

OTTAWA COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION OPERATIONAL POLICY PERMITTING	NUMBER: 1 EFFECTIVE DATE: 08/19/14 REVISION NUMBER:
SUBJECT: TREE PLANTING WITHIN COUNTY ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY	

The purpose of this guideline is to identify requirements regarding tree size and species, location, and general conditions for trees planted within County road right-of-way by adjacent property owners. Any tree planted within the County road right-of-way that does not conform to this policy shall be considered an unauthorized encroachment and subjected to removal in a manner consistent with the Road Commission’s encroachment policy and the relevant provisions of Michigan law.

TREE LOCATIONS
(Minimum locations from road centerline.)

	55 mph			45 mph			25 mph		
Primary Road	2 Lane	3 Lane	5 Lane	2 Lane	3 Lane	5 Lane	2 Lane	3 Lane	5 Lane
	32’ Min.	38’ Min.	47’ Min.	30’ Min.	36’ Min.	45’ Min.	28’ Min.	34’ Min.	43’ Min.
Local Road	2 Lane	3 Lane	5 Lane	2 Lane	3 Lane	5 Lane	2 Lane	3 Lane	5 Lane
	30’ Min.	38’ Min.	47’ Min.	28’ Min.	36’ Min.	45’ Min.	27’ Min.	34’ Min.	43’ Min.
Subdivision Street							2 Lane		
							25’ Min.		

TREE PLANTING SHALL NOT BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY AT ALL HORIZONTAL CURVE LOCATIONS.

The Road Commission reserves the right to increase the tree planting location offset from road centerline based on a field review of the site conditions.

General Conditions

1. A permit shall be obtained from the Ottawa County Road Commission prior to planting any trees within the county road right-of-way.
2. Tree planting specifications shall be measured from the road centerline to the center of the tree at ground level.

3. Tree planting shall not be permitted in ditches, on ditch slopes, or between a ditch and a roadway.
4. Required distance from centerline or back of curb shall not be reduced due to existing sidewalks, bike paths, structures, or utilities.
5. Sight distance at intersections and driveways shall be maintained in accordance with current Ottawa County Road Commission and AASHTO guidelines.
6. Other plantings such as shrubs and bushes may be permitted provided they do not reach a height greater than two (2) feet and must be salt tolerant.
7. Adjacent property owners shall be responsible to maintain tree plantings and to trim and remove all foliage less than 8-feet from the road centerline elevation.
8. The Ottawa County Road Commission shall not be responsible for damage or removal of tree plantings resulting from accidents, vandalism, disease, or normal road maintenance activities such as applying road salt or brine. Tree removal may be necessary in the future to accommodate road widening, reconstruction, permitted activities, or other normal uses of road right-of-way, and in such cases, compensation will not be made by the Ottawa County Road Commission.
9. Issuance of a permit to plant trees within the county road right-of-way does not convey ownership of the tree to the Ottawa County Road Commission or create any property rights to the right-of-way in favor of the permittee.
10. If a proposed tree planting location is within 10 feet (horizontal distance) from an overhead utility line, written permission from the utility company shall be obtained before a permit is issued.

Planting Size and Species:

All trees shall be at least one and one-half inches (1-1/2") in diameter. Tree species shall be approved by the Ottawa County Road Commission. The selected tree species shall be based on their form, hardiness, foliage, cleanliness and relative resistance to salt, insects, diseases, damage and drought. All permit requests for tree planting within the county road right-of-way must be salt tolerant.

The following tree species will not be allowed within the road right-of-way due to their sensitivity to road salt.

Redbud	English Hawthorn	Crabapple
Red Pine	Scotch Pine	Eastern White Pine
American Plum	Arborvitae	Gray and Red Osier Dogwood
Tulip Tree	American Sycamore	Pin Oak
Silky Sassafras	Japanese Maple	Flowering Cherry
Hemlock		

Adopted by the Board of County Road Commissioners: August 19, 2014

This policy supersedes and rescinds the previous Tree Planting Policy of January 24, 2013.