

Landmark Trees

Large, old, picturesque, rare, well-located, or otherwise special and interesting trees play an important role in the character of individual properties, and in the fabric of the City as a whole. All the trees in the City together have positive effects on the climate of the City, on its ability to attract and sustain wildlife, and on its visual beauty.

A. Identification

1. Trees which qualify as Natural Features are, generally speaking, any tree larger than 24 inches in Diameter at Breast Height and any tree of a size listed on the Landmark Tree List (See Table 5.23-1).
2. Large trees in natural areas (native forest fragments or forested Wetlands or Floodplain forest fragments) will often qualify as Landmark Trees.

B. Landmark Tree List

C. Protection Priorities

1. Highest concern

The most important Landmark Trees to protect are ones which are rare, unusual, old or historically significant. Certain trees may play a special role in the visual resources of a Site or an area. If the trees are native to Ann Arbor (known to have grown here in 1824), they are particularly important to protect.

2. Midlevel concern

Trees which are mature, late succession species, provide wildlife habitat or visual screening, represent good diversity of species, have interesting flowers or other features, or are in proximity to a native forest fragment and are related to it.

3. Lowlevel concern

Pioneer species of Woody Plants arising on Sites with highly disturbed soils, trees and shrubs not native to the region and known to be invasive (seeding prolifically and naturalizing into the neighborhood or into natural areas). Generally speaking, a fine quality planted landscape can be more valuable in the long term, and more appealing to more people in the short term than many pioneer Woodlands in the City.

D. Protection Measures

1. All tree roots are vulnerable to disturbance, and some species are more so than others. All construction activity (including the effects on soil moisture and drainage of Grading changes in the area) should be excluded from the Critical Root Zone of trees to be preserved according to submitted plans. These activities should be avoided to prevent and minimize damage or destruction of tree roots, threatening the life of trees: Soil compaction from vehicle and machine parking and traffic, excavation or Filling, storage of materials, Grading changes that affect soil moisture in the root zone at any time, and insensitive landscape design and installation techniques (including irrigation).
2. Activities which help prevent and minimize damage or destruction

to roots are encouraged, including the placement of utilities under pavement instead of under trees; tunneling utilities under trees instead of trenching; using granular material when placing modest amounts of soil over roots; excavating by hand; and keeping equipment and vehicles away from the Critical Root Zone.

3. Barrier fencing shall be installed at the limits of the Critical Root Zone for Landmark Trees. Barrier fencing shall be a minimum of four feet in height and shall remain in place in good condition until authorized to be removed. No filling, excavating, storage or trespass by Person or machine shall take place within the fenced area.
4. Any protected Landmark Trees that are determined by PSA Administrator to be dead, dying or severely damaged due to on-site construction activities within three years after issuance of a certificate of occupancy or final permit approval for development authorized by an approved site plan, PUD site plan, or plat shall be replaced by the property owner in the amount specified in the requirements for mitigation of Landmark Trees. If the site plan, PUD site plan, or plat has been compiled with, replacement shall be at the lesser rate. If the site plan, PUD site plan or plat has not been complied with, replacement shall be at the greater rate.

E. Mitigation.

1. A replacement tree or a combination of trees of a species native to Michigan shall be provided to equal a minimum of 50% of the original DBH for each Landmark Tree that is removed. Replacement trees shall be non-sterile varieties. The minimum size of deciduous replacement tree shall be one inch caliper. The minimum size of an evergreen replacement tree shall be five feet in height. If more than 20 replacement trees are required, a mixture of three or more species must be used.
2. A replacement tree or a combination of trees of a species native to Michigan shall be provided to equal a minimum of 200% of the original DBH for each Landmark Tree that is removed without the approval required by this chapter.
3. Mitigation shall be provided on the same Site as the removed Landmark Trees to the maximum extent feasible as space and long-term tree health allow. Where mitigation cannot be accomplished on the Site, all or part of the mitigation may be provided on public land within the City if approved as part of the site plan or plat.
4. Disturbed areas to be reestablished shall be planted with species native to Michigan and characteristics of the plant communities of the area before disturbance.

F. Guidelines for Best Mitigation Practices

1. Required or desired replacement should include the most appropriate, non-invasive species as part of the project design. Replacement requirements include using species native to Michigan, and a diversity of species in a range of sizes. Where trees are taken from a natural area, it is the natural area which should be replaced or restored at some other location- involving much more than just tree planting. Trees

which go into such a project may need to be smaller in size to find enough of the species needed to make a viable start to creating an ecosystem.

2. Replacement trees need a chance to become as great as the trees they replace. Genuine concern for soils and cultural needs of new plants should be a part of the design process. Many species of trees will never thrive in compacted, Fill soils or in conditions not suitable for their optimum growth. Recognition of these realities is critical to successful replacement.
3. Where it is not possible to install the number of trees required, alternate mitigation plans may be developed – including active management or restoration of natural areas on the Site, planting of trees on public land elsewhere in the City, additional storm water controls beyond that required and of help with Flooding conditions on the Site or in the watershed, donation of public land on the Site or elsewhere, etc.