction impacts, e.g. root pruning. The Governmental Entity may provide that the tree preservation plan excludes those portions of the site which it determines will not be affected by the activity. Any tree preservation plan required by this Section must be dated within thirty-six months of the activity.

TREE REMOVAL The cutting down, destruction, removal or relocation of any tree, including damaging by poison or other direct or indirect action.

VIABLE A tree, which in the judgment of the Governmental Entity, is capable of sustaining its own life processes, unaided by man, for a reasonable period of time.

1.3 PRESERVATION

1. The Governmental Entity shall have on staff at least two certified arborists. Any urban forestry work completed by a contractor within the Governmental Entity shall be under the direction of a certified arborist. These individuals are responsible for enforcement and compliance of the Urban Forest Management Plan.
2. The Governmental Entity shall have an urban forest inventory for all public trees and shall have a stratified sample inventory for the private trees. The Urban Forest Management Plan shall be based on this inventory.
3. The Governmental Entity shall have an approved Urban Forest Management Plan. This plan shall be the framework for the protection, management, and planting of trees within the Governmental Entity and shall support and clearly define the regulations identified in the Tree Preservation Ordinance. This Plan shall include the following:

1. A defined ten-year urban forestry strategy with clearly identified one, five, and ten year goals;

2. Community canopy mapping identifying existing tree canopy and priority locations for planting;

3. A strategy for completion and maintenance of a tree inventory on public and private property;

4. Clear guidelines on tree species and age diversity;

5. Clear identification of replacement value and requirements for tree removal or damage;

6. A preferred tree list.

7. Clearly defined specifications for tree planting, pruning, and impact reduction;

8. A risk assessment and management program;

9. A legacy tree preservation and protection program including a legacy tree list;

10. A strategy for management, preservation and protection of naturalized areas;

11. A strategy for administration and implementation of a volunteer program;

12. Clear identification of staff qualifications, training, support and needs;

13. Specifications for contracted labor and consulting;

14. Clear identification of forestry equipment and resource needs; and

 15. A forestry budget with one, five and ten year commitments.

1. The Governmental Entity shall require that any Contractor, working for the Governmental Entity who may interact or have impact on the Governmental Entity public property urban forest utilize a certified arborist for all work pertaining to trees, including but not limited to removal, pruning and planting activities. It is recommended that private landowners utilize a certified arborist for all work pertaining to trees, including but not limited to removal, pruning and planting activities.
2. Legacy Trees are provided special protection by the Governmental Entity. (See the Urban Forest Management Plan for the Legacy Tree Program.)
3. All tree planting, selection and management shall be in compliance with the Governmental Entity Urban Forest Management Plan.
4. It is recognized that diverse species and age structure of urban trees throughout the Governmental Entity are critical to the health of the forest structure and protects the Governmental Entity from catastrophic loss and improved longevity. Specifications for species and age diversity, planting and

 management are contained in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

1.4 PLANTING

1. As outlined in the Urban Forest Management Plan, the Governmental Entity shall plant, and recommend to private landowners, diverse species with the ratio of not more than 15% of any one family, 10% of any one genus or 5% of any one species, with the exception of naturalized areas where species selections are based on the natural species assemblages as defined in the Urban Forest Management Plan. Diverse species composition protects the Governmental Entity from catastrophic loss.
2. All trees planted by the Governmental Entity or their agent shall be planted in accordance with the Urban Forest Management Plan.
3. Trees purchased by the Governmental Entity shall meet the specifications required in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
4. It shall be unlawful to plant any tree or shrub in the public right-of-way, or on other publicly owned property or Conservation or Preservation Area, without prior written approval from the Governmental Entity and, in the instance of the Conservation or Preservation Area, the language on the recorded plat shall prevail.
5. It shall be unlawful to plant any tree under utility wires that is anticipated to grow to a height that will interfere with the wires.
6. The Governmental Entity shall implement a contract growing program. This contract will allow for stable pricing and broader species diversity to improve the overall diversity of the urban forest. This contract may be for a period of five (5) -ten (10) years.
7. The Governmental Entity shall provide education and outreach to private landowners on the need for species and age diversity, proper selection and planting practices, and how to select species for particular sites.

1.5 TREE CARE

1. Tree care within the Governmental Entity, on public lands, shall comply with requirements identified in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
2. The Governmental Entity shall provide education and outreach to private landowners on the need for proper tree care as identified in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

1.6 TREE PROTECTION

This Section applies to any work being conducted on property which may impact public or private property trees.

