



CITY OF KETTERING

TREE PROGRAMS



Did you know Kettering has earned the title “***Tree City USA***” from the Arbor Day Foundation? This means we are serious about our urban canopy because we know the people of Kettering appreciate the importance and beauty of trees. Our Parks Division even has an online tracking system to ensure we care for our trees and plant a variety of new trees whenever possible. It’s like having online medical records for our tree “patients” to give them the best care possible.

To foster this mission of having an expansive collection of trees, the City of Kettering has two programs where citizens can purchase and have the Parks Division plant a tree in their front yard or in a park or other public space such as a school or place of worship along with a memorial plaque for a loved one.

Trees add oxygen to our air, while removing pollution and providing shade and beauty to our great city. Consider purchasing a tree, and enjoy all the benefits trees can bring!

If you have any questions or would like the advice of our certified arborist on staff, please call 937-296-2486.



Citizen Tree Planting Program

To encourage the planting of quality street trees throughout Kettering, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department will make available a limited number of trees to Kettering residents. These trees are offered on a first-come, first-served, shared-cost basis. The trees are available to Kettering residents, businesses, churches and others but will be limited to one tree per person and/or address per year. The trees are planted by the Parks Division with all further maintenance being the responsibility of the owner. Tree varieties offered may change seasonally.

REGISTRATION

Interested Kettering residents or property owners can sign up for a tree in person at the Parks Maintenance Center, 3170 Valleywood Drive from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday through Friday or by calling 937-296-2486. Payment will be made at the time of registration.

COST AND TYPES OF TREES

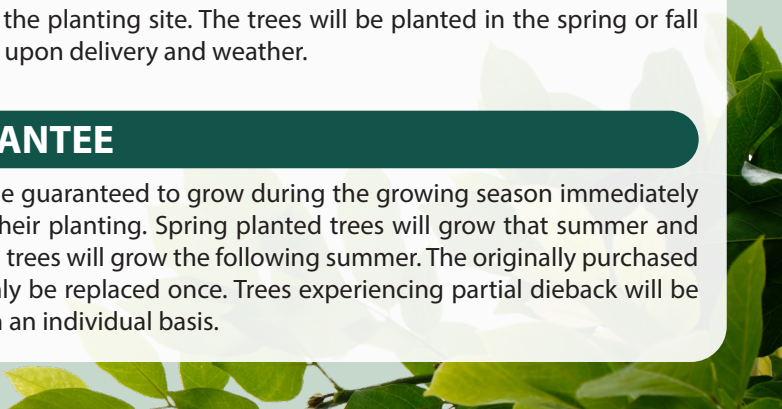
These trees have been chosen for their high quality, growing habits and appearance throughout the year. They are balled and burlapped.

PLANTING

The planting site will be determined by the property owner and Park personnel in an area immediately behind the walk or front yard. Back and side yard plantings are not allowed. Such obstacles as underground utilities, existing buildings and trees and overhead wires should be taken into consideration. The Parks Division will have the final choice in the location of the planting site. The trees will be planted in the spring or fall depending upon delivery and weather.

GUARANTEE

Trees will be guaranteed to grow during the growing season immediately following their planting. Spring planted trees will grow that summer and fall planted trees will grow the following summer. The originally purchased tree will only be replaced once. Trees experiencing partial dieback will be handled on an individual basis.



Large Trees List

EASTERN WHITE OAK

Quercus alba
50 – 80 feet



PEOPLE BENEFIT: Majestic shade tree with vibrant red to purple fall color, ideal for larger yards, and provides excellent structural support for swings or climbing. The strong, durable wood also makes it valuable for construction and furniture.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Acorns are a key food source for birds, deer, and small mammals. Its leaves support a wide variety of caterpillars essential to bird diets. Host to over 500 species of caterpillars, including the Tussock Moth and White-Marked Tussock Moth larvae. Birds like the Wood Thrush and Northern Cardinal benefit from its acorns and insects.

SYCAMORE

Platanus occidentalis
75 – 100 feet



PEOPLE BENEFIT: Ohio's largest deciduous tree, with large leaves and unique white bark that adds visual interest, providing shade and a dramatic presence in large yards. Its broad canopy creates cool, comfortable outdoor spaces.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Offers nesting sites for birds and shelter for various mammals. Supports a variety of wildlife, including the Eastern Screech Owl, Wood Duck and Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker. Its seeds are eaten by a variety of birds, and the tree provides shelter for many mammals, including squirrels and raccoons.

BUR OAK

Quercus macrocarpa
60 – 80 feet



PEOPLE BENEFIT: Adaptable, with impressive branching and drought tolerance, perfect for low-maintenance yards or large park areas. The strong, deep roots make it resistant to storms, offering a long lifespan and stability.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Acorns and leaves support local wildlife, providing food for birds, mammals, and beneficial insects like Acorn Weevils. The tree supports a range of birds, such as Blue Jays and Wild Turkeys, and provides habitat for small mammals.

