

STREET TREE GUIDE

Selecting and Planting Bozeman's Urban Forest

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Questions or concerns with a boulevard tree?

Call us at 406-582-3225 or visit bozeman.net/forestry.

Thanks for helping us keep Bozeman's urban forest beautiful.

BOZEMAN^{MT}

Parks & Recreation

www.bozeman.net/forestry | 406-582-3225

All of the trees in our yards, parks, and street boulevards make up our urban forest. These trees provide us with environmental and health benefits, including shade, beautification, and storing carbon. They also grow amongst the challenges of our built environment, with compacted soils, impermeable surfaces, and competing space for infrastructure & utilities.

What's a boulevard tree?

Publicly-owned right-of-way strips called street boulevards border private lots within the City of Bozeman. The trees planted in these spaces are public property.



Not sure? You can view all city-maintained trees on our Tree Inventory Map. This powerful tool is updated live as our crews work across the city, planting new trees, removing old ones, and recording pruning & storm response work. [Explore Tree Inventory Map](#)



Our inventory map displays all city-maintained trees.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in our street boulevards – the growing space between our sidewalks and street curbs. This is a challenging environment for trees, and selecting the best varieties will maximize the growth and beauty of our urban forest. This Street Tree Guide details all of the tree species allowed* in boulevard spaces; it also details several species that aren't appropriate and explains why.

Healthy boulevard trees depend on a shared maintenance between property owners and the City's Forestry Division. Residents are responsible for watering and mulching trees. The Forestry Division is responsible for planting, pruning, insect & disease identification, emergency storm response, tree removals, and stump grinding. These services are funded by the Tree Maintenance Special Assessment.

* We're constantly evaluating new additions to this guide; the lists of approved species are not exhaustive. Please contact the Forestry Division directly if you have questions on a tree variety not included in this version of the Street Tree Guide.

There are two ways to plant a new boulevard tree

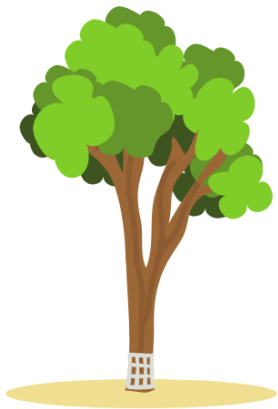
1. COST SHARE PROGRAM

The Cost Share Program provides new boulevard trees at a shared cost between residents and the City of Bozeman's Forestry Division. These trees are planted by Forestry Division staff.

To qualify for this program:

- Planting site must be in the boulevard planting strip, on a City-maintained street.
- Site must be to final landscape grade and residence must be occupied.
- If site is not irrigated, the resident must provide watering during the first two growing seasons.

The Cost Share Program opens in mid-March with applications available at City Hall and on the Forestry website (www.bozeman.net/forestry). A limited number of trees are ordered each year for this program, and participation is on a first-received basis.



Young trees require **mulch rings** and **trunk guards**. This protects the base from mower and string trimmer damage, and mulch makes watering more efficient while providing nutrients. Aim for 3-4" of natural wood chip material and replenish annually.

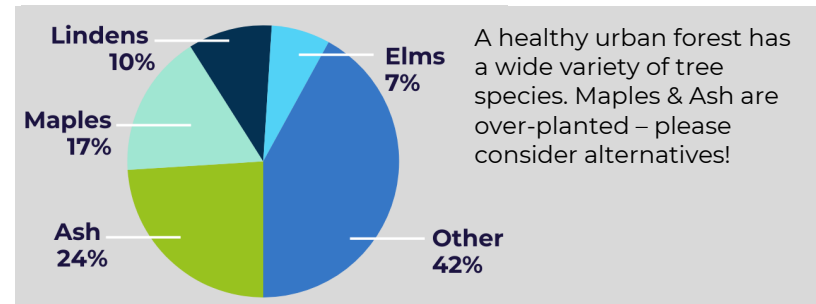


2. PURCHASE & PLANT YOUR OWN (Free Permit)

Our quick, easy, and free Planting Permit details all the quality standards and requirements for planting your own boulevard trees. It also allows us to keep our citywide Tree Inventory updated when new trees are added. Forestry Division staff will follow-up with any concerns before final approval, upon which you can begin planting!

