

Dublin City Council
Public Services Committee
Wednesday, February 11, 2026
4:00 p.m.
5555 Perimeter Drive
Council Chamber

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Kramb called the February 11, 2026 Public Services Committee meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Vice Mayor De Rosa, Dr. Lam and Ms. Kramb (Chair).

Staff Present: Mr. Barker, Mr. Earman, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Ament, Ms. Hunter, Ms. Rauch, Mr. Myers and Mr. Hiatt

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Kramb moved to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2025 Public Services Committee meeting. Vice Mayor De Rosa seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Kramb, yes; Dr. Lam, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes.

Discussion Items:

Greenway Corridor Screening Program

Mr. Earman presented the Greenway Screening Corridor Program based on references from a previous council meeting. He provided background that the pilot program was located in the Indian Run Meadows subdivision along the Avery- Muirfield corridor. The program was based on screening requirements established in 1978, which had proven very difficult to enforce due to linear footage and other factors incorporated into those requirements. He explained that the City decided to identify screening gaps, many of which were due to dying and decaying trees and shrubs over the years.

The project was initiated in 2020, and plantings were finished just a couple of years ago, with ongoing maintenance continuing to improve those areas. Mr. Earman specified that the pilot corridor extends from Valley Spring Drive to Scottish Corners.

He explained that the easements acquired allowed the City to assume responsibility for trees and shrubs along that corridor. The City's responsibilities in those easements include continuing to maintain, replace, and manage the trees and shrubs. Property owners would be responsible for all lawn care including mowing, mulching, watering, and fertilization - essentially everything not directly associated with the trees, though they could mulch if they preferred.

Mr. Earman noted that property owners who elected not to participate in the program remained responsible for their own trees and shrubs to ensure compliance with code requirements. He confirmed that to date, those property owners were within code compliance with no current issues.

The corridors discussed for future consideration included Frantz Road, Emerald Parkway, Dublin Road, and Coffman Road. Regarding pilot program details, Mr. Earman reported there were 31 properties along the Avery-Muirfield corridor section, with 25 participating. As part of the Greenway Corridor Screening Program, the City removed 84 dead or decaying trees and replanted 124 new trees and shrubs at a cost of approximately \$92,000. This initial cost did not include ongoing maintenance, replacements, or recording fees in the county office for easements.

Vice Mayor DeRosa asked about other trees in the area that would die soon due to aging. She wanted confirmation that if trees within the easement area died, the City would take responsibility to remove them, not just trees that were replaced. Mr. Earman confirmed that the City would take care of all trees within the easement area regardless of whether they existed before or after the program implementation. He noted he would work with the forestry team to continue assessments.

Mr. Earman credited landscape architect Michael Hiatt and Code Enforcement's Josh Britt for conducting extensive drive-throughs of each requested corridor to identify opportunities for additional screening. He clarified this did not mean screening would cover every square foot of the corridors. Parameters were established such as focusing on back-facing or side-facing properties to roads, while front-facing residences were not considered necessary for screening, though it remained an option.

Areas of greatest concern were identified including Coffman High School, the post office, businesses, and undeveloped properties. Mr. Earman suggested the City should work with schools to potentially share responsibility. The Emerald Parkway post office location showed a fairly wide-open section leaving the building exposed. Incorporating trees could help screen the post office, though Mr. Earman noted businesses often operate expecting visibility, so voluntary compliance would be important to find middle ground.

An undeveloped property at Frantz Road and Rings Road was currently farmed. Mr. Earman noted that during growing seasons, corn or soybean crops might provide aesthetic value as part of Dublin's history, making screening less necessary.

Multiple residential properties along Frantz Road, Monterey Drive, Corbins Mill, Long Branch Road, and Turkey Run were shown as screening opportunities. At Coffman Road on the west side of Coffman High School's parking lot, additional low hedge-type shrubbery was suggested for safety reasons without completely blocking sight lines.

Estimated costs for each corridor were:

- Emerald Parkway corridor \$24,000,
- Frantz Road \$51,000, and
- Coffman Road \$14,250, totaling \$89,250.

