



Street Tree Maintenance Manual Fact Sheet

What is a Street Tree?

“Street trees [are] located within the street rights-of-way.” (OMC 16.60.020) Parks staff are responsible for maintaining the trees shown in the **City Maintained Street Trees** map attached to your staff report. All other street trees in Olympia are the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. (OMC 16.60.100-140)

What is the Street Tree Maintenance Manual?

The Street Tree Maintenance Manual (STMM) is primarily an internal document that will be used to maintain street trees according to best professional practices.

It provides data and guidance to:

- prune and maintain trees to protect their health, safety, and value.
- maximize the City’s return on investment for street trees.
- manage a financially sustainable maintenance program.
- communicate with the public about street tree management.

What is Street Tree Maintenance?

Consistent maintenance is crucial to protect infrastructure, prevent hazards, and protect tree health and condition.

Industry maintenance best practices include:

- Pruning every 3-5 years.
- Weeding and maintaining tree grates.
- Mulching to conserve water and improve soil.
- Planting and watering new trees.
- Removing trees when necessary.

Olympia’s Street Trees

Most of our street trees are currently in good condition, with minor structural defects that can be corrected with pruning.

If maintenance is deferred for several more years, many trees will become too mature for structural pruning to be effective.

A healthy and diverse urban forest is protected, expanded, and valued for its contribution to the environment and community.

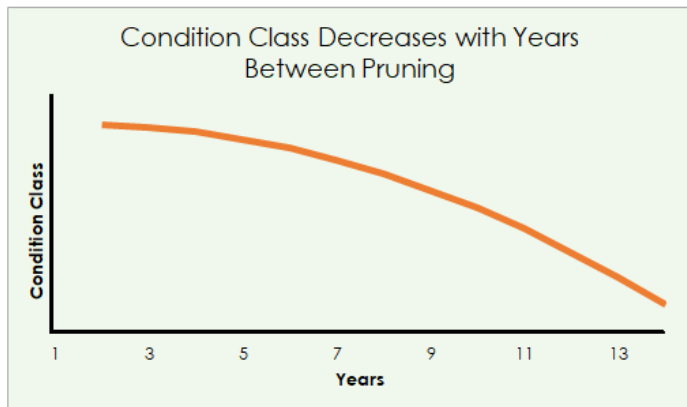
Olympia Comprehensive Plan -
Natural Environment Goal 3



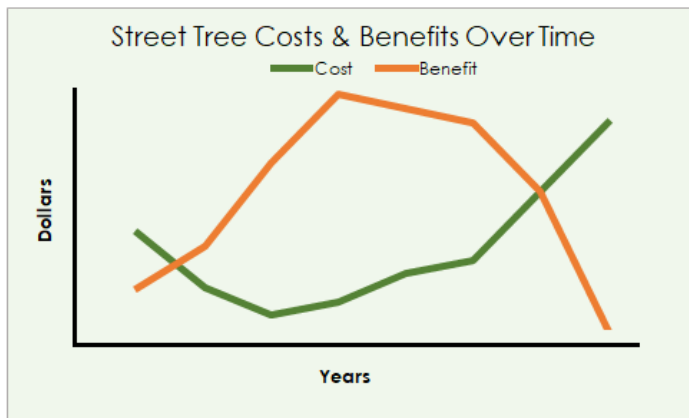
In 2015 the City -
maintained street tree
population was worth over
six million dollars.

Why Maintain Street Trees?

Regular maintenance improves the health and condition of street trees. Trees in good condition provide more of the benefits our community values from the urban forest.



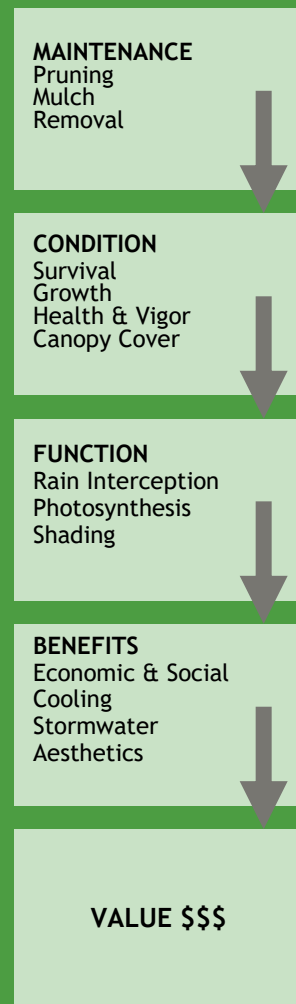
The condition of trees declines as the number of years since the last pruning increases.



Regular pruning is especially important for younger trees to develop good canopy structure. If trees are pruned in their early years, the cost of maintenance declines with age. The cost of deferred maintenance in older trees tends to be expensive.

Benefits of The Urban Forest

- Increased property values
- High quality retail environment supports local business
- Decreased stress and violence
- Walkability and motivation for exercise
- Greater social cohesion and sense of place
- Stormwater management
- Shade and summer cooling
- Improved air quality



Next Steps for Our Trees...

The STMM is part of a process to improve Olympia's urban forestry program outlined by the Urban Forestry Strategic Plan (2015). Developing an Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP) is the next step in the process. An UFMP will set policy and guide management for the entire urban forest including developed and undeveloped areas, and both public and private property.