

City of _____ Urban Forestry Specifications

Section 1. General Specifications

1. These specifications are to serve as a standard for planting and maintenance of all public trees. They will apply whether work is performed by City forces, private contractors or private individuals.
2. A free permit must be obtained from the City before any person, either for himself or another, plants, prunes, removes, or destroys any tree, shrub, or hedge in or upon the public right-of-way of any street, alley, sidewalk, or other public place.
3. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the business of planting, cutting, trimming, pruning, removing, spraying or otherwise treating trees, shrubs or vines within the City right-of-way without first obtaining a permit from the City (permit required by ordinance 8.10(2) (b). Any public utility company must notify the City before any trees are trimmed and must follow accepted arboricultural trimming standards.
4. Authorized work on or with public trees or shrubs neither expresses nor implies a right to violate any law of the land while in process of performing such work.
5. All such work shall be conducted in a manner as to cause the least possible interference with or annoyance to others.
6. All personnel utilized for work on or with trees or shrubs shall be trained to perform the work properly and safely.
7. Whenever electric or telephone lines, gas lines, water/sewer lines or other improvements, public or private, upon a public area will be implicated or jeopardized by any authorized tree or shrub activity, the proper authorities of the utilities involved or property owner involved shall be consulted prior to performing any work activity and all requested precautions by any such authority shall be complied with.

Section 2. Planting and Maintenance Standards

A. Definitions

Street Trees: Street Trees are herein defined as trees on public right-of-way between the curb and property line along the side of streets or ways within the City.

Park Trees: Park trees are herein defined as trees in public parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and all other areas owned by the City, or any area to which the public has free access as a park.

B. Areas of Responsibility

1. Street Trees: Street trees are the responsibility of the City for planting and management. All existing street trees are managed by the City.
2. Park Trees: Park trees are the responsibility of the City for planting and management. This includes trees in parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and all other areas owned by the City.

C. Planting Standards

1. Public projects, i.e. parks, streets, medians, substations, treatment plants and public buildings, shall provide for street and park tree planting as a part of the development process. If Private projects include street trees in their plans they shall adhere to the design objectives and spacing requirements of this document.
2. Existing public properties shall receive new infill planting on an ongoing basis. All removed public trees shall be replaced with one or more new trees if the location meets planting criteria.
3. Site criteria to be evaluated in determining tree planting locations are:
 - a) visibility of site
 - b) probability of long term tree survival
 - c) overall benefit to the community
4. Public tree planting can be by the balled and burlapped, tree spade, or container method. Bare root plantings are not permitted without written permission of the City.
5. The following are the minimum sizes for plant material. Larger sizes may be required to ensure survival or provide a landscape effect.
 - a) Shade trees - 1-1/2" caliper
 - b) Ornamental trees - 1" caliper
 - c) Evergreen trees - 5' height
 - d) Shrubs - 5 gallon container
6. No single species shall make up more than 15% of the total City tree population. This is to prevent uniform disease susceptibility.

D. Maintenance Standards

1. All public deciduous trees on improved properties shall be pruned on a rotational basis of not more than (5) years.
2. Public trees shall be managed in such a manner as to promote their general health by providing the necessary practices which may include insect and disease control, fertilization, irrigation, staking, guying, wrapping, cabling, bracing and pruning.
3. Trees shall be maintained in such a manner as not to endanger, interfere, or otherwise conflict with requirements of safe public use of an area.
4. Any public tree or shrub which because of habit of growth, age, condition or disease becomes a hazard to public safety or obstructs a clear view of streets, signs, signals or intersections, thus creating a hazard, shall be maintained to correct the problem. Hanging limb and branch growth shall be maintained 14 feet above streets and 8 feet above sidewalks.
5. Every owner of any tree or shrub overhanging any street or right-of-way within the City shall prune the branches so that such branches shall not interfere with the safe use of the street or sidewalk or obstruct the view of any street intersection. The City shall have the right to prune any tree or shrub on private property when it interferes with the safe use of the street or sidewalk or when it interferes with the visibility of any traffic control device or sign.
6. Any tree because of an epidemic disease or insect infestation, poses a threat to other trees or plants in the community shall be treated so as to control the spread of the problem organism.