Mr. Earman emphasized these were estimates for initial tree planting investment only, with ongoing maintenance costs being additional. He noted the estimated cost for these four areas was less than the Avery-Muirfield pilot alone, largely because Avery-Muirfield included significant dead tree removal costs while these would primarily involve new plantings.

Dr. Lam asked whether the Frantz Road corridor would include the entire road or just parts. Mr. Earman confirmed it would be the entire corridor, but only areas with screening deficiencies based on the criteria of backyards or side yards of residences, or buildings like the post office. He confirmed that Michael Hiatt and Josh Britt's assessment found all properties currently compliant with code, so participation would be voluntary.

Dr. Lam asked how this would coincide with planned infrastructure development on Frantz Road. Mr. Earman stated that none of the proposed treatments would interfere with planned improvements, as they purposely avoided conflict areas. Ms. Rauch confirmed that Metro Center development plans already included required screening.

Ms. Krumb asked about the status of compliance. Mr. Earman confirmed none were out of compliance. When asked if all identified locations were shown, Mr. Earman confirmed these were all opportunities identified based on the same criteria used for the Avery-Muirfield pilot.

Ms. Krumb noted that some parcels shown were undeveloped and questioned whether property owners would want to screen vacant parcels they hope to develop. She specifically mentioned the Emerald Parkway parcel and expressed doubt that economic development would support screening developable land.

Regarding the post office, Ms. Krumb asked about ownership of the land between the sidewalk and parking lot along Emerald Parkway. Mr. Earman stated that he believes it is owned by the post office. Ms. Krumb expressed skepticism that the federal government would participate, noting her past unsuccessful experiences working with post offices. She emphasized that unlike the residential pilot, this program would include non-residential properties.

Mr. Earman acknowledged there were some non-residential properties in the original pilot including a church and medical facility. Ms. Krumb questioned why the City had not installed screening along Emerald Parkway when it was built, particularly where it created new school frontage. She drove past that area daily and observed students hopping the fence to cut through the field. She also noted the marching band used every inch of space up to Coffman Road.

Vice Mayor DeRosa recalled extreme resident unhappiness when trees were torn down for the practice field along Roscommon Road. She received multiple requests from residents wanting trees replaced. Residents were livid about the tree removal, with rumors the trees were pruned then removed. The noise levels increased significantly for residents after tree removal. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated there was resident support for replacement in that area and that staff had reached out to schools who indicated they would plant trees.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked why the west side of Coffman Road was not included, noting aging trees there. She emphasized that code compliance could not be the only criteria since none of these recommendations were for code compliance issues. She stressed the need for clear criteria, noting the original pilot addressed aging trees proactively. She felt the west side of Coffman fit this criterion due to aging trees throughout that area.

Ms. Krumb asked about the program's genesis. Vice Mayor De Rosa explained that previous council members noted beautifully screened areas where trees had aged out. Responsibility became expensive and confusing for newer residents. Over time, trees died without replacement, creating issues. The broader discussion focused on protecting greenways and

streetscapes. The genesis was about the City's responsibility to maintain greenways after 30 years, determining ongoing responsibilities.

Vice Mayor De Rosa emphasized there had been some communication issues early in the pilot about voluntariness and objectives. Now with pictures showing results, the question was whether to make this available to others on a voluntary basis. With trees aging after 30 years, particularly in core city areas near schools, the cost for residents to replace would be high. The discussion aligned with the next agenda item about having a comprehensive greenway program alongside waterway and wooded lot programs.

Mr. Earman confirmed that staff would reassess gaps once Avery-Muirfield trees reached certain points. While currently meeting code, gaps might remain requiring additional trees. They would maintain staggered planting rather than replacing everything at once.

Dr. Lam asked about the six properties that did not participate in the pilot and whether there were compliance issues. Mr. Earman explained that non-participants understood they were responsible for maintaining their property to code standards. All were currently compliant and in healthy condition with no immediate concerns, though future issues might require welcoming them to the program or asking for replacements.

