# CITY OF CHARLES TOWN

## CHARLES TOWN TREE BOARD

## AGENDA • JANUARY 8, 2026

**Commission/Board Meeting** **COUNCIL CHAMBERS** **7:00 PM**

**101 E Washington Street, Charles Town, WV 25414**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

: **2026-1026:** Charles Town Tree Board Meeting Minutes - December 4, 2025
Tree Board Meeting Minutes - December 4, 2025.pdf

**3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

: **2026-1000:** Tree Canopy/Inventory Update- Review of goals, software data, etc. Plan to update and undertake new inventory.

: **2026-1001:** Pollinator Garden. Need for volunteers to weed and trim this Fall. Additional seeding? Day of Caring?

: **2026-1002:** Identification of open planting areas for tree installations in City.

: **2026-1003:** Identification of invasive species and project discussion of reclaiming native environment for Skate Park and Evitts Run. Plan to identify and map trees for removal.

: **2026-1004:** Development of watering, care and maintenance plan for new trees and assessment of equipment needed.

: **2026-1005:** Discussion of revisions to Tree Ordinance, meeting with James on planning issues and revisions to other ordinances. See attached Model Tree Ordinance.
revised model ordinance rev 9.2.25.pdf

: **2026-1006**: Chestnut Tree Saplings, growing and next steps, location to plant this Fall. Need cages or tubes. Funds to be delivered. Educational material. Decision to plant Spring/Fall of 2026.

: **2026-1007:** Clearing of brush and invasive species along Willingham Knolls and Evitts Run. Phase II?

: **2026-1008:** Recruitment list/volunteers for tree related projects. How do we get more people involved, especially young people and families, for City projects. Creation of master volunteer list across City groups.

: **2026-1009**: Arbor Day Foundation has software to manage and track these types of events, including a map with real time data to show public and private plantings as well as robust information about the trees and best planting areas on property to maximize energy savings.

: **2026-1010:** Assessment of native species for inclusion in planning and zoning ordinances.

Instead of a prohibited list (we cannot name all of the potential invasive species) we need to come up with an approved list of trees and shrubs. Anything else must be requested and approved by way of waiver.

See Model Ordinance.

: **2026-1011:** Tree trimming issues city wide. Washington Street. Discussion with City Manager on City expenditure to cover costs of tree trimming on W. Washington Street and tree trimming/removal at Jefferson Memorial Park.

: **2026-1012**: Review of cutting at Willingham Knolls and consideration of Milkweed and fostering seeding in areas not actively mowed. Consideration to permanently pasture small parcel along walkway back to native grass and flowers with no mowing. Create a native habitat. Milkweed naturally grows along this area.

: **2026-1013:** Assessment of dead trees and removal of tree tubes and dead trees at all parks.

: **2026-1014:** Tree grate issues downtown trees. Trees out-growing circle holes or roots raising grates. Request for removal and planting of native flowers & plants with small barriers to keep foot traffic out of areas. Consideration for Clover, Marigolds, Nasturtiums, Comfrey, Yarrow. Consideration of fencing to block off planting area. cutting of grates to create fencing in correct size?

https://capitolflexipave.com/

Tree image.jpeg
Tree image #2.jpeg
Tree image #3.jpeg

: **2026-1015:** Bee City USA Application process. Update for resolution to City Council. Discussion about make-up of Bee Committee
Bee City USA Application Steps.pdf
bee city usa resolution revised for CT need completion.pdf

## 4. NEW BUSINESS

: **2026-1016:** Consideration of development fees for Tree Board as part of subdivision ordinance.

: **2026-1017:** Ordinance consideration with planning to prescribe native trees, shrubs and plants as opposed to non-native species. Creation of water-gardens for drainage ponds.

: **2026-1018:** Citation for planting of invasive species.

: **2026-1019:** Consideration of Heritage Trees to enable certain protections.
https://americanheritagetrees.org/

: **2026-1020:** Educational program related to tree plantings and creation of natural environment with native trees, shrubs and plants.
Design a Native Plant Landscape - Homegrown National Park

: **2026-1021:** WV Department of Forestry Community Grants at $50,000. No longer focused on removal of invasive species, unless replace invasive with native 1 for 1. Funds are expended and reimbursed. Equipment can be purchased with a maximum of $5,000.

https://wvforestry.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Community-Tree-Grant-Instructions.pdf

: **2026-1022:** Mid-Atlantic Community Forestry Fund.
**Track I: EJ Organization Capacity Building** - To increase the ability of community-based organizations to advance urban forestry planning, planting, and maintenance efforts through training and technical assistance ($100,000 request maximum).
**Track II: Tree Canopy for Resiliency and Public Health** - Tree planting and tree canopy improvements to address local public health, climate change, ecologic, and environmental issues like air pollution and stormwater management (No request maximum).
**Track III: Workforce Development in Community Forestry** - Development of projects that engage residents in job training programs focused on developing forestry-related skills ($200,00 request maximum)
https://cbtrust.org/grants/MACFF/

: **2026-1023:** Potomac Audubon Society Monarch Way Station application projected Willingham Knolls entrance or Skate Park locations.

: **2026-1024:** Meeting with Nature Works re: Arc GIS, canopy and grants

: **2026-1025:** Master Plan Draft and Proposed Draft Budget
Master_Tree_Board_Plan_Draft_I_2026_Corrected 12.29.25.pdf
Budget_draft_I_2026-2027_Corrected.pdf

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

**6. NOTICE: The Public May View the Meeting Live by Clicking on the Event Link at: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81846354913?pwd=dExNQ2lXQUxzZExLN3dXRFhZZ2lKUT09**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1026: Charles Town Tree Board Meeting Minutes - December 4, 2025

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Tree Board Meeting Minutes - December 4, 2025.pdf

# CITY OF CHARLES TOWN
# Tree Board
# December 4, 2025

| Regular Meeting | Zoom Meeting | 7:00 PM |
|---|---|---|

101 East Washington Street, Charles Town, WV 25414

**CALL TO ORDER**

| Attendee Name | Status |
|---|---|
| Aaron Amore | Present |
| Katie Coon | Present |
| Jane King | Present |
| Carlo Olivares | Absent |
| Scott Updike | Present |
| Elizabeth Ricketts | Present |
| Cindy Rezmer | Present |

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**COMMENTS:** None
**RESULT:** Approved
**MOVER:** Katie Coon
**SECONDER:** Scott Updike
**AYES:** All

**2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

2025-1325: Tree Canopy/Inventory Update- Review of goals, software data, etc. Plan to update and undertake new inventory.

- We have data but we're at a standstill because we can't access/manipulate it.
- The city has just one admin user, James.
- Liz confirmed that parks and rec doesn't have a license.
- Scott is still trying to get info and reach out to GIS.
- Liz suggested that we collaborate with James and the planning department to include a layer on their mapping of the tree data that we want.
- Scott says we need a layer of info from the intern and we want to update that data.
- A true canopy estimation would help us with future projects.
- Liz suggested having James join a meeting to go over the data.

