

Tree Preservation and Landscape Standards

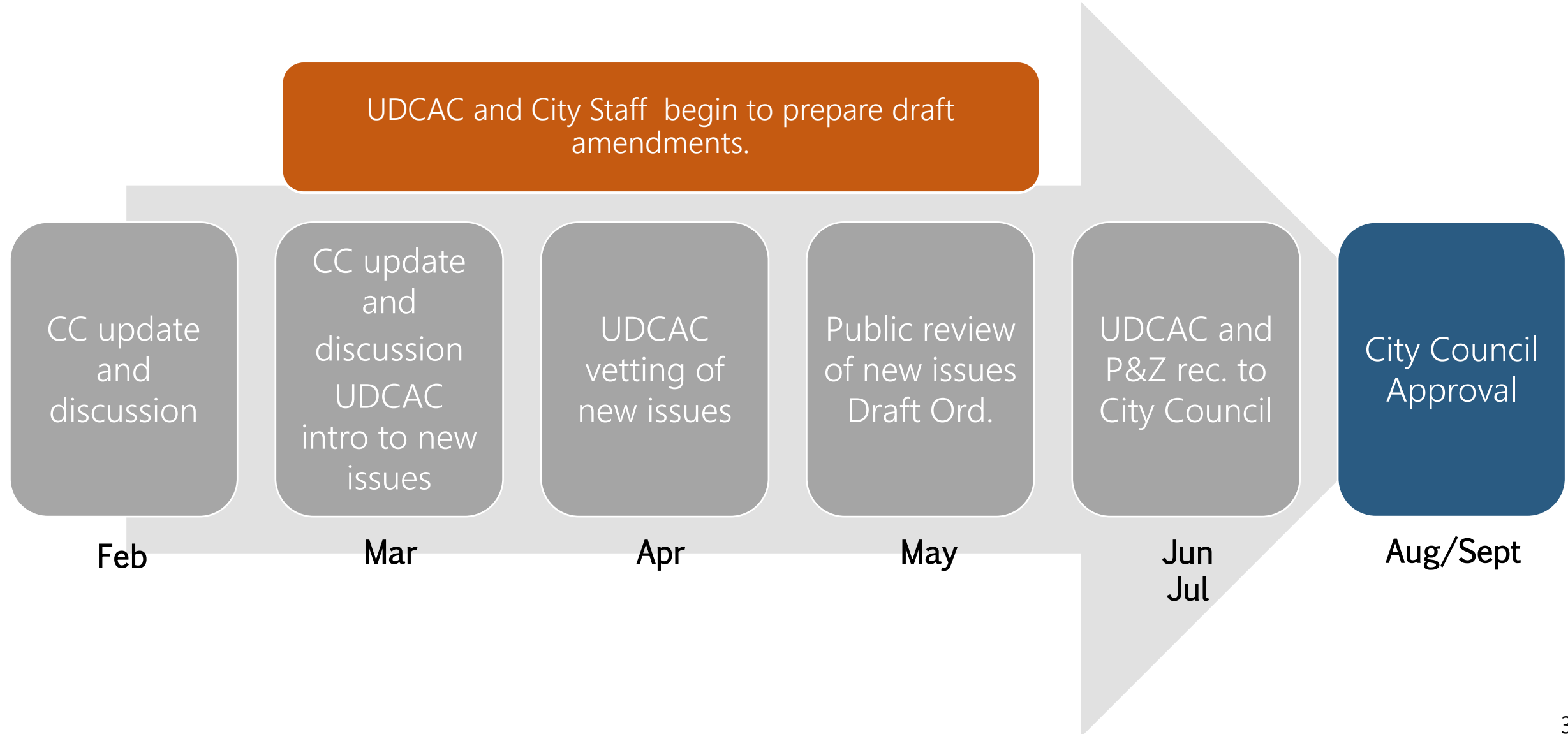
Adjustments and Clean-up

City Council
September 14, 2021

Purpose

- **Second Reading** of an Ordinance on a proposed Text Amendment to the Unified Development Code (UDC) relating to the Tree Preservation and Landscaping standards specifically as it pertains to tree preservation, removal and mitigation, streetyard, gateway and parking landscape standards, and screening and water conservation requirements (UDC General Amendment No. 20-03).