TULIP POPLAR

Liriodendron tulipifera
60 – 70 feet

PEOPLE BENEFIT: Striking, tulip-shaped flowers in spring, providing visual interest and attracting pollinators. Excellent shade for residential areas, making it a fast-growing ornamental tree with a tall, straight trunk.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: A vital nectar source for pollinators, its leaves serve as host plants for many native butterfly species, including the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail and Tulip Tree Beauty Moth. The seeds are eaten by American Goldfinches and Wild Turkeys, while its large size offers homes to cavity-nesting birds like the Wood Duck.

BLACK GUM

Nyssa sylvatica
30 – 50 feet

PEOPLE BENEFIT: Beautiful shade tree with vibrant red, orange, and yellow fall colors; adaptable to a variety of soil types, including clay. It's perfect for adding seasonal color and texture to residential landscapes.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Produces nectar for pollinators, fruit for birds and mammals, and offers excellent nesting habitat, particularly for the Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker and Wood Thrush. Its berries are a favorite food source for American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds.

KENTUCKY COFFEETREE

Gymnocladus dioica
50 – 75 feet

PEOPLE BENEFIT: Unique architectural form with beautiful seed pods and excellent shade, ideal for modern landscapes with a touch of visual drama. Its deep roots make it a good choice for planting in urban areas with challenging soil.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Provides habitat for native insects and seed pods for wildlife. The seeds are eaten by birds such as the Cedar Waxwing, and the tree provides shelter for White-Tailed Deer and other mammals. It also attracts beneficial insects like native bees.

Small Trees List

DOWNY SERVICEBERRY

Amelanchier arborea
15 – 25 feet



PEOPLE BENEFIT: Early white flowers, sweet edible berries, and stunning red-orange fall foliage. A delightful addition to small yards, offering visual interest throughout the year. This tree is a beautiful and functional plant for landscaping in all seasons.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Berries attract birds, including American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds, while its leaves host caterpillars essential for feeding young birds. Early flowers provide a spring nectar source for Honeybees and Cloak Butterflies. Its fruits are also favored by Cedar Waxwings.

AMERICAN HORNBEAM

Carpinus caroliniana
20 – 35 feet



PEOPLE BENEFIT: Attractive smooth bark, orange-red fall foliage, and adaptability to sun or shade make this tree versatile for many landscapes. Its compact size is great for urban or suburban gardens.

Wildlife Benefit: Provides seeds, buds, and leaves as food sources for wildlife, including Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, and Squirrels. The tree also provides shelter for various bird species and insects, supporting a diverse ecosystem.

PAWPAW

Asimina triloba
15 – 25 feet



PEOPLE BENEFIT: Large, interesting leaves, edible fruit, and its ability to thrive in small spaces make it a unique addition to backyards. This tree is well-suited for partial shade and is a favorite for those who enjoy fruit trees.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Hosts the Zebra Swallowtail Butterfly, whose larvae feed on the tree's leaves. It also provides habitat for various pollinators. The fruit is eaten by raccoons, opossums, foxes, and squirrels, while songbirds such as the American Robin and Gray Catbird may also feed on fallen fruit. Its dense foliage offers cover for nesting wildlife, and the flowers attract early-season pollinators such as beetles and flies.



FLOWERING DOGWOOD

Cornus florida
15 – 30 feet

PEOPLE BENEFIT: White to pink spring flowers, red berries, and vibrant red fall foliage add year-round interest. Perfect for small to medium-sized yards, creating year-round beauty and attracting pollinators.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Berries are a crucial food source for songbirds, including Northern Cardinals and Eastern Towhees, while its flowers provide nectar for early pollinators. The tree serves as a host for several butterfly species, including the Dogwood Butterfly and Zebra Swallowtail.



OHIO BUCKEYE

Aesculus glabra
20 – 35 feet

PEOPLE BENEFIT: Iconic state tree with showy yellow-green spring flowers, which add early color to the landscape. Its attractive, palmate compound leaves provide dense shade in summer. Perfect for medium-sized yards, this tree offers visual interest through the seasons and tolerates various soil types.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: Early-season nectar source for pollinators like Honeybees and Bumblebees, which are essential for early spring pollination. The seeds are consumed by wildlife, including White-Tailed Deer and Eastern Gray Squirrels. Its leaves host caterpillars and support various insect species that are important to local food webs.



FRINGE TREE

Chionanthus virginicus
15 – 25 feet

PEOPLE BENEFIT: A stunning small tree with fragrant, feathery white flowers in late spring, adding beauty and interest to yards. Tolerates partial shade and is adaptable to different soil types. In fall, it produces small blue-black berries and develops golden-yellow foliage.

