



Landscaping Guidelines FAQs

What is a Shade Tree or Conifer Tree?

A Shade Tree or Conifer Tree refers to one of the tree species listed on the City Tree List. A shade tree, also referred to as an overstory tree, is a tree that attains a height of twenty-five (25) feet or greater, grown primarily to provide shade. Species of oak, birch, and maple trees are all examples of shade trees. Some species of trees are not on the list because they do not reach a large enough mature canopy size to provide significant environmental benefits, have not been surviving well in the area, are prone to insects and disease issues, becoming invasive in natural areas, create a public nuisance, or have the potential to become a public hazard. Conifer trees, also known as evergreen trees, include species such as pine, spruce, and cedar. Cultivars of Conifer Trees must reach a mature canopy height of twenty (20) feet or larger to meet the tree landscaping requirement.

Can I plant a crabapple or other small flowering tree as one of two my trees for the landscaping requirement?

No, a crabapple or a small flowering tree is not a Shade Tree or Conifer Tree and does not meet the requirement for the Final Grade and Landscaping Guidelines. It does not reach a large enough mature size to qualify as a Shade Tree. You can plant a crabapple or small ornamental tree or shrub **in addition** to the two (2) required Shade Trees and/or Conifer Trees.

What does 2 ½ inch caliper mean?

2 ½ inch caliper refers to the trunk diameter of a tree six (6) inches above the top of the root ball.

There are established/preserved trees on the lot, am I required to plant an additional two trees?

No. If there are established trees preserved during the construction of the lot, planting additional trees is not required. Go to the Tree Preservation webpage for more information about the City's tree preservation program.

My rear and/or side yard is adjacent to a street and trees were planted along those sides. Do these trees count towards the landscaping requirement?

No. These trees were required to be planted as a condition of the development of the subdivision and are intended to provide a landscape buffer screen to the adjacent street. The buffer yard trees do not count towards the lot landscaping requirement.

My yard is too small for a mature shade tree, what can I planting to fit my planting space?

Different tree species and cultivars (a variety produced in cultivation by selective breeding) have different mature canopy widths and heights. There are several trees with cultivars that have smaller mature canopies that are better suited to a smaller yard. Ask your local nursery for ideas and if they are not on the list, call Forestry staff to discuss the tree(s) you are interested in planting.

I have overhead wires adjacent to my property, what can I plant on my property?

If you have overhead wires adjacent to your property, contact your electrical company to determine what species are allowed to be planted and within what distance from the adjacent wires.

Dakota County Electric:

<https://www.dakotaelectric.com/member-services/trees-power-lines/>

Xcel Energy:

https://www.xcelenergy.com/customer_support/vegetation_management

How do I correctly plant a tree or know if my contractor planted it correctly?

There are several steps that are most important when planting a tree to increase the likelihood of tree establishment and future tree health. These things include removing any burlap, twine, or wire from the top third of the root ball (for ball and burlap trees), box-cutting or removing circling and girdling roots (especially for container trees), exposing the top of the root ball to the root flare or first woody root and planting the tree so that root is at ground level and mulching the tree with several inches of wood or bark mulch covering the root system evenly. Below is a specification for correctly planting a tree. For more information, visit the MN DNR page: [Residential tree planting and care - tree planting and care | Minnesota DNR \(state.mn.us\)](#)

Central leader. (See crown observations detail).

Trunk caliper shall meet ANSI Z60 current edition for root ball size.

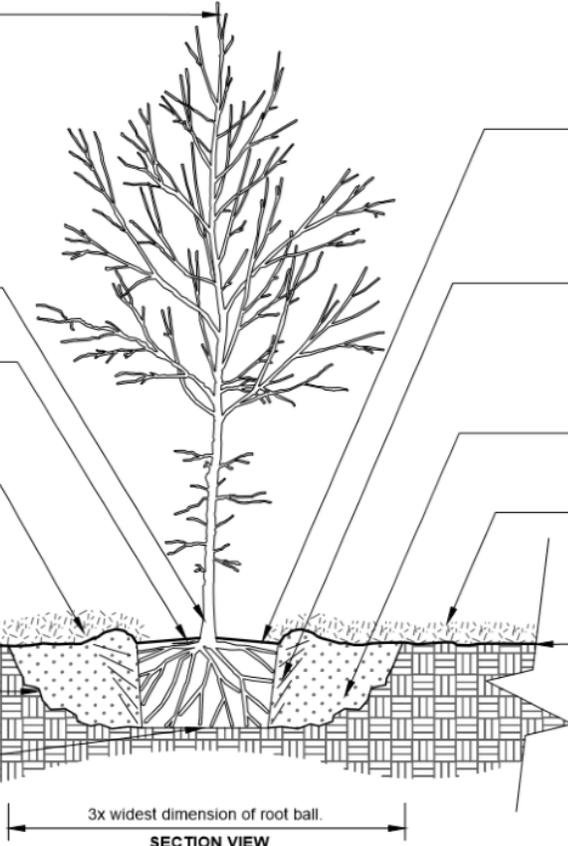
Root ball modified as required.

Round-topped soil berm 4" high x 8" wide above root ball surface shall be constructed around the root ball. Berm shall begin at root ball periphery.

Existing soil.

Slope sides of loosened soil.

Bottom of root ball rests on existing or recompacted soil.



Top of root ball shall be flush with finished grade.

Prior to mulching, lightly tamp soil around the root ball in 6" lifts to brace tree. Do not over compact. When the planting hole has been backfilled, pour water around the root ball to settle the soil.

Loosened soil. Dig and turn the soil to reduce compaction to the area and depth shown.

4" layer of mulch. No more than 1" of mulch on top of root ball. (See specifications for mulch).

Finished grade.

Notes:
 1- Trees shall be of quality prescribed in crown observations and root observations details and specifications.

2- See specifications for further requirements related to this detail.

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TREE w/ BERM (EXISTING SOIL NOT MODIFIED)