

CITY OF  
**Iowa Falls**  
*The Scenic City*

Tree Board Spring Information Sheet:  
Tree Planting Edition



## WANT TO PLANT A TREE?

### DO I NEED A PERMIT?

Yes, **if** you are planting the tree on public land -- this includes the right-of-way between the sidewalk and the street; this area between the sidewalk and the street is also called “the parking”. Trees planted in “the parking” are referred to as “street trees”.

### HOW DO I GET A PERMIT?

Find an application at City Hall or on the city’s website: *cityofiowafalls.com*. Once returned to City Hall, the application will be considered by the Tree Board. If approved, you’re ready to plant your tree or trees!

### WHEN’S THE BEST TIME TO PLANT?

The best times are spring and early fall. So now is the time to plan for a spring planting!

### WHAT AND WHO ARE THE TREE BOARD?

The City of Iowa Falls established the Tree Board in June of 1991 to provide assistance to the community in areas of planning, planting, and care of trees. Five Iowa Falls citizens are appointed to the board for 3-year terms. Currently the Tree Board is:

Mick Parker, chair

Sandy Foland

Teresa Birdwell

Jim Herzog

Kevin Seidl

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TREE PLANTING AND TREES?

1. See the Street Tree Planting Process on the next page.

2. Check out the Tree Board’s page for more information including City code concerning trees:

*cityofiowafalls.com/tree-board*

3. Ask at City Hall or talk to a Tree Board member or go to the North Park tree display.

4. Look at some of these resources:

#### **Trees Forever**

*treesforever.org/document/how-to-plant-a-tree-step-by-step/*

#### **Iowa DNR & ISU Extension**

*www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/forestry/planting\_careguide.pdf*

5. And don’t forget low-cost seedlings!!

#### **Iowa DNR State Forest Nursery**

*nursery.iowadnr.gov*

## THE STREET TREE PLANTING PROCESS:

### 1) MAKE A PLAN:

Select the desired species of tree for planting from the allowed street trees list. Select the location. Keep the following in mind during your selection:

a) Diversify!

To reduce loss from pests and disease **plant a different tree** than what's predominantly already in the area.

b) Location! Location! Location!

Consider the location of planting based on the City of Iowa Falls planting requirements.

- to plant a small tree, the space between the curb and the sidewalk must be at least 8 feet
- to plant a large tree, the space between the curb and the sidewalk must be at least 12 feet
- small trees may not be planted closer than 20 feet from each other, large tree no closer than 30 feet
- trees should be planted midway between the street side of the sidewalk and the curb
- trees must be planted at least 35 feet from the intersection, at least 5 feet from a drive or alley, and at least 10 feet from a fireplug or utility pole

c) Look up!

Only small trees may be planted under a power line based on the City of Iowa Falls planting requirements.

- no large tree may be planted within 10 lateral feet of an overhead utility line

d) Call 811!

Trees must be located properly based on the City of Iowa Falls planting requirements.

- no tree may be planted with 5 lateral feet of a supply or sewer line

### 2) COMPLETE THE APPLICATION:

Please complete all information requested and carefully sketch your planting location. Staking the desired location(s) helps the Tree Board members evaluate your request.

### 3) SUBMIT THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL:

Drop your application off at City Hall. The tree board will then review the application to verify suitability and compliance with applicable requirements. One approved, the tree may be planted!

### 4) PLANT AND MAINTAIN YOUR STREET TREE:

Your tree will need watering while it establishes itself:

- It takes a year or two for planted trees to be established in Iowa.
  - On average, trees need watering every 7-14 days if less than 1 inch of rain is received during the same time period.
  - When watering is necessary, use enough water to soak the entire root system to a depth of 20 inches or more.
- See [naturalresources.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/tree\\_biology/water.html](http://naturalresources.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/tree_biology/water.html) for more information

Your tree will need to be mulched and protection:

See [hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/faq/how-deep-should-mulch-layer-be-around-trees-and-shrubs](http://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/faq/how-deep-should-mulch-layer-be-around-trees-and-shrubs) and [www.extension.iastate.edu/news/yard-and-garden-prevent-wildlife-damage-trees-and-shrubs](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/news/yard-and-garden-prevent-wildlife-damage-trees-and-shrubs)

Your tree will need to be pruned:

See [naturalresources.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/care\\_maintenance/pruning.html](http://naturalresources.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/care_maintenance/pruning.html) for more information

For all street trees that abut your property, you are responsible for their maintenance, specifically:

- all branches should be pruned so that there is at least 15 feet above the street
- all branches should be pruned so that there is at least 8 feet above the sidewalk

## DID YOU KNOW?

- As of 2018, the city of Iowa Falls had 2,313 trees along its streets and in its parks!

- The emerald ash borer (EAB) is currently killing ash trees in Iowa Falls and surrounding areas. The City of Iowa Falls alone (parks & street trees) had 254 ash trees as of 2018. This does not include the ash trees on private property in Iowa Falls. Eventually, all of these trees will die and will need to be removed and replaced!

- The EAB is a small green beetle native to Asia. The adult beetle form is rarely seen but the larva or borer form feeds on the living part of ash trees, disrupting the flow of nutrients and water up and down the tree, eventually killing the tree.

- EAB is the 3rd major tree near extinction wave that has spread across the U.S. since 1900. Perhaps 3 billion American Chestnuts died during the early 1900's from chestnut blight. Tens of millions of elms have died from Dutch elm disease (DED) since the 1930's. EAB has been spreading outward from Michigan since 2002, killing tens of millions of ash trees already.

- American Elms were the most common tree in urban areas before the spread of DED. Ash trees were heavily planted to replace the dying elms, maintaining a lack of diversity; lack of diversity leads to enhanced disease spread.

- 32% of city trees in Iowa Falls are maples: 736 city trees as of 2018.

## NAME THAT TREE



This tree has a compound leaf, with 7 (usually) leaflets, 3 each on opposite sides and one at the tip. Its bark is gray and furrowed, with narrow interconnecting ridges creating a distinctive diamond pattern. Its seed is encased on the end a narrow, paddle-shaped “helicopter” similar to a maple but narrower and more symmetrical. The answer can be found below.

## MORE TREES

The tree board has received a grant to start replacing some city trees lost to EAB, oak wilt, and other causes. A planting of a dozen or so trees is currently being planned. **But many more trees need to be planted!** Please consider planting a tree or tree to your property or to the parking abutting your property.

## TREE BENEFITS

Shade! They not only make your summertime walks much more pleasant, they save you energy in at least two ways: the shade they provide reduces cooling costs and the wind blocking they provide reduces heating costs. Tree shade and evapotranspiration also mitigate the heat island effect, keeping Iowa Falls cooler!

Answer: An ash tree: two species, green ash and white ash, fit the description given above.