

7/25/17

Louisville Tree Ordinance

My opposition to this ordinance is not because I don't care about the tree canopy in Metro Louisville. However, that doesn't justify creating an expensive, cumbersome ordinance that extends the reach of government, while diverting resources away from more pressing issues like an understaffed police force, and enforcement of existing developments approved by the Metro Council.

I represent a 30 + year old deed restricted residential community of about 1745 single family homes with values between \$300,000 to almost \$3,000,000. Obviously, we contribute a substantial amount of money in property taxes to Ky and Metro Louisville, yet we have not received one penny from Metro to assist us in maintaining the trees and landscape along the almost 44 miles of public right of way in our community. In fact, about 25% of our almost \$2.0million annual home owner's fees are spent to maintain the trees, and landscaping in our community. This ordinance improves this...how???

We have always used experts to oversee the landscaping and tree maintenance for the 1000's of trees and acres of greenspace in our community. We have lost many trees over the last few years to the Emerald Ash Boar, just like the rest of the Metro area; however, we have a strict two tree policy in our neighborhood. In fact, we negotiated an agreement to minimize the cost of removal and replacement so that residents had an incentive to have diseased trees removed and replaced with healthy trees. This ordinance provides punitive action, but no incentives to encourage the removal and replacement of dead and dying trees.

We've been told, Metro will give us a "free permit", to do what we have already been doing for years. You do not add bureaucracy for free. There are now 3 arborists on Metro staff, to oversee all of Metro Louisville. No way that that organization can police all of Metro Louisville, without adding staff and cost. Permits will not remain free.

There are many other issues that Metro must deal with where funding is a major limitation. I see no value in saddling Metro Government, or the residents of Metro Louisville, with another ordinance that cannot be funded without increasing revenue, or stealing from existing programs.

My recommendation is not to repeal and replace...just repeal!

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