

Belle Plaine

Tree Manual



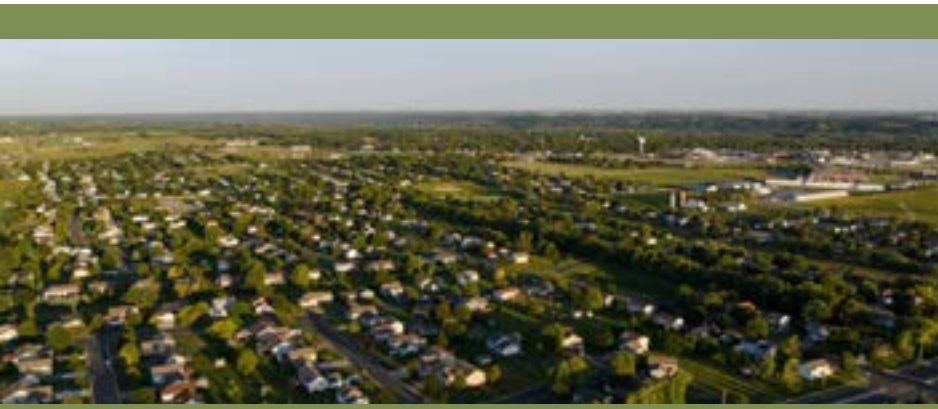


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1. Tree Ordinance Summary

In 2020, the City of Belle Plaine passed a citywide Tree Ordinance that codifies the maintenance and management of trees within the city limits. This Tree Manual attempts to provide supporting information to help city staff, residents and developers best adhere to the laws presented in this ordinance.

A. Definitions

PARK TREES

“Park Trees” are trees, shrubs, bushes, and all other woody vegetation in public parks having individual names, and all areas owned by the City or to which the public has free access as a park.

SIGNIFICANT TREE

Any tree of a species not on the City’s ‘Banned Species List’, in fair or better condition, and 1) over 6” DBH for hardwood trees, 2) over 8” for softwood trees, or 3) over 12’ in height for conifers.

STREET TREES

“Street Trees” are trees, shrubs, bushes, and all other woody vegetation which have been or will be planted in a public right-of-way by the City at the direction of the Tree Care Manager/City Forester. “Right-of-Way” is as defined in Section 605.03 of the City Code, as may be amended.

TREE CARE MANAGER/CITY FORESTER

The “Tree Care Manager/City Forester” is a person or persons certified by the Minnesota Commission of Agriculture to plan, direct, and supervise all requirements for controlling shade tree diseases throughout the City. The Superintendent of Public Works and authorized assigns shall be the Tree Care Manager/City Forester.

TREE SIZES

A “Small Tree” is any plant material that will grow to a height and/or spread to a maximum of thirty (30) feet; a “Medium Tree” is any plant material that will grow to a height and/or spread to a maximum of thirty-one to and including forty (40) feet; a “Large Tree” is any plant material that will grow to a height and/or spread of over forty (40) feet.

B. Trees on Public Property

PARK TREES

The city will adhere to best practices when it comes to the management of park trees. ANSI A300 standards will be followed for planting, pruning and removal.

TREE CARE ON PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY (BOULEVARD)

The public right-of-way includes areas designated for public access, typically between the sidewalk and curb along streets, where the City has been granted an easement. The City of Belle Plaine Tree Ordinance outlines that trees growing in this area shall be maintained by the adjacent property owner. Permits are required to plant trees in the right-of-way. No permits are required to prune or remove trees in the right-of-way. However, all tree work must comply with the ANSI A300 standards for tree care (see ISA guidelines in this packet) and no tree topping is allowed. Stumps must be removed or cut below grade and backfilled. If the City designates a right-of-way tree as a nuisance or public safety concern, the adjoining property owner must remove the tree within the timeframe specified by code enforcement.

PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY (BOULEVARD)

“Public Right-of-Way” means the surface, air space above the surface and the area below the surface of any public street, highway, lane, path, alley, sidewalk, trail, avenue, boulevard, drive, court, park, parkway, easement, or similar property or waters within the City owned by or under control of the City, or dedicated or otherwise conveyed to the City for general public use, including, but not limited to, any riparian right which, consistent with the purposes for which it was created, obtained or dedicated, may be used for the purpose of installing, operating and maintaining utility service facilities. No reference herein to a “public right-of-way” shall be deemed to be a representation or guarantee by the City that its interest or other right to control or use such property is sufficient to permit its use for the purpose of installing, operating and maintaining utility service facilities.

C. Trees on Private Property

City Code Section 1107.03, SUBD 6 requires trees be planted a minimum of five (5) feet from the property line.

Residents must maintain trees so they do not pose a safety risk to public rights-of-way. Property owners and developers must work through the tree preservation protocols for any proposed new construction that requires a special use permit, site plan review, or planned development.

The Tree Care Manager/City Forester has the authority to trim, remove, or order the trimming and removal of trees, shrubs, or plants upon private property when such action is necessary to mitigate hazards, provide for the public's safety, or to prevent the spread of disease or insects. The City has no authority to resolve tree-related disputes between property owners that do not involve other municipal code violations or impact public property.

When subdividing land, developers may remove up to twenty-five (25) percent of the trees for rights-of-way and streets and an additional twenty-five (25) percent of the existing trees for grading. Any additional trees removed shall be replaced on a 1:1 ratio.

Tree percentage shall be based on a canopy survey conducted using either aerial imagery measurements or iTree Canopy. Up to 25% of the canopy may be removed.

