



Town of Lake Park, Florida

Tree Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Town Hall Commission Chamber, 535 Park Avenue, Lake Park, FL 33403

Brady Drew	—	Chair
Gillian Kennedy Wright	—	Vice-Chair
Shana Phelan	—	Board Member
Mary Beth Taylor	—	Board Member

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE AND BE ADVISED, that if any interested person desires to appeal any decision of the Tree Board, with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, such interested person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate in the meeting should contact the Town Clerk's office by calling 881-3311 at least 48 hours in advance to request accommodations.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

6:00 pm

PRESENT

Chair Brady Drew

Vice-Chair Gillian Kennedy Wright

Board Member Shana Phelan

Board Member Mary Taylor

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Drew led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Townwide Swale Restoration Initiative and Request for Tree Board Collaboration on Right-of-Way Tree Inventory

Public Works Director Jaime Morales explained that the Town wants to start a swale restoration initiative and a tree inventory also needs to be conducted throughout the Town. He stated the process

for assessing the trees in Town is a missing component and he is seeking Board input. Chair Drew emphasized the importance of lifting the tree planting permit moratorium. Public Works Director Morales stated that they would like to move in that direction, but a tree inventory would need to be completed in order to be able to compile a list of recommended trees that can be planted in the swales. Chair Drew spoke about the benefits of an application called "I-Tree" that could help quantify storm water benefits. Chair Drew asked who would be undertaking the tree inventory. Public Works Director Morales referenced the framework document that was a part of the agenda packet (Exhibit A), which outlines several options including potential assistance from the Tree Board Members. Board Member Taylor suggesting breaking up the inventory into smaller sections with a possible trial area beginning on Park Avenue. Public Works Director Morales explained how the inventory could be completed without hiring a professional, using staff and current available technology for location mapping. Board Member Phelan asked if there were funds in the budget that could be used for this initiative. Public Works Director Morales stated that with the current budget constraints, he is trying to find other solutions so that this initiative can begin. Board Member Phelan stated that having a professional come in and do the inventory would yield better quality data and suggested asking the Commission to consider approving the cost for the inventory in the coming budget cycle. Public Works Director Morales stated that in two years' time, the Town will be having a road assessment done and they could request that they also provide the tree inventory at the same time but he stated that starting the process now is what he recommends. Board Member Taylor stated that this initiative falls within the Town's strategic plan and it should be up to the Town Commission to fund it. Vice-Chair Kennedy Wright suggested breaking up the inventory into smaller bites. She also suggested utilizing local schools/colleges to include the tree survey into future curriculum for school credit or partnering with neighboring communities who have arborists on staff. Public Works Director Morales stated he would reach out to some neighboring communities and also spoke about an app that could be used by Town residents to survey the trees on their properties. The Board stated that they would prefer to have the initial inventory done by a professional. The Board also spoke about educating residents about the initiative and to include a reminder that they are currently not allowed to plant anything. Public Works Director Morales suggested the possibility of breaking the inventory up into four phases, so as to spread the cost out over a longer period of time. Board Member Phelan stated that they should ask for the full amount upfront and if they say no, then it can be adjusted down from there. Public Works Director Morales asked the Board if they were aware of any grants that could be utilized. Board Member Phelan spoke about an Urban & Community Forestry Grant for 50/50 matching, open to governments for tree canopy and inventory. Public Works Director Morales stated that he would look into that immediately. Chair Drew

asked how the obstruction of flow would be quantified in the survey. Public Works Director Morales stated that they would examine multiple factors such as the root system and the over-slope being a possible obstacle and talked about various potential remedies with removal of the tree being the last resort option. Board Member Phelan requested that the Board as a whole be notified when the request for funds goes before the Commission so that they can be present.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve the consent agenda made by Board Member Phelan, Seconded by Board Member Taylor.

Voting Yea: Chair Drew, Vice-Chair Kennedy Wright, Board Member Phelan, Board Member Taylor.

