



Mark Stockman  
Director of Public Works

Dear Property Owner;

Thank you for contacting our office with your request for *Tree Planting Information*.

Enclosed you will find a Street Terrace Tree Planting Permit Application. Please fill in completely and return in the *pre-addressed envelope enclosed* or in person to:

City of Rockford  
ATTN: City Forester  
523 S. Central Avenue  
Rockford, IL 61102

Your application will be processed promptly and a permit issued to you. Although there is no cost to you for this permit, you are responsible for all the cost incurred with planting trees. You may not begin planting until the permit has been issued.

In effort to promote diversity in our tree canopy, we may approve your planting permit but require a change in the tree species that you may plant. We understand all the trees listed are approved, but there are many other factors that determine what is allowed. Each location will be individually evaluated to determine which species is best suited for the location. Our goal is to plant the right tree in the right place to ensure generations to come will be able to enjoy our Forest City.

Should you have any further questions, please contact the Street Maintenance Division at (779) 348-7260. Our office hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

City Forester

# Planting Permit Application

## Planting of Street Terrace Trees

### APPLICATIONS AND APPROVAL

This application must be filled out completely to be considered for permit issue. Please be aware that whenever a property owner plants a tree in the street terrace, it becomes public domain. A written permit can be issued under the following conditions:

The permittee shall be liable for:

- 1) All expenses involved in planting of the approved species;
- 2) Any injuries and/or damages sustained in such action;
- 3) Using white spray paint, mark the proposed planting site(s) with a "T" to indicate where tree(s) will be planted;
- 4) Contacting J.U.L.I.E. for a utility locate by dialing 811 or online at [www.illinois1call.com](http://www.illinois1call.com) a minimum of 2 days prior to planting
- 5) The minimum size of the proposed tree shall be two inches (2") in diameter, as measured six inches (6") above grade, and ten to fourteen feet (10' to 14') in height
- 6) Mulching and/or staking must be approved by City Forester

**Rockford, Illinois, Code of Ordinances**

**Chapter 27 - TREES AND SHRUBS >> ARTICLE II. - PERMITS**

**Sec. 27-45. - Required.**

No person, except upon order of the city forester, shall plant, remove, transplant, move, spray, brace, trim, prune, cut above or below ground, disturb, alter or do surgery on any public tree or shrub within the city or cause such act to be done by others, without first obtaining a written permit for such work from the city forester as herein provided. Application for said permit may be made by phone, but no permit shall issue unless the applicant has forwarded to the city forester proof that the applicant has obtained underground utility locations. Unless there exists special circumstances demanding explanation, permits will be issued by mail. This section shall not affect the right of the city to direct or cause the removal of any tree, plant, or shrub planted in any street, alley, parkway, or public place to accommodate public necessity or improvement.

(Ord. No. 2011-095-0, 8-15-2011)

**Sec. 27-47. - Issuance; contents; expiration; revocation.**

Every permit required by this article shall be issued by the city forester on forms prepared by him and shall include a description of the work to be done and shall specify the species or variety, size, nursery grade and location of trees or shrubs to be planted, if any. Any work done under such permit shall be performed in strict accordance with the terms thereof and the provisions of this chapter. Permits issued under this section shall expire six months after the date of issue, unless otherwise revoked. Permits may be revoked by the city forester if the permit was issued based upon mistaken, false or incorrect information received from the owner or permit applicant.

(Ord. No. 2011-095-0, 8-15-2011)

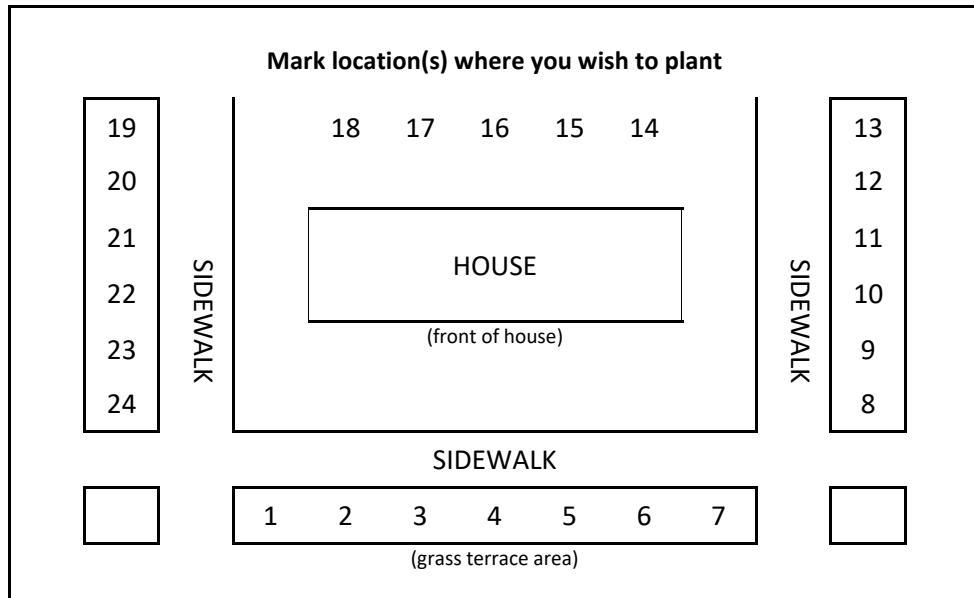
**Sec. 27-48. - Fee.**

No fee shall be charged for permits required by this article.