Ms. Kramb asked about using tree fund money since they were obtaining easements. Mr. Earman confirmed the tree fund was used for Avery-Muirfield and was intended for use for this program. Ms. Kramb confirmed the \$89,250 cost could come from the tree fund. When asked about the current fund balance, Mr. Earman believed it was about \$400,000 based on his last conversation with finance.

Ms. Kramb explained the tree fund came from developers who could not meet code requirements for tree installation on their property and could pay the cost of those trees into a city fund usable only on city land. Mr. Earman noted part of the fund was also designated for reforesting the Riverside Crossing Park west side staging area after path system completion.

Vice Mayor De Rosa discussed concerns about changing environmental conditions causing tree stress. Trees planted under previous conditions might not thrive as conditions warmed. The City needs to proactively address tree replacement needs. She stated that this fits well with Dublin's tree city goals and suggested establishing criteria for a funded program similar to sidewalk and road maintenance budgets.

Committee members discussed additional areas to consider. Vice Mayor DeRosa suggested Sells Mill, the west side of Coffman Road, and potentially Brand Road. Mr. Earman confirmed they had not done a city-wide assessment, only reviewing the originally requested corridors.

Dr. Lam liked the current options as major thoroughfares into and out of Dublin. He noted visitors frequently comment on Dublin's beauty and greenery. Vice Mayor De Rosa added they should consider routes to and from schools, community areas, and parks. She mentioned Hard Road was already well-screened with newer trees.

Mr. Earman offered to research additional suggestions if the Committee desired, or to establish criteria first. Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested criteria might include whether areas were thoroughfares, heavily trafficked, had aging trees, or species known to be at risk.

Mr. Barker asked about prioritizing residential areas first while addressing identified commercial area issues. Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested prioritizing areas around schools, parks, and community areas.

Ms. Kramb suggested staff look at older neighborhoods since Dublin exploded in growth during the 1990s. Those 1980s and 1990s subdivisions would have trees starting to die. She noted newer western areas had younger trees and were previously farm fields without many existing trees. Vice Mayor De Rosa added they should be proactive about areas with tree species known to be at risk due to environmental changes.

When asked what additional information would be helpful, Ms. Kramb wanted to know about commercial properties, particularly vacant ones she doubted they would screen. She also wanted information about school interest in collaborating, noting safety concerns. She recalled principals opposing dense vegetation along walking routes to maintain visibility of students.

Dr. Lam noted the Coffman High School area had significant pedestrian traffic with people parking and walking across. He expressed concern about potential damage and lifecycle costs if trees were planted in high-traffic areas. He agreed about businesses like the post office likely not wanting screening that would block visibility and frustrate customers.

For the last question about prioritizing corridors, Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested that since this was a voluntary program, they could be broader in scope than if the program were mandatory. Mr. Earman agreed. Implementation would take time for getting people on board and establishing easements, similar to Avery-Muirfield. Funds would be expended strategically over time rather than all at once.

Mr. Earman suggested combining all corridors to determine participation, taking successful applications to City Council quarterly for easement approval through ordinance. He offered flexibility on focusing on one corridor or pursuing all four, noting limited work areas would not overburden staff regardless of approach.

Ms. Kramb saw these more as sites than corridors due to their spread-out nature, unlike Avery-Muirfield's adjacent properties. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that with additional areas like the west side of Coffman Road, they would achieve more of a corridor feel. Ms. Kramb saw nothing wrong with spot projects, suggesting annual work on handful of locations.

Vice Mayor De Rosa emphasized that because the program was voluntary and based on lessons learned, they should not limit scope too much or risk accomplishing little over three years. The goal of keeping greenways healthy requires a larger scope given the time for residents to decide, volunteer, order, and plant.

Mr. Earman recommended starting with establishing criteria, then exploring different areas based on those criteria before returning to the Committee. Ms. Kramb agreed with this approach to figure out criteria, broaden identification of locations including 1980s-1990s developments, create a full list of potential sites, then proceed.

Vice Mayor De Rosa looked forward to the Community Services Advisory Committee's (CSAC's) input at their March meeting, with results brought back to this committee.

HOA Maintenance of Woodlots and Woodlot Maintenance Grant Program

Mr. Ament presented an overview of homeowners' association (HOA) maintenance responsibilities for woodlots followed by the proposed woodlot grant program for discussion and feedback.

