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A resolution requesting Nashville Electric Service and the Electric Power Board to provide performance metrics and information regarding its tree trimming program and to continue working with the Metropolitan Council, the Metropolitan Department of Water and Sewerage Services, the Metropolitan Tree Advisory Committee, Cumberland River Compact, Nashville Tree Conservation Corps, Nashville Tree Foundation, and other conservation groups on refining the recently announced vegetation management changes to ensure that electric outage prevention is compatible with maintenance of a healthy tree canopy.

WHEREAS, the tree canopy in Nashville and Davidson County is a utility that improves ambient air quality, absorbs and filters stormwater, mitigates the heat island and greenhouse effects, provides habitat for wildlife, supports public health, provides significant economic benefits, and increases the quality of life for Nashville's residents; and

WHEREAS, the city of Nashville has committed to protecting and expanding this important utility since 2018 through the Root Nashville Campaign, which committed to plant 500,000 trees by 2050; and

WHEREAS, Winter Storm Fern caused significant damage to the electric grid and the tree canopy in Nashville, Davidson County, and the surrounding areas, resulting in loss of power for 230,000 customers of Nashville Electric Service ("NES"); and

WHEREAS, an internal NES audit revealed that in recent years the utility company was behind on vegetation management and maintenance, thereby increasing risk for power outage; and

WHEREAS, recently NES has begun a new more aggressive tree trimming approach, which calls for an increased tree trimming clearance regardless of tree species or the health of the tree; and

WHEREAS, maps comparing recent vegetation-management routes and subsequent outage locations have raised questions regarding whether the newly introduced 15-foot clearance and no overhang requirements materially reduced outages compared to previous vegetation-management practices (had they been fully implemented), indicating that additional publicly accessible analysis is warranted; and

WHEREAS, NES has referenced data indicating that the 15-foot clearance significantly reduces outages compared to a 10-foot trimming clearance, but this data has not yet been furnished to the Metropolitan Council ("the Council") or any Metro Government departments that would allow for a public review of the program's efficacy when compared to a fully implemented vegetation management program under the prior program or other less aggressive tactics; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. RS2026-1995 urged NES to implement a temporary moratorium on the new vegetation management changes until data determining the necessity and increased efficacy of the new policy could be provided to the Council; and

WHEREAS, NES has removed the requirement to cut all trees and vegetation under power wires, and NES representatives held a meeting with the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee of the Council to discuss improvements to the new policy and customer communication regarding tree trimming, whereupon NES agreed to continue evaluating the need for species specific policy; and

WHEREAS, further, NES has not studied the costs to Nashville and Davidson County residents of permanently altering the tree canopy. Numerous peer-reviewed studies, documented by the U.S. Forest Service and International Society of Arboriculture, have concluded that mature street trees substantially reduce surface and ambient temperatures, lower energy consumption, improve stormwater management, and provide significant economic and public-health benefits. In Nashville, it is estimated that street trees bordering public rights-of-way provide taxpayers approximately $10 million annually in benefits; and

WHEREAS, NES has begun implementing the more aggressive vegetation management approach cutting back mature trees in some parts of town, including very healthy trees that are recognized winners of the Nashville Tree Foundation’s Big Old Tree Contest that withstood the test of Winter Storm Fern and demonstrated their hardiness; and

WHEREAS, the nationally recognized ANSI A300 (Part 1) Pruning Standard provides that pruning objectives should be established before pruning begins, that pruning should preserve tree health and structural integrity whenever reasonably possible, and that pruning practices should be tailored to species, age, condition, growth habit, and site conditions rather than employing a one-size-fits-all approach; and

WHEREAS, the International Society of Arboriculture's *Best Management Practices for Tree Pruning* recognizes that excessive canopy removal may increase decay, stimulate weakly attached epicormic growth, reduce structural stability, shorten tree lifespan, and increase future maintenance costs; and

WHEREAS, many electric utilities throughout North America employ integrated vegetation-management programs that consider tree species, growth rate, structural condition, defect history, site constraints, conductor voltage, reliability objectives, and available planting space when determining appropriate pruning specifications; and

WHEREAS, it is important to take a measured approach, confirmed through publicly accessible performance metrics, to ensure protection of two important utilities in NES territory, both the electric grid and the tree canopy; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as requesting that Nashville Electric Service provide data on standard electric utility reliability metrics to the Metropolitan Council and to the Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Water and Sewerage Services to demonstrate the necessity of the increase from 10- to-15-foot clearance including statistics on the efficacy of the program and the cost-benefit analysis. Standard electric utility reliability metrics include annual reporting of SAIDI, SAIFI, CAIDI, momentary interruptions, tree-caused outages, miles trimmed, number of trees removed, number of customer complaints, average pruning cycle length, percentage of circuit miles on schedule, outage reduction attributable to vegetation, cost per avoided outage, distribution by tree species, number of hazard trees removed, and emergency callouts before and after implementation. These metrics should then be compared to prior NES practices and utilities of similar size.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Council requests that NES evaluate one or more representative distribution circuits utilizing species-specific pruning practices consistent with ANSI A300 standards and compare reliability outcomes against circuits maintained under the current uniform 15-foot clearance policy.

Section 3. That the Metropolitan Council requests that NES revise its vegetation management policy to include species specific trimming guidelines as recommended by ANSI A300 (Part 1) Pruning Standards, and ANSI A300 (Part 7) Integrated Vegetation Management, International Society of Arboriculture Best Management

Practices, and the Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Water and Sewerage Services. The Metropolitan Council further requests that NES develop, in consultation with the Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Water and Sewerage Services, a publicly available Vegetation Management Manual establishing objective criteria for pruning based upon species growth characteristics, mature size, utility compatibility, structural condition, growth rate, conductor voltage, available planting space, ANSI A300 pruning standards, International Society of Arboriculture Best Management Practices; and electric system reliability objectives.

Section 4. That the Metropolitan Council requests that NES add to its Vegetation Management Policy an option for property owners to engage a certified arborist to provide trimming appropriate to specific species in the appropriate season to avoid damage to trees or nesting birds, in accordance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Section 5. The Metropolitan Council requests that NES prepare an annual Vegetation Management Report summarizing vegetation-management activities, reliability outcomes, costs, customer complaints, and environmental impacts, and present that report publicly before the Metropolitan Council Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Section 6. That the Metropolitan Council further requests a meeting be scheduled no later than August 15, 2026 among NES officials, members of the Metropolitan Council Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Water and Sewerage Services, and representatives of the Cumberland River Compact, Nashville Tree Foundation, Nashville Tree Conservation Corps, and the Metropolitan Tree Advisory Committee to discuss existing data and form a plan for the requested study.

Section 7. That the Metropolitan Clerk shall be directed to deliver copies to the Chief Executive Officer of Nashville Electric Service and each member of the Metropolitan Electric Power Board.

Section 8. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.