

Tree Maintenance and Preservation

In a Nutshell

Tree maintenance and preservation are a collection of activities aimed at prolonging the life of trees and bushes. While planting trees is the more popular activity, maintaining and protecting trees is just as important, if not more important in the grand scheme of things. Protecting mature trees during development will provide environmental benefits and increase the value of the developed land.

The “How To”



immediately after a tree is planted. In fact, no tree should be planted without a planting taking place in a heavily forested area. Proper watering and mulching are age or kill trees when done improperly. The Missouri Department of Agriculture has instructions on pruning various types of trees. Structural pruning should be done best left to professional, such as arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture. [This site](#) has more information on tree care and how to find a certified arborist.

Protecting trees during development is a complex process that differs for each tree. Many times trees are spared from the bulldozer during construction only to die 5-10 years later, usually due to significant root damage. Trees that are structurally unsound should be removed or they become a significant liability and a more costly removal once construction is complete.

Tree fertilization is very important to the life of a tree as well. Tree fertilization is often done improperly. Before putting fertilizer down, a soil test should be administered on the soil. University of Missouri [Extension](#) and University of Illinois [Extension](#) can test soil.

Planning & Zoning

Several local communities have ordinances that require tree protection during development (or redevelopment). Ordinances that encourage offsetting the removal of mature trees/wooded tracts with new planting do not realize the economic benefit to preserving mature trees. Prime examples include the [City of Lake Saint Louis](#) (Sec. 245.040), and the [City of Website Groves](#). The latter also has a manual of best practices concerning trees.

Dollars & Cents

As mentioned previously, mature trees offer significantly greater environmental benefits over small trees. Thanks to ongoing research, these values can be quantified by the i-Tree software suite: www.itreetools.com. The value of using Conservation Development over traditional development can be found here: http://www.landchoices.org/conservationsubs/advnt_consubs_devel.htm.

Measuring Success

The International Society of Arboriculture has a great [article](#) on developing and monitoring tree ordinances. On page 150, they have guidelines for proper record keeping of trees. On page 163, there is information on how to solicit citizen feedback through surveys and interviews on how a tree program is going. Both of these forms are measure are very good indicators of how your community's tree maintenance and preservation program is going.

Case Studies

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri Tree Canopy Coverage Study

Contact

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