

# Community Trees

## Charter Township of Ypsilanti

2022

Trees benefit the entire community, so all trees should be considered when examining the use of local laws and resources. This snapshot outlines how trees are managed in your community and is intended to encourage resident involvement in shaping future land use, resource management, and conservation policies.

Current Tree Canopy Cover: 23%

Tree City USA: No

Woodlands Protection Ordinance: Yes

Current Tree Inventory: No

Tree Donation Program: Yes

Volunteer Program: No

Tree Maintenance: Contract

Tree Planting: Contract

Public Parks: 27, > 970 acres

Dedicated Funding: Yes (general fund, millage, grants, and entrance fees)



Website: [ytown.org](http://ytown.org)

## STRENGTHS

### Robust Park System

Large with diverse recreation facilities and dedicated funding.

### Elected Park Commission

Listens to residents' concerns, opinions, and ideas at monthly public meetings and involved in development of park policy and priorities. Learn more and find the meeting schedule at [ytown.org/park-commission](http://ytown.org/park-commission).

### Recognition of Trees Benefits

Ordinance language and staff recognize the roles of trees. Residents value trees' ability to clean the air, capture CO<sub>2</sub>, protect water quality, and reduce stormwater runoff and flooding, etc.

### Development Policies Incorporate Trees and Open Space

Policies in place for tree planting, preservation, replacement, and removal on new developments. Planned Developments are a zoning type that requires a percentage of open space with a portion accessible to residents. Policies in place for designating and protecting historic or specimen trees and vegetative linkage strips.

## CHALLENGES

### Limited Staff Capacity and Funds

Four staff and seasonal crew focus on critical issues, such as hazard trees, but lack capacity for preventative routine maintenance.

### Minimal Guiding Documents and Data

No tree inventory data or urban forestry management plan directs or prioritizes actions. Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted in 2019.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Adopt a PDR Ordinance for Preservation on Private Land

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) is a voluntary agreement that compensates property owners who accept a permanent deed restriction (through a conservation easement) on their land, forever limiting development rights.

### Develop Sustainable Volunteerism

Long-term programs to ensure ongoing proper maintenance of public trees within the park system and, as permitted, along streets. Programs could expand to assist or advise private landowners with simple, routine maintenance.

### Conduct a Tree Inventory for Township Parks

Identify species and log condition of public trees within the park system to better target maintenance activities and priorities.

### Strengthen Construction Protection Standards for Trees

Protect the critical root zone (CRZ), which varies by species and site conditions, from disturbance.

### Finish Update of Woodlands Protection Ordinance

Balance the need to preserve healthy stands of specimen trees/old woodlots and re-develop targeted areas of the community, such as Michigan Ave, Ecorse, and Huron.

### Lack of Routine Private Tree Maintenance

Leads to expensive tree issues that individual residents cannot afford.

### No Jurisdiction and Resources for Street Trees

Township lacks jurisdiction, as well as funds and internal skilled staff, to care for street trees. The Washtenaw County Road Commission has jurisdiction over most street trees but prioritizes driver safety issues.

## WHAT CAN I DO?



### SPEAK UP

Attend public meetings or serve on the Park Commission.



### LEARN

Use this guide to review local ordinances and planning documents.



### TEND A TREE

Regular maintenance reduces future costs.

See Resources on Back ►

# Charter Township of Ypsilanti Ordinance Overview

The table below summarizes applicable forestry and landscape standards included in your local ordinances compared to elements typically included in robust programs. This brief overview does not examine the quality of each element nor how well it functions in practice. A more detailed document was provided to local staff and/or elected officials to provide guidance for future regulatory updates.

	Code/Ordinance Element	Yes	No	Location
Public	Responsible Party and Regulations for Tree Planting, Maintenance, Preservation and Removal		●	
	Tree Board/Commission/Department and Duties		●	
	Tree Canopy Guidelines		●	
	Permit Required for Work on Trees		●	
	Mutilation of Trees Prohibited		●	
Development	Tree Planting	●		Sec. 1301(3)(A-C)
	Tree Preservation	●		Sec. 24-69
	Tree Removal	●		Sec. 24-67(4)(b)
	Tree Replacement	●		Sec. 24-68(a)(1); Sec. 1301(3)(J)(4)
	Landscape Plan Required, Inclusion of Trees and Vegetation in Site Plans	●		Sec. 1301(1-2)
	Parking Lots: Tree Planting	●		Sec. 1301(3)(D)(1-2)
	Landscaping Standards and Tree Requirements: Greenbelts, Berms, Planting Screens, Fences, etc.	●		Sec. 1301(3): (E); (G)(5)(a-b); (I)(3)(a-b); (H)(2-3)
	Prohibited Species List	●		Sec. 1301(3)(K)(6)
	Plant Material Guidelines: Species, Size, Spacing	●		Sec. 1301(3)(B)
Promote Use of Native Species	●		Sec. 1301(3)(A)(8); Sec. 1301(3)(K)(1)	
General	Woodlands Protection Ordinance	●		Chapter 24, Article III
	Dead/Diseased Tree Removal	●		Chapter 66, Article II, Sec. 66-28
	Approved/Suggested Species List	●		Sec. 42-61

## KEY

**Yellow Text:** Ordinance is from draft Zoning Code rewrite provided by Ypsilanti Township.

**Blue Text:** Ordinance is from the V2 Woodlands Ordinance Amendment Draft provided by Ypsilanti Township.



**Municode** The "Code of Ordinances Charter Township of Ypsilanti" is available at Municode, a searchable, online database of municipal codes organized by chapters, articles, divisions, and sections. Find any ordinance by using the search bar at the top. As new ordinances are adopted, they may not be reflected immediately on Municode. Visit the Township's website to find new updates.

## What's a Tree Ordinance?

An ordinance is a law issued by a local government. Tree ordinances establish official policies for how a community wants to maintain its trees and establishes legal protection.

## Example Types of Tree Ordinances

**Street/Park Tree:** Addresses planting, maintenance, and removal of trees within the ROW or parks. May include private trees if they impact public interest or pose a public hazard.

**Tree/Woodland Protection:** Conserves desirable trees, tree canopy, or historic trees on public and private property. May require a permit to remove, encroach upon, or prune protected trees.

**Landscaping/Buffer:** Establishes requirements, such as number, placement, and types of suitable trees. May require trees in parking lots or buffer strips to protect needs of adjacent property owners (noise and views) or water quality (riparian buffers).

## RESOURCES

For more information, visit [washtenawcd.org/communitytrees](http://washtenawcd.org/communitytrees)

- Community Maps
- Tree Ordinance Development
- Tree Board Information
- Tree Benefit Facts
- How to Plant a Tree
- And More!