Mr. Ament provided background that Council discussed this topic during the 2025 goal setting retreat. Staff had outlined the City's current woodlot maintenance program established in 2023, intentionally focused on city-owned woodlots prioritizing sites with greatest ecological value. At that retreat, discussion shifted to HOA maintained woodlots prompted by requests from neighborhoods like Wyandotte Woods seeking support for woodlots in HOA maintained reserve areas. These areas were assigned to HOAs through plat restrictions resulting in varying responsibilities across neighborhoods.

Mr. Ament showed citywide mapping illustrating woodlots within HOA maintained areas, highlighting how many significant woodlots fell under HOA maintenance responsibility. These included areas where invasive species, aging tree stands, or potential waterway blockages created increasingly complex maintenance challenges.

HOAs had previously requested consultation and technical guidance from the City, but as acknowledged at the council retreat, full woodlot restoration was often financially prohibitive for HOAs to perform.

Regarding tree preservation funding background, Mr. Ament explained fees went into a dedicated account within the General Fund for eligible tree-related purposes. Replacement is required when trees are removed from locations, with on-site replacement or appropriate fees paid to the City. Replacement ratios are determined based on location and size of removed trees. Community engagement encouraged members to report tree issues and engage in planting programs. The initiative contributed to expanding urban canopy, mitigating heat island effects, enhancing stormwater management, and aligning with sustainability objectives including zero waste and carbon neutrality goals. These funds might appropriately support a future woodlot maintenance grant program given alignment with broader urban canopy and sustainability goals.

Dr. Lam asked about tree preservation fund details, specifically whether developers paid once or continuously. Ms. Rauch clarified it was a one-time fee in lieu of replacement only when trees could not be replaced on-site. The current \$400,000-plus balance would only be replenished through new developments.

Mr. Ament explained that following retreat feedback, Council directed staff to explore separate purpose-specific grant programs including one for woodlot maintenance, contemplate potential tree preservation funding use, continue offering HOA consultation, and refer the topic to Public Services Committee.

Staff proposed creating a woodlot maintenance grant program modeled on two existing successful programs - the Stormwater Maintenance Grant and Beautify Your Neighborhood Grant (BYNG). The goal is to create an additional grant program exhibiting consistency, usability, and alignment with established processes HOAs already know. The purpose is providing financial assistance and technical guidance to Dublin homeowners and civic associations for maintaining city-owned woodlots they were responsible for maintaining,

supporting neighborhoods in keeping ecologically significant spaces resilient, safe, and sustainable.

Under proposed guidelines, projects involving tree removal must include like-for-like replacement plans with no debate. Grant awards would range from \$2,000 to \$15,000 with required one-to-one matches from applicants. HOAs or civic associations could receive one grant annually. The recommended \$15,000 maximum reflected real-world costs of approximately \$5,000 for full-grown tree removal and \$160 for replacement.

Applications would be evaluated using a 30-point scoring system. This structure highlights the importance of hazard reduction aligning with City woodlot maintenance program priorities and ecological benefits. Categories address key tree removal considerations while accommodating projects involving removal with specific species control or broader restoration efforts.

Applications would require the same information as BYNG and Stormwater Maintenance Grants: applicant association information, project details, location, existing conditions, specific needs, hazard concerns, removal and restoration details, relevant PID numbers, quotes, scopes, estimates, and financial information regarding association budgets and reserves. These components ensure transparency, accountability, and position HOAs for continuing long-term maintenance after grant funding use.

For implementation, staff recommends leveraging the existing BYNG framework with slight modifications. Under the revised structure, the current BYNG would become the entryway beautification grant program. Stormwater and Woodlot Maintenance grants would sit under one Beautify Your Neighborhood Grant umbrella. This approach aims to simplify resident experience, provide branding continuity, and leverage familiar, trusted structure.

Mr. Ament posed the following four questions for Committee members to respond:

- Does the Committee support implementing the proposed program?
- Are \$2,000 minimum and \$15,000 maximum matching amounts appropriate?
- Does the Committee support using tree preservation funding?
- What total annual allocation does PSC recommend?