1. Unless otherwise authorized by this Section, it shall be unlawful for any person to remove, injure or undertake any procedure which will cause death, substantial damage, or create a hazard, to any tree without first obtaining a Tree Permit from the Governmental Entity.
2. In the event of any site improvement, a Tree Preservation Plan is required, must be approved, and implemented prior to the start of any work or delivery of any materials to the Building Activity Area. The approved Tree Preservation Plan shall be available on the site throughout the entire construction period until final approvals for all site work shall be received in writing. (See Landscape or Development Ordinance.)
3. In instances where construction or site work requires heavy equipment, all appropriate tree protection measures must be taken and identified in the Tree Preservation Plan and in compliance with specifications outlined in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

1.7 LEGACY TREE PRESERVATION

A. A Legacy Tree is a tree provided special designation by the Governmental Entity. The criteria for designation and protection is provided in the Legacy Tree Program and Legacy Tree List detailed in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

1.8 TREE REMOVAL

Tree removals are considered an impact to the entire Governmental Entity, whether on public or private land. It is clearly documented that larger trees provide larger benefits and as such, tree removal fees and fines are based on species and diameter (See Fee and Fine Schedule of the Code and the Urban Forest Management Plan). It is recognized that the planting of young trees to replace the value of mature trees will take tens of years and for this reason efforts should be made to preserve and protect trees where they are growing.

1. It shall be unlawful for any individual to remove or cause damage to any tree located on public property without first receiving a Tree Permit from the Governmental Entity.
2. No live, dead or dying tree, or grouping of trees, equal to 6” or greater on private property may be removed from private property without first obtaining a permit from the Governmental Entity.
3. A nuisance tree is a tree that has already died, is in a state of irrevocable decline, has the capacity to damage a person or thing or is an invasive species. Removal of a nuisance tree shall require a permit from the Governmental Entity. In the event of an emergency, and access to the Governmental Entity is not possible, a nuisance tree may be removed without a permit, however, the property owner shall take photographs and memorialize the nuisance situation prior to removal and shall follow up with a request for a tree permit from the Governmental Entity on the next business day.
4. Any tree removed from a parcel or transplanted elsewhere must be replaced according to the regulations outlined in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
5. A tree may be removed with a Tree Permit when necessary to observe good forestry practice such as optimizing the number of healthy trees in a given parcel of land, as determined at the sole and absolute discretion of the Governmental Entity, or when such removals are in accordance with the Governmental Entity approved Urban Forest Management Plan, Landscape Plan or Landscape Management Plan.
6. A tree may be removed, with a Tree Permit, due to natural circumstances, or when it is dead or irreversibly declining, is in danger of falling, is too close to existing structures so as to endanger such structures, interferes with overhead utility services, creates unsafe vision clearance, or constitutes a health risk, when determined at the sole and absolute discretion of the Governmental Entity.
7. All stump removals shall require underground utility locations prior to any action.
8. If a tree is removed or damaged which is not on the Tree Permit it must be replaced or bonded as set forth in the Fine Section of this Code and in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
9. Removal of invasive woody plants such as buckthorn does not require a permit and is encouraged. These invasive species can quickly colonize an area reducing the health and vitality of non invasive plants. A list of invasive woody plants is provided in the Urban Forest Management Plan. An incentive program is provided for private property owners to remove buckthorn and other invasive woody plants from their properties. This program is detailed in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

1.9 TREE REPLACEMENT

1. It is recommended, when possible, tree replacement species come from the Preferred Species List as provided in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
2. Any tree which is required to be removed or which has been damaged shall require a bond to be posted until adequate replacements or remediation can be made. The bond amount is identified in the Fine Section of the Code and in the Urban Forest Management Plan. Determination of extent of damage is at the sole discretion of the Governmental Entity.

