



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**  
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**Agenda Item Number:** 5

**Agenda Date:** August 13, 2024

**In Control:** Audit Committee

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**DEPARTMENT:** Office of the City Auditor

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Kevin Barthold

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

Acceptance of the Office of the City Auditor Report AU24-028 Audit of DSD and Parks and Recreation Tree Mitigation Program.

**SUMMARY:**

Determine if oversight of the Tree Mitigation Program is adequate to include allocation of funds and monitoring of performance metrics.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Background

The Tree Mitigation Program is governed by the Tree Canopy Preservation and Mitigation ordinance in the City's Unified Development Code. The goals of the program are to protect existing trees and promote the planting of new trees while allowing development to occur. The Development Services Department (DSD) in conjunction with the Parks & Recreation Department

(Parks) is responsible for administering the program.

DSD is responsible for issuing tree permits and collecting fees for the program. Developers must obtain a tree permit prior to any land development that will remove trees. Land development activities that remove trees require a Tree Permit/Affidavit application and a Tree Preservation Plan. If the developer decides to not preserve any trees, they can instead pay Tree Mitigation fees.

The Tree Canopy Preservation and Mitigation funds were established to account for revenues generated from the Tree Canopy Preservation and Mitigation ordinance. Tree Canopy Investment fees are set at \$15 per lot for residential and \$25 per acre for commercial properties. Tree mitigation fees are \$200/inch (tree's diameter in inches) for Significant trees and \$200-\$600/inch for Heritage trees. For FY 2023, \$8.1 million in tree mitigation and \$663 thousand in canopy fees were collected.

Parks is responsible for spending the fees collected in the Tree Canopy Preservation and Mitigation funds on tree planting, tree maintenance, and the purchase of property to be used to plant additional trees. Additionally, Parks holds tree adoption events. For fiscal year (FY) 2023, 12,629 trees were either planted or adopted.

#### Scope & Methodology

The audit scope was FY 2023. It consisted of evaluating application requirements and accuracy of fees collected through the administration of the Tree Mitigation Program. Additionally, we reviewed the expenditure process for the fees collected through the program. We also reviewed the performance measure process.

We assessed internal controls relevant to the audit objective. This included a review of application completeness and approval, fee accuracy, site inspections, expenditures of collected fees, and physical controls.

#### Conclusion

We determined that oversight of the Tree Mitigation Program was adequate. We found that funding was allocated correctly, performance metrics were properly monitored, projects had the required application documents, and approvals and fees were accurately calculated and recorded in the correct fund in SAP.

We made no recommendations and consequently no management responses were required.

#### **ISSUE:**

This item is presented for acceptance by the Audit Committee.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

NA

**ALTERNATIVES:**

NA

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends acceptance of this audit report.