1:1 replacement shall be determined by:

1. Calculating the square footage of the canopy removed
2. Calculating the square footage of the canopy that replacement trees will provide at maturity (for example, a tree with a 40-foot spread at maturity will provide 1,256 square feet of canopy)
3. Total square footage of replacement trees at maturity shall be equal to or greater than the square footage of removed canopy

2. Boulevard Tree Corridors

The City of Belle Plaine has identified specific Boulevard Tree Corridors in which to focus tree planting efforts to maximize the ecological, economic and aesthetic benefits of street trees.

Boulevard tree corridors are areas where the City may plant boulevard trees in suitable locations. After planting abutting property owners will be responsible for watering and trimming trees in boulevard tree corridors. The following have been identified as Boulevard Tree Corridors:

- Hickory Boulevard
- Commerce Dr. W
- South St from Market St to city limits
- Meridian St from Main St to city limits
- State St from Walnut to city limits
- Walnut St from Main St to city limits
- Main St from West St to city limits

A. Boulevard Tree Permit Zones

Boulevard tree permit zones are areas where abutting property owners may submit a permit to a plant tree in the boulevard. Planting locations are subject to approval by the Public Works Superintendent.

The following standards apply:

- Property owners must submit an application on a form provided by the City prior to planting a tree in the boulevard in designated Boulevard Tree Permit Zone.
- Boulevard must be a minimum of four (4) feet wide to be eligible for a planting permit.
 - Boulevards of 4'–5.5' in width may be suitable for small trees.
 - Boulevards of 5.5'–7.5' in width may be suitable for medium trees.
 - Boulevards of greater than 7.5' in width may be suitable for large trees.
- Trees should be planted in the middle of the boulevard.
- Plant trees at least 30 feet from street corners and street lights.
- Plant trees at least 10 feet from driveways.
- Plant trees at least ten (10) feet from fire hydrants and utility boxes.
- Plant trees at least ten (10) feet from any storm drains.
- Plant trees at least ten (10) feet from any buried utility. Property owners should call 811 for utility locates. The most common utilities of concern are the water line and sanitary sewer lines that run to the house from the main line beneath the street. The shutoff valve (curb stop) is often recognizable and can give a rough idea of where the utility lines are located.
- Trees must be separated from other trees. Space minimums between trees:
 - 15 feet for small trees.
 - 25 feet for medium trees.
 - 35 feet for large trees.
- City staff will have the final say on tree placement.
- Overhead and/or underground utilities may eliminate your boulevard from the tree program.
- Watering and trimming are the homeowner's responsibility.

Tree Size	Height	Boulevard Sizes	Distance from Other Trees
Small	Grow up to 30 feet tall	Planted in boulevards 4'–5.5' in width	Planted at least 15 feet away from other trees
Medium	Grow up to 40 feet tall	Planted in boulevards ranging from 5.5'–7.5' in width	Planted at least 25 feet away from other trees
Large	Grow taller than 40 feet	Planted in boulevards wider than 7.5' in width	Planted more than 35 feet away from other trees

Figure 1. City of Belle Plaine Tree Planting Guide

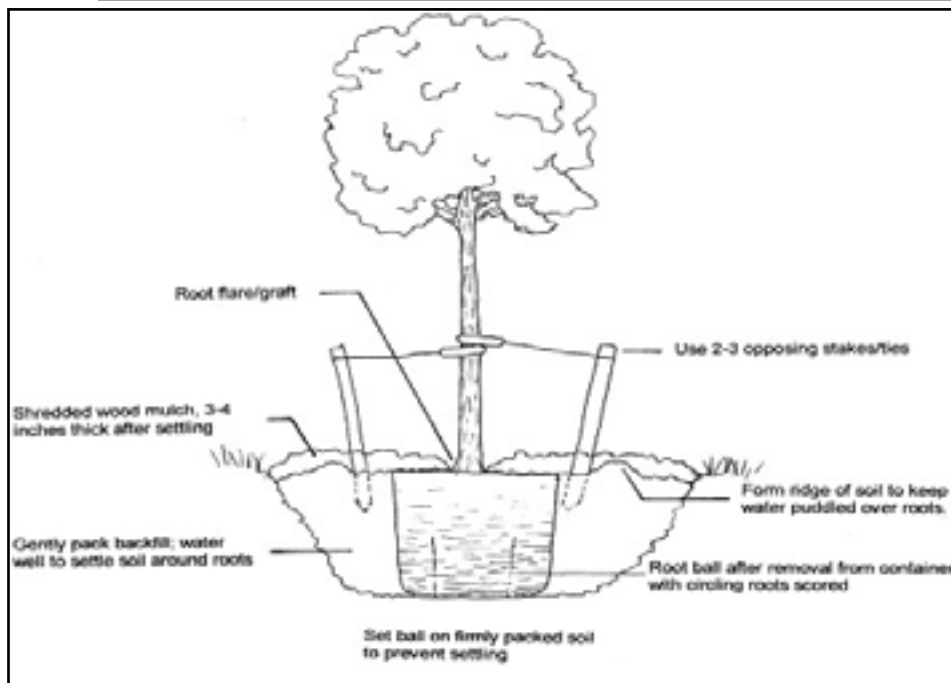
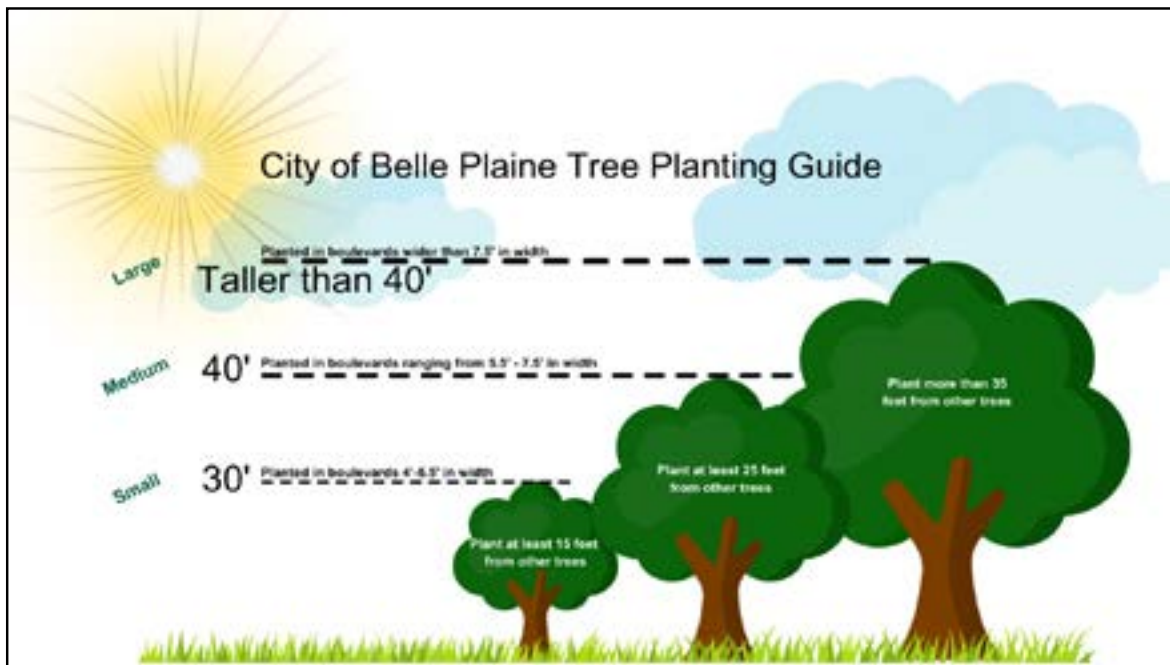


