

What is a Planting Strip?

A planting strip is the portion of the street right-of-way between the curb or edge of road and the property line, not including the sidewalk.



The planting strip Sidewalk Property line

Who owns the planting strip?

It is Town property, but the homeowner plays an important role in up keep.

Who maintains the planting strip?

The adjacent property owner. Similar to surrounding communities Watertown relies on you as a partner to help create and maintain a greener, more beautiful Town.

What you should do as a homeowner and community member:

- Water newly planted trees. If you see a watering bag on a street tree check to see if there is water in it - if it's empty - fill it up!
- Don't park on the planting strip!
- Compost your leaves in the fall (Check the trash collection calendar).
- Report issues to the Tree Warden.



Town of Watertown

Department of Public Works

124 Orchard Street

Watertown, MA 02472

(617) 972-6420

Tree Warden:

Christopher Hayward, MCA

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DPW Highway Supervisor:

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Watertown's guide to Tree Planting & Care for residential planting strips



Trees are Important!

Street trees provide many benefits including:

- increasing beautification and comfort which promotes the health, happiness and wellness of the surrounding community
- increasing the value of surrounding properties
- filtering stormwater run-off through their roots (improving water quality) while soaking some up and helping hold excess water in the soil (reducing flooding)
- encouraging drivers to slow down
- providing shade which lowers the heat on urban streets and sidewalks and reduces air conditioning costs
- improving air quality
- absorbing carbon dioxide which helps reduce the effects of greenhouse gasses

Find out how you can bring these
benefits to your neighborhood!

What can you do with your planting strip?

Become a Steward!!

- Water newly planted street trees and plantings.
- Protect all plantings. Check with the Tree Warden about appropriate edging or fencing.
- Control the weeds.
- Remove trash and waste.
- And of course, don't park on the planting strip

Request Pavement Removal

Email the DPW Highway Supervisor to:

- Remove pavement. No permit needed, The Town will provide loam and seed. The sidewalk must be at least 4-feet wide and the planting strip must be at least 2-feet wide.
- Install soil and grass seed to repair or establish a new planting strip. Specify if you don't want your strip seeded because you plan to plant flowers or other vegetation.

Plant Vegetation

- Do you want to plant other things besides grass? You don't need a permit! See the Planting Strip brochure.

Request a Tree (or care for one)

Email the Tree Warden to:

- Plant a tree (subject line: "New Tree Planting Request")
- Remove a dead tree (subject line: "Remove Dead Tree")
- Prune a street tree (subject line: "Prune Tree")

Things to remember:

- The Town will pay for the tree and will install it.
- An optional donation of \$95 is requested for the tree and installation.
- The homeowner is responsible for watering the tree.
- Planting a tree depends on how much space there is in your planting strip, as well as over head wires and underground pipes.
- If there is not enough room for a tree in the planting strip, residents may still be able to:
 - » Request pavement removal and have the Town provide loam and seed.
 - » Plant flowers or other vegetation! (See planting brochure)
 - » Have the Town plant a tree in your front yard! (location subject to approval by the Tree Warden)

What homeowners cannot do:

- Install irrigation in the planting strip
- Plant or prune a Town tree on their own (email the Tree Warden - we are here to help!)
- Install curbing, hardscaping, or objects in the Right-of-Way without getting a permit from the Town.

Don't Forget!

- It is Town property, but the homeowner plays an important role in the up keep. The Town cannot replace damaged plants due to snow removal or people parking on the planting strip so please take the necessary precautions when choosing what to do with your planting strip.
- Communicate with the Town to report damage or concerns you have.
- Contact information is on the back of this brochure.
- Street trees are regulated under the Massachusetts Public Shade Tree law (MGL Chapter 87).

Watertown has been designated a Tree City USA community by the Arbor Day Foundation!