

Purpose

It is the policy of the City of Marshalltown, Iowa, to regulate and control the planting, removal, pruning, and protection of trees and other vegetation within street, highway, alley and rights-of-ways within the boundaries of the City. This is to prevent damage to any public sewer or water main, street, sidewalk or other public property; to protect trees located in public areas from undesirable and unsafe planting, removal, and pruning; to guard against the spread of pests or disease.

Any tree or other woody plant material may not be planted within an alley right-of-way or dedicated utility or walkway easement area.

Planting permit

A [permit](#) to plant a tree in a terrace area is required. The application requires the property owner show the exact location, tree species and notify Iowa One Call. Once the application has been received at the Parks & Recreation office, city staff will inspect the location and approve or deny the permit. Trees planted without a permit may be subject to removal. If the city must remove it, the cost of the removal may be charged to the property owner. [Permits](#) and other tree information may be found [online](#): www.ci.marshalltown.ia.us

Certain species prohibited

This list will be updated and maintained as the need arises with the most current listing provided with the planting permit. [Prohibited](#) from being planted on the terrace area:

- All evergreen trees and shrub species, except those with a mature height of 12 inches or less.
- All deciduous shrubs.
- All Poplars (populus spp.), including, but not restricted to, Cottonwood, White Poplar, Lombardy Poplar, and hybrids thereof.
- Sycamore (Platanus spp.) and all cultivars.
- Silver Maple (Acer saccharinum) and cultivars (also known as Autumn Blaze Maple).

Prohibited species continued:

- Honeylocust (Gledistia triacanthos) and cultivars.
- Catalpa (Catalpa speciosa).
- Pin Oak (Quercus palustris).
- Boxelder (Acer negundo).
- Birch (Betula spp.).
- Russian Olive (Elaeagnus angustifolia).
- Female Ginkgo (Ginkgo biloba).
- Willow (Salix spp.).
- Oriental Elms (Ulmus pumila & U. parvifolia).
- Red Mulberry, White Mulberry (Morus rubra & Morus alba).
- Crab Apples with exception of Spring Snow or male sterile varieties.
- Purple Leaf Plum (Prunus cerasifera).
- Bradford Pear (Pyrus calleryana 'Bradford').
- White Ash and cultivars (Fraxinus americana)
- Green Ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica lanceolata)
- Blue Ash (Fraxinus quadrangulata)
- Japanese Tree Lilac (Syringa amurensis japonica)

The City Council may issue a special permit for planting evergreen and deciduous shrubs with a mature height greater than 12" within the terrace area for decorative purposes if the mature height will not interfere with pedestrian and vehicular safety or the free use of the street or sidewalk. Each request will be reviewed upon its own merits.

It is unlawful to plant any tree species, which bears fruit, except for male sterile varieties, on a terrace area or on private property in a location where the tree will overhang a sidewalk.

Any plant species prohibited by this ordinance, but in place on the effective date of the ordinance,

need not be removed unless interference with other provisions of the ordinance so requires.

The following tree species are recommended for planting in public right-of-way areas of the city:

Suggested Trees for Terrace Area Less Than 8 Feet in Width

- Amur Maple – tree form (Acer ginnala)
- Tatarian Maple (Acer tataricum)
- American Hophornbeam (Ostrya virginiana)
- Thornless Cockspur Hawthorn (Crataegus crus-galli inermis)
- American Hornbeam (Carpinus caroliniana)
- Crabapple (Malus sp.) (Male sterile varieties only)

Suggested Trees for Terrace Area 8 Feet or More in Width

- Basswood/Linden (Tilia spp.)
- Kentucky Coffeetree (Gymnocladus dioica)
- White Oak (Quercus alba)
- Bur Oak (Quercus macrocarpa)
- Swamp White Oak (Quercus bicolor)
- Northern Red Oak (Quercus rubra)
- Sugar Maple (Acer saccharum)
- Red Maple (Acer rubrum)
- Black Maple (Acer nigrum)

Spacing and placement of trees in terrace

Trees planted adjacent to any street in the City must be planted in a location that is midway between the outer line of the sidewalk (or proposed sidewalk) and the curb (or designed curb) as established by the City engineer. No tree can be planted nearer than 3 feet to the curb or outer sidewalk line. On terraces more than 14 feet wide, trees must be planted 7 feet from the outside edge of the sidewalk.

