

## **ROUTINE OVERHEAD CUTTING OF TREES ALONG THE VILLAGE ROADWAYS**

As a Tree City USA community, the Village follows guidelines set forth by common municipal tree care practices. The standard practices are a balance between ensuring public safety and preserving the health of the island's tree canopy.

The Village's priority is public safety. Everyone who visits the island will at some point find themselves under the tree canopy above the Village roadways. The smaller dead limbs usually end up as nuisance debris on the roads. When the larger limbs fall, they can block the roadway and if they happen to fall on a person, that could be fatal. The live oak limbs on the island are especially dense and heavy and there are many of them.

An additional aspect of public safety is that the larger emergency vehicles need clearance to travel our roads. The lower limbs cause damage to the vehicles and could cause injury to the operator or passengers. When lower limbs are struck, the tree itself can be damaged at its trunk, slip into a declining state, and ultimately die. Our emergency vehicles need to be able to get to their calls as quickly and safely as possible.

The overall health and cosmetic look of our trees are also important. Properly pruning can have health benefits for the tree. For instance, by cutting lower hanging limbs, we help propagate the desirable upper canopy limbs.

The Village's Public Works employees are trained in basic arborist techniques regarding proper tree pruning and have experience in leading our tree cutting contractor during this phase of our tree management program. Our contractor (currently Fitness Tree) also has highly trained people who are led by a licensed arborist.