Figure 2. Diagram showing a properly planted tree, with mulch ring and stakes.

3. Tree Planting Guidelines

Planting of trees as regulated by the City Code shall be performed following the standards and applications as outlined in this section. These practices will not be enforced upon those performing work on private property outside of the regulations set-forth by the City Code, but they may serve as an approved reference.

A. CITY CODE

City Code Section 1107.03, SUBD 6 requires trees be planted a minimum of five (5) feet from the property line. The City has no authority to resolve tree related disputes between property owners that do not impact public property.




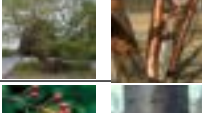
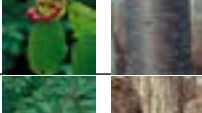



B. PLANTING SPECIFICATIONS

Outlined in this section are specific standards of practice that should be adhered to when planting trees as regulated by the City Code.











All planting should adhere as a minimum practice to ANSI A300 Part 6: Tree, Shrub, and Other Woody Plant Maintenance – Standard Practices (Transplanting) as distributed by the American National Standards Institute and highlighted as Best Management Practices by the International Society of Arboriculture.














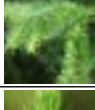






1. Prior to digging, all utilities shall be located and marked in accordance with all Federal, State, and local law.
2. No trees other than those listed in the *Approved Street Tree Planting Guide* shall be planted.
3. All newly installed boulevard trees must meet the American Standard for Nursery Stock. The trees must be free from disease, insects, and any other disfigurements.
4. All trees must be planted following the International Society of Arboriculture’s *Best Management Practices – Tree Planting*.
5. Any planting holes drilled with an auger must have the sides of the holes “roughened” with a shovel to reduce compaction and the effects of “glazed wall”
6. When planting trees, all non-biodegradable material shall be removed from the tree. This includes but is not limited to:
 - i. All rope and twine wrapped around the ball and/or trunk
 - ii. The top 1/3 of burlap shall be cut and removed from the root ball
 - iii. The top 1/3 of any wire baskets shall be cut and removed from the root ball







4. Recommended Trees for Planting

Deciduous Trees			
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Tree Size	Varietal Notes	Example
Basswood/ <i>Tilia americana</i>	Large		
Birch/ <i>Betula spp.</i>	Large	Multiple Varieties	
Ohio Buckeye/ <i>Aesculus glabra</i>	Large		
Burning Bush/ <i>Euonymus alata</i>	Small		
Northern Catalpa/ <i>Catalpa speciosa</i>	Large		
Amur Choke Cherry/ <i>Prunus maackii</i>	Small		
Pin Cherry/ <i>Prunus pennsylvanica</i>	Small		
Kentucky Coffeetree/ <i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>	Large		
Crabapple/ <i>Malus sylvestris</i>	Small	Multiple Varieties	
Pagoda Dogwood/ <i>Cornus alternifolia</i>	Small		
Eastern Wahoo/ <i>Euonymus atropurpureus</i>	Small		
Ginkgo/ <i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Large		
Hackberry/ <i>Cletis accidental</i>	Large	Multiple Varieties	
Thornless Cockspur Hawthorn/ <i>Crataegus crusgalli</i>	Small	Inermis	

Deciduous Trees			
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Tree Size	Varietal Notes	Example
Bitternut Hickory/ <i>Carya cordiformis</i>	Large		
Shagbark Hickory/ <i>Carya ovata</i>	Large		
Honey Locust/ <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	Large	This variety is thorned. Other thornless varieties include: Imperial, Majestic, Skyline, and Sunburst.	
Hornbeam/ <i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	Medium	Ironwood	
Japanese Tree Lilac/ <i>Syringa reticulata</i>	Small		
American Linden/ <i>Tilia americana</i>	Large		
Redmond Linden/ <i>Tilia hybrid</i>	Large		
Crimean Linden/ <i>Tilia x euchlora</i>	Large		
Little Leaf Linden/ <i>Tilia cordata</i>	Large		
Sugar Maple/ <i>Acer saccharum</i>	Large	Multiple Varieties	
Mountain Ash/ <i>Sorbus subg. Sorbus americana</i>	Small	Not an Ash Tree; small tree of a different genus	
Northwoods Red Maple/ <i>Acer rubrum</i>	Large		
Bur Oak/ <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Large		
Bicolor Oak/ <i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Large		
Northern Pin Oak/ <i>Quercus ellipsoidalis</i>	Large		
Ussurian Pear/ <i>Pyrus ussuriensis</i>	Medium		