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- Aaron brought up the concern that none of us, including James, really know how to manipulate the data and James already has a lot on his plate.
- Aaron suggested contacting James Rumsey or Nature works about how much it would cost for them to do it professionally for us.
- We could incorporate this into the $50k grant from Forestry as a component to hire out for the tree canopy data.

2025-1326: Pollinator Garden. Need for volunteers to weed and trim this Fall. Additional seeding? Day of Caring?

- No caring day volunteers.
- Look at doing a weed and trim in Spring.

2025-1327: Identification of Open Planting Areas for Tree Installations in the City

- Put on hold.

2025-1328: Identification of invasive species and project discussion of reclaiming native environment for Skate Park and Evitts Run. Plan to identify and map trees for removal.

- Aaron and Carlo marked invasives with spray paint so we can tell which ones are which at the Skate Park and Evitt's Run.

2025-1329: Development of Watering, Care and Maintenance Plan for New Trees and Assessment of Equipment Needed

- Aaron met with Travis and they did not get far.
- Maybe this is something we can put into the grant proposal.

2025-1330: Discussion of revisions to Tree Ordinance, meeting with James on planning issues and revisions to other ordinances. See attached Model Tree Ordinance.

- Ordinance committee is working on other priority items, and they haven't taken it up yet.

2025-1331: Chestnut Tree Saplings, growing and next steps, location to plant this Fall. Need cages or tubes. Funds to be delivered. Educational material. Decision to plant Spring/Fall of 2026.

- They're mulched in for the winter.
- In Spring we will look into tubes.

2025-1332: Clearing Brush and Invasive Species Along Willingham Knolls and Evitts Run. Phase II?

- A lot of progress was made at the last clearing effort, a lot of invasives were cleared.
- Will look at a Spring clearing.

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2025-1333: Recruitment list/volunteers for tree related projects. How do we get more people involved, especially young people and families, for City projects.

- Aaron talked to Brent about it.
- We need a city-wide volunteer list.
  - A master list with a spreadsheet that we can cross reference.
- Cindy suggested utilizing the website more.
- Aaron will ask Liz Cook about a QR code for volunteering.

2025-1334: Arbor Day Foundation has software to manage and track these types of events, including a map with real time data to show public and private plantings as well as robust information about the trees and best planting areas on property to maximize energy savings.

-

2025-1335: Assessment of native species for inclusion in planning and zoning ordinances. Instead of a prohibited list (we cannot name all of the potential invasive species) we need to come up with an approved list of trees and shrubs. Anything else must be requested and approved by way of waiver. See Model Ordinance.

- Aaron met with James about the subdivision ordinance about it saying what CAN be planted (instead of what can't) and needing permission for anything else.

2025-1336: Tree trimming issues city wide. Washington Street. Discussion with City Manager on city expenditure to cover costs of tree trimming on W. Washington Street and tree trimming/ removal at Jefferson Memorial Park.

- Aaron met with Brent and he wanted to look at doing a city-wide trimming.
- The tops of the trees didn't get trimmed last time.
- Liz requested this to be on the agenda at the next city council meeting.
  - Council discussed it before but there was no resolution because they couldn't agree where the funding should come from.
- Maintenance will get to stump grinding at Happy Retreat sometime after Christmas.

2025-1337: Review of cutting at Willingham Knolls and consideration of Milkweed and fostering seeding in areas not actively mowed. Consideration to permanently pasture small parcel along walkway back-to-back to native grass and flowers with no mowing. Create a native habitat. Milkweed naturally grows throughout this area.

- There's a Potomac valley Audubon society grant program for vouchers for plants (20% milkweed for monarchs).
  - Need parks approval.
  - Willingham Knolls is a good place for it.
  - No minimum size.
- Good opportunity for community involvement.

- Dec. 15th is the application deadline.
- Gavin, Carlo and Aaron will meet at Willingham Knolls tomorrow.

2025-1338: Assessment of Dead Trees and Removal of Tree Tubes and Dead Trees at all parks

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2025-1339: Tree Grate Issues Downtown trees. Trees out-growing circle holes or roots raising grates. Request for removal and planting of native flowers & plants with small barriers to keep foot traffic out of areas. Consideration for Clover, Marigolds, Nasturtiums, Comfrey, Yarrow. Consideration of fencing to block off planting area. cutting of grates to create fencing in correct size?

- Most cities have done away with grates.
- Look into this in the Spring.

2025-1340: Bee City USA Application process. Update for resolution to City Council. Discussion about make-up of Bee Committee

- Brent wants Liz to present the resolution to the council.
- Liz thinks it would be better to be part of the tree board master plan and have it presented by the board.
  - We need to get on the agenda for council.
  - We will look at the master plan in our January meeting.
  - It's a new committee and there are costs associated with it.

## 3. NEW BUSINESS

2025-1341: Consideration of development fees for Tree Board as part of subdivision ordinance

-

2025-1342: Ordinance consideration with planning to prescribe native trees, shrubs and plants as opposed to non-native species. Creation of water gardens for drainage ponds.

-

2025-1343: Citation for planting of invasive species

-

2025-1344: Consideration of Heritage Trees to enable certain protections.

- Board members will review and discuss next meeting.
- We want to try and protect old trees and prevent them from being pulled out.

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2025-1345: Educational Program related to tree plantings and creation of natural environment with native trees, shrubs and plants.

- Goes with Bee City USA.

2025-1349: ARCG license is $700 annually. Use of Parks and Recreation license?

- Liz confirmed that parks and rec and does not have a license, only James does.

2025-1350: WV Department of Forestry Community Grants at $50,000. No longer 2 focused on removal of invasive species, unless replace invasive with native 1 for 1. Funds are expended and reimbursed. Equipment can be purchased with a maximum of $5,000. https://wvforestry.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Community-Tree-Grant Instructions.pdf

- It was suggested that we come up with a 3-phase project for the grant proposal so we're building on it.
- Aaron will start the grant application and will work with Tanner.

2025-1351: Mid-Atlantic Community Forestry Fund. Track I: EJ Organization Capacity Building - To increase the ability of community-based organizations to advance urban forestry planning, planting, and maintenance efforts through training and technical assistance ($100,000 request maximum). Track II: Tree Canopy for Resiliency and Public Health - Tree planting and tree canopy improvements to address local public health, climate change, ecological, and environmental issues like air pollution and stormwater management (No request maximum). Track III: Workforce Development in Community Forestry - Development of projects that engage residents in job training programs focused on developing forestry-related skills ($200,00 request maximum) https://cbtrust.org/grants/MACFF/

- We could have the tree canopy in Track II, there's no request max.
  - Pairs into what we're already doing.
- The city has grant funds to do stormwater planning and design.
- Aaron will work on the grant proposal.
- February deadline.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn at 7:40 PM

**MOVER:** Katie Coon

**SECOND:** Scott Updike

**AYES:** All

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**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1000: Tree Canopy/Inventory Update- Review of goals, software data, etc. Plan to update and undertake new inventory.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1001: Pollinator Garden. Need for volunteers to weed and trim this Fall. Additional seeding? Day of Caring?

