# Minot State University Tree Care Plan

## The purposes of campus tree care plan

Trees are jewels in treeless North Dakota, and our campus is an excellent example of how trees may be supported in the heart of the prairie. There are several important points to emphasize. From a scientific view, all trees are plant species which should be classified and documented. For teaching purposes, all trees should be labeled to allow students to learn more about them. Trails and excursion paths could be established to show students and the general public the diversity of our trees. From a management view, we need to determine which trees should be planted, which trees should be moved or (probably) removed, what is the best way of cutting trees, how to deal with damaged and unhealthy trees, and many other considerations.

### Roles of Committee

The committee members will accept to serve for a period of one calendar year with a renewal option. Members shall appoint officials who will conduct the day-to-day business of the committee. Committee members are expected to actively participate and contribute in policy/guideline issues as well as in research/information gathering that would aid in the campus tree care plan.

## 1. Campus tree removal policy

The following criteria are used in evaluating a campus tree for possible removal:

- The tree is dead or dying.
- The tree is deemed hazardous, when the hazardous condition cannot be corrected through pruning or other reasonable arboricultural practices.

When trees are not deemed dead, dying, or hazardous, the following factors will be considered:

- Life expectancy of the tree.
- Desirability of the tree species.
- Amount of space allowable for tree growth.
- Overall quality and structural integrity of the tree.
- Persistent and uncontrollable insect and disease problems.
- Frequency and extensiveness of the tree's maintenance requirements.
- Feasibility and timeliness in which a replacement tree will be planted.
- Proximity and quality of trees near to the one considered for removal.
- Wishes and desires of the grounds arborist, faculty, students, and administration.
- Quality and extent of past pruning and other tree maintenance practices the tree has undergone.
- Extent and frequency of damage the tree is causing to surrounding infrastructure such as sidewalks, streets, sewers, etc.
- Location of the tree with regard to streetlights, traffic control devices, intersection sight lines, and the requirements of the tree related to available growing space.

Tree condition evaluation will be done by campus tree care professional or her/his designated second. Other input from administration, faculty, and students will be submitted as well and final determination made at the Committee meeting. No tree should be removed without prior consent of the Committee. If the removal of a tree is a part of any Campus development plan, this plan must be agreed to by the Committee.

Sometimes, trees are removed due to emergency repairs. In these cases, all trees should be kept alive and planted back as a part of repair workflow. If this is not possible, trees which are taken out should be moved to a new location. The Committee will later determine if the planting of new trees is possible on the location of the emergency repairs.

It is also suggested that a notice be posted upon the tree in question and published in print or online at least 10 days in advance of work being completed. If the tree is a definite hazard, this notification period may be bypassed by decree of representatives from administration, the tree committee, and the campus arborist.

When possible, preference should be given to the moving of the tree to a new place, instead of discarding it.

## 2. Planting new trees

When replacing trees or planting new trees, there are several things to consider:

- Educational Value. Non-native tree species should be chosen for their enhancement of biological, ecological, and general education of the campus and community.
- Environmental and/or Functional Reasons. Trees contribute largely to the environment, so it is vital that the species of planted tree accommodates the needs of the environment. Trees help fight global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide and keeping our air oxygenated. The selection of trees is important to produce a healthy mixture of species to increase diversity and decrease the incidence of disease and insect epidemics. Native (to North Dakota and bordering states and territories) species of trees will fulfill most of the requirements mentioned above.
- Aesthetic Purposes. The chosen tree should be aesthetically pleasing and have an ornamental value. Exceptions are possible only if the educational importance of the particular tree is emphasized. We also need to prefer native species over non-native, even if they are less attractive.

Planting of individual trees (e.g., as a replacement of removed trees) as well as all Campus development plans suggesting tree planting, should be approved by the Committee.

## 3. Pruning trees

The following pruning methods are pre-approved by the Committee:

- Clean: Selective pruning to remove one or more of the following parts: dead, diseased, and/or broken branches.
- Thin: Selective pruning to reduce density of live branches.
- Raise: Selective pruning to provide vertical clearance.
- Reduce: Selective pruning to decrease height and/or spread (consideration must be given to the ability of a species to tolerate reduction pruning).

## 4. MSU Campus as a natural environment

If there is a choice between different ways of tree pruning, tree planting, or tree removal, preference should be given to methods which improve:

- Land restoration which leans towards the past natural environment conditions in the particular part of campus.
- “Nativity” of species content.
- Xeriscaped gardening, i.e., gardening without or with lesser amount of watering.
- The presence of animal species which are a component of the natural ecosystems in the region (however, over-presence of some animals like insects is not typically welcomed).

## 5. Financing

Minot State University full time student population is approximately 3,300. Therefore, the amount of annual expenditures needed for Tree Campus USA participation is 3,300 x $3 equal to $9,900.00. This money will be spent on the following activities:

- Moving trees to new places, instead of discarding them.
- Healing damaged trees (for example, with tree wound paint).
- Buying new trees (in addition to tree-buying in accordance with University plans). This will allow an increase in diversity, education value and the amount of natural landscape in the Campus.
- Making the tree inventory of the Campus.
- Labeling the selected amount of trees on Campus, and renewal of old labels.