1. Any tree species removed, 6” DBH or a group of trees whose combined DBH inches equals 6”, identified on the Preferred Species List, shall be replaced based on the calculation provided on the Preferred Species List with a species identified on that list as provided in the Urban Forest Management Plan. All tree replacements shall be spaced and sited appropriately by a certified arborist as provided in the Urban Forest Management Plan and as approved by the Governmental Entity.
2. When a tree removal is required as a result of any project, tree replacement shall occur within the landscape season. In the event of weather conditions or species specific needs, which prohibit proper replacement of a tree, the Governmental Entity may issue written notice of an extension of up to 180 days upon written request by the Applicant. If an extension is awarded to the Applicant, the Applicant shall notify the Governmental Entity when replacement is complete. If, after the 30 day or awarded 180-day extension, the tree is not replaced or the Applicant has not notified the Governmental Entity that installation is complete, all bonds shall be forfeited and the bond money shall be placed in the Tree Bank. Tree removal requirements, associated with a development project, can be found in the Development Section of the Code.
3. All tree replacement plantings shall require an underground utility location prior to planting.
4. If the property where a removal has taken place does not have adequate space to plant a replacement tree, then the Applicant shall be required to pay the Governmental Entity a dollar amount as identified in the Fee Section of the Code. Funds shall be placed in the Tree Bank for tree replacement or tree care in another area of the Governmental Entity. (See the Urban Forest Management Plan.)

1.10 SPECIAL RULES FOR CONSERVANCY OR PRESERVATION AREAS

If a Conservancy or Preservation Area is impacted in any way, the following restitution shall be charged to the offender:

1. A cash bond (in addition to the Tree Permit Bond) is required for every one thousand square feet of Conservancy or Preservation Area as defined in the Fee Section of the Code.
2. The purpose of this deposit is to pay for restoration of the Conservancy or Preservation Area damaged directly or indirectly as a result of the impact. All restoration shall be in accordance with the Conservancy Area Restoration Guide contained in this Code.
3. Any maintenance made necessary as a result of impact, including but not limited to the removal of dead trees or preventative measures such as root pruning or crown reduction of existing trees.
4. Any expenses incurred by the Governmental Entity, as a result of the impact in administering or enforcing the provisions of this Code.
5. The Cash Bond will be refunded one year after the repairs have been made and all maintenance is completed.

1.11 TREE PRESERVATION AND/OR REMOVAL PLAN FOR SIGNIFICANT REMOVALS, CONSTRUCTION AND/OR DEVELOPMENT

An applicant seeking a permit for significant tree removals or tree removal and/or planting related to construction and/or development shall submit three copies of a legible Tree Preservation Plan drawn to industry acceptable scales ranging between 1” = 20’ to 1” = 80’ and exhibiting the following information for the entire site (See Landscape Ordinance for more information.) All activities taking place shall be in compliance with the Urban Forest Management Plan:

1. Property address,
2. Scale: 1 inch equals 20 feet for small individual property lot up to 1” = 80” for an entire subdivision
3. Plan Title: Tree Preservation Plan or Tree Preservation and Grading Plan or Tree Planting Plan or Tree Removal Plan,
4. Date,
5. Property line boundaries and easements,
6. Front, side and rear yard setbacks,
7. Existing and proposed driveways, walkways, patios and other impervious surfaces or structures,
8. Existing and proposed building footprint,
9. Existing and proposed grades and drainage ways,
10. If required, tree inventory as outlined previously in this Section,
11. Location, size, species of all trees within fifteen feet of construction activity envelope on abutting properties and/or rights-of-way,
12. All trees to be removed, marked with an “X” or other denotation,
13. Tree Inventory Data Sheet: Identification number, species, and save/remove information for every tree located on the plan,
14. Tree size shall be identified as DBH, canopy spread and root zone,
15. Location of chain link tree preservation fencing. Fencing shall be placed DBH as described in Tree Protection section of the Code.
16. Location of silt fencing (required to run parallel to the Tree Preservation requirements (root pruning, plywood access routes, mulching, etc.),
17. Location of equipment/supply storage and staging,
18. Required plan notes listed,
19. Identification of uses on adjacent properties, and
20. If grade is to change, existing and proposed elevations with contour lines at one foot intervals.

1.12 NUISANCE TREES

A tree which is determined to be a nuisance risk tree is one which is dead or declining and has the potential to damage other trees, people, or structures.

1. It shall be the duty of the property owner on any parcel to promptly remove any trees which pose a risk.
2. Should the Governmental Entity notify the property owner, in writing, of a tree which is a potential risk, the property owner shall have thirty days to remove the tree. If after thirty days the property owner has not removed the tree then the Governmental Entity shall take action to have the tree removed and shall provide to the property owner a written invoice outlining all costs associated with the removal, including but not limited to staff time, materials and oversight of said removal. Should the property owner not reimburse the Governmental Entity within thirty days of issuance of a written invoice, the Governmental Entity shall place a lien on the property until all expenses related to the removal and subsequent lien are paid.