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1002: Identification of open planting areas for tree installations in City.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1003: Identification of invasive species and project discussion of reclaiming native environment for Skate Park and Evitts Run. Plan to identify and map trees for removal.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1004: Development of watering, care and maintenance plan for new trees and assessment of equipment needed.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1005: Discussion of revisions to Tree Ordinance, meeting with James on planning issues and revisions to other ordinances. See attached Model Tree Ordinance.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- revised model ordinance rev 9.2.25.pdf

**Ordinance # [ ]- Tree Removal-Replacement-Planting Ordinance**

***Trees play a critical, often overlooked, role in the water cycle and in the mitigation of stormwater runoff issues such as soil erosion, pollutant reduction, infiltration, quantity reduction, and thermal effects. This ordinance is intended to ensure that permittees are considering these undervalued assets in their stormwater management efforts.***

**SECTION I. Purpose:**

An ordinance to establish requirements for tree removal and replacement in the City of Charles Town to reduce soil erosion and pollutant runoff, promote infiltration of rainwater into the soil, and protect the environment, public health, safety, and welfare.

**SECTION II. Definitions:**

For the purpose of this ordinance, the following terms, phrases, words, and their derivations shall have the meanings stated herein unless their use in the text of this ordinance clearly demonstrates a different meaning. When consistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words used in the plural number include the singular number, and words used in the singular number include the plural

number. The use of the word "shall" means the requirement is always mandatory and not merely directory.

A. "Applicant" means any "person", as defined below, who applies for approval to remove trees regulated under this ordinance.

B. "Critical Root Radius (CRR)" – means the zone around the base of a tree where the majority of the root system is found. This zone is calculated by multiplying the diameter at breast height (DBH) of the tree by 1.5 feet. For example: a tree with a 6" DBH would have a CRR = 6"x1.5' = 9'.

C. "Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)" means the diameter of the trunk of a mature tree generally measured at a point four and a half feet above ground level from the uphill side of the tree. For species of trees where the main trunk divides below the 4 ½ foot height, the DBH shall be measured at the highest point before any division.

D. "Hazard Tree" means a tree or limbs thereof that meet one or more of the criteria below. Trees that do not meet any of the criteria below and are proposed to be removed solely for development purposes are not hazard trees. [Municipalities may choose to require a Licensed Tree Expect to make all Hazard tree determination]

    1. Has an infectious disease or insect infestation;

    2. Is dead or dying;

3. Obstructs the view of traffic signs or the free passage of pedestrians or vehicles, where pruning attempts have not been effective;
4. Is causing obvious damage to structures (such as building foundations, sidewalks, etc.); or
5. Is determined to be a threat to public health, safety, and/or welfare by a certified arborist or Licensed Tree Expert (LTE).

E. "Person" means any individual, resident, corporation, utility, company, partnership, firm, or association.

F. "Planting strip" means the part of a street right-of-way between the public right-of-way and the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic or between the abutting property line and the curb or traveled portion of the street, exclusive of any sidewalk.

G. "Resident" means an individual who resides on the residential property or contractor hired by the individual who resides on the residential property where a tree(s) regulated by this ordinance is removed or proposed to be removed.

H. "Street Tree" means a tree planted in the sidewalk, planting strip, and/or in the public right-of-way adjacent to (or specified distance from) the portion of the street reserved for vehicular traffic. This also includes trees planted in planting strips within the roadway right-of-way, i.e., islands, medians, pedestrian refuges.

I. "Tree" means a woody perennial plant, typically having a single stem or trunk growing to a considerable height and bearing lateral branches at some distance from the ground.

J. "Tree Caliper" means the diameter of the trunk of a young tree, measured six (6) inches from the soil line. For young trees whose caliper exceeds four (4) inches, the measurement is taken twelve (12) inches above the soil line.

K. "Tree removal" means to kill or to cause irreparable damage that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. This includes, but is not limited to, excessive pruning, application of substances that are toxic to the tree, over-mulching or improper mulching, and improper grading and/or soil compaction within the critical root radius around the base of the tree that leads to the decline and/or death of a tree. Removal does not include responsible pruning and maintenance of a tree, or the application of treatments intended to manage invasive species.

L. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES AND TREES shall mean (i) all native and non-native vines and vegetation that grow out of place and are competitive, persistent and pernicious, or (ii) trees which are native or non-native to this country or region of the country, whose vines produce chemicals that prevent the growth of other plants and serve as a primary food source to an invasive species of insects. These plants and trees may damage other trees, vegetation or structures. Examples include, but are not limited to, bamboo (spreading or running type), ragweed, multi flora rose, kudzu-vine, poison ivy

or oak, Ash trees and the Ailanthus Altissima tree (a/k/a the "Tree of Heaven").

**SECTION III. Regulated Activities:**

[Application review and approval can be conducted along with existing business practices and permit application review such as, but not limited to, site plan approvals, building permit approvals, planning board application approval, etc. A separate application process is not required, but the Department has included sample language below for municipalities that prefer to do so.]

**A. Optional Application Process**:

**1.** Any person planning to remove a street tree, as defined as Tree removal, with DBH of 2.5" or more or any non-street tree with DBH of 6" or more on their property shall submit a Tree Removal Application to ***[Municipal Officials].*** No tree shall be removed until municipal officials have reviewed and approved the removal. **[For larger scale clearing projects, municipalities may choose to require a tree survey be submitted as part of the application to determine number, sizes, and exemptions of trees for the assessment of fees]**

**[The municipality may choose to impose application fees. If so, the following language may be used, with revisions as deemed appropriate.]**

**[Optional for municipalities: Applicants will be subject to an application fee as per the Table below.]**

**B. Tree Replacement Requirements**

1. Any person who removes one or more street tree(s) with a DBH of 2.5" or more, unless exempt under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table below.
2. Any person, who removes one or more tree(s), as defined as Tree removal, with a DBH of 6" or more per acre, unless otherwise detailed under Section IV, shall be subject to the requirements of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table.

