

Beautiful City Trees

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City Beautification

- "... the tree-lined streets of Sioux Falls are a big part of why this is a beautiful community."
- "These trees add to property value, provide aesthetics, provide shade from summer heat, reduce utility bills, temper the wind, reduce noise and air pollution, support our urban wildlife and provide for a pleasing environment to live, work and play."
- from <https://www.siouxfalls.org/parks/forestry/faq>
- Let's make it happen

I Wanted To Plant 50 Trees

- Local school needs trees, nature



City Ordinance

- Planting many trees is too costly
- Planting trees in the parking strip is often illegal
- Various other stifling city requirements
- City apparently prefers bleak concrete to tree-lined streets
- I cancelled my plans to beautify a local school setting

A Definition

- Parking strip - a strip of land between the sidewalk and the curb that is not built upon but beautified with turf, trees, flower beds, etc.
- Definition based on <https://www.atg.wa.gov/ago-opinions/motor-vehicle-prohibited-parking-places-parking-strip>

City Ordinance Problem 1

- "§ 94.037 STREET TREES PERMITTED.
- (a) The director shall maintain a list of approved street trees.
- (b) The director may approve species other than from the approved list when the planting of the species is of equal or greater benefit to the city."
- Better to say "Deciduous trees may be planted in the parking strip"

Problems 2

- "§ 94.038 PLANTING IN PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY."
- "(1) No person shall plant or allow a tree to be planted in the right-of-way without a permit subject to the provisions of this chapter;"
- That's a nuisance
- "(2) Only approved trees may be planted in the parking strip;"
- Adds needless difficulty, reduces variety

Problems 3

- "(3) No tree shall be planted where the clear space between the curb and the sidewalk is less than five feet;"
- Prevents planting trees
- "(4) No tree shall be planted closer than three feet from the curb;"
- Prevents planting trees
- "(5) Trees must be one inch in diameter or larger measured six inches above the ground;"
- Increases cost, prevents mass plantings

Problems 4

- "(6) Trees shall not be planted under power lines unless approved by the director;"
- Should read "Dwarf trees may be planted under power lines"
- "(7) Trees shall be planted at least 40 feet apart except where otherwise permitted by the director;"
- Stifling. Plant as many trees as you like
- "(11) Trees on a corner lot shall be planted at least 30 feet back from the corner"
- Big trees are higher than cars & don't block vision 9

Problems 5

- "ARBORIST'S LICENSE § 94.060 REQUIRED."
- "No person for hire ... may perform tree maintenance or remove trees within the city unless the person ... holds a valid arborist's license"
- Licenses protect established businesses, are a barrier to entry, increase cost, encourage expensive consumer safety
- Law prevents maintenance workers trimming twigs
- License requirement should be limited to big jobs

Problems 6

- "§ 94.035 PERMIT TO REMOVE; REQUIRED."
- "(a) No person shall remove trees in public places without first procuring a permit from the director."
- Is this necessary? Do city staff get formal permits?

Conclusion, Recommendations

- Does the city want trees or control?
- Encourage tree-lined streets – stop preventing them
- Simplify ordinance
- Lighten up
- Encourage nature and trees

Enjoy Winter, Nature, Trees

