

## Maintenance of Street Trees

Street trees play a large role in maintaining the City's attractive appearance, in creating a positive impression of the City for current and potential homeowners and business people, and in cooling and cleaning the atmosphere in the City. However, street trees come with some costs, such as trimming and cleaning up after major storm or disease damages, as well as occasional, relatively low cost maintenance.

One maintenance item required of street trees is trimming. City of Wahpeton Ordinance 12-173 requires that property owners trim and maintain trees at their expense in the boulevards along streets and alleys adjacent to their properties to provide proper clearance above streets, alleys, and sidewalks for public safety and to prevent damage to street sweeping, snow plowing, and garbage collection equipment. For unobstructed travel to pedestrians and vehicles, trees are to be trimmed to eight (8) feet above the sidewalk and fifteen (15) feet above the street or alley surface. For proper visibility for traffic and signs, boulevard trees must be trimmed to be at least eighteen (18) inches above traffic signs and nine (9) feet above the boulevard within fifty (50) feet of intersections. Shrubs and bushes must be trimmed to be no higher than thirty (30) inches above the street within fifty (50) feet of intersections.

Street trees not kept or maintained at or above the specified heights above streets and sidewalks are defined as public nuisances. The ordinance provides that in the event that a property owner fails to trim or maintain boulevard trees, the City shall make the necessary arrangements for the work and bill the owner directly and if the owner does not pay the bill, the City shall Special Assess the cost to the property.

The Tree Disposal Site located at the east end of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North, it is open 24 hours a day, at no cost to Wahpeton residents only. No garbage, leaves, yard waste, or tree stumps may be disposed at the Tree Disposal Site, and violators are subject to up to \$500 penalty. For a list of tree contractors licensed to trim or remove trees within the City contact the Public Works Department at 642-6565.

Citizens wishing to plant street trees in the boulevards in public right-of-way are requested to apply to the City for a Permit to Work in Public Right-of-Way to allow City staff opportunity to check the proposed planting site. Trees planted over an underground utility line are at risk of being removed for repair or replacement of the utility which may occur long before the end of the tree's normal life span. Contact the Public Works Department at 642-6565 for further information regarding tree planting in street boulevards.