The species type and diversity of replacement trees shall be in accordance with Appendix A (**insert municipality provided tree list as Appendix A of this ordinance**). **[The municipality shall provide a list of approved trees that are acceptable to be planted as replacement trees, or at a minimum develop a list of trees that shall <u>not</u> be used as replacement trees. This list will be included as "Appendix A". It is permissible for a municipality to include a procedure for approval of a tree not on the approved list. The list shall also contain approved planting times/seasons and proper planting standard procedures or a reference to available literature containing this information.]**

Replacement tree(s) shall:

1. Be replaced in kind with a tree that has an equal or greater DBH than tree removed

<u>**or**</u> meet the Tree Replacement Criteria in the table below;

2. Be planted within twelve (12) months of the date of removal of the original tree(s) or at an alternative date specified by the municipality;
3. Be monitored by the applicant for a period of two (2) years to ensure their survival and shall be replaced as needed within twelve (12) months; and
4. Shall not be planted in temporary containers or pots, as these do not count towards tree replacement requirements.

**Tree Replacement Requirements Table:**

| **Category** | **Tree Removed (DBH)** | **Tree Replacement Criteria (See Appendix A)** | **Application Fee** *[Municipality may choose to include and determine appropriate fees.]* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | DBH of 2.5" (for street trees) or 6" (for non-street trees) to 12.99" | Replant 1 tree with a minimum tree caliper of 1.5" for each tree removed | *TBD by town* |
| 2 | DBH of 13" to 22.99" | Replant 2 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed | *TBD by town* |
| 3 | DBH of 23" to 32.99" | Replant 3 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed | *TBD by town* |
| 4 | DBH of 33" or greater | Replant 4 trees with minimum tree calipers of 1.5" for each tree removed | *TBD by town* |

**C. Replacement Alternatives:**

1. If the municipality determines that some or all required replacement trees cannot be planted on the property where the tree removal activity occurred, then the applicant shall do one of the following:
    a. Plant replacement trees in a separate area(s) approved by the municipality.

b. Pay a fee of (amount to be set by municipality) per tree removed. This fee shall be placed into a fund dedicated to tree planting and continued maintenance of the trees.

**SECTION IV. Exemptions:**

All persons shall comply with the tree replacement standard outlined above, except in the cases detailed below. Proper justification shall be provided, in writing, to the municipality by all persons claiming an exemption **[the municipality shall define what "proper justification" is such as photos or statements from WV licensed tree expert as per WV reg (?) or arborist.]:**

A. Residents who remove less than four (4) trees per acre that fall into category 1, 2, or 3 of the Tree Replacement Requirements Table within a five-year period. [The number of trees removed is a rolling count across a five-year period. For example, if 3 trees from category 1 are removed in July 2023, the 'count' resets to zero in July 2028. However, if 1 tree from category 1 is removed in July 2023 and another in July of 2025 the first tree will come off the count in July 2028 and the second in July 2030.]

B. Tree farms in active operation, nurseries, fruit orchards, and garden centers;

C. Properties used for the practice of silviculture under an approved forest stewardship or woodland management plan that is active and on file with the municipality;

D. Any trees removed as part of a municipal or state decommissioning plan. This exemption only includes trees planted as part of the construction and predetermined to be removed in the decommissioning plan.

E. Any trees removed pursuant to a West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved environmental clean-up, or WVDEP approved habitat enhancement plan;

F. Approved game management practices, as recommended by the State of West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife;

G. Hazard trees may be removed with no fee or replacement requirement.

H. Invasive Trees, shrubs or plants may be removed with no fee or replacement requirement.

**SECTION V. Enforcement:**

This ordinance shall be enforced by the **[Police Department and/or other Municipal Officials of insert name of municipality]** during the course of ordinary enforcement duties.

**SECTION VI. Violations and Penalties:**

Any person(s) who is found to be in violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall be subject to a fine of $ [amount per tree to be established by municipality but shall not be less than the amount of the required replacement tree(s) and cost of planting] [Municipalities may require the planting of additional trees in lieu of a fine].

**SECTION VII. Severability:**

Each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase of this Ordinance is declared to be an independent section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase, and finding or holding of any such portion of this Ordinance to be unconstitutional, void, or ineffective for any cause or reason shall not affect any other portion of this Ordinance.

**SECTION VIII. Invasive Species:**

A. *Plantings of Invasive Plant or Tree Species*. All new in-ground plantings of invasive plant or tree species are strictly prohibited. All existing plantings or trees must be contained by appropriate physical barriers to prevent the growth or spread of existing invasive plant or tree species beyond the boundaries of a resident's property.

B. *Control of Growth*. All persons must control the growth of invasive plant species and trees. Failure to control the spread of such vegetation and trees beyond the boundaries of a resident's property is a violation of this chapter.

C. *Inspections*. All places and premises in the City of Charles Town shall be subject to inspection by the enforcing officer. For purposes of this Ordinance, the enforcing officer shall be the Code Enforcement Officer. Such inspections shall be performed by the Code Enforcement Officer or his or her designated municipal employee. Such inspection shall be made if the Code Enforcement Officer has reason to believe that any section of this chapter is being violated.

***1. Enforcement of Invasive Species Section***

A. Whenever an invasive plant or tree species (as defined by this chapter) is found on any plot of land, lot or any other premises or place, and is found to lack appropriate physical barriers to prevent the spread or growth of the species, or is found to have spread beyond the boundaries of a property, a violation, in writing, shall be given by the Code Enforcement Officer to the owner of the property from which the invasive plant or tree species has spread, directing the owner to remove or abate the same within such time as shall be specified therein. The violation shall be served upon the property owner of record by regular and certified mail or by personal service.

B. In the event a property owner fails to correct a notice of violation within the time specified in the notice of violation, the Town (by and through those municipal personnel deemed necessary and appropriate by the Code Enforcement Officer) may thereafter enter upon the property and remove or abate the invasive plant species or trees. The property owner shall be responsible for all costs incurred by the City in correcting the violation and bringing the property into compliance. The City may also place a municipal lien against the property for all costs incurred by the Town in bringing the property into compliance. The amount of the lien shall be authorized by Resolution adopted by the City Council, and shall be added to and become a part of the taxes next to be assessed and levied upon the property, shall bear interest at the same rate as taxes, and

shall be collected and enforced by the same officer and in the same manner as taxes. Costs shall be in addition to any penalties imposed for any violation of this section.

**2. Violations and Penalties.**

A. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be subject to the violations and penalties set forth herein.
B. Any person violating the provisions of this chapter shall, upon conviction, be punishable by a fine of not more than $1,000.00 or community service as determined by the Municipal Court. The continuation of such violation for each successive day shall constitute a separate offense.
C. In addition to the penalties set forth herein, any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be liable for any damages caused to any adjoining property, including, but not limited to, the cost of removal of the invasive plant or tree species extending onto the adjoining property, as well as the repair and replacement of any property damaged by the invasive plant or tree species.

*City Property*. This Ordinance shall not apply to City owned property or City conservation easements.

**SECTION IX. Effective Date:**

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and any publication as may be required by law.

