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CITY PLANNING ANNOUNCES ZONING PROPOSAL TO MANDATE STREET TREE PLANTINGS

Requirements Respond to Mayor Bloomberg's Vision for a Greener New York and Goal to Plant One Million More Trees in the Next Decade

October 9, 2007 - City Planning Director Amanda M. Burden today announced the Department of City Planning's proposed regulations to require street tree planting for all new developments and major enlargements citywide. This proposal, already in public review, would result in approximately 10,000 new street trees per year. Mandatory street tree planting was one of the 127 PlaNYC initiatives announced by the Mayor on Earth Day to green the city. The average street tree in New York City intercepts over 1400 gallons of storm water each year, while reducing energy costs and air pollution.

"These new regulations requiring street tree planting will go a long way to fulfilling Mayor Bloomberg's pledge to plant and care for [one million street trees](#) throughout the five boroughs over the next decade" said Director Burden. "Street trees not only help beautify neighborhoods, cool the streets and cleanse the air, they will also create a healthier, more environmentally sustainable city".

Currently, street trees are required to be planted for new developments located in lower density growth management areas and contextual higher density residential developments as well 17 Special Districts mapped throughout the city. These regulations would be amended to subject all zoning districts to the new, citywide regulations.

The proposal would require street trees in all zoning districts for new developments, enlargements of 20 percent or more and some changes of use. Zoning requirements would be based on lot frontage, requiring one street tree for every 25 feet of street frontage, with a minimum requirement of one street tree. Existing street trees in front of the property could fulfill the requirement. In higher density residential districts, R6 and above, as well as commercial and manufacturing districts, trees would be required in tree pits with cobble stones, vegetative groundcover, or a metal grate. In lower density residential districts, R1 through R5, trees would be planted in a continuous sidewalk planting strip. Industrial uses which would conflict with street trees would be exempt from the requirement. Where development sites front on sidewalks that cannot accommodate required trees due to existing infrastructure such as elevated subway lines, curb cuts and other subsurface conditions, or are located in certain Historic Districts where street trees are found to be inconsistent with the industrial character, the required trees must be planted in an existing tree pit or on city-owned land within the Community District or a half-mile of the development site. The process will be overseen by the [Department of Parks and Recreation](#) which sets standards for street tree planting design.

In keeping with the Bloomberg Administration's PlaNYC sustainability initiatives, the City Planning Commission is acting to green the city wherever it can. In addition to street tree requirements, a proposal for new regulations that would [green new commercial parking lots](#) is currently undergoing public review. City Planning also recently initiated public review on a zoning change to establish [landscaping requirements for yards](#) throughout the city and prohibit excessive paving in the front yards of homes in lower density districts. These initiatives will improve the city's neighborhoods while putting in place essential elements to achieve the City's 2030 sustainability objectives.

The new city-wide requirements are being considered by 59 Community Boards and the five Borough Presidents. Following receipt of their recommendations, the City Planning Commission holds public hearings on the proposals which will subsequently require approval by the City Council.

Department of City Planning

The Department of City Planning is responsible for the City's physical and socioeconomic planning, including land use and environmental review; preparation of plans and policies; and provision of technical assistance and planning information to government agencies, public officials, and community boards.