C. Infected, Infested Trees Due to a Pest or Pathogen Are Defined as a Nuisance

1. Any tree which is in a state of irreparable or untreatable decline due to heavy infestation or disease is included in the definition of a nuisance. Infested or infected trees, which at the direction of the Federal or State Departments of Agriculture are identified to be in quarantine or can potentially infect or infest other trees are defined as a nuisance. This would include but not be limited to Ash (Fraxinus) trees infested with emerald ash borer which are not being treated or whose treatment is ineffectual, or Elm trees (Ulmus) infected with Dutch elm disease. This enforcement, management, regulation, quarantines and other relevant information are included in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
2. Trees in Decline or Dead Are Defined as a Nuisance
3. Any tree or part of a tree which is dead which could potentially fall on another trees, a person or structure is defined as a nuisance.
4. It shall be unlawful for any owner - of any lot or land in the Governmental Entity to permit or maintain on any such lot or land, any tree which is dead, or declining to the state where it may create a potential risk for structures, other trees, or people. It shall be the duty of any such owner to promptly cause the removal of any such tree.

1.13 INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL

A. INVASIVE WOODY PLANTS

1. Invasive plants cause ecological disruption to natural ecosystems. The type of impact varies based on the species and the traits of that species. The Urban Forest Management Plan contains the list of Invasive Species and non-preferred species. The planting of Invasive Species is not allowed and removal is strongly encouraged. The private property invasive species incentive program is detailed in the Urban Forest Management Plan.
2. The Governmental Entity shall develop and implement an outreach plan to educate property owners of the potential impacts and remediation strategies, including a suggested planting list of alternative species to assist property owners in dealing with the problem. (See Urban Forest Management Plan.

B. INVASIVE DISEASES AND INSECTS

 1. Impacts to Trees

Invasive diseases and insects can create significant stress to trees and in some instances kill trees. The Governmental Entity shall include in the Urban Forest Management Plan a list of Invasive Diseases and Insects which have been identified by State and Federal Departments of Agriculture as significant threats to trees.

 2. Invasive Species Management Plan

 The Governmental Entity shall develop an action strategy to deal with any of these diseases or insects and take action to remove the pest, forestall impacts to the trees through treatments or other means or develop a removal and replacement strategy for remediation of the problem. This strategy shall be contained in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

 3. Private Property Owner Outreach

The Governmental Entity shall develop and implement an outreach plan to educate property owners of the potential impacts and remediation strategies to help property tree owners in dealing with the problem.

1.14 TREE PLANTING CREDITS

1. The Governmental Entity shall provide tree credits to property owners who proactively plant trees on their property and is detailed in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

1.15 TREE BOARD

A. Establishment

The Governmental Entity hereby establishes a Tree Board which shall be a recommending body to provide assistance, direction and expertise to the Governmental Entity regarding the preservation, planting, management and protection of trees. The Tree Board shall utilize the urban forest management plan for guidance on urban forestry issues.

B. Membership

1. The Tree Board shall consist of seven members and one alternate member who shall be

appointed by the Mayor, subject to approval of the Governmental Entity Board. It is recommended that individuals within the community who have expertise in horticulture, forestry, planning or related fields be sought as members of the Tree Board. At least one member of the Tree Board shall be a certified arborist. The Mayor shall designate one of the members to act as chairman of the Tree Board, subject to the approval of the Governmental Entity Board. A member of the Governmental Entity Board shall be assigned to be an ex officio member of said Tree Board without the power to vote. The one alternate member shall attend and participate in all meetings of the Tree Board, but shall only vote in the event one or more of the full members is absent. All members of the Tree Board shall be property owners of the Governmental Entity, unless no certified arborist is a property owner within the Governmental Entity.

2. The appointed members shall serve for a period of three years. An alternate member

shall be appointed for a term of one year. If a vacancy shall occur in the full membership, the alternate member shall be appointed to fill such vacancy. Vacancies in full and alternate membership shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments. The Tree Board members shall serve without compensation.