Adoption Date:

Approved By:

**Appendix A**

Approved list of Replacement tree Species and Planting Standards for

**City of Charles Town, West Virginia**

**[The municipality shall provide a list of approved trees that are acceptable to be planted as replacement trees, or at a minimum develop a list of trees that shall not be used as replacement trees. The list shall include approved planting times/seasons and proper planting standard procedures or a reference to available literature containing this information.]**

| Tree Species | Planting Season | Planting Procedure<br>(soil type, watering, pruning, staking, wrapping, exposure, depth, mulching, etc) |
|---|---|---|

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1006: Chestnut Tree Saplings, growing and next steps, location to plant this Fall. Need cages or tubes. Funds to be delivered. Educational material. Decision to plant Spring/Fall of 2026.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1007: Clearing of brush and invasive species along Willingham Knolls and Evitts Run. Phase II?

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1008: Recruitment list/volunteers for tree related projects. How do we get more people involved, especially young people and families, for City projects. Creation of master volunteer list across City groups.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1009: Arbor Day Foundation has software to manage and track these types of events, including a map with real time data to show public and private plantings as well as robust information about the trees and best planting areas on property to maximize energy savings.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1010: Assessment of native species for inclusion in planning and zoning ordinances. Instead of a prohibited list (we cannot name all of the potential invasive species) we need to come up with an approved list of trees and shrubs. Anything else must be requested and approved by way of waiver.**

**See Model Ordinance.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1011: Tree trimming issues city wide. Washington Street. Discussion with City Manager on City expenditure to cover costs of tree trimming on W. Washington Street and tree trimming/removal at Jefferson Memorial Park.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1012: Review of cutting at Willingham Knolls and consideration of Milkweed and fostering seeding in areas not actively mowed. Consideration to permanently pasture small parcel along walkway back to native grass and flowers with no mowing. Create a native habitat. Milkweed naturally grows along this area.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1013: Assessment of dead trees and removal of tree tubes and dead trees at all parks.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1014: Tree grate issues downtown trees. Trees out-growing circle holes or roots raising grates. Request for removal and planting of native flowers & plants with small barriers to keep foot traffic out of areas. Consideration for Clover, Marigolds, Nasturtiums, Comfrey, Yarrow. Consideration of fencing to block off planting area. cutting of grates to create fencing in correct size?**

**https://capitolflexipave.com/**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Tree image.jpeg
- Tree image #2.jpeg
- Tree image #3.jpeg







**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1015: Bee City USA Application process. Update for resolution to City Council. Discussion about make-up of Bee Committee

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Bee City USA Application Steps.pdf
- bee city usa resolution revised for CT need completion.pdf

**1. Form a committee.**
Every committee will be different, but should include individuals with experience and interests that will help the committee complete the commitments. See the resolution for a full list of requirements associated with the committee.

**2. Assign facilitation to a local government body or non-profit organization.**
Assign facilitation of the Bee City USA effort to a new or existing committee. This committee may be based in a local government or with a non-profit organization and may be an existing committee or a newly formed subcommittee.

**3. Designate a local government department as a sponsor.**
Designate a local government department as the Bee City USA program and committee sponsor and an employee from that department as the Bee City USA committee liaison.

**4. Complete the online application.**
Log in and fill out the "About, Profile, and Application tabs. There is one login per Bee City. Your Application tab will be reviewed once you indicate that it is complete and ready for review.

**5. Complete the draft Bee City USA resolution.**
Complete the draft resolution by downloading the template and updating the areas highlighted in yellow. *Please note: we ask that you start an application and upload your draft resolution to your Application tab for our approval before it is passed*.

**6. Submit the application and resolution to your local government for approval.**
Present your Bee City USA application and resolution to your local government for formal approval and adoption.

**7. Submit your adopted resolution and pay the application fee.**
Submit a scanned copy of your signed, adopted resolution by uploading it to your online Application tab then pay the application fee on the Fee Payment tab. Our W9 and an invoice is available on that tab. Once the final application, adopted resolution, and fee payment have been submitted, Xerces will notify all contacts listed on the Profile and Application tabs of the approval of your application within a month
Application and renewal fees are based on population size.
100 (population <9,999)
200 (population 10,000 - 24,999)
300 (population 25,000 - 49,999)
400 (population 50,000 - 99,999)
500 (population >100,000)

**Please do not pass this resolution until your city/county has started a Bee City Application and Bee City USA has approved your draft resolution. Upload your draft resolution to your "Application" tab.**

**Below, you may modify the "Whereas" section of your resolution. The "Now, Therefore" section can be lightly modified, but the commitments cannot be deleted or greatly modified.**

**Questions? Email beecityusa@xerces.org.**

**RESOLUTION NO. _____**
**A RESOLUTION** of City Council of Charles Town, West Virginia
designating Charles Town as a BEE CITY USA® affiliate.

WHEREAS, the mission of BEE CITY USA is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species, by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the more than 3,600 species of native bees in the United States, along with introduced honey bees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides (including insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides), parasites, diseases, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers; and

WHEREAS, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat (A) is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees blooming in succession throughout the growing season to provide diverse and abundant nectar and pollen, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted; (B) is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat; (C) comprises undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering; and (D) provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and

WHEREAS, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a long-term approach to maintaining healthy landscapes and facilities that minimizes risks to people and the environment by: identifying and removing the causes of pest problems rather than only attacking the symptoms (the pests); employing pests' natural enemies along with cultural, mechanical, and physical controls when prevention is not enough; and using pesticides only when no other method is feasible or effective; and

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters broad-based community engagement in environmental awareness and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charles Town should be certified a *BEE CITY USA* community because of its commitment to preserving and planting of native trees and plants that strengthen the natural environment for pollinators, birds and native species. Charles Town has installed several pollinator gardens and will continue to expand the scope and size of its planting projects, removing invasive species and planting native flowers, grasses shrubs and trees to enhance the nature and food for pollinators including all varieties of bees and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in order to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, the City of Charles

Town chooses to support and encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement, resolving as follows:

1. The City of Charles Town [appropriate department name] Department is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor.
2. The [appropriate position title] of [department above] is designated as the BEE CITY USA Liaison.
3. Facilitation of the City of Charles Town's BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the [committee name] Committee.
4. The [committee name] Committee is authorized to and shall:
    a. **Celebration**: Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase the City of Charles Town]'s commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
    b. **Publicity & Information**: Install and maintain at least one authorized BEE CITY USA street sign in a prominent location, and create and maintain a webpage on the City of Charles Town website which includes, at minimum a copy of this resolution and links to the national BEE CITY USA website; contact information for your BEE CITY USA Liaison and Committee; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s); and your recommended native plant species list and integrated pest management plan (explained below).
    c. **Habitat**: Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat on public and private land, which includes, but is not limited to, Identifying and inventorying the City of Charles Town's real property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings; creating a recommended locally native plant list to include wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species; and, tracking (by square footage and/or acreage) annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.
    d. **Pollinator-Friendly Pest Management:** Create and adopt an integrated pest management (IPM) plan designed to prevent pest problems, reduce pesticide use, and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods.
    e. **Policy & Plans**: Establish, through the City of Charles Town], a policy in the [Plan name] Plan of the City of Charles Town's Comprehensive Plan to acknowledge and commit to the BEE CITY USA designation and review the [Plan name] Plan and other relevant documents to consider improvements to pest management policies and practices as they relate to pollinator conservation, identify appropriate locations for pollinator-friendly plantings, and consider other appropriate measures.
    f. **Renewal:** After completing the first calendar year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of the City of Charles Town's BEE CITY USA designation following the format provided by BEE CITY USA, including a report of the previous year's BEE CITY USA activities, and paying the renewal fee based on the City of Charles Town's population.