To obtain a Planting Permit:

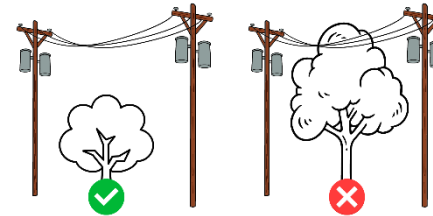
- Review this Street Tree Guide for approved species, then contact the nursery/greenhouse of your choice. See what trees they have available and ensure they're at least 1.5" caliper, the minimum size for a new boulevard tree.
- Visit the Forestry Division website for a free Planting Permit. Carefully review the checklist of requirements, then describe the number, size and species of tree(s) you'd like to plant at your site.
- Submit your permit for approval. Forestry staff will provide recommendations based on your permit description and a site assessment. If everything looks good, we'll approve the permit and you can begin planting!



Larger Shade Trees

These trees develop into our major canopy, shading our homes & lawns and providing the greatest environmental benefits. Larger trees should be prioritized as much as possible for new plantings.

Name	Description
Birch, Paper (<i>Betula papyrifera</i>) [Native Tree]	Paper Birch is known for its white bark and bright yellow fall color. This species does not tolerate full sun, so choose a site with partial shade.
Birch, River (<i>Betula nigra</i>)	River birch has attractive, reddish-brown, exfoliating bark. This species does not tolerate full sun, so choose a site with partial shade.
Elm (<i>Ulmus</i> species) [Native Tree]	Elms are large-growing shade trees and a critical part of our mature canopy. Cultivars must be resistant to Dutch Elm Disease and European Elm Scale. The 'Brandon' cultivar is no longer accepted for boulevards.
Hackberry (<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>)	Hackberry is somewhat rare in Bozeman and a great shade tree. Small fruits stay on the tree and attract songbirds over winter.
Honeylocust (<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>) [Native Tree]	Varieties must be thornless and only male, as the female seed pods can be messy. Honeylocust are vulnerable to canker disease; we recommend 'Skyline' as a resistant cultivar.
Kentucky Coffeetree (<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>)	This tree is extremely rare in Bozeman. Coffeetree grows slowly, but it dodges our shoulder seasons that cause storm damage in other species. Very unique bark texture and develops into a large shade tree with time.
Linden (<i>Tilia</i> species)	Lindens are excellent medium-large trees, providing a mid-summer flower for pollinators and dense shade. The species is prone to aphid damage; 'Harvest Gold' is a resistant cultivar.
Freeman Maple (<i>Acer x freemanii</i>)	This maple can have excellent orange-red fall color, but the 'Autumn Blaze' cultivar is notorious for poor structure and being prone to storm damage.
Norway Maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>)	The most popular, and therefore overplanted, maple in Bozeman. Develops into a large tree with very dense shade, often suppressing turfgrass growth.



! Warning !

Larger shade trees are not appropriate for planting near overhead powerlines.

Mature Height	Growth Rate	Fall Color	Spring Flowers
Large (30-40 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	No
Large (30-40 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	No
Large (60-70 ft.)	Fast	No	No
Large (40-50 ft.)	Moderate	No	No
Large (50-60 ft.)	Fast	Yes	No
Large (40-50 ft.)	Slow	Yes	No
Large (30-50 ft.)	Moderate	No	Yes
Large (40-60 ft.)	Fast	Yes	No
Large (40-50 ft.)	Moderate	No	No

Larger Shade Trees (cont.)

Name	Description
Red Maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)	A medium-sized maple that tolerates poor urban soils. Bold red fall color. Younger trees have thin bark and should have trunk protection during winter months.
Sugar Maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)	The Sugar Maple is widely regarded for its excellent orange-red fall color. It can develop into a large shade tree, but does not do well on fully exposed sites. Plant in a site with partial shade and/or protection from winds.
Bur Oak (<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>) [Native Tree]	A native oak that develops character with age. Younger trees are vulnerable to bullet gall wasp. Maintaining mulch rings and regular watering are essential for healthy establishment.
Red Oak (<i>Quercus rubra</i>)	The red oak has good branching structure and vivid red fall color. This tree needs some protection from wind and/or full sun, but grows well in Bozeman
Ussurian Pear (<i>Pyrus ussuriensis</i>)	A hardy tree with good resistance to fire blight. White flowers in Spring, glossy foliage and bright orange/red fall color. 'MorDak' is a popular cultivar.
Black Locust (<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>)	A reliable, large-growing shade tree that also features summer flowers. Another rare tree in Bozeman's urban forest.



