



# BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 5610  
October 7, 2019  
Consent Calendar

## AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 5610: Arbor Day Proclamation No. 246	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Proclaim the third Saturday in October as Arbor Day in the City of Mercer Island	

<b>DEPARTMENT OF:</b>	Parks and Recreation	Alaine Sommargren, Interim Parks Operations Manager
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	n/a	
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	Arbor Day Proclamation	
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	n/a	

<b>AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE</b>	\$ n/a
<b>AMOUNT BUDGETED</b>	\$ n/a
<b>APPROPRIATION REQUIRED</b>	\$ n/a

## SUMMARY

The City of Mercer Island obtained Tree City USA designation in 2017. This proclamation is an annual requirement for maintaining this designation. Tree City USA certification recognizes the many ways the City of Mercer Island values and supports a robust urban forest management program. In addition, active Tree City USA status makes the City eligible for certain urban forestry grant programs.

Since the program’s creation in 1976, more than 3,500 communities have made the commitment to become a Tree City USA. The Tree City USA designation recognizes a community’s commitment to caring for its urban forest. The annual Arbor Day celebration creates a platform from which the City of Mercer Island can celebrate its triumphs, raise awareness of the challenges facing its urban tree canopy, and educate citizens on ways in which they can contribute to a healthy urban forest.

Four core standards of sound urban forestry management must be met to qualify for the Tree City USA program:

1. Maintaining a tree board or department,
2. Adopting a tree care ordinance,
3. An annual budget of at least \$2 per capita dedicated to community forestry, and
4. An annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

The City of Mercer Island currently meets these criteria in the following ways:

- Urban forestry programs within the Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments are well-established and include extensive tree planting and systematic tree assessments along the City's parks, open spaces, and arterial boundaries. This work is supported by seven staff ISA-certified arborists.
- The tree chapter of the Mercer Island Municipal Code was updated in 2017, demonstrating the City's ongoing commitment to protecting and enhancing this vital natural resource.
- Calculations of expenditure on all aspects of tree care indicate that the City spent approximately \$24 per capita on urban forestry work in 2018, exceeding the minimum requirement. These expenditures include all plant materials, installation, maintenance, and risk management, as well as ongoing training for staff arborists.

This proclamation, designating the third Saturday in October as Arbor Day in the City of Mercer Island, fulfills the final requirement needed to maintain Tree City USA qualification.

The 2019 Arbor Day celebration will be held on October 19, 2019 in Homestead Park. The event will include tree and shrub planting, forest restoration work, a recognition of volunteers' forest stewardship, a reading of this proclamation, and activities for all ages. The community is encouraged to participate in this and other tree planting volunteer events and support the City's efforts to foster a healthier, greener Mercer Island.

Visit [www.mercergov.org/volunteer](http://www.mercergov.org/volunteer) to find a calendar of upcoming planting events.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Proclaim the third Saturday in October as Arbor Day in the City of Mercer Island and encourage Islanders to participate in tree planting events in Mercer Island parks.