

Tree Selection Guidelines

Purpose: To illustrate the various considerations necessary to properly select trees for installation within the City of Allentown Right-of-way. To serve as a guide for property owners, developers, and contractors to use in preparation of tree planting permits. To substantiate recommendations and directives given by the Shade Tree Commission concerning, plan review, permit consideration, and/or planting or replacement planting projects.

General

1. **Urban Forestry Management Plan** – local, regional and/or city-wide planting plans may exist which have been adopted into an Urban Forestry Management Plan and will aid in the proper selection and planting of trees for your project. Consult with the superintendent of Parks or designee to find out if a plan has been developed for your area.
2. **Local Context** – in effort to maintain consistency where warranted, introduce variety where needed, and/or avoid particular problems, It is important to observe the species, spacing, position and health of existing trees within the right-of-way near or adjacent to the proposed planting site(s).
3. **Site Context** – the immediate context for each proposed tree should be evaluated for solar exposure, overhead wires/clearance, canopy area, root zone, available moisture, winter salt exposure. Consideration should be given to particular tree species that have characteristics favorable to adapt to site contextual conditions.
4. **Essential Benefit** – while trees within the street right-of-way provide numerous benefits, the basic purpose is to provide shade upon paved surfaces within the city to prolong the life cycle of pavements and reduce the thermal pollution of storm water in turn keeping our creeks, stream and rivers healthier. Tree selection should maximize this benefit potential.
5. **Aesthetic Benefit** – street trees enhance the beauty of our city. Tree selections should also consider design elements such as scale, proportion, foliage color and texture, branching habit and structure just to name a few.

Prohibited Trees

For the purpose of avoiding public nuisance, environmental hazards, and to ensure public safety, the Shade Tree Commission has identified the following trees as prohibitive from planting within the Public Right-of-way: (It is also advisable to avoid planting on private property for similar reasons)

American Elm (except Dutch elm disease-resistant cultivars)
American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
Ash (*Fraxinus* species)
Birch (*Betula* species)
Box elder (*Acer negundo*)
Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*)
Crabapple (*Malus* species)
Flowering Pear (*Pyrus* species)
Ginkgo – female (*Ginkgo biloba* –female)
Hawthorne (*Gleditsia* species - except thornless varieties)

Mulberry (*Morus* species)
Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)
Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*)
Poplar/Aspen (*Populus* species)
Russian Olive (*Elaeagnus* species)
Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
Walnut (*Juglans* species)
Willow (*Salix* species)
Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*)
Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)

The Superintendent of Parks and the Shadetree Commission reserve the right to prohibit additional trees as necessary and warranted both city-wide and/or at the localized street or neighborhood level.