Mature Height	Growth Rate	Fall Color	Spring Flowers
Medium (30-40 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Large (50-60 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	No
Large (50-70 ft.)	Slow	No	No
Large (40-60 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	No
Medium (30-40 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Large (50-60 ft.)	Fast	No	Yes (Summer)

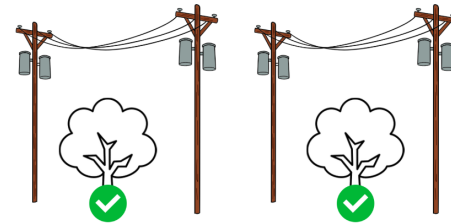


Watering Trees: Bozeman doesn't receive enough rainfall to keep trees at their best. New plantings should be watered at a rate of 20 gallons per week, from May through September. Even mature trees need occasional watering. Lawn irrigation or oscillating sprinklers are great ways to water these much larger root zones. Any watering is better than none.

Small Ornamental Trees

While still providing the benefits of larger trees, ornamentals do so on a lesser scale. Many of these trees offer colorful flowers or small fruits for pollinators and songbirds. All of these trees are best for restricted sites, such as narrow boulevards (less than 5' wide) or planting near overhead powerlines, unless mentioned otherwise.

Name	Description
Alder (<i>Alnus</i> species) [Native Tree]	Alders are native to Bozeman as a small shrub, but single-trunk forms make great street trees. Tolerant of wet soils and interesting flowers/cones.
Ohio Buckeye (<i>Aesculus glabra</i>)	Yellow flowers in spring and brilliant red/orange fall color. Best used for larger boulevards as the nuts can become a litter problem. <u>NOT appropriate for planting under overhead powerlines.</u>
Amur Chokecherry (<i>Prunus maackii</i>)	A very hardy medium-sized tree with unique amber-colored, exfoliating bark. The fruits attract songbirds.
Chokecherry (<i>Prunus virginiana</i>) [Native Tree]	A native tree with white flowers in spring and small fruit that attract birds. Very resilient to weather extremes and storm damage.
Crabapple (<i>Malus</i> hybrids)	Crabapples are known for their colorful flowers and fruits. Choose varieties with a high resistance to fire blight, such as 'Radiant' crabapple. We no longer recommend the 'Spring Snow' cultivar.
Turkish Filbert (<i>Corylus colurna</i>)	A member of the hazelnut family, Turkish filbert is another tough and hardy tree for urban sites. <u>NOT appropriate for planting under overhead powerlines.</u>
Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus</i> species)	Hawthorns have showy flowers, colorful fruit and good fall color. Only thornless varieties should be planted. Contact the Forestry Division for a current list of acceptable cultivars.
Japanese Tree Lilac (<i>Syringa reticulata</i>)	Large clusters of white flowers appear later in June and persistent fruit pods in fall. This species grows very slowly and is a great choice around overhead powerlines.
Amur Maackia (<i>Maackia amurensis</i>)	A rare tree in Bozeman and strongly encouraged to improve our species diversity. White flowers in July, attracting pollinators and developing into small seed pods that persist through winter.



Ornamental trees are a great choice for planting near overhead powerlines.

Mature Height	Growth Rate	Fall Color	Spring Flowers
Small (20-30 ft.)	Moderate	No	No
Large (25-40 ft.)	Slow	Yes	Yes
Medium (25-30 ft.)	Moderate	No	Yes
Medium (25-30 ft.)	Moderate	No	Yes
Small (15-25 ft.)	Moderate	No	Yes
Medium (30-40 ft.)	Moderate	No	No
Small (15-25 ft.)	Slow	Yes	Yes
Small (15-25 ft.)	Slow	No	Yes
Small (15-25 ft.)	Slow	No	Yes (Summer)

Small Ornamental Trees (cont.)