Deciduous Trees			
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Tree Size	Varietal Notes	Example
Allegheny Serviceberry/ <i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	Medium		 
Smooth Sumac/ <i>Rhus glabra</i>	Small		 
Staghorn Sumac/ <i>Rhus typhina</i>	Small		 
Nannyberry Viburnum/ <i>Viburnum lentago</i>	Small		 
Black Walnut/ <i>Juglans nigra</i>	Large		 

Coniferous Trees			
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Tree Size	Varietal Notes	Example
Red Cedar/ <i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Small		 
White Cedar/ <i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	Large		 
Douglas Fir/ <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	Large	glauca	 
White Fir/ <i>Abies concolor</i>	Large		 
American Larch/ <i>Larix laricina</i>	Large	All larches may be considered for street tree use, in particular in tough sites. They do lose their needles in the Autumn, making them deciduous conifers, which creates a rather coarse winter habit. Japanese Larch is the least Winter hardy; American Larch does the best on wet sites; European Larch has the most refined growth habit; Siberian Larch is an excellent shelterbelt/wind-break tree.	 
European Larch/ <i>Larix decidua</i>	Large		 
Japanese Larch/ <i>Larix kaempferi</i>	Large		 
Siberian Larch/ <i>Larix sibirica</i>	Large		 
Eastern White Pine/ <i>Pinus strobus</i>	Large		 
Jack Pine/ <i>Pinus bankisiana</i>	Large		 

Coniferous Trees			
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Tree Size	Varietal Notes	Example
Pondarosa Pine/ <i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	<i>Large</i>		
Scots Pine/ <i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	<i>Large</i>		
Black Spruce/ <i>Picea mariana</i>	<i>Small</i>		
Black Hills Spruce/ <i>Picea glauca</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>densata</i>	
Norway Spruce/ <i>Picea abies</i>	<i>Large</i>		
White Spruce/ <i>Picea glauca</i>	<i>Large</i>		



5. Prohibited Trees For Planting

Trees within the public right of way (boulevard) are an asset to the City of Belle Plaine and must be maintained as healthy non-hazardous trees. To promote the overall health and well-being of the urban forest, the species listed in this section are prohibited to be planted within the City maintained rights of ways and may be removed at any time by the discretion of the City.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Varietal Notes
Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	
Callery Pear	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	This and all varieties including Bradford pear are prohibited.
Ash species	<i>Fraxinus</i>	All species including the ones native to North America are prohibited.
Black locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	
European Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	
Amur corktree	<i>Phellodendron amurense</i>	
Amur maple	<i>Acer ginnala</i>	
Tatarian maple	<i>Acer tataricum</i>	
Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	
Buckthorns	<i>Rhamnus cathartica & Frangula alnus</i>	
Exotic honeysuckles	<i>Lonicera tartarica, L. morrowii, L. x bella</i>	
Japanese barberry	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	
Russian olive	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	
Siberian elm	<i>Ulmus pumila</i>	
Siberian peashrub	<i>Caragana arborescens</i>	
Autumn Olive		
Mulberry		
Japanese honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	
Bohemian knotweed	<i>Polygonum x bohemicum</i>	
Winged burning bush	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	

These species are recognized as noxious weeds by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

6. Tree Pruning Guidelines

A. PRUNING TREES

Pruning of trees as regulated by the City Code shall be performed following the standards and applications as outlined in this section. These practices will not be enforced upon those performing work on private property outside of the regulation set-forth by the City Code, but they may serve as an approved reference.

Prune limbs to allow 10' overhead clearance and one (1) foot side clearance from nearest edge of sidewalk. Prune limbs to allow at least 14' overhead clearance from streets. Prune dead limbs that could pose danger to people or property.

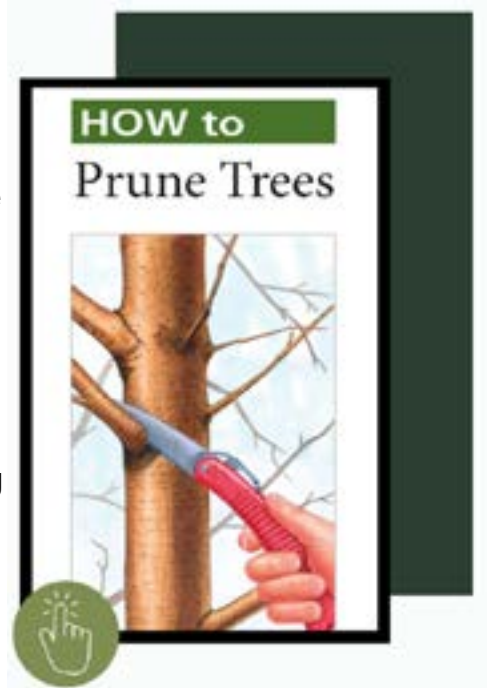
B. PRUNING STANDARDS

Outlined in this section are specific standards of practice that must be adhered to when pruning trees as regulated by the City Code.

All pruning shall adhere as a minimum practice to *ANSI A300 Part 1: Tree, Shrub, and Other Woody Plant Maintenance – Standard Practices (Pruning)* as disturbed by the American National Standards Institute.

