



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

Date:

To: Council Member Cam Gordon, Chair, Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee

Referral to: None

Subject: Recommendation on Tree Stump Removal on Private Property

Recommendation: Receive and File

Previous Directives:

On May 12, 2014, The Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee directed the Neighborhood and Community Relations and Regulatory Services staff to develop a recommendation for addressing the removal of damaged trees and stumps on private properties resulting from the June 21, 2013, storm and return to Committee with that recommendation in July 2014.

Department Information

Prepared by: Robert Thompson, Neighborhood Support Manager
Approved by:
David Rubedor, Neighborhood and Community Relations Director _____

Interim City Coordinator _____

Presenters in Committee: Robert Thompson

Financial Impact

No financial impact.

Recommendation:

NCR staff met with Regulatory Services and Development Finance Division staff to review issues related to tree blow downs on private property resulting from the June 21, 2013 storm. Our findings include the following:

1. There is not data available on the number of trees on private property that were affected by the June 2013 storm. However, a review of a list of boulevard and park trees removed by MPRB last year indicates that most neighborhoods across the City (76 out of 84 neighborhoods) were impacted--blow downs were not just isolated to a swath across the middle of the City. This is due in part to the straight-line winds of the June 2013 storm, compared to the narrower path of the May 2011 tornado.

2. Paying for tree blow downs on private property would set a precedent and expectation that the City would pay for tree removal on private property in future storms. We recommend against setting this precedent due to potential costs associated with more frequent storms that have impact city-wide. However, if the City would like to consider this, it might be better to ask the Office of Emergency Management to develop a policy for tree removal on private properties following future storms.
3. Without data on the number of stumps and damaged trees on private property, NCR was not able to estimate the costs associated with tree removal city-wide. A cursory examination shows that costs associated with city-wide tree removal on private property would be considerably higher than the \$75,000 currently provided for tree removal in North Minneapolis.
4. If the City Council does wish to proceed with such a program, the Northside Tornado Tree Removal program can provide one model for process. Other models could include the community clean-up and curbside pickup events organized by Folwell Neighborhood Association and Webber Camden Neighborhood Organization during July 2011.

Following our discussion, it is recommended that the City not proceed with a broader tree removal fund for private property. If the City Council would like to establish a policy and a fund for responding to tree removal following extreme weather events, the Office of Emergency Management might be best positioned to lead such an effort, perhaps in collaboration with NCR, Regulatory Services, and other relevant City staff.