

# PRESS RELEASE

## East Pine Street Forestry Project Begins July 6

One of downtown's most historic tree-lined boulevards will get some well-deserved attention beginning July 6 when Parks and Recreation arborists begin pruning 68 street trees on East Pine Street between Madison and Pattee Streets.

The trees, which include both Silver and Norway maples, will be pruned to enhance the trees' health, remove dead branches, eliminate hazards and increase light and air penetration to the trees' crowns and to the landscape below. Proper pruning maintains good tree health and structure while enhancing the aesthetic and economic values of the landscape.

The City Council and neighborhood representatives understand the importance of the project and are supportive. "Missoula's urban forest is a cherished and critical part of our historic neighborhoods. Just like any aspect of our community, our trees require maintenance and care. I'm happy to support Missoula Parks & Recreation's efforts to keep our urban forest healthy," said Ward 1 City Council Representative Dave Strohmaier.

In addition to the pruning project, the City's urban forestry program has identified 19 trees on East Pine Street that are dead or dying, and their structures are compromised. In this state, street trees become a hazard to pedestrians and motorists and must be removed.

"These 19 trees have reached the end of their natural life-spans and represent an unacceptable level of risk to citizens," says Parks and Recreation Director Donna Gaukler. "Hazardous tree removal is an important part of the City's forestry program. When we are required to remove a street tree, we work with the adjacent property owner to plant a replacement tree as soon as possible." Adjacent property owners have been offered the opportunity to receive a replacement tree that is appropriate for the site. Trees will be planted in the boulevard in Spring, 2012.

The project will take approximately six to eight weeks to complete. Residents can expect minor traffic delays and limited restriction of on-street parking to protect motorists, property and people between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., weekdays. The pruning project and the replacement trees are funded by the annual Park District assessment as allocated for proactive pruning, forest risk management and new tree planting. For more information about the project, phone Parks Services and Systems Manager David Selvage at 552-6252.

## **East Pine Street Tree Maintenance & Removals Project Details**

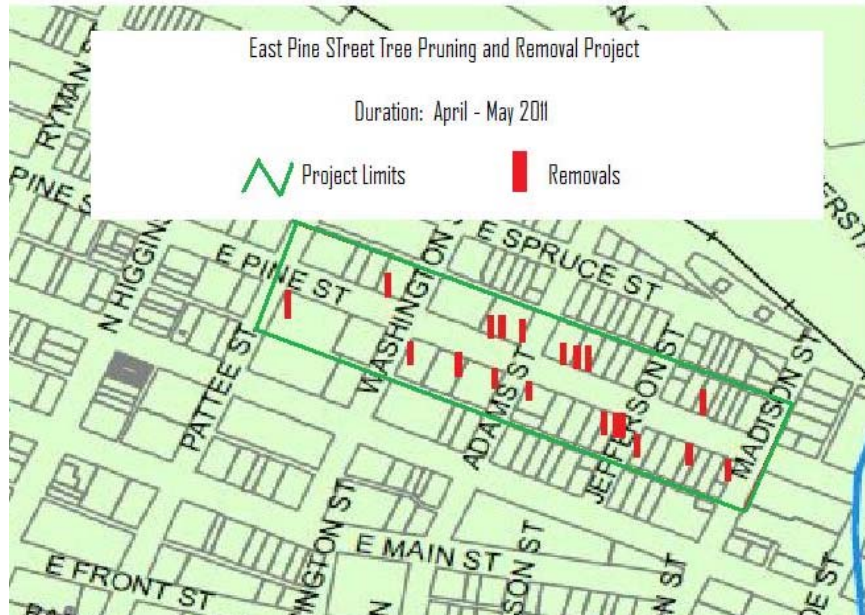
One of the City Council's budget goals for 2011 included funding enhancements for sustainable urban forestry activities. Missoula Parks & Recreation Department's Urban Forestry program received \$10,000 from the annual Park District assessment to plant new trees, and \$30,000 for proactive pruning and emergency and risk management work including pruning and removals.

One of the top priorities for the City's Urban Forestry unit is to address deteriorating conditions associated with Silver Maple and Norway Maple trees that were planted over 100 years ago. Ben Carson, Urban Forester notes that there has been a marked decline in the condition of many of these centurion trees over the last several years as they reach the end of their natural life span.

Certified Arborists with Missoula Parks & Recreation's Urban Forestry Unit completed inspection and assessment of 89 public street trees located on a four block segment of East Pine Street, between Pattee Street and Madison Street during the month of February.

Of the 89 trees surveyed, 70 remain in viable condition and, will benefit from the removal of deadwood and correction of structural issues through appropriate pruning. The Urban Forestry Division will prune 68 of the trees. Pruning the trees will help maintain tree health, extend tree life, mitigate potential public safety concerns such as limb failures due to physical defects, dead or dying limbs, and diseases such as internal decay.

Tree decline, dieback of more than half of a tree's canopy, and structurally compromised areas of decay are defects present in nineteen (19) trees along these four blocks. These defects are significant enough to require removal of the 19 trees in question. Tree Hazard guidelines published by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) were closely followed in making the removal decisions. Trees containing large deadwood, extensive dieback, and structural flaws such as internal decay and root rot create an unacceptable level of risk to the adjacent roads, private parcels, and residents using the sidewalks.



Notice of hazardous tree removals will be sent to the residents and property owners of the fourteen adjacent properties that will be directly affected by removals. Notices will be sent at least two weeks prior to the commencement of this project by City Arborists. Tree pruning and removal will begin upon completion of the Urban Forestry Spring 2011 tree planting program, and it is anticipated that the project will be underway in late June or early July. Minor traffic delays and daytime restrictions prohibiting on street parking are expected to protect motorists, property and people from tree work hazards.

Missoula's Urban Forestry Division replaces all trees removed from city boulevards whenever space allows. Upon project completion, tree removal sites will be evaluated for appropriate replacement species. The Urban Forestry Division will work with affected property owners to assure that wherever possible, removed trees would be replaced during the city's next planting cycle.