ADOPTED by the Charles Town City Council of Charles Town, West Virginia], this ___ day of _____, 20__.

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1016: Consideration of development fees for Tree Board as part of subdivision ordinance.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1017: Ordinance consideration with planning to prescribe native trees, shrubs and plants as opposed to non-native species. Creation of water-gardens for drainage ponds.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1018: Citation for planting of invasive species.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1019: Consideration of Heritage Trees to enable certain protections.
**https://americanheritagetrees.org/**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1020: Educational program related to tree plantings and creation of natural environment with native trees, shrubs and plants.**
**Design a Native Plant Landscape - Homegrown National Park**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1021: WV Department of Forestry Community Grants at $50,000. No longer focused on removal of invasive species, unless replace invasive with native 1 for 1. Funds are expended and reimbursed. Equipment can be purchased with a maximum of $5,000.**

**https://wvforestry.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Community-Tree-Grant-Instructions.pdf**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1022: Mid-Atlantic Community Forestry Fund.**
**Track I: EJ Organization Capacity Building - To increase the ability of community-based organizations to advance urban forestry planning, planting, and maintenance efforts through training and technical assistance ($100,000 request maximum).**
**Track II: Tree Canopy for Resiliency and Public Health - Tree planting and tree canopy improvements to address local public health, climate change, ecologic, and environmental issues like air pollution and stormwater management (No request maximum).**
**Track III: Workforce Development in Community Forestry - Development of projects that engage residents in job training programs focused on developing forestry-related skills ($200,00 request maximum)**
**https://cbtrust.org/grants/MACFF/**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1023: Potomac Audubon Society Monarch Way Station application projected Willingham Knolls entrance or Skate Park locations.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1024: Meeting with Nature Works re: Arc GIS, canopy and grants

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Charles Town Tree Board**
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 01/08/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1025: Master Plan Draft and Proposed Draft Budget

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Master_Tree_Board_Plan_Draft_I_2026_Corrected 12.29.25.pdf
- Budget_draft_I_2026-2027_Corrected.pdf

# Charles Town Tree Master Plan

## Priority administrative tasks & projects for 2026

Mayor and City Council,

We would like to start with thanking you for the opportunity to serve on the City of Charles Town Tree Board. It is our honor to assist our community with the critical tasks of planting, protecting, and maintaining our City's trees.

Our 2025 Master Plan was overwhelmingly successful. Here are just a few of our successes from this year:

- Maintained our Tree City USA status for the 13th year and received national recognition.
- Hosted a community Arbor Day event at Evitts Run Park followed by planting of 25 trees in cooperation with the Cacapon Institute.
- Participated in the Cacapon BMP Program and coordinated the delivery of 299 trees for planting in the City on private property. This included educational materials to each participant related to the planting, care and maintenance of trees
- Secured funding for a pollinator garden to be installed at the City's Skate Park.
- Community pollinator planting event under the utility lines at the Skate Park saw over 20 volunteers participate in the planting event.
- Applied for a Monarch Way Station grant through the Potomac Audubon Society for installation in Willingham Knolls or the Skate Park.
- Coordinated with City Staff and Maintenance to identify deficiencies in PPE items for workers engaged in tree related activities.
- Held several community events at Evitts Run Park and Willingham Knolls to clear invasive species from the park and to provide care for the recently planted trees in these parks.
- Identified at risk trees at Jefferson Memorial Park with a proposed plan for removal and trimming of affected trees.
- Coordinated with City Staff for the identification and removal of stumps on City owned property.
- Submitted a revision to the Tree Board Ordinance to provide for additional structure and enforcement mechanisms for the improper removal of trees as well as planting or failure to contain invasive species. This is pending befor the Ordinance Committee.
- Assessed additional grant funds and preparing for applications coming due in 2026.
- Working with Parks & Recreation to assess use of grant funds to study storm water run-off, tree plantings and green infrastructure on City owned properties.
- Prepared an application and draft resolution for Charles Town to make application to become a Bee City USA member.

We seek to build on these successes in 2025 and continue addressing our community's tree-related concerns and interests; create a healthier, more vibrant community through community forstry; provide educational and volunteer opportunities for our citizens; and increase tree canopy throughout our City.

As per our City's Ordinance Article 1104 Trees, one of our duties as a board is *"to prepare and update, annually, a written City-wide "Tree Master Plan" that guides the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal, or disposition of trees on public lands; such plan shall consider existing and future utility locations and environmental factors in relation to existing and future tree species on public or private lands, as provided in this article or other ordinances; such plan shall also provide a status report of "Landmark Trees" within the City; such plan shall be recommended to the Mayor and Council and, upon their acceptance and approval, shall be implemented as the "Tree Master Plan."*

The recommended priority actions on the following pages reflect the conversations we've had as a board, as well as conversations that our community has had with us as friends and neighbors. However, at this moment, they are only that – recommendations.

We have grouped our recommended priority actions into two categories – "Administrative", which will need to be addressed within the Board itself or at the staff or Council level, and "Projects", which are implementable projects throughout our community. Each has a priority ranking; estimated timeframe for completion; a generalized, estimated cost; and a Tree Board member lead.

This list conveys our values and what we want to achieve moving forward, but they can only be achieved with your input, acceptance, and ultimate approval.

We respectfully submit the following Charles Town Tree Master Plan and sincerely look forward to working with you on implementing these recommended priority actions.