WILDLIFE BENEFIT: The fragrant flowers are an excellent nectar source for native bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, including the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail. The berries provide food for many songbirds, including the Northern Cardinal, Eastern Bluebird, and American Robin. The tree also serves as a host plant for several moth species, supporting caterpillar populations vital to bird diets.



Living Tree Program

The Living Tree Program is designed for those persons or organizations desiring to commemorate a particular event by the planting of a tree. The event might be an anniversary, birthday, wedding, birth, reunion, graduation, retirement or death of a loved one. The person or group chooses a tree from the designated list. The prices listed are the City's expected cost for that tree. The tree will be planted by the Parks Division.

Registration

Interested persons or groups must order and pay for a tree in the Parks Maintenance Center located at 3170 Valleywood Drive, between 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday through Friday or by calling the Parks office at 937-296-2486. Those purchasing a tree will need to meet on site with a parks manager to pick the exact planting location and variety.

Planting

The tree will be planted in Kettering on public land including areas such as parks, medians or public buildings. The tree may not be planted on residential property, businesses or other areas private in nature. The trees will be ordered and planted in the spring or fall by the Parks Division. Existing trees may also be purchased and adopted. Price on existing trees depends on type. All trees are maintained by Parks personnel.

Plaques

Bronze 8" x 10" plaques are installed by Parks personnel next to the Living Tree. The cost for plaque is \$390. In order to provide consistent quality and aesthetics, only plaques purchased through the City will be allowed. Plaques may have as many words as the donor wishes, size permitting.



Want to Plant Your Own Tree?

Whether you utilize a City of Kettering tree program or not, we hope you consider planting a tree on your property to enjoy its benefits. With some planning, it can be an easy project. The best time to plant a tree is during cool temperatures. People often assume a new tree won't survive a winter, but since trees go dormant during that time, they typically do well and "rest" before the growing season in spring.

Before you purchase a tree, find a location in your yard that will accommodate the tree not just now but several years from now when it's fully grown. Do some research on how tall your tree could grow and how big its canopy might be when determining where to plant it.

Homeowners must contact the Ohio Utilities Protection Service (OUPS) by calling 8-1-1 within 2 to 10 working days before beginning any digging. Your utilities, lines, pipes and cables will be located to ensure you can dig safely.

The Arbor Day Foundation Guidelines for Planting Trees



First, dig a hole 3 to 4 times wider than the container or root ball. Dig sloping sides to the hole to allow room for proper root growth.



Next, carefully remove the tree from the container if it is in one. If its roots are wrapped in a burlap ball, there's no need to cut off the wrapping yet. Set the tree in the center of the hole. The root collar—where the roots meet the trunk—should be slightly above ground level. If it is buried, add some soil to the hole to lift the tree up.



Once the tree is in position, if its roots are wrapped, remove all the rope and twine from the ball as well as the burlap. Make sure your tree is straight and then firmly pack the original soil around the roots or root ball, making sure there aren't any air pockets. Continue until the soil is just below the root collar.

Heritage Tree Program

To honor exceptional Kettering trees and to promote their appreciation and preservation.

- Inform & educate the community about noteworthy trees
- Encourage proper care & protection of Kettering's Heritage Trees
- Increase public awareness of the ecological benefits of having diversity

Heritage Tree Award:

- Up to 10 trees each year will be awarded throughout the community (residential, commercial, and/or public park)
- After submission, City of Kettering staff will confirm tree details and get owner permission for nomination
- If awarded, applicants will be provided a plaque to display within the given property for a period of time, Labor Day – Halloween (Approximately 8 weeks)
- A program nomination form—can be submitted by owner or neighboring property owner.
- Applicants who are awarded will be recognized within city publications and social media posts.
- Awarded trees will be added to the City of Kettering Heritage Tree Program database to remain recognized for future years.

For more information or to fill out an application, go to www.playkettering.org/commemoratives-and-memorials



A tree is defined as a perennial plant having a single woody main trunk usually characterized by the ability to grow to considerable size and the development of woody branches. **Shrubs, bushes, ornamentals and fruit trees NOT included.*

Tree must meet one or more of the following criteria:

Extraordinary

Size and/or Age

This criteria is relative to the species of tree being assessed. If given recognition the tree must measure and score at or above the 50th percentile for trees identified by the Native and NonNative Ohio Big Tree Champions Program within its given species. Additionally, the tree will be assessed for its significance due to size and age based on the ecological benefits it provides the community.

Exceptional

Form, Beauty, Rarity, Etc.

This criteria will be assessed based on the general health and overall aesthetic value that the tree provides the community. Additionally, tree diversity data from the City of Kettering's current inventory will be reviewed to consider if the tree is rare relative to the surrounding urban canopy tree diversity.