As general guidelines the following must be followed while performing City approved maintenance on trees in the right-of-way.

1. All tree work is to be performed by an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist, Municipal Specialist, Board Certified Master Arborist, or Tree Care Industry Council (TCIA) Accredited Certified Tree Care Specialist.
2. All pruning tools must be kept adequately sharp to insure smooth cuts.
3. All tools used on the pruning or removal of trees shall be properly disinfected prior to use on any other tree or plants. Tools shall also be disinfected between pruning infected and unaffected areas in the same tree. Disinfecting can be accomplished by wiping the tools with isopropyl alcohol or 10% bleach to water solution.
4. No spurs, climbing irons, or spike shoes shall be permitted for use on trees, unless the tree is to be removed.
5. Do not prune if boring insects are flying (they are attracted to fresh wounds). Do not prune Oak trees between April 1 and August 30 unless for imminent danger or other safety concerns.
6. All wood pruned/removed from the tree(s) shall be cleaned up and chipped or hauled off the City of Belle Plaine's right-of-way daily. Each jobsite shall be left in "better than arrival" condition. Any holes created in turf area must be repaired by contractor.
7. Absolutely NO TOPPING will be permitted. Branches must be cut back using "Rule of 1/3".



C. PRUNING CATEGORIES

Approved pruning categories have been established for pruning trees found within City Properties, rights of way, and other city maintained areas. The following categories are outlined for use by private residents, City employees, or City contractors working on behalf of Belle Plaine.

8. **Light or Safety Prune** shall consist of the minimum pruning necessary to correct extreme or undesirable conditions that may be hazardous to persons or property.
 - i. Remove all dead and dying branches greater than 3 inches in diameter
 - ii. Remove all broken or loose branches lodged in the trees. Remove all lower limbs that constitute a threat to persons or property, including those that fall within the City clearance standards. (The City discourages removing lower limbs to the point that the trunk exceeds one-third of the height of the tree.)
9. **Medium Prune** may include any or all of the specifications for Minimum pruning, in addition to the following:
 - i. Removal of all dead and dying branches
 - ii. Remove all dead or live branch stubs from previously broken or poorly cut branches
 - iii. Remove any live branches that interfere with the tree's structural strength and healthy development. These are to include:
 - a. Crossed or rubbing branches
 - b. Multiple leaders in a single leader type tree
 - c. Undesirable sucker and sprout growth
 - d. Diseased or infested limbs
 - e. Excessively heavy branch ends
 - f. Multiple branches near the end of broken or stubbed limbs
10. **Heavy Prune** may include any or all of the specification for Medium pruning, in addition to the following:
 - i. Inspection for health conditions
 - ii. Crown thinning
 - iii. Crown shaping
 - iv. Crown restoration
 - v. Up to 20% of the canopy may be removed

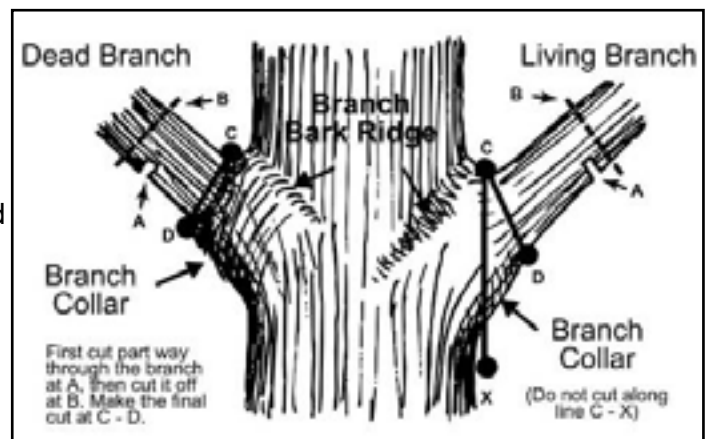


Figure 3. Diagram showing Pruning Hardwoods to Protect Branch Collars.

All Pruning shall be performed by using the “Three Cut Method”. This method is the removal of a limb using a 3-cut process to protect the branch collar. The first two cuts remove the weight of the branch. This prevents the bark from ripped away from the trunk at and below the branch collar.

1. The **first cut** is an undercut about 1/4 through the branch made upward from the bottom of the branch about one or two inches farther out than the collar.
2. The **second cut** is a downward cut just outside the undercut that actually removes the entire branch, eliminating the weight of the branch before making the final natural target cut.
3. The **third cut** is the natural target cut. The remaining portion of stub is removed with a cut made just outside of the branch collar tissue.

D. PROHIBITED PRACTICES

TOPPING or CROWN REDUCTION

All pruning shall be completed with the “rule of 1/3”. The reduction of the crown by “topping” branches will not be permitted. The pruning of limbs shall be performed by pruning back to a lateral no less than 1/3 of the diameter of limb being pruned. Heading cuts will not be permitted.

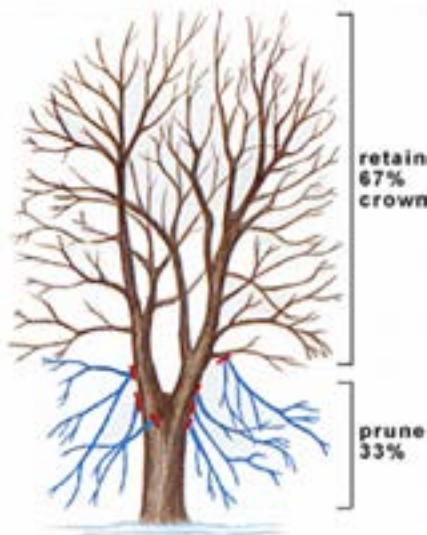


Figure 4. (Above)
Pruning Practices for Structure, Shape, and Canopy Reduction. The trunk shall be no more than one-third the tree height.