**Charles Town Tree Board,**
**Aaron Amore**, Chair
**Katie Coon**
**Jane King**
**Scott Updike**
**Elizabeth Ricketts**

# Administrative

## Maintain Tree City USA Status

**There are 4 Standards that must be met prior to re-applying for Tree City USA designation:**

1. **City must have a Tree Board or a Forestry Department**
2. **City must have a tree care ordinance**
3. **City must have a community forstry program with a budget of at least $2 per capita**
4. **City must have an annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation**

**In 2024, The City of Charles Town attained Tree City USA for the 13th time in the City's history. We received national recognition for reaching this milestone. The Tree Board will work with staff and City Council and WV Division of Forestry on reapplying to maintain this status with the Arbor Day Foundation. Visit the Arbor Day Foundation[1] website for more details.**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: January 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: No costs beyond the $2/capita that is already budgeted for contracted tree costs**
- **Tree Board Lead: Katie CoonCoon**
-

## Landmark Trees Program

**We have researched and drawn upon the expertise of the many Landmark Tree programs across the country and tailored it to our community. We have created an online form and a printable brochure for citizens to apply.**

- **Priority: Medium**
- **Estimated Time Frame: January 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: None**
- **Tree Board Lead: Katie**

## Tree Canopy Survey

**We obtained the tree inventory from 2019 which was maintained by Jefferson County and successfully imported this data into the City's database. In order to update the data, we will require additional assistance in accessing GIS data sets and the technology necessary to import this data through AI protocols to bring in inventory, species and density data to complete this process. Although the City has purchased a license for Arc GIS software, it only has one such license and staff lack the expertise to manipulate the data and software abilities to assist with the importation, manipulation and establishment of viable tree data.**

**We have reached out to Nature Works located in Shepherdstown and initiated discussions about how to accomplish this task. Nature Works has a full-time GIS trained employee and is familiar with both the software and the data sets necessary to assist. We are seeking grant funds to assist with the costs of said services.**

**The purpose of such an updated inventory would assist in the following areas:**

- **assessing defensible space around buildings to reduce wildfire risk**
- **mapping risks to utility infrastructure like powerlines**
- **modeling of tree services like air and water pollution mitigation**
- **measuring carbon storage and sequestration**
- **wildfire modeling**
- **assessing tree risks to residential properties**
- **creating and analyzing forst inventory**
- **Measuring agroforstry resources in rural landscapes**
- **Improving run-off uptake accomplished through trees and green infrastructure.**
-

**Benefits come in many forms, such as energy conservation and the improved physical and psychological health of the people within these urban environments. The CTTB is in the process of seeking appropriate measures to assess and update the data. We will work with City staff to coordinate an appropriate and cost-effective approach for updating the data.**

**Use of Arbor Day Foundation mapping software in conjunction with private tree sales for mapping of trees on private properties in the City.**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: by end of 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: $3,000 per year or $10 a tree. This cost can be passed onto the cost of the tree purchase. In 2025 we had 299 tree purchases and by adding this fee onto the cost of a tree, the program can pay for itself.**
- **Tree Board Lead: Scott Updike**

## Tree Maintenance plan and Planning consideration

**CTTB intends to seek assistance from outside vendors as part of its grant application process to augment the current maintenance plan. The grown of the City, the significant addition of trees and pollinator gardens has increased the need for a professional maintenance plan and obtaining the equipment necessary to assist with such a plan. Proper assessment of trimming for City Trees, their care and maintenance vary upon tree species and location. The City has recently put out an RFP for a City wide assessment and trimming/removal of trees that require immediate care.**

**We need to review the tree type and species that we plant on Washington Street as well as other City streets and provide additional trimming and care for these trees due to their location. IN addition, we need to remove the metal grating that surrounds these trees as they impair growth and in some cases have been pushed up and create a hazard to pedestrians. Most cities we have viewed regionally do not use such grates any longer and provide an open mulched area for trees to grow.**

**We strive to incorporate this plan into our GIS database to identify stressed trees, damaged trees and species that need removal/replacement.**

**CTTB will seek input to develop and implement a City wide maintenance plan that will pair with our Arc GIS program. This will include watering, mulching, pruning and or removal of trees. It will also include attributes, such as species, size, location and health of trees. These attributes will also include certain risk factors that will enable the City to monitor and take necessary steps for trees that are impaired or otherwise may cause a risk to humans and/or structures.**

## Certified Arborist

**Travis Kable, ISA Arborist certification and a current City employee. He directed the trimming of City Trees on Washington Street recently and coordinated efforts to remove trees at Jefferson Memorial Park.**

# Projects

## Initiation of Grant Award

**CTTB continues to pursue grants to offset the costs related to removal of invasive species, replanting new native trees and care and maintenance of City trees.**

**CTTB applied for a grant through The American Chestnut Foundation for the saplings and there-introduction of American Chestnut Tree (Hybrids) to be installed in and around Happy Retreat. We obtained 30 hybrid Chestnut trees which have been gown out for a season and will be planted in the Spring of 2026. We anticipate additional saplings from TACF in Spring of 2026 due to a bumper crop of seeds this past Fall.**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: Unknown**
- **Tree Board Lead: Aaron C. Amore**

## Tree Inventory/Mapping

**There are three main types of inventories: sample, partial, and complete.**

1. **A sample inventory is conducted on a random sample of street segments, blocks, road miles, or area to provide an estimate for the urban forst. Typically, the sample is 3-10%. The sample can also be stratified.**
2. **Identify invasive species and/or diseased trees (including Ash trees vulnerable to the Ash Borer Beetle) for removal.**
3. **CTTB will look to obtain a complete tree inventory of City Trees in 2026 to be added as layered dataset in the City's GIS database.**
4. **A complete inventory includes all street trees, sometimes all park trees and trees on municipal properties, and often includes available planting locations and stumps.**

**Use of Arbor Day Foundation mapping software in conjunction with private tree sales for mapping of trees on private properties in the City.**

**CTTB seeks to create a complete tree inventory to the greatest extent possible. An example of such a tree inventory is seen in the following link which shows a complete tree inventory for the WVU Campus in Charleston, WV.**
**https://pg-cloud.com/WVSU/https://pg-cloud.com/WVSU/**
**Purpose: Identification of the City's tree inventory will not only identify the type of trees in the community but will assess the overall health of the trees. This will enable City maintenance to be**

**aware of diseased or dying trees that might create a hazardous condition or situation. It can also identify invasive species which can be removed to prevent further spread of such trees to the detriment of native trees.**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: by end of 2025**
- **Estimated Cost: Unknown**
- **Tree Board Lead: Scott Updike & Aaron C. Amore**

## Arbor Day Celebration

**CTTB seeks to promote its Arbor Day Celebration through the following means:**

1. **Planting of a Tree**
2. **Session/class with an Arborist on planting, care and pruning trees growing in their yards for Charles Town Citizens. This workshop may be facilitated by certified ISA Arborists or by WV Division of Forestry.**
3. **Educational program for young persons, including a nature walk, artistic activities and possibly a sponsored event by a local business or businesses.**

**In order to maintain our Tree City USA status we also need a Mayoral proclamation.**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: April 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: None**
- **Tree Board Lead: TBD**

