

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis

Council Bill No. 14-2022

Introduced: February 7, 2022

Auditor: Michael A. Martin

Fiscal Impact:

Per the Director of the Department and Planning and Zoning (DPZ), this legislation is not expected to have a fiscal impact on the County, as its resulting workload is anticipated to be absorbed by existing department resources.

The proposed change will require an applicant to provide additional information in a forest conservation plan, to be prepared by a qualified professional. According to the Director of the DPZ, this will require fieldwork to be performed by existing DPZ staff, as they will need to review and verify all trees in a plan that may be eligible for protection.

Revenues from enforcement and penalties allowed under Section 16.1213 could be recognized for any discrepancies discovered after a forest conservation plan has been approved. However, our Office is unable to estimate volume of future violations at this time.

Purpose:

The purpose of this legislation is to require that forest conservation plans provide the location and a list of each tree with a diameter of 24-inches or greater when measured at 4.5 feet above the ground. The tree listing shall include tree species, tree condition, and the diameter of the applicable State Champion tree of the given tree species.

Other Comments:

The Director of the DPZ anticipates that the below plan statuses will be exempted from the changes in the proposed legislation as prescribed under Section 16.102(h) of the County Code:

- Signed preliminary or preliminary equivalent sketch plans
- Approval letters for a final plan (minor subdivision or re-subdivision)
- Signed site development plans

When instances of non-compliance are noted in a plan under review, the DPZ will require developers to submit a revised plan.