Tree spacing for terrace areas less than 8 feet wide must be planted at least 20 feet from one another and no closer than 30 feet to a large tree. Large trees, such as those listed in the suggested species for terrace areas of 8 feet wide or more, must be planted 40 feet from one another. Trees shall be planted no closer to a utility pole than a distance equal to the mature spread of the tree species being planted.

Trees planted adjacent to a highway must be planted 10 feet back from the back of curb line. Other special considerations do exist and a special permit must be secured from Iowa DOT.

Tree planting distance from street intersections and driveways

No tree may be planted closer than 30 feet to a street intersection. No tree shall be planted closer than 10 feet to a driveway or alley in residential areas. Spacing of trees from commercial driveways will be judged on an individual basis.

Location of underground utilities

Before any digging, all underground utilities must be located. **Call Iowa One Call, 811, or go online to www.iowaonecall.com**, 48 hours before planting and prior to applying for a planting permit. This is to verify that all underground utilities have been located in the terrace area by the proper utility companies. This service is FREE and it is the law.

Unauthorized trimming prohibited; permit required

It is the property owner's responsibility to maintain terrace trees. Property owners or occupants may trim limbs or branches not exceeding six (6) inches in diameter from trees on terrace areas without a written permit. Cutting or trimming should conform to the arboricultural specifications and standards of practice adopted by the City Horticulturist. Trees, branches or limbs over six (6) inches in diameter of trees on terrace areas can only be removed by the City, a public service company, or a person or firm licensed by the City. A permit to remove any tree or limbs greater than

6 inches in diameter must be issued by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Trimming and removal of terrace trees

The City will be responsible for removing dead or diseased trees from all public areas in the city. The abutting property owner or occupant is responsible for trimming and maintaining the trees on the terrace abutting their property. Trees must be trimmed so that the overhanging branches are at least fifteen (15) feet above the surface of the street and at least eight (8) feet above the surface of the sidewalk to alleviate interference with the street lighting, or the free and safe use of the street and sidewalk by the public. Any tree or branches or limbs over six (6) inches in diameter of trees on terrace areas shall only be removed by the City, a public service company, or a person or firm licensed by the City. A permit issued by the Parks and Recreation Department is required. No permit is required of any public service company or City employee.

The City may serve notice to the abutting property owner, agent or occupant to trim or otherwise maintain the trees on the abutting terrace, or remove trees, other than dead or diseased, that is not in compliance with the provisions of this ordinance. If the abutting property owner, agent, or occupant does not perform the required action required within a reasonable time, the City may perform the required action and assess the costs against the abutting property.

The City has the authority to trim or remove any tree, shrub, or other plant material planted on any City terrace for non-compliance of this ordinance. This work shall be done at City expense if notice is not given to the abutting property owner.

See a list [licensed tree trimmers](#) or contact the City Clerk, 754-5701 for an available list.

Contact the Parks and Recreation office, 754-5715, 10 W State Street, for further information. Planting [permits](#) and other tree information may be found online:

www.marshalltownparkandrec.com or
<http://www.marshalltown-ia.gov>
Click on Applications and Documents

City of Marshalltown

A Guide for the Management and Preservation of Terrace Trees and Right-of-Way Areas



The City of Marshalltown acknowledges the urban forest as a necessary part of the City's infrastructure. This green infrastructure provides numerous crucial ecosystem services to the city including environmental (storm water management, carbon sequestration and urban wildlife habitat), social (human health healing and quality of life), and economic (increased property values, increased business activity and decreased energy use). Citizens may join with the City to further protect and conserve this valuable resource.

The City Tree Ordinance is intended to reduce tree canopy loss and implement urban forest management through requirements for the planting of trees as well as the care, maintenance and preservation of existing trees in Marshalltown.

This brochure outlines a portion of City Ordinance Section 27.

The complete ordinance is available upon request at the Parks & Recreation Office.