E. Street Tree Spacing and Location Requirements

1. At the intersection of roadways or vehicular access points, no plant material with a mature height greater than 30 inches shall be planted within sight triangle measuring 30 feet along the boundary of each of the intersecting roadways, measured from the point of intersecting curb lines, except where engineering standards indicate otherwise.
2. No tree planting is permitted where the distance between a curb and a detached sidewalk is less than 4 feet. In addition, a planting area defined by two curbs, curb and fence, or sidewalk and fence must be 4 feet wide if street trees are to be planted.
3. Trees must be centered in the planting strip when the distance between the curb and detached sidewalk is 8 feet or less.
4. Where the sidewalk is attached to the curb as a continuous element, the street tree planting must be at least 3 feet in back of the walk and no more than 7 feet. The tree must be located on the public right-of-way.
5. No street tree planting is to be made closer to the street than 30 inches back from the back side of the curb.
6. Larger maturing trees should be spaced 35 feet apart and smaller maturing trees 20 feet apart. The City may require wider spacings if it is necessary for development of the tree or for safe use of the street or sidewalk. When space is limited or to achieve certain design effect, closer spacings may be considered.
7. No tree shall be planted closer than 5 feet from any driveway or alley nor shall a tree or shrub be planted in such a manner that its eventual growth cannot be reasonably controlled so as to avert interference with or obstruction to any improvements installed for public benefit.
8. Tree plantings made in a sidewalk must have a minimum of 16 square feet cutout area. The tree must be set back from the street a minimum of 30 inches from the back of the curb.
9. No tree planting is to be made within 5 feet of any building or structure.
10. No street trees other than those low-growing species that do not attain a mature height greater than 20 feet shall be planted under or within ten feet of any overhead power line exclusive of street light or service lines.

F. Tree Removal Criteria

It is the objective of the City to provide a tree planting program on City property that insures the future existence of the City's tree resource by the planting of as many or more trees than must be removed due to infection, death, hazardous condition, nuisance or construction occurring in the area. In addition a set of tree removal criteria is used to prevent indiscriminate removal.

City trees may be removed only when one or more of the following criteria is met:

1. The tree is infected with an epidemic insect or disease where the recommended control is not applicable and removal is the recommended practice to prevent transmission.
2. The tree poses a public nuisance because of its species, size, location or condition. The nuisance could be caused by fruit or seed drop, harboring of insects or excessive twig or limb breakage.
3. The tree poses a severe safety hazard that cannot be corrected by pruning, transplanting or other treatments.
4. The tree severely interferes with the growth and development of a more desirable tree.
5. The aesthetic values of the tree are so low or negative that the site is visually enhanced by the tree's removal.
6. Work improvements required to be made around the tree will kill or render it a hazard.

7. Preservation of the tree, when adjacent property is developed, is not cost effective. The monetary value of the tree shall be compared to construction costs necessary to preserve the tree.

G. Regulations Pertaining to Hedges and Shrubs

1. Before planting any shrub or hedge on the public right-of-way, the property owner must first obtain a permit to do so from the City.
2. At the intersection of roadways within a site triangle measuring 30 feet along the boundary of each intersecting roadway, no solid hedge is permitted and individual shrubs shall not exceed 30 inches in height. Pruning to maintain a height not to exceed 30 inches is mandatory upon the property owner.
3. No hedge planting is permitted in the parkway between the sidewalk and the curb. (Shade trees of acceptable species may be planted in this area.)
4. Where the combination sidewalk-curb and gutter have been installed, hedges may be planted no closer than 5 feet from such sidewalk.
5. Where curb and gutter have been installed but no sidewalk exists, no hedge shall be planted closer than 8 feet from such curb.
6. No hedge shall be planted closer than 5 feet from an existing or designated alley.
7. Rank growing or spreading species which ultimately grow out over designated pedestrian or vehicular right-of-ways and obstruct such passageways are not permitted.