

Section 1

Introduction

Introduction



Mission Statement:

To assist in making Saint Paul the most livable city in America, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation will facilitate the creation of active lifestyles, vibrant places, and a vital environment.

-Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department



Vision Statement:

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation will make Saint Paul the most livable city in America by:

- Responding creatively to change
- Innovating with every decision
- Connecting the entire city



Forestry's role:

Saint Paul Forestry, organizationally, is a unit of the Department of Parks and Recreation located in the Operations Division, Natural Resources Section. Forestry is responsible for over 500,000 public trees including nearly 150,000 street trees and manages this resource to promote a healthy urban forest that provides numerous environmental, social, and economic benefits. Forestry's stewardship through boulevard and park plantings, maintenance, wood recycling, insect and disease management, education, and oversight of dangerous private property trees improves the urban canopy and creates a strong environment for the residents of Saint Paul.

Objectives

The Street and Park Tree Master Plan is a living document linked to online resources that will allow the City of Saint Paul and its residents to plan for and maintain a diverse and vital urban forest. This document outlines the goals, strategies, and criteria that will help guide planning and management decisions through the use of established best management practices and innovative approaches.

Street and park trees contribute to the urban environment in many ways and help promote a sense of identity within the community. Many of the benefits provided by trees add directly to the livability of Saint Paul by providing vibrant, high quality public spaces.

The urban forest continues to change and adapt to new conditions and an expanding body of knowledge on the benefits and management of trees within the urban environment. Developing a healthy urban forest through sound stewardship will further Saint Paul's shared vision of tree lined streets and parks that provide social, economic, and environmental benefits for all residents.

Key objectives of this document:

- Providing information on the environmental, economic, and social benefits of street and park trees
- Outlining the guiding principles, design standards, and methods that promote a healthy and diverse urban forest
- Providing a list of appropriate tree species for the urban environment with information on selecting the proper tree
- Illustrating the goals and alternative planting patterns that create a diverse urban canopy
- Guiding the establishment and maintenance of new and existing trees
- Creating a flexible and accessible document for the City and its residents

Introduction

Scope

The scope of the tree planting program has varied throughout the years depending on the number of trees lost from disease or storms. Funding sources have been diverse; from state and federal grants, Capital Improvement Bonds, Friends of the Parks, and private citizens. Saint Paul has also partnered with a number of organizations including the University of Minnesota, Tree Trust, Great River Greening, and Environmental Wood Supply. Millions of dollars have been spent and tens of thousands of trees have been planted, yet there is still a need and more correctly, a demand for a tree in front of most residences. Streets of each planning district or section of a planning district is planted on a rotational basis. Currently this is done on a four year cycle though in the past it has been as long as ten years depending on funding availability and attrition. Although not always possible, the goal has been to plant a boulevard tree in front of each home in Saint Paul.

Canopy cover and the species selected for planting along boulevards and within parks continues to adapt to changing conditions and emerging issues such as the emerald ash borer (EAB) which is projected to have a major impact on the city's tree canopy. Responsive and innovative management of the urban forest will be a key part of maintaining a vibrant street and park tree environment.

Intent

It is the intention of the Street and Park Tree Master Plan to be used as a comprehensive guide by city staff, public and private developers, and property owners for the selection, placement, and proper maintenance of trees in parklands and along major transportation corridors, thoroughfares, and residential streets within the city. The information found within this document is also intended to assist homeowners with the selection of trees for their own properties.

Overview of the Master Plan

The Street and Park Tree Master Plan serves as a guide to tree management across the city of Saint Paul. It covers a range of topics and provides links to online resources that contain the most current information available for use in the decision making process.

Elements of the Master Plan include:

- Guiding Principles and Design Standards
- Tree species list and selection criteria
- Master street tree plan maps
- Appendix with management guidelines and practices
- Reference + Resource guide

Planning Process

This master plan was prepared in collaboration between the Forestry and Design sections of the Department of Parks and Recreation with additional recommendations from the Saint Paul Tree Advisory Panel.

A number of updates to the 1978 Street and Park Tree Master Plan have been developed by Saint Paul arborists, landscape architects, and planners based on new research and an expanded understanding of urban forestry management. These include an updated tree species list and master planting plans, sequenced planting pallets, the use of structural soils, and expanding the role of trees as green infrastructure in the urban environment.

The master plan was presented to the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on March 10, 2010 which voted to approved the document.