Smith Ave Landscaping Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Click here for the boulevard tree pallet referenced below.

What is the budget for replacing trees:

The budget allows for a 1 to 1 replacement minimum for all removed boulevard trees.

How big will the trees be when they are planted?

The pallet of trees for this project includes tree species that grow at different rates and mature to different heights and widths. The trees proposed will be have a trunk with of 1.5 – 2.5 inches and will stand 7 – 15 feet tall. Ornamentals will be on the smaller end of this range and shade trees will be on the larger end.

What is the growing speed of the trees?

The palette for this project includes many medium to fast growing trees like the Elm, Maple, Linden, Hackberry, and Crabapple among others. There are some slower growing species like the Oak, Coffeetree, Ironwood, and Blue Beech included in the palette, but are included for their native and pollinator attributes.

Why will the trees not be planted until 2019?

To avoid construction conflicts with the 1917-45 project that includes a mill and overlay, sidewalk work, ADA improvements and other work in the ROW. This project must be completed before any trees are planted to avoid potential damage to the trees during construction and access conflicts with contractors.

Who will plant the trees and what is the process?

A MnDOT inspector will be on-site to approve planting stock and materials which include the trees, mulch and compost. The inspector will also oversee the planting operations to ensure they meet MnDOT specification 2571 and the standard planting details. The contractor is also required to have a Certified Landscape Specialist on site at all times. This specialist is certified by MnDOT to perform or supervise plant installation and establishment work.

What if I want to plant more trees in the area?

Trees can be planted off MnDOT's Right of Way (ROW) without the need of a permit. If one wishes to plant a tree on MnDOT's ROW, a Limited Use Permit will need to be acquired. More information can be found here.

What is the maintenance and watering plan for the new trees?

Watering and regular maintenance will follow MnDOT's specification 2571 – Plant Installation and Establishment: https://www.dot.state.mn.us/pre-letting/prov/order/2571.pdf

This work consists of:

- Watering- During the PIP (plant installation period), provide watering equipment and forces on the project capable of completely watering plants as often as necessary to maintain soil moisture in the root zones. Within 2 hours of installation, saturate the backfill soil of each plant with water. After settling, provide additional backfill to fill in the voids.

Which trees are native to Minnesota?

Minnesota is home to 52 native tree species. A full list can be found here.

The palette proposed for this project is about 70% native or a native cultivar, meaning the tree is a hybrid mix of a native and non-native tree species. We try and include as many native trees as possible in roadside projects. However, we do need to plant non-natives in some cases because of the harsh roadside conditions in which many natives are unable to adapt to or survive.

Which Trees are pollinators?

A detailed list of trees and shrubs for recommended for pollinators can be found here.

Many of the trees recommended for this project are pollinator friendly, but we also have to look at trees that can survive in the harsh urban environment that includes compacted soils, salt, urban pollution, etc.

Are there allergies and fragrances associated with the trees?

Trees with colorful flowers, like apple and cherry varieties, have bigger, stickier pollen that doesn't blow in the wind or cause allergy symptoms. They do produce some fragrance, but the fragrance is limited to the bloom on the tree which will typically only last a week or two. Trees that often set of allergies include: Ash, Aspen, Beech, Birch, Box Elder, Cedar, Cottonwood, Elm, Hickory, Mountain Elder, Mulberry, Oak, Pecan, and Willow.

Ginkgo Trees: What is the difference between male and female trees?

Nurseries typically only sell male trees (fruitless) and the Ginkgo cultivars are exclusively male. Female trees do produce seeds that mature during the autumn and are messy and omit a foul odor after splitting open. No serious insect or disease problems are associated with the Ginkgo and are believed to be an ancient species which has inhabited the earth for up to 150 million years.

Are Japanese Beetles cause for concern?

The Japanese Beetle is an insect that is currently thriving all over the Metro area. These beetles do move around the neighborhood and are active feeding on foliage of trees, shrubs and grass during a few weeks in the early and mid-summer.

Beetles will defoliate trees quickly if populations are high enough in a given area. Beetles can gravitate towards some tree species more than others (i.e. certain lindens, certain elms, and crab-apples), however they will feed on almost all types of trees and shrubs. We have been advised that there is almost no way to 100% remove this pest. It is difficult to say how long they will be around the Metro and populations can be up and down from one year to the next. Populations are dependent on many factors including the climate, and the area's history of consistently treating their trees/ lawns for the Japanese beetles.

The tree pallet we have developed is diverse, and has taken into account the Japanese beetle issue. New boulevard trees will be under the landscape contractor's care for 2 years. If the contractor sees an issue with the beetle on the trees under contract, they may have the ability to treat for beetles with appropriate control measures. More information on treatment can be found at:

https://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/insects/find/japanese-beetles/

Is the Emerald Ash Borer cause for concern?

With the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer MnDOT has a developed a policy to remove any ash tree in the public right of way with construction projects. This is being done to help control the spread of the insects and to avoid any hazardous trees after they have been infested which can lead to brittle limbs that can fall during high winds or storms. More information can be found at:

http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/hwy149highbridge/ashtree.html

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/terrestrialanimals/eab/index.html

For full details about the Hwy 149 construction project, please visit: www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/hwy149highbridge