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Dear Members of the Colorado Springs City Council,

On behalf of the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), we are pleased to express our support for the proposed updates to the City of Colorado Springs' urban forestry ordinance.

Healthy community forests are essential infrastructure that provide measurable environmental, economic, and social benefits. Trees improve air quality, reduce urban heat, intercept stormwater, enhance property values, and contribute to the health and well-being of residents. Maintaining these benefits requires urban forestry programs that are supported by modern policies and the ability to effectively manage public tree resources.

The proposed ordinance updates represent an important step toward strengthening the City's urban forest program. In particular, we support efforts to:

- Modernize tree-related code to reflect current urban forestry best management practices.
- Provide City forestry staff with appropriate authority to address public safety concerns and proactively manage tree-related issues.
- Redirect funding from an obsolete program toward active tree planting and replacement efforts, helping to maintain and expand Colorado Springs' tree canopy while improving long-term community resilience.
- Increase the City's capacity to replace trees removed due to necessary infrastructure improvements, ensuring that canopy benefits are sustained for future generations.

Communities across Colorado continue to face increasing challenges associated with aging tree populations, invasive pests, prolonged drought, and changing climate conditions. Updating local ordinances to better support sustainable tree management is an important investment in community resilience and responsible stewardship of public resources.

The Colorado State Forest Service appreciates the City of Colorado Springs' commitment to strengthening its urban forest and recognizes the collaborative efforts of City staff and community partners in developing these proposed revisions.

Thank you for your consideration of these updates and for your continued commitment to the long-term health and sustainability of Colorado Springs' urban forest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carrie Tomlinson", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Carrie Tomlinson
Urban Forestry Manager, CSFS