Vice Mayor DeRosa raised concerns about the stormwater maintenance program's limited uptake despite being called successful, with only three applicants in its history. Mr. Ament explained the program was created based on resident contacts similar to current discussions. Initial traction occurred but guidelines stipulated HOAs could only receive awards every five years. The proposed program would allow annual awards following BYNG's twice-yearly application cycle.

Vice Mayor De Rosa identified two barriers from HOA conversations: the City requiring money up front when HOAs lack full amounts, and the onerous application process. She expressed concern that HOAs with annual fees as low as \$90 per month would never have funding to apply. She questioned whether requiring expertise to assess decay and invasive species would necessitate hiring someone or if the City would help.

Mr. Ament explained that the evaluation criteria on applications were for Jeff Myers and his team to evaluate, including site visits. Mr. Myers confirmed they would assess sites based on application criteria in specified areas.

Ms. Kramb clarified that HOAs lack skills to identify dead trees, invasive species, or costs without hiring arborists. They struggle with basic requirements like drawings and finding parcel maps. She had witnessed groups abandoning projects due to complexity, having to help them with simple tasks like drawing on printed aerials with markers.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked if the City could help since these were city-owned properties under HOA maintenance. She believed more participation would result if people could call for assessment help. She emphasized wanting to make the program effective given staffing considerations.

Mr. Myers expressed willingness to visit sites and make recommendations, identifying high-risk areas. While his passion was trees focusing on risk protection first, he would discuss options including replacing dead trees with shade-tolerant species like Ohio Buckeye for better mixed species profiles.

Ms. Kramb opened a broader discussion about potentially including private property owners along Riverside Drive, Dublin Road, Martin Road, and Summit View Road who owned woodlots that could impact streams and roads. Vice Mayor De Rosa distinguished this from the HOA-focused grant programs, suggesting it might fit better with the Greenway program discussed earlier dealing with individual property maintenance. Committee members agreed to keep programs separate to avoid complexity.

Dr. Lam suggested prioritizing hazard mitigation over aesthetics, particularly for trees threatening houses or roads. He recommended clearly stating priorities in applications. Mr. Ament noted staff attempted this through weighted evaluation criteria giving hazard mitigation 10 points versus 5 for other categories.

Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested being more explicit, potentially launching the program funding only hazardous tree removal and erosion control initially. She recommended clearly stating the limited scope rather than creating criteria that would frustrate applicants with denials. Ms. Kramb added that trees blocking creeks should be prioritized equally with hazard trees, particularly in areas like Wyandotte Woods with current stream mitigation projects.

Mr. Barker clarified the intent focused on city-owned reserve areas maintained by HOAs, not residential homes or private property. He acknowledged legitimate concerns about HOAs' financial barriers to participation. While staff expected active involvement facilitating applications, the financial barrier of a 50% match for a \$10,000 project costing HOAs \$5,000 remained.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked if payment could be simultaneous rather than reimbursement to ensure project completion without HOAs fronting money. Mr. Barker agreed to discuss with the City Manager and Chief Financial Officer creative support methods while ensuring investment delivery certainty. He confirmed staff support would be better communicated and memorialized.

Mr. Barker also noted trees along waterways provided value by anchoring soil, preventing sediment loading, and providing beneficial shade. He found this consideration very compatible with the program.

Dr. Lam raised concerns about administrative complexity including scoring, site visits, compliance verification, and maintenance requirements. He worried about HOAs applying without specialist knowledge potentially implementing projects incorrectly, requiring significant City oversight. He asked about expected application volume.

Mr. Ament outlined a tentative administrative process that would begin with applicants accessing online surveys or forms on the BYNG website indicating interest in one of three grant buckets. Mr. Ament or Ms. Hunter would meet with individuals to confirm appropriate program fit and connect them with staff liaisons. After coordination with expert staff to ensure an understating of requirements, full applications would follow typical board, commission, and council review paths.

Mr. Barker expected considerable early interest based on numerous contacts about noise issues from lost tree buffers. Many scenarios involve diseased or fallen large older trees. Interest existed for expanding tree canopy, maintaining park-like aesthetics in reserve areas, and noise mitigation. The program is proposed with once yearly participation.