C. Procedures

1. The Tree Board shall meet and adopt, change or alter, rules and regulations of

organization and procedure consistent with Governmental Entity ordinances and Illinois State laws. The Tree Board shall keep written records of its proceedings which shall be open at all times to public inspection. The Tree Board shall file an annual report to the Governmental Entity Board setting forth its past-year activities and recommendations for future action by the Governmental Entity.

D. Powers and Duties

The Tree Board shall have the following powers and duties subject to the approval of the Governmental Entity Board:

1. To provide guidance on the preservation, care, management and protection of trees within the Governmental Entity in accordance with Urban Forest Management Plan.

2. To prepare and recommend to the Governmental Entity Board from time to time recommendations for specific improvements of the preservation, care, management and protection of trees within the Governmental Entity.

3. To recommend rules and regulations to the Governmental Entity Board for budget, plans, projects and schedules regarding the preservation, care, management and protection of trees within the Governmental Entity.

4. To review the Governmental Entity Urban Forest Management Plan and provide recommendations for improvements to the Governmental Entity Board.

5. To work collaboratively with Governmental Entity forestry staff to support the Governmental Entity ordinances and Urban Forest Management Plan.

6. Manage and administer all plans, programs, projects and tasks delegated to it by the Governmental Entity Board as authorized and directed by the Governmental Entity Board.

7. The Tree Board shall hear any requests for appeal to this Code and make recommendations to be forwarded to the Governmental Entity for a final decision.

E. Salaries and Employees

The Tree Board may, with the review and approval of the Governmental Entity Board, employ necessary help whose salaries, wages and other necessary expenses shall be established by the Governmental Entity Board and provided for by adequate appropriation made by the Governmental Entity Board from the public funds. Staff and resource needs shall be included in the Forest management plan.

1.16 TREE PREMIT PROCEDURE

1. Applicant Submission

An applicant for a simple tree removal on public or private property shall fill out a Tree Removal Request online, or in person, and the Governmental Entity arborist shall make an inspection and render a determination.

If a removal is significant, in conjunction with any type of development, then a full tree preservation plan and inventory for the area to be impacted will be required. The Governmental Entity shall review the plan. This review shall include an inspection of the site and referral of the application for recommendation to other appropriate administrative departments or agencies. The Governmental Entity shall render a decision on the application within ten working days of its receipt of a properly completed application.

1.17 PERMIT ISSUANCE

1. Issuance

The Governmental Entity shall issue a permit upon approval of an application and payment of a required fee and bond.

1. Time Limitation
2. A permit shall expire and become null and void if work authorized is not commenced within one year from the date of the permit or if such work when commenced is suspended or abandoned at any time for a period of one year.
3. If work has commenced and the permit becomes null and void or expires because of a lack of progress or abandonment, a new permit for the proposed tree removal, planting activity shall be obtained before proceeding with further work.

1.18 CASH BONDS

1. If tree replacement is required by this Section, then as a condition of the Tree Permit, the Applicant shall submit a cash bond as identified in the Fee Section of this Code. The bond shall be held for the purpose of assuring that the replacement tree(s) are purchased and planted.
2. If it is determined that practices which violate any portion of the Governmental Entity Code have resulted in tree damage, then the Governmental Entity may require that a cash bond, as determined in accordance with the Fee Section of this Code, shall be submitted at the time the violation occurs. The bond shall be held for the purpose of assuring that all remedial actions to minimize tree damage are taken, and/or for the purpose of assuring tree replacement should any damaged tree die or show noticeable signs of decline as determined by a certified arborist. If it is determined that residual damage may not be apparent, then the bond may be held for a period of 60 months or five years. At the end of which time, if the tree survives and is in good health, as determined by a certified arborist the bond shall be returned. If the tree does not survive, and was not further impacted by an act of God, or is in poor health then replacement shall be required as identified above and according to the Fee Section of the Code.
3. If the bond is posted for a tree and the property owner wishes to transfer the property, then the bond shall be transferred with the property. If the bond is returned, then it shall be returned to the existing property owner.

1.19 FINAL INSPECTION

Final approval shall be issued when all relocation, replacement or remediation of trees is completed and a final inspection has been conducted by the Governmental Entity. Should the Governmental Entity determine that the season is inappropriate for planting then relocation or replacement shall be deferred until the next planting season. All bonds and fees will remain in the custody of the Governmental Entity until final inspection and approval has been provided in writing.

