



Tree Planting FAQs

Do I need permission to plant a tree on the strip outside my house?

Yes, planting a tree on the public right-of-way without written approval from the Urban Forestry Unit of the City of Berkeley Parks Division is a violation of B.M.C. 12.44.010. All tree planting requires prior submittal of a tree planting application.

How many trees will be planted?

Urban Forestry staff will inspect the property to determine if the site is suitable for having a street tree based on our Tree Planting Location Standards. For most residential properties, only one tree will be planted. When determining a planting location, many factors are taken into consideration including: underground utilities (gas, water, sewer and communication lines), utility poles, street lights, overhead service lines, driveway approaches, fire hydrants, stop signs and other street signs, proximity to intersections and the mature size of the selected tree species. Spacing between trees will be determined by the mature size of the species selected and location of existing trees.

What species will be planted?

Urban Forestry staff selects a tree species according to the width of the planting strip, the presence of overhead high voltage, lines and the species of existing trees. Tree species are evaluated for their performance in relation to pest and disease susceptibility, and potential infrastructure damage. Because of this, existing species may no longer be planted. No tree shall be planted under high voltage lines that may grow to a height within the required clearance space, regardless of the existing tree species or size of planting space. The City strives to designate one species for a multi-block section of a street, while varying the species planted on adjacent streets.

What if there is concrete that needs to be removed to plant a tree?

Concrete removal is included when city staff plants the tree. The scheduling of concrete removal may affect the scheduling of the tree planting. If self-planting, the resident needs to submit an engineering permit with the Permit Service Center (1947 Center Street, 3rd Floor) and include a sketch of the area of work.

Do I need permission to plant a tree on private property?

Before planting trees on private property, remember to call #811 two business days before any project that involves digging, no matter how large or small, and including tree planting. 811 is a free service and will allow your local utility providers (gas, electric, telecom, water) to mark the location of underground lines so that you #knowwhatsbelow and keep your family and neighbors safe and avoid potentially costly repairs. You can also visit <https://www.usanorth811.org/> and submit an online request.

If you have additional questions about tree planting, call (510) 981-6660 or send an email to trees@cityofberkeley.info