Mr. Barker distinguished this from the Greenways corridor pilot where the City assumed perpetual maintenance on private property. This program involved private improvements with HOAs contracting work directly, with warranty provisions between HOAs and vendors providing ongoing maintenance. The City would not assume additional long-term maintenance responsibilities.

Dr. Lam clarified his concern was about oversight ensuring grant money was used appropriately without overcrowding or other issues. Mr. Barker confirmed Mr. Myers would diligently ensure appropriate site plans and species selection. They would confirm field implementation matched approved components.

Dr. Lam then raised sustainability concerns about the limited tree fund with no ongoing developer payments. With annual reapplication potential, he worried about funding depletion. Mr. Ament explained one discussion goal was determining appropriate annual allocation limits from the tree fund.

Mr. Myers provided expertise on woodlot maintenance methodology. Current practice avoided removing dead material as carbon sources to prevent atmospheric release. Standing dead trees near edges risking property were prioritized for removal, but interior dead trees provided important habitat for species like Indiana Brown Bats. Tree removal was restricted between April 15 and October 15 for bat and migratory bird protection.

Priority for removal focused on hazard mitigation to specific targets - highest risk being people, then people in cars and buildings, then structures. Edge dead trees would be prioritized while discouraging interior removal to further habitat and carbon sequestration goals. Balance was needed to avoid fire risk buildup while keeping carbon in place.

In response to Vice Mayor De Rosa's questions regarding how to help people successfully use the program, Mr. Myers confirmed his willingness to visit sites like Wyandotte Woods where he had spoken with HOAs. He would identify high-risk areas and make recommendations about invasive species control while prioritizing tree-related risks.

Regarding dead tree replacement in shaded areas, Mr. Myers suggested shade-tolerant species creating mixed profiles rather than uniform climax species. He emphasized intermediate variety benefits for woodlot health.

Committee members discussed not requiring inch-for-inch dead tree replacement since it would discourage participation when residents could simply let trees fall naturally. Mr. Myers explained the methodology of leaving fallen trees for carbon sequestration and habitat while prioritizing edge hazards.

Vice Mayor De Rosa brought up HOA feedback about fronting money, application complexity, and annual fees varying from \$90 yearly to hundreds monthly. She emphasized removing barriers for program success since goals included spending money for tree growth and maintenance. She suggested reconsidering waiting periods and simplifying processes.

Ms. Rauch noted that in all years administering Beautify Your Neighborhood grants, applications meeting criteria had never been disapproved by Council. She suggested treating applications less formally to simplify the process.

Mr. Barker appreciated feedback about simplification. He noted government funding requirements created some unavoidable barriers but agreed to work on improvements. Ms. Krumb suggested learning from bed tax grant simplification where staff received administrative approval authority for certain amounts, wondering if similar approaches could apply.

Ms. Krumb asked about specific dollar amounts but acknowledged they could not determine that today. She suggested bringing back stormwater grant funding removed from previous CIP due to non-use and calculating potential use based on expected applications.

Vice Mayor De Rosa emphasized wanting money spent on intended purposes, suggesting removing barriers identified through experience. She appreciated consolidating programs under one umbrella for simplification but noted inconsistent requirements needed alignment.

Ms. Rauch supported examining which approvals were truly necessary versus automatic, reducing intimidating requirements for volunteer HOA leaders. The Committee agreed staff should return with revised proposals incorporating feedback about payment timing, application simplification, criteria clarification, and funding recommendations.

2026 PSC Meeting Schedule

The Committee discussed moving meeting start times from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM to accommodate Dr. Lam's schedule. Dr. Lam offered to maintain 4:00 PM if it burdened others, but committee members agreed 5:00 PM worked well, noting they previously started at 5:00 PM when a former member required that time.

Ms. Krumb moved to amend the PSC Meeting Schedule to have a 5:00 PM start time moving forward.

Vice Mayor De Rosa seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Dr. Lam, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Ms. Krumb, yes.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.



Chair, Public Services Committee



Clerk of Council