



City of Gahanna
200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

**COMPREHENSIVE
LANDSCAPE PLAN**

November 9, 2022



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I. Introduction

A. Purpose Statement

- i. The City of Gahanna's Comprehensive Landscape Plan (Comprehensive Tree Plan for Gahanna) was created for the following reasons:
 - a. To provide a tree plan to City Council, Planning Commission and internal staff
 - b. To provide clear guidance, tree care standards and landscaping requirements to Gahanna residents and contractors

B. Note to Gahanna Residents

- i. This document is designed to assist residents in finding the tree-related information. Copies of referenced documents can be obtained by contacting the City Forester. Before conducting any work in a right-of-way, citizens must refer to the most updated copy of the codified ordinances, and a right-of-way permit must be acquired before work begins.
 - a. The city of Gahanna focuses on diversifying tree species to protect the urban tree canopy.

II. Gahanna Codified Ordinances

A. Ohio Revised Code

City of Gahanna Codified Ordinances may be stricter than the Ohio Revised Code, but they cannot be less strict than State Law. The City of Gahanna defers to the Ohio Revised Code in any situation where municipal code is lacking in content.

B. Chapter 154 – Landscape Board

This ordinance outlines the creation, purpose and intended duties of Gahanna's Landscape Board. For a current copy, contact the City Forester or visit the City of Gahanna's website.

C. Chapter 913 – Landscaping Requirements

This ordinance outlines requirements for tree planting and maintenance in both private and public spaces. This chapter also includes information about landscaping.

Residents searching for information about street tree requirements should review this chapter under section 10. For a current copy, contact the City Forester or visit the City of Gahanna's website.

D. Chapter 914 – Tree Preservation, Planting and Replacement

This ordinance outlines the preservation and protection of Gahanna's existing trees. During certain kinds of development, trees must be included in landscape plans and some trees require protection during construction. For a current copy, contact the City Forester or visit the City of Gahanna's website.

III. Park Trees

A. Program Description

i. What are Park Trees?

Park trees are considered to be any tree in a City-owned greenspace (not in a right-of-way). Some park trees are more frequently maintained than others. Trees that are specially planted for aesthetic value are pruned and cared for on a regular basis while trees in natural forests are only evaluated if they become hazardous.

ii. The Importance of Park Trees

Trees are a vital asset to any urban environment. Healthy trees add beauty, are a source of oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide, provide shade, absorb noise and increase property values. Parks and the trees found in parks add value to the community and provide a natural haven for residents.

Gahanna has been designated a Tree City USA for more than 30 years, and park trees help the community maintain this prestigious status.

iii. Park Tree Guidelines

The City of Gahanna is responsible for the planting, maintenance, and removal of park trees. If a citizen notices a tree that is dead and/or hazardous on park property, they are encouraged to report the tree to Gahanna's City Forester.

B. Memorial Tree Program

- ##### **i. The Memorial Tree Program is an opportunity to help beautify Gahanna's parks while also celebrating life by planting a tree.**
- People often wish to leave living memorials for those they have lost or to celebrate a birth of a child, wedding, or anniversary. In response to these wishes, the Gahanna Department of Parks and Recreation has established a special program to allow people to donate towards planting trees on City of Gahanna property. A donation of \$650 will plant a tree that will beautify the community for future generations to enjoy. Trees are planted in the spring and fall. The size and species of trees will be appropriate for the site and will be at the discretion of the Parks staff. A plaque will be ordered and installed by the City of Gahanna and is included in the price of the tree. Contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 614-342-4250 for more information.

IV. Street Trees

A. Program Description

i. What are Street Trees?