Figure 5. (Above)
Crown Reduction



Figure 6. (Above)
Crown Thinning

7. Resident Tree Care Information



8. Trees and Construction

Appendix A.

Applicable City Code (Ordinances)

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SECTION 1107.03 SCREENING AND LANDSCAPING.

1107.03 SUBD. 1. SCREENING, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL.

All commercial and industrial uses abutting and/or adjacent to a residential district shall be required to provide screening according to this Section. All fencing and screening specifically required by this Ordinance shall be subject to Subdivision 1104.03 (2) of this Section and shall consist of either a fence or a green belt planting strip as provided for below:

1. A green belt planting strip shall consist of evergreen trees and/or deciduous trees and plants and shall be of sufficient width and density to provide an effective visual screen. This planting strip shall be designed to provide complete visual screening to a minimum height of six (6) feet. Earth mounding or beams may be used, but shall not be used to achieve more than three (3) feet of the required screening. The planting plan and type of plantings shall require the approval of the Council.
2. Planting in excess of six (6) feet in height shall require approval of the Zoning Administrator and the Building Official.
3. A required screening fence shall be constructed of masonry, brick, or wood. Such fence shall provide a solid screening effect six (6) feet in height. The design and materials used in constructing a required screening fence shall be subject to the approval of the City Council. Fences exceeding six (6) feet in height, or a variation from the requirements of this Section, shall require a conditional use permit.

1107.03 SUBD. 2 LOCATION AND SCREENING OF REFUSE.

1. All refuse and refuse handling equipment, including but not limited to garbage cans and dumpsters, shall be stored within the principal structure, within an accessory building, or totally screened from eye-level view for all uses, except for residential structures with four (4) dwelling units or less.
2. Screening shall be at least six (6) feet in height, constructed of brick, block, or wood, and compatible with the principal structure. Accessory structures shall comply with minimum setback requirements. All dumpsters and trash handling equipment shall be kept in a good state of repair with tight-fitting lids to prevent spilling of debris.

1107.03 SUBD. 3. LANDSCAPING; GENERAL RESIDENTIAL.

The lot area remaining after providing for off-street parking, off-street loading, sidewalks, driveways, building site and/or other requirements shall be landscaped using ornamental grasses, shrubs, trees or other acceptable vegetation or treatment generally used in landscaping within one (1) year following the date of building occupancy. Fences or trees placed upon utility easements are subject to removal, if required for the maintenance or improvement of the utility. Trees on utility easements containing overhead wires shall not exceed twenty (20) feet in height.

1107.03 SUBD. 4. LANDSCAPING, ALL USES. (Excluding residential structures containing less than four (4) dwelling units).

Prior to approval of a building permit, all above referenced uses shall be subject to mandatory landscape plan and specification requirements. Said landscape plan should be developed with an emphasis upon the following areas:

1. The boundary or perimeter of the proposed site at points adjoining other property and the immediate perimeter of the structure;
2. All landscaping incorporated in said plan shall conform to the standards and criteria listed in Subdivision 4 of this Section.

1107.03 SUBD. 5. TYPE AND SIZE OF PLANTS.

All plants must at least equal the following minimum size:

Potted/Bare Root or Balled and Burlapped

- Small Trees (as defined in the Tree Manual) 1½ inch diameter
- Medium and Large Trees (as defined in the Tree Manual) 2 inch diameter
- Evergreen Trees 3 - 4 feet
- Tall Shrubs & Hedge Material (Evergreen or Deciduous) 3 - 4 feet
- Low Shrubs - Deciduous 24 - 30 inches
- Evergreen 24 - 30 inches
- Spreading Evergreens 18 - 24 inches

Type and mode are dependent upon time of planting season, availability, and site conditions (soils, climate, ground water, manmade irrigation, grading, etc.)

1107.03 SUBD 6. SPACING.

1. Plant material centers shall not be located closer than five (5) feet from the fence line or property line and shall not be planted to conflict with public plantings based on the judgment of City staff. Shade trees shall not be located closer than five feet (5') to any public sidewalk, street, or walkway.
2. Where plant materials are planted in two (2) or more rows, plantings shall be staggered in rows unless otherwise approved by the City staff.
3. Deciduous trees shall be planted not more than forty (40) feet apart.
4. Where massing of plants or screening is intended, large deciduous shrubs shall not be planted more than four (4) feet on center, and/or evergreen shrubs shall not be planted more than three (3) feet on center.

1107.03 SUBD 7. TYPES OF NEW TREES.

Plantings, suitable trees are identified in the Belle Plaine Tree Manual, "Recommended Trees For Planting" or the Tree Manual supplemental document "City of Belle Plaine Recommended Trees". Trees identified in the Tree Manual as prohibited for planting shall not be planted.

1107.03 SUBD. 8. DESIGN.

1. The landscape plan must show some form of designed site amenities (i.e., composition of plant materials, and/or creative grading, decorative lighting, exterior sculpture, etc., which are largely intended for aesthetic purposes).
2. All areas within the property lines (or beyond, if site grading extends beyond) shall be treated. All exterior areas not paved or designated as roads, parking or storage, must be planted into ornamental vegetation (lawns, ground covers or shrubs) unless otherwise approved by the Zoning Administrator.
3. Turf slopes in excess of 2:1 are prohibited.
4. All ground areas under the building roof overhang must be treated with a decorative mulch and/or foundation planting.

5. All buildings must have an exterior water spigot to ensure that landscape maintenance can be accomplished.

1107.03 SUBD. 9. LANDSCAPE GUARANTEE.

All new plants shall be guaranteed for two (2) full years from the time planting has been completed. All plants shall be alive and in satisfactory growth at the end of the guarantee period or be replaced.

