



## TREE PLACEMENT

Street tree planting is required to sustain a population of street trees and in many locations new street trees can be planted to enhance and expand the population of street trees. Street tree planting efforts can quickly become counter-productive when trees are selected for sites that are not conducive to their healthy development and long term growth, are in conflict with existing or proposed tree planting plans, planted in locations that create visual obstructions or significantly increase the likelihood or will result in infrastructure and/or utility conflicts. Resources that could have subsequently been used to plant, maintain and manage other trees now have to be invested to correct these situations. Proper tree selection and placement is critical in the development of a diverse and healthy street tree population. A large amount of dissatisfaction with street trees is the result of poor tree selection and placement. Therefore, the Forestry Division is committed to planting the right tree in the right place.

Street tree planting sites are carefully evaluated by the Forestry Division. Tree placement considerations (site conditions) may prevent the planting of a street tree even if one has been requested for that location. City residents that desire to plant a street tree in their adjacent tree lawn are reminded that a street tree planting permit is required from the Forestry Division. The Forestry Division must approve the species and site prior to a street tree being planted. Street trees that are planted without Forestry Division approval are subject to removal. The party excavating the planting hole assumes all responsibility for the location of underground utilities and any resulting damage to a utility from their excavation work.

Street tree placement guidelines include the following:

- Trees can only be planted in tree lawns that exceed 36 inches in width. Minimum growing space requirements for a street tree is 16 feet<sup>2</sup> (2304 in<sup>2</sup>). Therefore, a 36 inch wide (curb to sidewalk) tree lawn must also be 64 inches long. The minimum size for tree wells is 48 inches x 48 inches. Soil depth at the planting site must be workable to a minimum depth of 24 inches.
- Minimum spacing between street trees is 35 feet for large canopy trees and 20 feet for small understory trees.
- Street trees must be planted at least 20 feet from street corners and intersections, 5 feet from alley and driveway entrances, 5 feet from fire hydrants and at grade utilities that include sewer vents, water and gas shut offs and 15 feet from street and alley lights.
- *O2: Planting Standards for City Trees* provides detailed information about street tree planting and a complete set of standards and guidelines for their selection and placement.

## CITY OF ST. LOUIS STREET TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

- Forestry Division plants street trees in the tree lawn. The tree lawn is the City easement along public streets that is typically between the curb and the sidewalk. Trees are planted at no charge to the adjacent property owner by the Forestry Division with the following exception: property owners that have agreed to plant street trees as part of a condition for the development of their property must do so pursuant to that agreement and where specified at their own expense. Street trees are purchased with ward improvement funds allocated at the discretion of each ward's alderperson.
- Property owners can request a tree (or trees) for the tree lawn (city easement) adjacent to their property by calling the Citizens' Service Bureau at 314-622-4800 or by the following the links to CSB (request a City Service) at [www.stlouis-mo.gov](http://www.stlouis-mo.gov). The Forestry continually surveys wards to determine planting needs and plants street trees in open or otherwise available planting sites. Tree placement considerations (site conditions) may prevent the planting of a street tree even if one has been requested.
- Street trees are normally planted from November to April. Requests for street trees that are made late in the planting season are generally planted during the next planting season. The Forestry Division plants several thousand street trees per year. Due to the large volume of trees planted and the availability of different trees at different times of the year from the nursery, exact planting dates cannot be provided.
- The Forestry Division plants street trees that are approximately 2-2.5 inch in caliper size and 5-8 feet tall.
- While suggestions are welcomed for tree selection, the Forestry Division has trained staff experienced in selecting a street tree best suited to the planting site and therefore, tree selection and placement is at the discretion of the Forestry Division.
- The Forestry Division plants street trees at no cost in the tree lawn. Property owners wishing to plant a street tree in the tree lawn at their expense must obtain a permit to do so from the Forestry Division. The species of tree to be planted as well as its location in the tree lawn must be approved by the Forestry Division as part of the permit process. The tree to be planted must also conform to size and quality standards in use by the Forestry Division for street trees. Regardless of who plants the tree all street trees are the property of the City of St. Louis.

## STREET TREE PLANTING PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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email: [McCarthyC@stlouiscity.com](mailto:McCarthyC@stlouiscity.com)

A street tree may be requested by contacting the Citizens' Service Bureau at: 622-4800 or at [www.stlouis-mo.gov](http://www.stlouis-mo.gov) (request a city service)



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1415 N 13<sup>th</sup> St  
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[www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/forestry/](http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/forestry/)

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a designated "Sterling  
Tree City USA" by the  
National Arbor Day  
Foundation