2. Minutes of the March 17, 2026 Special Called Tree Board Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT:

This time is provided for addressing items that do not appear on the Agenda. Please complete a comment card and provide it to the Agency Clerk so speakers may be announced. Please remember comments are limited to a TOTAL of three minutes.

NONE

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

-Board Member Taylor spoke about the 2nd Street sub-station and a letter she received from a resident about it being an eye-sore. Public Works Director Morales stated that this area is temporary and the landscaping will be restored. He stated he will reach out to the resident to provide an update.

-Board Member Phelan expressed gratitude for the Arbor Day Celebration.

-Chair Drew stated it would be nice to go back next year and measure the tree they planted on Arbor Day.

STAFF MEMBER COMMENTS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Board Member Taylor, Seconded by Board Member Phelan.

Voting Yea: Chair Drew, Vice Chair Kennedy Wright, Board Member Phelan, Board Member Taylor.

Meeting adjourned 7:10 pm.

FUTURE MEETING DATE: The next scheduled Tree Board Meeting will be conducted on June 9, 2026.

Big Ben
Chair

[Signature]
Deputy Town Clerk, Laura Weidgans



Approved on this 11th of August, 2026



Exhibit A

Town of Lake Park Right-of-Way Tree Inventory and Swale Conflict Assessment Program

Technical Program Framework

Objective:

To develop a consistent, map-based inventory of trees located within Town right-of-way, roadside swales, public parks, and other public landscape areas, with emphasis on tree health, species diversity, infrastructure conflicts, maintenance needs, and potential impacts to stormwater conveyance. The program is intended to support data-driven urban forestry management, swale restoration, sustainability planning, public safety, and community beautification.

Program Purpose:

The Town's tree canopy is an important public asset. However, trees located in or near drainage swales, sidewalks, utilities, driveways, and roadway corridors must be evaluated using both urban forestry and public infrastructure criteria. This program establishes a practical framework for collecting reliable tree data, identifying priority conditions, coordinating with stakeholders, and using the information to guide maintenance, policy, budget, and future planting decisions.

1. Inventory Scope:

- Town-maintained right-of-way, including roadside swales and roadway corridors.
- Sidewalk corridors, driveway interfaces, curb lines, and utility conflict areas.
- Public parks, streetscapes, municipal facilities, and other Town-managed landscape areas.
- Priority corridors where drainage, maintenance access, sidewalk condition, or roadway safety concerns have been identified.

2. Required Data Fields:

- Species identification, including common name and scientific name where available.
- Diameter at breast height (DBH), measured in inches using a consistent field method.
- Approximate height and canopy spread.
- Tree health and condition rating, using a defined scoring scale.
- Global Positioning System (GPS) location or mapped point location suitable for Geographic Information System (GIS) integration.

- Observable defects, including decay, dead limbs, poor structure, disease indicators, root conflicts, or storm damage.
- Maintenance needs, including pruning, monitoring, removal evaluation, root conflict review, or arborist assessment.
- Infrastructure conflict indicators, including conflicts with swale flow lines, drainage structures, sidewalks, driveways, utilities, roadway edges, signs, lighting, and sight visibility areas.
- Stormwater impact indicator, identifying whether the tree or associated planting appears to obstruct flow, alter swale grade, trap sediment, restrict maintenance access, or contribute to localized drainage issues.

3. Data Collection Method:

- Divide the Town into manageable survey zones based on corridors, neighborhoods, parks, and operational priorities.
- Begin with high-priority areas where known swale performance, sidewalk, utility, or maintenance conflicts exist.
- Use trained Public Works staff, qualified arborists, and, where appropriate, trained volunteers for non-technical data collection support.
- Use standardized field forms and photo documentation to maintain consistency across survey teams.
- Require quality control review of a sample of completed records before accepting each survey zone as complete.