1107.03 SUBD. 10. MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT.

All mechanical equipment such as air conditioning units, etc., erected on the roof of any structure, shall be screened so as not to be visible.

(Ord. 14-06, Section 1107.03, Adopted October 20, 2014)

(Ord. 23-05, Adopted October 16, 2023)

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1109.05. TREE AND WOODLAND PRESERVATION

1. Structures and other amenities shall be located in such a manner that the optimum number of trees shall be preserved.
2. Prior to the granting of a building permit, it shall be the duty of the person seeking the permit to identify existing trees on the lot on their site plan. Trees may be removed within a twenty-five (25) foot radius of the building pad perimeters and from the planned driveway. Any additional trees removed shall be replaced on a 1:1 canopy ratio. When subdividing land, developers may remove up to a combined total of twenty-five (25) percent of the trees for rights-of-way, grading, and streets. Any additional trees removed shall be replaced on a 1:1 canopy ratio. The 1:1 canopy ratio shall be determined by:
 - a. Calculating the total square footage of the tree canopy to be removed.
 - b. Calculating the total square footage of the canopy that replacement trees will provide at maturity.
 - c. The total square footage of the replacement trees at maturity shall be equal to or greater than the square footage of removed tree canopy
3. Forestation, reforestation or landscaping shall utilize a variety of tree species and shall not utilize any species under disease epidemic. Species planted shall comply with landscaping requirements outlined in this Ordinance section.
4. Development including grading and contouring shall take place in such a manner that the root zone aeration stability of existing trees shall not be affected and shall provide existing trees with a watering area equal to not less than one-half (1/2) the crown area.
5. The provisions of this Section shall not apply to the following:
 - a. The removal of trees from commercial nurseries or horticulture properties such as tree farms, orchards or commercial forests. This exception shall not be interpreted to include lumber harvesting incidental to imminent development of land.

- b. The removal of trees on public rights-of-way conducted by or on behalf of a federal, state, county, municipal or other governmental agency in pursuance of its lawful activities or functions in the construction or improvement of public rights-of-way.
- c. The removal of trees deemed by the City to be diseased, dying or dead.
- d. The removal of any tree that has become or threatens to become a danger to human life or property.
- e. The removal of any tree by a public utility when such a tree has the reasonable potential of endangering the facilities operated by the utility.

(Ord. 23-05, Section 1109.05(2), Adopted October 16, 2023)

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SECTION 606.00 TREE CARE AND MAINTENANCE

606.01 FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

The City of Belle Plaine recognizes the value of a healthy urban forest to its residents and visitors. The City finds trees provide many benefits, including but not limited to:

- a. Protecting against wind and water erosion,
- b. Providing a natural buffer between land uses,
- c. Supplying shade and insulation that increases energy conservation,
- d. Sequestering of carbon emissions,
- e. Providing habitat for wildlife,
- f. Improving privacy and increasing livability

The City will continue to work to enhance, preserve, and protect the urban forest within its boundaries by promoting and establishing the growth of new trees, ensuring proper and adequate tree maintenance, and monitoring the removal of public trees.

The purpose of this Section is to provide regulations and standards for the planting, maintenance, and removal of shade trees within the City.

606.02 DEFINITIONS

PARK TREES – “Park Trees” are trees, shrubs, bushes, and all other woody vegetation in public parks having individual names, and all areas owned by the City or to which the public has free access as a park.

SIGNIFICANT TREE – “Significant Trees” are any tree of a species not prohibited in the City of Belle Plaine which are in fair or better condition and over: Six (6) inches in diameter at breast height for hardwood trees; Eight (8) inches in diameter at breast height for softwood trees; or Twelve (12) feet in height for conifers.

STREET TREES – “Street Trees” are trees, shrubs, bushes, and all other woody vegetation which have been or will be planted in a public right-of-way by the City at the direction of the Tree Care Manager/City Forester. “Right-of-Way” is as defined in Section 605.03 of the City Code, as may be amended.

TREE CARE MANAGER/CITY FORESTER – The “Tree Care Manager/City Forester” is a person or persons certified by the Minnesota Commission of Agriculture to plan, direct, and supervise all requirements for controlling shade tree diseases throughout the City. The Superintendent of Public Works and authorized assigns shall be the Tree Care Manager/City Forester.

TREE SIZES – A “Small Tree” is any plant material that will grow to a maximum height or spread of thirty (30) feet; a “Medium Tree” is any plant material that will grow to a maximum height or spread of thirty-one (31) to and including forty (40) feet; a “Large Tree” is any plant material that will grow to a maximum height or spread of over forty (40) feet.

606.03 TREE CARE MANAGER/CITY FORESTER DUTIES

The Tree Care Manager/City Forester shall study, investigate, counsel, develop, and administer plans for the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal, or disposition of trees and shrubs, in parks, along public rights-of-way, and in other public areas. The Tree Care Manager/City Forester shall also administer the shade tree disease control programs for the city in accordance with the city code and best practices.

606.04 TREE PLANTING

Subd. 1. Planting on Public Property. A permit is required for planting trees in “Boulevard Tree Permit Zones” as provided in Section 606.07 of the City Code as may be amended. No species may be planted on public property that are not included on the Belle Plaine Tree Manual, “Recommended Trees For Planting” or the Tree Manual supplemental document “City of Belle Plaine Recommended Trees”. Trees identified in the Tree Manual as prohibited for planting shall not be planted. The Tree Care Manager/City Forester shall assure all plantings and requests for planting include species that are appropriate.

Subd. 2. Tree Spacing. The spacing of Street Trees shall be in accordance with tree species size classes. Typical tree spacing minimums shall be: small trees, 30 feet; Medium Trees, 40 feet; Large Trees 50 feet, except as approved by the Tree Care Manager/City Forester.

