Street Trees

In a Nutshell

Street trees are trees planted along the side of streets. Benefits include reduction in the heat island affect, improved property values, increase in shaded area and safer transit. In recent years cities have enacted laws requiring street trees and establishing other provisions.

The “How To”

A community or individual looking to plant street trees can use several different types of trees. St. Louis City has a long list of trees that are used as a street trees. The list is not exhaustive, but it is extensive. The City of Brentwood has a smaller list of suggested street trees. The City of Collinsville, IL, has a tree ordinance that promotes native tree species and prohibits the use of invasive species.

Planning & Zoning

The City of St. Louis established an ordinance in 2010 relating to the planting of street trees and the regulations around which trees are planted in the city.

The City of Creve Coeur has an excellent street tree planting program. For residents who want to purchase a street tree, the city will pay half and the citizen will pay half.

The City of Collinsville, IL updated its tree ordinance in August of 2022. Updates to the ordinance include promoting native species and prohibiting invasive species and the addition of a Tree Advisory Board. Click here to view the staff report that accompanied the ordinance.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources provides a Sample Tree Ordinance.

Dollars & Cents

Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) grants from the Missouri Department of Conservation are one source of funding for city tree programs.

There are numerous benefits to having trees along streets. Benefits include reducing storm water runoff and erosion, shading pedestrians and buildings to lower energy bills, improving air quality, increasing home values, and even lowering the average driving speed.

Costs for street trees vary depending a number of variables, including current landscape, type of tree being planted and how many trees are being planted. The City of Creve Coeur for instance spends about $270 per tree it plants for residents. The cost of those trees is split between the city and resident.

Discover More

The St. Louis Great Streets Initiative includes the planting of street trees. Information on this process can be found here.