4. Technology and Mapping Tools:

- Mobile Data Collection. ArcGIS Field Maps, i-Tree, TreePlotter, or comparable mobile applications may be used for field collection and real-time mapping.
- Geographic Information System Integration. Inventory points should be incorporated into the Town's GIS environment for mapping, analysis, dashboard reporting, and long-term asset management.
- Aerial Review. Drone imagery may be used where appropriate to support canopy assessment, corridor review, and identification of hard-to-access areas. Field verification should still be used for final tree-level records.
- Centralized Database. The program should maintain a centralized database capable of tracking tree condition, maintenance history, inspection dates, conflict indicators, and future updates.

5. Quality Assurance and Data Governance:

- Adopt a written data dictionary defining each field, acceptable values, measurement method, and required documentation.
- Use a consistent tree condition rating scale, such as Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, Critical, or Dead.
- Require periodic data audits to confirm species identification, location accuracy, condition scoring, and conflict classification.

- Limit technical determinations, such as hazard rating or removal recommendations, to qualified staff or certified arborists.
- Maintain records in a format that can support future maintenance planning, budget development, public communication, and policy review.

6. Community Engagement Strategy:

- Develop public education materials explaining the role of swales as drainage infrastructure and the importance of proper tree placement.
- Use the Town website, newsletters, social media, neighborhood meetings, and Tree Board presentations to communicate program goals.
- Provide clear guidance on permitted and non-permitted planting within right-of-way and swale areas.
- Consider volunteer participation for tree identification support, public outreach, and neighborhood-level observations, provided that technical findings are verified by staff or qualified professionals.
- Highlight the benefits of healthy tree canopy while also explaining the operational need to protect drainage conveyance, public safety, and infrastructure.

7. Program Phases:

- **Phase 1, Planning and Standards Development.** Confirm data fields, condition rating criteria, conflict indicators, survey zones, technology platform, staff responsibilities, and quality control requirements.
- **Phase 2, Pilot Survey.** Conduct a pilot survey in a limited area with known tree, swale, or infrastructure conflicts. Refine the data collection method before expanding townwide.
- **Phase 3, Townwide Data Collection.** Complete phased inventory work by zone, beginning with priority corridors and then expanding to remaining public right-of-way and Town-managed areas.
- **Phase 4, Analysis and Reporting.** Prepare maps, dashboards, species summaries, condition summaries, conflict area lists, and recommended maintenance or policy actions.
- **Phase 5, Long-Term Monitoring.** Update records annually or biennially, or after major storm events, capital projects, roadway work, swale restoration, removals, or new plantings.

8. Expected Program Outputs:

- GIS tree inventory layer with mapped tree locations and core data fields.
- Townwide tree inventory summary report.
- Priority conflict map identifying locations where trees or plantings may affect swale function, sidewalks, utilities, roadway safety, or maintenance access.

- Recommended tree species guidance for appropriate right-of-way locations outside active swale conveyance areas.
- Public education materials supporting proper planting, swale protection, and long-term canopy management.
- Maintenance and budget planning information to support future trimming, removal evaluation, replacement planting, and swale restoration work.

9. Implementation Steps:

1. Confirm the desired software platform and data collection method.
2. Prepare the data dictionary, survey form, condition rating guide, and conflict indicator definitions.
3. Identify survey zones and establish a phased schedule.
4. Conduct a pilot survey and complete quality control review.
5. Revise the methodology based on pilot results.
6. Proceed with phased townwide inventory work.
7. Develop maps, summary reports, and recommended action items.
8. Use inventory findings to guide swale restoration, maintenance priorities, public education, and future right-of-way planting policy.

Professional Recommendation:

The Town should treat this program as both an urban forestry initiative and a public infrastructure management tool. A successful program should preserve and improve tree canopy while ensuring that swales, sidewalks, utilities, and roadway corridors remain functional, maintainable, and safe. The most effective approach is to begin with a focused pilot area, verify the data collection method, and then expand the inventory townwide using consistent standards.