
General Information

A. Concept

A street tree is any tree with a trunk located 50% or more within the land lying between property lines on either side of all public streets, boulevards, and alleys, including public easements. With narrower rights-of-way and the increasing use of underground utilities, the available space within a public right-of-way to plant trees is diminishing. Placement of trees outside of the public right-of-way on private property will still maintain all of the aesthetic and environmental advantages of trees. In addition, the placement outside of the public right-of-way will prevent future complications of sight distance, utility conflicts, and construction conflicts. Thus it is recommended that new trees not be placed in the public right-of-way.

If trees are placed in the public right-of-way, the principal considerations in design of the placement of street trees are their relation to horizontal and vertical clear zones. No street tree should be placed in the horizontal clear zone or triangular sight distance as described in [Chapter 5](#). The minimum vertical clearance for mature trees should be 14 feet above the street grade, 10 feet above recreational trails, and 8 feet above sidewalks. Special considerations must be given to clearances to overhead utility lines, driveways, traffic signs, and underground utilities. If at all possible, street trees should not be placed over buried utilities (public or private).

B. Conditions

1. Design Standards:

- a. SUDAS Design Manual
- b. Recognized design publications for street trees
- c. In case of a conflict between the above design standards, the Jurisdictional Engineer should be contacted for clarification

2. **Construction Standards:** Use the most recent edition of the SUDAS Standard Specifications together with the latest contract supplementary information.

3. **Project Submittals:** If street trees are allowed by the Jurisdiction and if project submittals are required, a street tree planting layout showing the quantity, species/cultivar, and location of all trees must be submitted for review. This plan is to be approved by the Jurisdiction prior to the tree planting and a permit issued if the proposed trees are within the public right-of-way.

4. **Ownership:** If the tree is located in the public right-of-way or publicly owned property, Section 364.12 of the Iowa Code requires the Jurisdiction to remove deadwood or diseased trees. If the street tree(s) are located outside of public property or right-of-way, the responsibility and ownership is that of the landowner.

5. **Establishment and Warranty Periods:** The establishment period is 1 year after the installation has been accepted by the Engineer. Care and maintenance of all plants will be the responsibility of the Contractor during that time. The Engineer has the option to include an additional year, which is called the warranty period. If specified, the warranty period begins immediately after the establishment period and continues for another year. Check with the Jurisdiction for their requirements.