1.20 COMPLIANCE

The Governmental Entity shall retain jurisdiction to ensure compliance with this Section and shall have the right to issue a stop work order for non-compliance. No stop work order issued pursuant to this Section shall be removed by the Governmental Entity unless the applicant has paid a reinspection fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule of this Code.

1.21 PENALTY

Any person found guilty of violating any provision of this Section shall be assessed at a cost as prescribed in the Fee Section of the Code. Each tree cut down, destroyed, damaged, removed or moved shall constitute a separate offense. In addition to these penalties, if a tree is removed in violation of this Section, all replacement requirements of this Section shall be applied.

1.22 ENFORCEMENT

1. Enforcement Right of Entry of Governmental Entity Officers

To carry out the purposes of this Section and to implement its enforcement, the Governmental Entity is authorized and empowered, upon 24 hours’ notice, to enter upon any lot or parcel of land in the Governmental Entity at all reasonable hours to inspect any tree or wood and to remove specimens from any such tree to determine their condition. It shall be unlawful for any person to interfere with a Governmental Entity Officer carrying out the duties authorized in this Section.

1. Duty of Property Owner to Abate Nuisance or Potential Risk

If it is determined that there exists a public nuisance or risk as declared in this Section, the Governmental Entity shall serve or cause to be served upon the owner - of the lot or parcel of land on which such nuisance or risk is located, a written notice identifying the nuisance or risk and requiring the owner to comply with the provisions of this Section. If the person upon whom such notice is served fails, neglects or refuses to remove and dispose of the tree or dead wood within thirty days after service of such notice, the Governmental Entity may proceed to remove and dispose of such tree or dead wood and the costs shall be paid by the owner to the Governmental Entity.

1. Service of Notice to Property Owner

Service of notice provided for in this Section shall be effected by personal service or by certified mail addressed to the occupant or to the person to whom, and at the address, to which the tax bill was sent for the general taxes for the last preceding year on the lot or parcel on which the nuisance is located.

1. Governmental Entity Abatement and Assessment of Costs

Any costs incurred by the Governmental Entity in the abatement of a public nuisance or hazard as declared in this Section shall be assessed against the record owner of the land involved and the Governmental Entity shall place a lien upon such property for those costs in the manner provided by law.

1.22 EXCEPTIONS

If because of emergency weather or other casualty conditions a tree is endangering health, safety or property and requires immediate removal, verbal authorization may be given by the Governmental Entity for the tree removal without obtaining a written permit. Such verbal authorization shall later be confirmed in writing by the Governmental Entity.

1.23 APPEALS FOR VARIANCE

A. Any person aggrieved by any decision of the Village in the enforcement of any terms or provisions of this Section may, within ten working days after the date of the decision, appeal to the Tree Board by filing a written notice of appeal with the Governmental Entity Clerk. The notice of appeal shall set forth concisely the decision and the reasons or grounds for the appeal. The Tree Board may make a recommendation to the Governmental Entity Board to affirm, modify, or reverse the decision. The decision of the Governmental Entity Board shall be final and no petition for rehearing or reconsideration shall be available. Reasonable notice of the hearing by the Tree Board shall be provided by the Governmental Entity Clerk to all affected parties.

B. No variances in the strict application of the provisions of this Section shall be recommended for approval by the Board unless it finds:

 1. That there are special circumstances or conditions, fully described in the written notice of appeal which are peculiar to the property (properties) and do not apply generally to properties within the Governmental entity, and that said circumstances or conditions are such that the strict application of the Code would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use of the subject property (properties).

 2. That for reasons fully set forth in the written notice of appeal, the granting of the variance is necessary for the reasonable use of the property (properties) and that the variance, as recommended for approval by the Board, is the minimum variance that will accomplish this purpose.

 3. That the result of granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of standards set forth within this Code and in harmony with this Section, and will not be injurious to adjacent property or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.

1.24 CIVIL REMEDIES

In addition to any other remedies provided by this Section the Governmental Entity shall have the following judicial remedies available for violations of this Section or any permit condition promulgated under this Section.

1. The Governmental Entity may institute a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction to establish liability and to recover damages for any injury caused by the removal or damage of trees in contravention of the terms of this Section.
2. The Governmental Entity may institute a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction to seek injunctive relief to enforce compliance with this Section to enjoin any violation, and to seek injunctive relief to prevent irreparable injury to the trees or properties encompassed by the terms of this Section.