
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1153

Brief Description: Concerning urban forest management ordinances.

Sponsors: Representatives Duerr, Ramel, Parshley, Berg, Ormsby and Hill.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish model urban forestry ordinances and recommendations.
- Subject to appropriation, requires the DNR to administer a grant program for implementation of the model ordinances.

Hearing Date: 1/29/25

Staff: Lily Smith (786-7175).

Background:

Urban forestry is the planning, establishment, protection, care, and management of trees within and around human settlements. Communities may use urban forestry ordinances to promote urban forestry management and care of trees, such as through minimum tree standards or the regulation of tree removal. Communities may also use urban forestry management plans to do assessments and outline different planning objectives related to tree and vegetation management, such as setting canopy goals and planting site prioritizations.

Among other activities, the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Urban and Community Forestry program (program) provides assistance and resources for the development and coordination of urban forestry policies, programs, and activities. The program may also provide

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assistance to communities in developing urban forestry management programs, plans, or ordinances.

Summary of Bill:

The DNR must establish optional model urban forestry ordinances and recommendations related to tree banks that:

- establish criteria for including and designating areas for tree banks;
- determine the appropriate ratios and species of trees planted within a tree bank to compensate for removal elsewhere;
- provide a tree selection and siting tool for use by local jurisdictions;
- provide best practices for growing and maintaining newly planted trees within a tree bank;
- provide criteria for determining trees that are critical to retain during development;
- prohibit retention outside a critical area if it would affect a proposed development in certain ways, including preventing middle housing; and
- provide options for incentivizing developers to retain certain trees.

The DNR must provide support to local jurisdictions that utilize the model ordinances and recommendations.

Subject to appropriation, the DNR must develop a grant program and provide grants for implementation of the ordinances to cities and counties meeting certain criteria.

A tree bank is an area or areas designated by a community in which trees can be planted to compensate for the removal of trees elsewhere and includes programs for the payment of a fee in lieu of physically planting the trees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2025.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.