Subd. 3. Drainage and Utilities. Plantings within drainage and utility easements are subject to approval of the Tree Care Manager/City Forester. In general, if trees are proposed, only Small Trees will be considered, and trees must not be planted under or over any existing utility line or within ten feet thereof.

Subd. 4. Tree Placement.

- a. Trees planted in the Right-Of-Way (Boulevard). All trees planted within the public right-of-way (boulevard) shall meet the provisions of Section 606.07 of the City Code as may be amended.
- b. Trees planted on Private Property. The center of trees planted on private property shall be no closer than five feet (5') from any property line, public sidewalk, street, or walkway.

606.05. TREE CARE

Subd. 1. Care of Trees in Rights-of-Way. The City may plant, prune, maintain, and remove trees, plants, and shrubs within public rights-of-way and other public property. No other planting may be done without consent of the Tree Care Manager/City Forester. The Tree Care Manager/City Forester shall have control and supervision over all shrubs and trees upon, or overhanging all streets or other public property and rights-of-way.

Subd. 2. Removal of Trees Endangering Utilities or Other Public Improvements. The Tree Care Manager/City Forester may remove, order removal of, or authorize removal of any tree or part thereof which is in an unsafe condition or which by reason of its nature is determined to be potentially injurious to utilities or other public improvements. The Tree Care Manager/City Forester may also remove or authorize removal of a tree that is affected with any injurious fungus, insect, or other pest. Trees overhanging rights-of-way may be pruned to remove obstructions and to provide clear space.

Subd. 3. Trees on Private Property. Pursuant to Chapter Four of the City Code, the Tree Care Manager/City Forester has the authority to trim or remove or order the trimming and removal of trees, shrubs, or plants upon private property when such action is necessary to mitigate hazards, provide for the public's safety, or to prevent the spread of disease or insects. The City has no authority to resolve tree related disputes between private property owners.

Subd. 4. Tree Topping. It is unlawful for any entity to remove, alter, destroy, or top any Street Tree, Park Tree, or other tree on public property without authorization of the Tree Care Manager/City Forester. Topping is defined as the severe cutting back of limbs to stubs larger than three inches in diameter within the tree's crown, to such a degree as to remove the normal canopy and disfigure the tree.

Subd. 5. Required Clearances. Property owners shall ensure trees on private property and trees planted in Boulevard Tree Permit Zones, whether or not a permit was issued, are pruned to maintain the following:

- a. Ten foot (10') overhead clearance and one (1) foot side clearance from nearest edge of a public sidewalk.
- b. Fourteen foot (14') overhead clearance from a public right-of-way, including a street or alley.
- c. Removal of dead limbs, branches, and whole trees that pose danger to people or property.

Subd. 6. Hazardous Trees. A tree is potentially hazardous when it has a structural defect likely to cause failure of all or part of the tree which could strike a “target.” A target can be a vehicle, building, or a place where people gather such as a park bench, picnic table, street, or backyard. Structural defects to trees include: deadwood, cracks, weak branch unions, decay, cankers, root problems, and poor tree architecture. A tree with defects is not hazardous, however, unless some portion of it is within striking distance of a target. The Tree Care Manager/City Forester take immediate action to mitigate hazardous trees when: broken branches or tree top is lodged in a tree; a tree is dead as determined by the Tree Care Manager/City Forester, and if a branch is dead and of sufficient size to cause injury.

606.06. BOULEVARD TREE CORRIDORS

Boulevard tree corridors are areas where City may plant boulevard trees in suitable locations. After planting abutting property owners will be responsible for watering and trimming trees in boulevard tree corridors. The following have been identified as Boulevard Tree Corridors:

- a. Hickory Boulevard
- b. Commerce Drive West
- c. Meridian Street South from Main Street to southern corporate limits
- d. State Street West from Walnut Street to western corporate limits
- e. Walnut Street North from Main Street to northern corporate limits
- f. Main Street from West Street to eastern corporate limits

606.07. BOULEVARD TREE PERMIT ZONES

Subd. 1. Boulevard Tree Permit Zones are areas where property owners abutting a public street right-of-way may plant a tree in boulevard.

Subd. 2. Permit Required. A permit is required for tree planting in Boulevard Tree Permit Zones. Permits and planting locations are subject to approval by the Tree Care Manager/City Forester.

Subd. 3. Boulevard Tree Permit Zone planting requirements.

- a. Boulevards must be a minimum of four (4) feet wide to be eligible for a Boulevard Tree Permit Zone planting permit. Boulevards of four to five and a half feet (4'-5.5') in width may be suitable Small Trees. Boulevards of five and a half to seven and a half feet (5.5'-7.5') in width may be suitable for Medium Trees. Boulevards of greater than seven and a half feet (7.5') in width may be suitable for Large Trees.
- b. Trees shall be planted on a line equal-distant from the established inside curb line and the established sidewalk or property line. In all cases the largest tree suitable for the space should be utilized unless otherwise authorized by the Tree Care Manager/City Forester.

- c. The center of the tree shall be at least thirty (30) feet from street corners and street lights.
- d. The center of trees being planted shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet from any driveway, fire hydrant, utility box, storm drain, overhead utility, or buried utility, including water and sanitary sewer service lines.
- e. Trees must be separated from other trees. Space minimums between trees:
 - i. 30 feet for small trees.
 - ii. 40 feet for medium trees.
 - iii. 50 feet for large trees.
- f. Boulevard Tree Permit Zone permit holders are responsible for tree watering and trimming after planting.

606.08 PENALTY

Any person, firm, or corporation who violates any portion of this Section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, thereto, the costs of prosecution may be imposed upon the defendant, and the Court shall order restitution to the City for damage to the tree or property.

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