Street Trees

Recommendation

Plant groupings of closely spaced trees along Stone Avenue at varying intervals not to exceed 100 feet.

What Are Street Trees?

Street trees are large upright trees that are intended primarily to be stand-alone landscape elements. Street trees will be most effective in providing "true" shade and a commanding visual contrast between dense landscaping and open space when planted in groups. These trees should be located to maximize shade for pedestrians. Locations could include between the street and the sidewalk, between the sidewalk and adjacent properties, and in the center of the street. (For discussion of the latter, see the Study Card titled *Landscape Islands*.) Street trees can be incorporated into new development projects, redevelopment projects, and public improvement projects.

Street trees serve the following important functions:

- Provide visual relief from large expanses of paving.
- Contribute to the "greening" of the corridor.
- Provide dense shade when planted in groups.
- Separate pedestrians from motor vehicles.

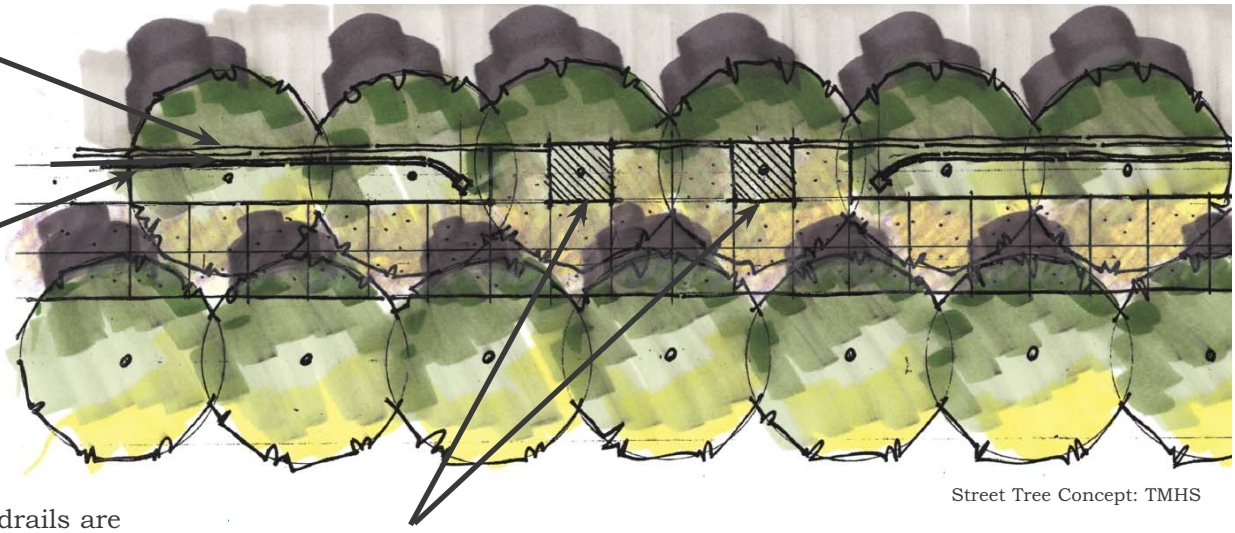
What Is Included in Planting Street Trees?

Trees

Trees are large upright varieties with a long life, low maintenance needs, and drought tolerant characteristics.

Art Rail

Because Stone Avenue has limited right-of-way, street trees will sometimes need to be located immediately adjacent to the road. "Art rails" that meet the specifications of guardrails are used to protect the cars from the trees and the trees from the cars. These rails are treated artistically to complement both their immediate location and contribute to the overall aesthetics of the corridor.



Street Tree Concept: TMHS

Tree Grates

Tree grates are generally slotted iron grates that fit flush with the adjacent sidewalk and allow water and air to reach the ground surface around the trees. These grates should only be used where large expanses of concrete surround the street tree locations or heavy pedestrian use is anticipated.

Lighting

Accent lighting can be incorporated with street trees to enliven the street and to highlight the more heavily used pedestrian areas.

Street Trees

What Are Key Guidelines for Using Street Trees?

While the location and installation of street trees are quite flexible, an evenly spaced line of trees throughout the corridor is not recommended for two reasons. First, the need to keep businesses visible would prohibit close enough spacing to provide effective shade. Second, Stone Avenue is distinguished in part by its diversity of parcel sizes, land uses, and building types. Uniform landscaping would detract from rather than complement this diversity. Following are the guidelines for the location of street trees.

1 Street trees should be planted with consideration for the sun angles and desired shade locations. For example, street trees planted on the east side of Stone Avenue will provide more pedestrian shade if they are located between the street and the sidewalk.

2 Street trees should be tightly spaced where shade is most needed. Street trees can be spaced further apart or not planted where pedestrian shade is not a primary goal.

3 Street trees should reflect adjacent pedestrian activities. For example, trees should be located and spaced to provide meaningful shade at bus stops.

4 Street trees should be planted on the sides of Stone Avenue at those locations where landscape islands have been installed in the center of the road. This will further enhance the traffic calming effect of the center islands by reinforcing the visual perception of the narrowing of the road at these locations. (See Study Card titled *Landscape Islands*.)

5 "Art rails" (i.e., customized guardrails) should be utilized to allow planting of trees close to the curb line. This maximizes available landscape space and provides a narrow streetscape cross section.

6 Wherever possible, new development or redevelopment should create a shaded environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. As such, street trees should be incorporated into all new projects along the corridor.

7 Street trees should be incorporated into projects that include the addition of new sidewalks along the corridor.

8 Street trees should be a minimum of 36-inch box size. This will reduce the time at which a tree is "at risk" from poor maintenance, improper watering, staking, etc. Starting with larger trees will provide more shade sooner.

9 Street trees should be planted with two-foot-deep root guards in locations where the trees' roots could affect the sidewalk or street paving.

10 Tree grates should be used where trees are planted in openings within the sidewalk.

11 Street trees should be selected from the recommended plant palette for the Stone Avenue Corridor. (See Study Card titled *Plant Palette*.)

How Can Street Trees Be Installed and Maintained?

Some street trees should be able to be incorporated into the Stone Avenue streetscape in the near future by requesting that developers plant them in conjunction with new development or redevelopment projects. In addition, opportunities to demonstrate the use of large upright trees for shade and visual contrast should be sought in the City of Tucson Stone/Speedway Gateway Improvement Project and in the Stone/Grant portion of the Pima County Grant Road Improvement Project.

Street trees are also recommended for inclusion in the landscape elements described in other cards. (See the Study Cards titled *Landscape Islands, Green Nodes,* and *Pedestrian Nodes*.)

Street trees located in the city's right-of-way would be under the care and maintenance of the city, while those on private property would be the responsibility of the property owner.

Have questions about the study results?
Contact the City of Tucson
Comprehensive Planning Task Force
at 791-4505.

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