Notable

Origin

This criteria will be assessed based on the narrative provided by the applicant. Understanding the history of a tree based on the context of the property and/or the applicant will allow for committee members to properly assess a tree's significance to the community based on this information.

Why Choose Native Trees?



Native trees are the foundation of a healthy ecosystem. They have evolved alongside local wildlife, providing food and shelter for birds, butterflies, and countless other species. While nonnative trees may offer visual appeal, they often fail to support local food webs. For example, a single oak tree can host over 500 species of caterpillars, which are essential food for baby birds. In contrast, a nonnative tree like a ginkgo may host fewer than five.

Here in Kettering, we're working to restore and support our local food webs by planting trees that truly sustain life. While many birds enjoy seeds and berries, most native Midwest birds must feed their young live caterpillars and insects to survive. A single chickadee, for example, needs to find up to 6,000 caterpillars to raise one nest of babies! Without native trees and plants to support these insects, bird populations suffer. Baby birds simply can't eat birdseed. By planting native trees in our yards and parks, we're ensuring that Kettering's birds, butterflies and other wildlife have the food they need to thrive.



By choosing native trees, you're not just adding beauty to your community—you're creating a thriving habitat right here in Kettering. Imagine stepping outside to hear more birdsongs, watch butterflies fluttering among the leaves, and know that your tree is helping to sustain life. That's the power of choosing native!



Protect Our Native Ecosystem: Remove Invasive Species

What Are Invasive Species?

Invasive species are non-native plants that spread aggressively, outcompeting native species and disrupting local ecosystems. Our native food webs depend on native plants for survival! Some of the most problematic invasive species in our region include Japanese Honeysuckle, Tree of Heaven, and Callery/Bradford Pear.

The Problem with Invasive Species

Invasive species, like Japanese honeysuckle, have long been a problem. Introduced in the 1800s, it rapidly took over natural spaces, crowding out native plants. By the 1990s, honeysuckle had become widespread and difficult to control, and as of 2006, it became illegal to sell or plant certain cultivars in Ohio.

Similarly, Callery pears have become a serious invasive problem, spreading rapidly into forests, wetlands, and roadsides. Introduced in the early 1900s as ornamental trees, Callery pears (including 'Bradford' and 'Cleveland' varieties) quickly spread beyond cultivation. By the 2000s, these trees were outcompeting native plants and failing to support local wildlife. As of January 2023, it is illegal in Ohio to sell, grow, or plant Callery pears.

How to Remove Invasives

Small Plants:

- Pull by hand when soil is moist to remove all roots.
- For multiple bushes, cut with shears & apply herbicide with a foam brush.
- Check periodically for regrowth.
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Large Plants:

- Cut stems close to the ground & immediately apply herbicide apply a strong herbicide at specified application rate (Triclopyr or Glyphosate).
- Use a paint brush or sponge to apply herbicide directly to the stump within minutes of cutting for best results. Use herbicide cautiously! Remember: The Label is the LAW!

While herbicides should be avoided when possible, the U.S. Forest Service & EPA approve their careful use to control aggressive invasive plants. Apply directly to the cut stump to avoid harming nearby vegetation!

Let's work together to restore our native ecosystem!



Planting For A Greener Tomorrow

With a little time, attention, and patience caring for a newly planted tree is very easy. Don't expect your tree to start growing the first season it's planted. Newly planted trees take about three seasons to regain their strength from the transplant and create strong roots before you will see visible growth above the ground.



Tree Care Tips and Techniques

Pruning



Pruning during the winter is the most common practice that promotes new growth in the spring. It's best to wait until the coldest part of winter has passed. Pruning can be done in summer or spring as well to promote flowering or to control the growth of a tree. Pruning, however, should never be done in the fall, as this gives the tree a cut that is difficult for it to heal during the winter months and causes the tree to expend extra energy that is a risk to its overall health.

Mulching



Think of mulching as nature's blanket for a tree. It insulates the soil, and provides a buffer from heat and cold. It retains water to help the roots stay moist and helps keep weeds out. Natural mulch such as wood chips or bark pieces should be 2–4 inches deep within a circle around the tree. Mulch should never touch the trunk of the tree nor be piled up around it in a mound.

Watering



Remember, a newly planted tree is working hard to establish strong roots. During the summer, your tree will be exerting energy dealing with heat and drought, so watering it will give it the extra help it needs to thrive. Water a tree often enough so the soil is moist—not saturated. Over-watering is a common tree-care mistake. A damp soil that dries for a short period will allow adequate oxygen to permeate the soil. To check soil moisture, insert a garden trowel into the ground 2" deep to create a trench. Use your finger to touch the soil, and if it's moist to the touch, the tree has enough water. If the soil is soggy, cut back on watering, but do check it often.



**If there are any questions, please call the
Parks Maintenance Center at 937-296 2486.**



CITY OF KETTERING
PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT