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**Street Trees for Minnesota**

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The Redmond linden growing at the side of a busy boulevard.

All trees require care; even the best may not survive without it. Trees should be carefully planted, immediately watered, and carefully pruned. Water should be provided during dry spells at least through the first two growing seasons. Staking usually is necessary for trees larger than 6 feet or trees located in a windswept area. Weed competition must be controlled either by mulching or hand hoeing. A guard, mulch, or cultivated area around the base of the tree will reduce the chances of damaging it with lawn mowers and other equipment. Trees planted in parks or along roadways where there is tall grass should be protected from rodents with a cylinder of quarter-inch hardware cloth. To prevent sunscald, thin, smooth-barked trees must be wrapped in the fall for several years. The proper training and pruning of young trees will eliminate many potential problems and reduce maintenance costs. Street trees should be pruned to remove lower branches that interfere with pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Most of the trees on the list on the back of this fact sheet can be seen at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum at Chaska.

**TREES NOT SUITED FOR STREET TREES**

- Boxelder (*Acer negundo*)—Brittle wood; has boxelder bugs on female trees.
- Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*)—Weak wood; shallow roots; gets too large.
- Birch (*Betula* spp.)—Due to unfavorable conditions, susceptible to die-back and birch borers.
- Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*)—Messy leaves, flowers, and fruits.
- Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)—Often defoliates early in the season; messy; slow to leaf out in spring.
- Mulberry (*Morus alba tatarica*)—Fruits messy.
- Poplars (*Populus* spp.)—Short-lived; brittle wood; many get too large; some have suckering roots.
- Black Locust (*Robinia pseudocasia*)—Subject to borer damage; has suckering roots.
- Willows (*Salix* spp.)—Weak wood; has numerous twigs.
- Elms (*Ulmus* spp.)—Susceptible to Dutch elm disease; some have brittle wood.

Trees can add infinite beauty to a community and create a feeling of peace and tranquility. The flowers, the cool green foliage, the form, the fruits, the bark, the branching habit, and the autumn color add beauty to our cities and towns. They help achieve continuity in the community by tying together varied styles of architecture.

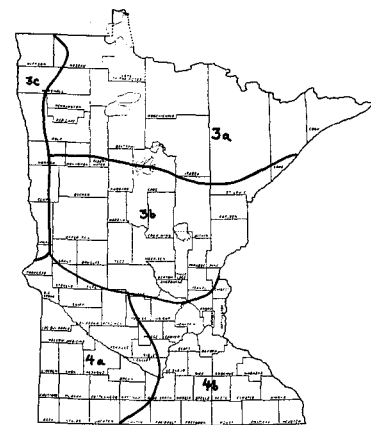
Since Dutch elm disease is taking its toll in Minnesota, people in towns and communities are becoming interested in other trees they can plant. In selecting trees for a community today, several different kinds should be considered. A good plan is to use different kinds of trees on different streets rather than a random planting of many different kinds of trees on the same street. Variety is needed to prevent a situation where a single tree species may be injured or killed by a disease or pest.

There are a number of important considerations when selecting trees. Due to the severity of our climate, hardiness is of primary importance. The map below shows hardiness zones in Minnesota. Note that other considerations also were included.

The tree's mature size should be considered when street trees are chosen. Selecting trees that will not outgrow their allotted space will save maintenance time and eliminate the necessity for removing trees before they reach maturity. Many trees are being brutally pruned because attention was not given to their mature size when they were planted. It would be better if such trees were removed and replaced by smaller ones.

If trees are planted beneath utility wires, their mature height should be below the wires, or the tree should be planted on the homeowner's property on the house side of the sidewalk. Where salt poses a threat, setting trees back from the street will minimize the problem. Trees should not be planted near corners where they are likely to obstruct vision, traffic control lights and signs, or street lights.

Some trees litter sidewalks and streets with large and messy fruits, twigs, and leaves that can plug sewer entrances. The best trees have deep root systems, since the roots of some trees can clog and damage sewer lines. Check the following list of undesirable trees. Be certain of where underground utility wires and gas lines are located before you start digging. Selecting trees that have few insect and disease problems will minimize the amount of spraying required. All trees require some maintenance, but those on the recommended list require a minimum. Trees should be able to grow in existing soils, or the soils should be modified before trees are planted. Trees must be able to tolerate city air and the reflected heat from streets and concrete buildings.



Zones 3 and 4 approximate the hardiness zones taken from the plant hardiness zone maps prepared by the U.S. National Arboretum, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the American Horticultural Society. The breakdown within these zones has been slightly altered to take into account soil alkalinity, precipitation, and wind. Within these zones, more favorable microclimates often exist in urban areas than in rural areas.

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