Name	Description
Amur Maple (<i>Acer ginnala</i>)	Single-trunk forms only (No multi-stem) for boulevard planting. Amur maple has bright orange/red fall color.
Tatarian Maple (<i>Acer tataricum</i>)	Similar in form to the Amur Maple. The 'Hot Wings' cultivar is widely used in Bozeman for its bold fall color.
Mountain-ash (<i>Sorbus</i> species) [Native Tree]	Mountain-ash have white flowers in spring and showy clusters of red-orange fruit in fall. Choose single-trunk varieties that are highly resistant to fire blight, a bacterial disease. <u>NOT appropriate for planting under overhead powerlines.</u>
Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier</i> species) [Native Tree]	Small trees with attractive spring flowers, edible fruit and red fall color. Only single-trunk forms (No multi-stem) are acceptable for boulevard trees.
Yellowwood (<i>Cladrastis kentukea</i>)	Another rare species, Yellowwood is known for its resiliency to urban conditions. White flowers in spring give way to small seed pods in the fall, while the leaves turns a bright yellow-orange before dropping.

Why So Few Native Trees?



Boulevard trees must be strong and resilient for urban growing conditions. Many non-native trees are better suited to thrive in these tight spaces.

Mature Height	Growth Rate	Fall Color	Spring Flowers
Small (15-25 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	No
Small (20-25 ft.)	Slow	Yes	No
Medium (25-30 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Small (15-20 ft.)	Slow	Yes	Yes
Medium (30-40 ft.)	Moderate	Yes	Yes

Beyond The Boulevard...



Native tree species love having room to grow. Our parks and private yards are great spaces for Cottonwoods, Aspen, Pines and Spruces!

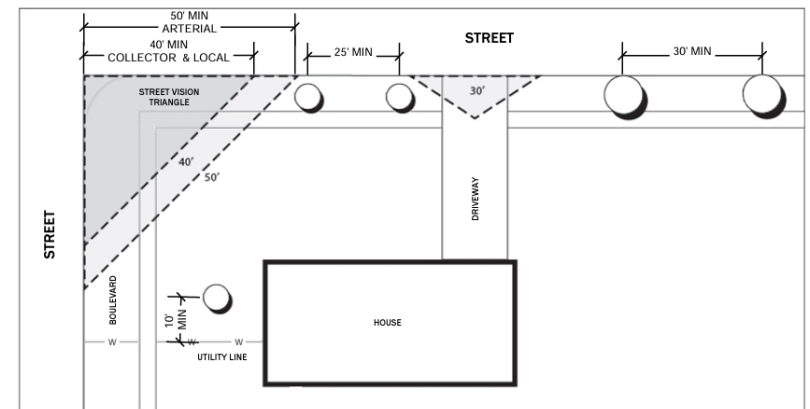
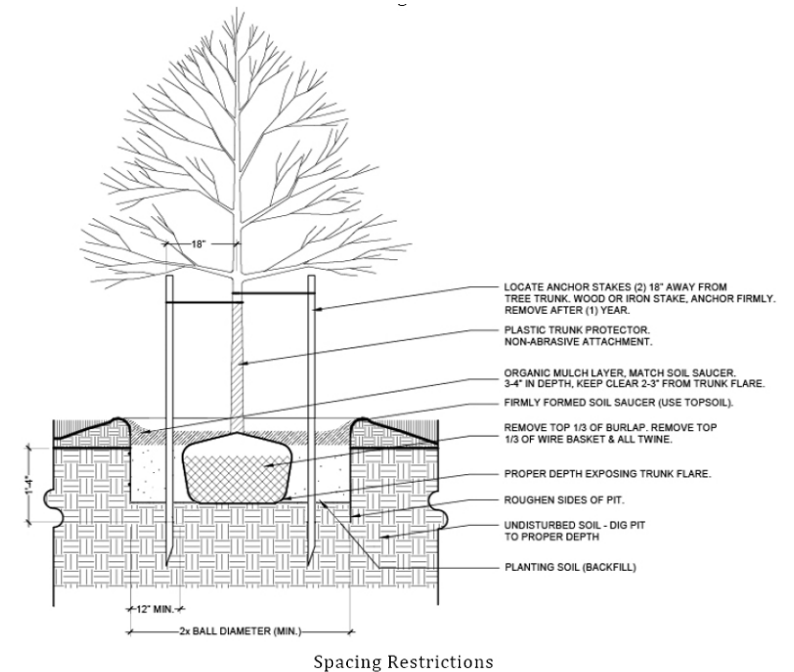
Prohibited Trees

Our street boulevards host a wide variety of trees, but certain species aren't allowed. They may lead to visibility concerns, harm concrete sidewalks and driveways, or are best reserved for larger growing spaces.

Name	Description
Ash (<i>Fraxinus</i> species)	Ash trees are no longer permitted for planting due to their susceptibility to the Emerald Ash Borer, a non-native pest. While this insect has not been found in Montana, it is steadily spreading across the country. Bozeman would be extremely vulnerable, as ~24% of our park & boulevard trees are Ash species.
Cottonwood and Aspen (<i>Populus</i> species)	While Cottonwoods and Aspens are iconic native trees, they are not appropriate for boulevards. Cottonwoods grow to a massive size, and are prone to heaving concrete and frequent storm damage. Aspen tend to multiply, sending up new shoots and overtaking the boulevard. These trees are best reserved for private yards and park spaces.
Evergreen Conifers (Pines, Spruces, Firs, etc.)	Evergreen trees are very problematic for the restricted growing site of a boulevard. They create vision hazards for pedestrians and vehicles, and tend to heave sidewalks as they grow. Evergreens are best reserved for private yards and park spaces.
Orchard Fruit Trees (Apples, plums, cherries, etc.)	Edible fruit trees require constant maintenance and are not appropriate for boulevards. To stay healthy and produce quality fruit, orchard trees need low canopies, which conflict with street/sidewalk clearance, and frequent pruning of immature fruit. Heavy fruit crops that aren't maintained can tear trees apart in storms and/or create trip hazards.



Planting Details



Small tree species must be spaced min. 25' apart; large tree species min. 30' apart.

All trees must be planted outside of the Street Vision Triangle and 10' clear of utilities.

After Planting

WATERING: Young trees need to be watered during the first two years after planting. We recommend a minimum of 20 gallons, 1-2x per week from May - September. Watering is the property owner's responsibility. Watering bags simplify the process and are available through the Cost Share Program. Using water to establish young trees is exempt from any drought restrictions declared by our Water Conservation Division.

MULCHING/TRUNK GUARDS: Maintain the mulch ring around the tree by adding mulch as needed, being sure to keep the total depth of mulch 3-4" and to keep it 1-2" clear from the base of the tree. Trunk guards are required to protect young trees from mowers and string trimmers.

STAKE REMOVAL: Stakes should be removed after one year. The City Forestry Division will remove stakes from Cost Share trees. Property owners are responsible for removing stakes from trees they've planted.

WRAPPING: Trees with thinner bark, especially mountain-ash and maples, will benefit from having the trunk wrapped during the winter with a protective wrap or plastic guard that can be purchased at most garden centers. Be sure to remove the wrap in spring.

PRUNING: Boulevard trees can only be pruned by the Forestry Division or an approved professional arborist. Please contact the Forestry Division to request any pruning work; If you'd like to hire your own arborist to prune boulevard trees, we can approve that through a free Pruning Permit.

Questions or concerns with a boulevard tree?

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Thanks for helping us keep Bozeman's urban forest beautiful.

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Partnerships & Resources

The Forestry Division is always looking for ways to improve our Urban Forest, through maintenance, education, and public outreach. Here are a few of our main initiatives:

BRANCH OUT BOZEMAN (B.O.B.)

We've partnered with the Gallatin Watershed Council to launch BOB, an urban forest initiative to provide volunteer planting opportunities across the city. BOB is developing its own website for volunteer signups and will prioritize new areas for tree planting based on improving water quality, tree equity, and urban heat island effect.

[Visit Branch Out Bozeman Website](#)

FREE MULCH SITE

Mulching trees is critical to their health, efficient watering, and protection from mowers & string trimmers. We recycle the wood chips from our pruning & removal operations as free mulch. This mix of wood and leaves is an ideal natural material, so lay it on thick around your trees (3-4" deep). Available May-September at Gallatin County Fairgrounds.

[Learn More About Free Mulch](#)

URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

The City of Bozeman completed its UFMP in 2016. This plan is a comprehensive review of Bozeman's urban forest and how we can fully realize the benefits of our trees. An updated UFMP will be developed for 2026.

[Explore The Urban Forest Management Plan](#)

EMERALD ASH BORER PLAN

The Forestry Division has a plan for EAB's arrival, including early detection, treatment options, and necessary tree removals. To learn more about the Emerald Ash Borer, read the Course of Action Plan from the link below.

[Learn More about The EAB Plan](#)