(Ord. No. 2011-095-0, 8-15-2011)

## PLANTING PERMIT APPLICATION

SITE ADDRESS:			
PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME:			
PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS: (IF DIFFERENT FROM SITE ADDRESS)			
CITY, STATE ZIP:			
PHONE NUMBER:			
EMAIL:			
APPROXIMATE PLANTING DATE:			
ISSUE PERMIT TO:	<b>PROPERTY OWNER</b>	OR	<b>CONTRACTOR</b>
CONTRACTOR NAME:			
CONTRACTOR ADDRESS:			
CONTRACTOR PHONE NUMBER:			
CONTRACTOR I.S.A. #: OR IL LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR ASSN. #:	ISA _____	ILCA _____	



Property owner must mark terrace with a white "T" to indicate proposed planting location(s)

Cell #	Terrace Width	Overhead Wires	Species to be planted	Size (Diameter Inches)
		Yes    No		

I hereby agree to abide to all provisions and tree planting requirements within this application, and to the tree planting permit once issued.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Permittee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Application Date

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Site Inspection Date \_\_\_\_\_

RFS # \_\_\_\_\_

Approved as submitted

Approved with changes (Note below)

Declined (Note Below)

Follow up date: \_\_\_\_\_

# City of Rockford Tree Planting Policy

## **Type of Street Terrace**

Before selecting a tree for a street terrace, we must determine the type of street terrace that is in front of your home. This will determine what you can plant in the street terrace.

In the City of Rockford, street terraces can be classified into four main groups:

- \_) **Closed Terraces** are defined as areas located between the curb and sidewalks. Generally, closed terraces are found in older residential areas but at times will be found in newer residential areas. These areas are heavily planted with trees, which have to compete for space with utilities, signs, street lights, and other objects.
- \_) **Open Terraces** can be defined as areas that are not defined by sidewalks. Generally, open terraces are found in fewer residential areas. There are generally fewer obstructions to trees, as lawn spaces are larger and utility lines are frequently buried or located in the rear of the properties.
- \_) **Boulevard Terraces** can be defined as a street terrace in the middle of the roadway. It is interesting that boulevards were introduced in Paris, France in the mid 1800's as a way to control troop movement. Tree lined boulevards provide troops with some measure of defense.
- \_) **Business Terraces** are the most difficult areas for tree planting, as visibility problems are most severe and impact on people is greatest. Width requirement for business terraces warrants further discussion under its own classification. Contact the City Forester for specific instructions before planting in business terraces.

## **Width of the street terrace**

The width of the street terrace will determine what can be planted in the street terrace. No trees will be allowed on any street terrace that is less than four feet (4') in width.

It has been determined that a four foot (4') street terrace cannot provide sufficient space for growth of a tree, and safe pedestrian and vehicle passage. Small confined areas create additional stress on the trees, making them more susceptible to insect and disease problems, which increase control efforts and maintenance costs.

## **Size of the tree**

Many people fondly remember when streets were lined and canopied by large elms, oaks, maples and other species. However, modern-day street designs have changed. Streets and boulevards are made much wider; older streets are enlarged, utilities both above and below ground are more numerous, all reducing space for trees.

Early street terrace planting programs encouraged close spacing, with as little as 20 to 30 feet for visual impact. Width of the street terrace and other constraints on available growing space were not a factor in the selection of the mature size of the tree chosen for planting.

Close spacing did create immediate visual impact, but no so obvious was the impact on future management costs. Trees planted close together became more expensive to maintain as they matured. When street terrace trees are planted in tight groupings, it creates additional pruning demands. Live branches from adjacent trees interfere with each other, and increased shading creates more deadwood.

Confined spacing of trees also creates additional stress on the trees, making them more susceptible to insect and disease problems, which in turn increases control efforts and maintenance costs. Dutch Elm disease is a clear example of disease transmission through root grafts from close spacing.

As a rule, trees should be placed so that they can develop freely without crowding each other, buildings, utility lines or other structures. As trees develop in street terraces, the safe passage of pedestrian and vehicle traffic must be provided for.

Frequently a person will select a tree based on how they like a certain type of tree for its color and shape, giving little regard to how large it will grow. As the tree grows, we commonly see trees growing into overhead utility lines, breaking sidewalks and curbs, obscuring signs, creating traffic hazards, and growing out of scale with respect to their surroundings.

Large trees will seldom find a place along the street terrace of today. Street terraces will be composed of small and medium growing trees. Even medium trees may grow too large for some street terraces.

In the City of Rockford, trees are grouped by mature height into three size classes:

- \_) Small Trees – 30 feet tall or less when mature,
  - o Minimum 5 – 6 foot terrace width required
- \_) Medium Trees – 30 feet tall to 50 feet tall when mature;
  - o Minimum 7 – 10 foot terrace width required
- \_) Large Trees – 50 feet tall or larger when mature.
  - o Minimum 11 foot terrace width required

### **Choosing the right spot for street terrace planting**

Minimum distance from objects and sight of vision in Street Terraces

Paved Surface	10 Feet	Railroad Crossings	100 Feet
Fire Hydrants	10 Feet	Bus Stops	40 Feet
Water & Sewer Services	10 Feet		
Manholes & Catch Basins	10 Feet	<b>Existing Trees</b>	
Street Lights	15 Feet	Small Shade Trees	15 – 30 Feet
Intersections & Alleys	40 feet	Medium Shade Trees	30 – 45 Feet
Traffic Lights	40 Feet	Large Shade Trees	45 – 60 Feet

**If the street terrace in front of your home has Commonwealth Edison transmission lines overhead, you are limited only to small trees, no matter what size or type of street terrace you have.**