Street trees are the trees located in the right-of-way or easement (usually the area of turf between the street and the sidewalk). Rights-of-way are the areas dedicated to the City where utility lines are typically placed. Because the City

must have access to these utilities, the City retains ownership of right-of-way areas, including the trees. Like sidewalks, curbs and driveways, street trees are the maintenance responsibility of the adjacent homeowner. For more information, please contact the City of Gahanna's City Forester.

ii. The Importance of Street Trees

Trees are a vital asset to any urban environment. Healthy trees add beauty, are a source of oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide, provide shade, absorb noise and increase property values. Planting of street trees is required for all new residential and most new commercial developments. Gahanna has been designated a Tree City USA for more than 30 years, and street trees help the community maintain this prestigious status.

iii. Street Tree Guidelines

Many Gahanna residents ask if they are allowed to maintain and prune the street trees adjacent to their homes. In fact, it is the responsibility of the homeowner to do this. Because residents frequently ask for guidance on street tree removal, replacement and care, the City of Gahanna has a Standards and Specifications document available for resident use. It is available both digitally and on paper. Please contact the City Forester to obtain a copy of this document. The City's Parks Department and the City Forester are available for guidance by calling 614-342-4250; or by sending an email to the City Forester at julie.predieri@gahanna.gov.

B. Tree Grant Program

This program is temporarily on hold due to funding.

V. Tree City USA

A. Program Overview

- i. The City of Gahanna and its citizens take pride in their commitment to protecting and improving the quality of the urban forest. Tree City USA is a national recognition of that commitment and is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation. Gahanna strives to maintain this accreditation annually.
- ii. Tree City USA provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of towns and cities where more than 93 million Americans call home.

B. Tree City USA Benefits

- i. Receive flags, signs, and other materials to proudly display your award

- ii. Educate residents about the value of trees and green space
- iii. Gain national recognition for your commitment to environmental stewardship
- iv. Create a cleaner, healthier, and more beautiful urban landscape
- v. For up to date information on Tree City USA please visit <https://www.arborday.org/programs/treecityusa/>

C. Standards of Tree City USA Accreditation

- i. To qualify for Tree City USA, a town or city must meet four standards established by The National Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters. These standards were established to ensure that every qualifying community would have a viable tree management plan and program. It is important to note that they were also designed so that no community would be excluded because of size.
 - a. A Tree Board or Department
 - b. A Tree Care Ordinance
 - c. A Community Forestry Program with an Annual Budget of at Least \$2 per Capita
 - d. An Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation

VI. Appendix

A. Definitions (in reference to Codified Ordinances)

- i. “Accessory use or building” means a use or a structure subordinate to the principal use or building on a lot and serving a purpose customarily incidental thereto.
- ii. “Board” means the City Landscape Board.
- iii. “Injurious plants” includes, but is not limited to the following list of trees that are prone to disease, seek water (trouble for water and sewer lines), are soft wood trees and need room for roots to grow and a curb lawn does not provide enough room. Some of the trees have thorns and some won’t tolerate snow, salt and sand that could affect it during the winter.
- iv. “Interior landscaping” means the use of landscape materials within the innermost boundaries of the landscape buffer zone and perimeter landscaping.
- v. “Landscape buffer zone” means that area adjacent to any vehicular use area or along common boundaries in which the perimeter landscape requirements are to be met.
- vi. “Large tree” means any tree species which normally attains a full grown height in excess of fifty feet.
- vii. “Medium tree” means any tree species which normally attains a full grown height of between twenty-five feet and fifty feet.
- viii. “Small Trees” means any tree species which normally attains a full grown height under twenty-five feet.
- ix. “O.F.T.” means or fraction thereof.

- x. "Opacity" means the degree to which a wall, fence or landscaping is impenetrable to light or vision.
- xi. "Public Trees" shall include all shade and ornamental trees and/or shrubs now or hereafter growing on any public property.
- xii. "Parking area, lot or structure" means an off-street area or structure, for required parking or loading spaces, including driveways, access ways, aisles, parking or loading spaces, including driveways, access ways, aisles, parking and maneuvering space.
- xiii. "Perimeter landscaping" means the use of landscape materials within the landscape buffer zone to achieve the required opacity.
- xiv. "Person" means any person, corporation, partnership, company, contracting firm or other entity.
- xv. "Pruning" means to cut branches, stems, etc. from a plant to improve shape and growth.
- xvi. "Street trees" means those trees, shrubs, bushes, and all other woody vegetation on land lying within street easements or right-of-way, or between property lines on either side of all streets, avenues or ways within the City.
- xvii. "Topping" means the severe cutting back of limbs within a tree's crown to a stub, or to a bud or a lateral branch not large enough to assume the terminal role and produce healthy growth so as to remove the normal canopy, disfigure the tree, and promote weak rapid growth.
- xviii. "Treelawn" means that part of a street not covered by sidewalk or other paving, lying between the property line and that portion of the street right-of-way that is paved and usually used for vehicular traffic.
- xix. "Vehicular use area" means any area used by vehicles. (Ord. 160-92. Passed 10-6-92)

B. Invasive Species List

- i. The following invasive species list is provided by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Please visit their website for a current list of plants.
 - a. Amur honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)
 - b. Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*)
 - c. Black dog-strangling vine, black swallowwort (*Vincetoxicum nigrum*)
 - d. Callery pear (*Pyrus calleryana*) (effective on January 2023)
 - e. Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe* ssp. *Micranthos*)
 - f. Common barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*)
 - g. Common reed (*Phragmites australis*)
 - h. Common teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*)
 - i. Curly-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*)
 - j. Cutleaf teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*)
 - k. Dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)
 - l. Brazilian Elodea (*Egeria densa*)
 - m. Eurasian water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

- n. European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)
- o. European frog-bit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*)
- p. European wand loosestrife (*Lythrum virgatum*)
- q. Fig buttercup/lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna* (synonym *Ranunculus ficaria*))
- r. Flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*)
- s. Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolate*)
- t. Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)
- u. Glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*)
- v. Hairy willow herb (*Epilobium hirsutum*)
- w. Hybrid cattail (*Typha x glauca*)
- x. Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillate*)
- y. Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)
- z. Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*)
- aa. Kudzu (*Pueraria montana* var. *lobate*)
- bb. Morrow's honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*)
- cc. Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- dd. Narrow-leaved cattail (*Typha angustifolia*)
- ee. Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
- ff. Parrotfeather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)
- gg. Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
- hh. Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)
- ii. Tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*)
- jj. Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- kk. Water chestnut (*Trapa natans*)
- ll. Yellow floating heart (*Nymphoides peltate*)

- i. Note that there are species not listed above that are considered to be on the “watch list.” Although not yet classified as an invasive species, these plants display characteristics of invasive species. For more information on the watch list, contact The Ohio State University’s local extension office at 614-866-6900.

C. Prohibited Tree List

- ii. The following list of prohibited street trees are considered to be "injurious plants" and are prone to disease, seek water (trouble for water and sewer lines), are soft wood trees and need room for roots to grow and a curb lawn does not provide enough room. Some of the trees have thorns and some won't tolerate snow, salt and sand that could affect it during the winter:
 1. Box elder
 2. Mulberry
 3. Siberian elm
 4. Fruit trees
 5. Evergreen species
 6. Poplar species
 7. Hawthorn species (with exception of thornless cultivars)

8. Honey locust (with exception of thornless and seedless cultivars)
9. Silver maple
10. Willow species
11. Ginkgo (exclusion only includes females)
12. Tree-of-heaven
13. Cottonwood
14. Crabapple species
15. Ash species
16. Pear species

Note that industry standards encourage the phrase, “Right Tree, Right Place.” Just because a tree is not listed as prohibited does not mean that it is an acceptable species for any location. All new street trees must be approved by the City Forester before planting. Any tree planted that has not been approved may be removed by the City of Gahanna.

D. Contact Information

City of Gahanna
City Forester
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