Amendment Process



Issues Discussed at Council March 2021

- Tree Preservation & Mitigation
 - Cleaned up and addressed common issues seen across developments
 - Defined new terms like “branch” and “tree stand”
 - Clarified boundaries of developments, which trees need to be surveyed, when a permit is needed
 - Adjusted fee-in-lieu amts, prioritized mitigation options
- Landscaping
 - Addressed conflicts between landscape requirements and signage, easements, etc.
 - Adjusted planting requirements based on area calculations
 - Clarified Gateway Landscape applicability
 - Set terms for when artificial turf may be used
- Screening & Water Conservation
 - Clarified screening requirements for waste containers and recycling containers
 - Reviewed non-residential requirements for opportunities to encourage water conservation

Additional Topics Directed by Council March 2021

- Consider allowing trees smaller than 6" in diameter as credit trees
- Consider giving mitigation credit for new trees planted on residential lot

Size of Credit Trees

- Proposed Terms

- Trees between 3 and 6-inches in diameter can be counted for credit under the following terms:
 - a. Trees shall meet the locational requirements (i.e. undisturbed areas, not around an existing PT or HT, not planned for future phase of development, not expected to be impacted by utilities, should not affect sight triangles, etc.);
 - b. Trees shall be in good health and within or near a tree stand;
 - c. Trees full Critical Root Zone shall not be impacted from construction;
 - d. Trees may be counted at a reduced mitigation ratio of 0.5:1 inch ratio; and
 - e. Must be a shade tree to receive credit.

Credit for Residential Plantings

- Proposed Terms
 - Allow on-site credit for trees planted on residential lots when the following conditions are met:
 - a. New tree must be a minimum 3-inch caliper
 - b. Plant out common areas to fullest extent first.
 - c. Only trees planted above the minimum landscape requirements shall be given credit
 - d. Give credit at a 0.5:1 ratio
 - e. 15-foot minimum spacing
 - f. May only be used on property subject to a Residential Building Permit

Public Outreach – Round 1

- Round 1 – Survey & Office Hours
 - Survey & Office Hours
 - Tree mitigation fee is more cost effective than planting new tree. Revise mitigation fee to encourage preservation or more on-site planting
 - Provide list of recommended trees for tight areas, parking, sidewalks, and buildings, as well as low water users (Development Manual)
 - Allow artificial turf on playscapes and recreational fields that are not always screened from the road or adjacent property
 - Tree preservation requirements may cause issues for large industrial sites
 - Support 3rd class of tree protection
 - Clarification on proposed amendments

Public Outreach – Round 2

- Round 2 – Survey
 - Survey open May 31 – June 10
- 4 Responses
 - Understood the amendments & no additional info needed
 - Too many trees destroyed during site prep. Backyard and frontyard trees *can* be saved
 - To remove any trees at all is unacceptable

Recommendations

- The UDCAC voted unanimously at their March 10, 2021 and June 16, 2021 meeting to recommend approval of the amendments with the following conditions:
 1. That the size requirement for on-site replacement trees on residential lots be adjusted to read similar to the language established in UDC 8.06. For example, "Shade trees planted to meet the requirements of this chapter shall be a minimum of three caliper inches measured at six inches above finished grade or have a three-inch DBH."
- The Planning & Zoning Commission voted unanimously at their July 20, 2021 meeting to recommend approval of the amendments.

Second Reading of Ordinance

An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Georgetown, Texas, Amending Chapter 3 "Applications and Permits", Chapter 4 "Zoning Districts", Chapter 8 "Tree Preservation, Landscaping and Fencing", Chapter 11 "Environmental Protection", and Chapter 16 "Definitions", of the Unified Development Code (UDC) relative to Tree Preservation And Mitigation, Landscaping, Screening, and Water Conservation; repealing conflicting ordinances and Resolutions; including a severability clause; and establishing an effective date.