## Cost-share Tree Planting Program for Private Residents

**The Charles Town Tree Board plans to apply for Cacapon Institute's "Your Community BMP" program in Spring and or Fall 2026. This program has expanded in recent years with approximately 357 trees purchased in the Fall of 2024 and in 2026. The popularity of this program will require the use of additional resources. CTTB intends to cooperatively work with the Arbor Day Foundation to use software designed to facilitate this program.**

**Trees will be picked up by City maintenance personnel from the WV Division of Forestry office in Inwood and delivered to residents houses at a date TBD in March-September 2026**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: Spring- Fall 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: None**
- **Tree Board Lead: Aaron**

## Cacapon Tree Program

**CTTB will continue to apply for free trees available through the Cacapon Institute for Spring and Fall Plantings on City owned properties. These programs normally provide 25-30 trees, a planting day that has volunteers assist in planting and educational opportunities. These are great community events where volunteers learn about proper planting and care for trees.**

## Tree Nursery

**CTTB has obtained a variety of free saplings through First Energy and the WV Agricultural Extension. The CTTB has obtained the temporary use of land at Evitt's Run Park for the installation of a tree nursery using woodchips and a bare root growing application. The CTTB needs some additional funds to secure all of the necessary components and will look for the**

**installation of the nursery in the Spring of 2026. CTTB intends to add in the costs and materials of this nursery into one or more grants it is currently seeking in order to create a properly designed and installed nursery.**

**These saplings normally require additional growth befor planting in the community. The nursery can grow out these free saplings for future use in City planting as well as providing opportunities for the sale of these trees to City residents.**

**Currently CTTB has approximately 300 saplings that are in various stages of growth planted in woodchips housed temporarily at 206 W. Liberty St.**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: Spring- Fall 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: None**
- **Tree Board Lead: Aaron**

## Ordinance Revision and Coordination with Planning

**CTTB has proposed and submitted revisions to its codified ordinance to more specifically enumerate the species of permitted trees, a list of invasive species of trees and shrubs, proper siting for trees to prevent growth related issues for the tree and its root systems. CTTB will work with the Planning Department to assure consistent rules and regulations will apply to future developments in the community consistent with the changes anticipated in the revision to the Tree Ordinance along with those in Planning and Zoning ordinances.**

## Expansion of Pollinator Gardens & Bee City USA

**CTTB will increase the pollinator garden(s) established at the Skate Park to include land directly under the utility lines on the sloped hillside. The removal of invasive plants and the installation of native grasses and flowers will stabilize the soil on the steep slope, will provide for regenerative growth from these perennial plants, will provide food for pollinator insects and beautify the Skate Park. CTTB plans to phase in sections of the hillside as time and resources allow.**

**CTTB has advanced a resolution to be adopted by City Council for application to become a Bee City USA city. This would involve the creation of a Bee City Committee to take on the direct work of planning, planting and maintaining pollinator gardens and installations. It would also involve educational outreach programs to encourage private property owners, developers and other stake-holders to focus on retaining native plants, trees and grasses and alternatively removing non-native grass planting and installing native and environmentally friendly species.**

**The Committee would ideally be comprised of one member from CTTB, one member from Parks and Recreation, one member from Infrastructure, a City liaison and citizen members from our local wards. It is anticipated that this commission will take direct control of pollinator planning and installation projects in the City and will work cooperatively to accomplish these goals. This committee can be overseen by CTTB or Parks and Recreation.**

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: Spring- Fall 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: None**
- **Tree Board Lead: Aaron**
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## Invasive Control

CTTB looks to continue the removal of invasive species at our City Parks. Bradford Pear Trees, Siberian Elms, Autumn Olive shrubs and Chinese Bittersweet vines are significant problems and can quickly overtake native species and expand ground cover. CTTB will investigate and propose several options to address removal and control of these invasive species.

CTTB will work with Parks & Recreation to remove non-native grass areas that require mowing and provide no benefit to the environment or public use and replace it with native flowers, grass, trees and shrubs to return the land to a sustainable and natural landscape.

- **Priority: High**
- **Estimated Time Frame: 2026**
- **Estimated Cost: Unknown.**
- **Tree Board Lead: Carlo**

## Independent Budget for CTTB

CTTB requests that the $2.00 per capita set aside be dedicated to the CTTB alone for use in its on-going projects. At present, such funds are in control of the Maintenance department and are almost subsumed by Maintenance for its costs related to tree removal and clean up. CTTB is left to request funds of very modest amounts to offset the expenditures made by its board member. CTTB members have been very resourceful in obtaining free or significantly reduced materials but there are limits to these sources.

CTTB will continue to seek grant funds for direct use and to off-set its costs but requests that it is provided with the $2.00 per capita set aside made by the City as part of our membership in the Arbor Day Foundation. CTTB members have dedicated significant time, including time to re-write and revise the City Ordinance, review the Subdivision Ordinance and provide skillsets, time and advice that are often outsourced to City Staff or retained professionals. CTTB cannot efficiently and effectively advanced its goals as set forth in this Master Plan and those that have proceeded it without access to resources necessary to achieve its goals and those of the City.

Attached is a Draft Budget previously proposed to City Council in the Spring of 2025 and CTTB asks City Council to approve its request for an independent budget based upon the attached budget proposal.

**Charles Town Tree Board 2026-2027 Budget- Proposed**

**Materials**

Trees (nursery equipment $1,000)

Seeds $300

Stakes/tubs $300

Pesticides/herbicides $200

Computer inventory software $3,000

Administrative and public education materials (paper, copies, brochures, educational books) $ 200

Equipment Skid steer auger $1,000

Pruning tools (3x $79 Felco pruners) $230

Handsaws & pole saws $380

Spray equipment pump, reel hose and tank $ 500

Equipment rental (stump grinder, brush hog, auger, rake) $500

Other Personal Protection Equipment $500

Equipment and material subtotal $ 7,867

Contract Services (tree removal/trimming contractors, grant writing and outside experts) $5,000

Memberships (Tree City USA, Bee City USA, TACF) $55 + $100) = $155

Total $13,065.

Tree Board anticipates the purchase of equipment annually depending upon budget and grant funds over the next three years: Skid steer auger $1,000, stump grinder attachment $3,000, Wood chipper $7,500-8,500, chain saws $2-3 at $800= $2,400. Dedicated trailer for water tank, pump and hose/reel for use in watering and mulch delivery for maintaining trees $1,500. Grant funds are often limited in the amount/cost of equipment and do not include chainsaws and stump grinders.

Tree Board anticipates the creation of a tree nursery in the coming fiscal year. Materials are estimated at $1,000 with volunteer time to assist in construction. Use of existing tanks and materials owned by City and use of shed building for water run-off capture at maintenance yard is anticipated.

Tree City USA requires a minimum of $2.00 per capita budget to be established to be used for the planting, care and removal of city trees and the planning efforts to make those things happen. Charles Town, West Virginia, had a population from the 2020 Census of 6,534.

The 2020 Census population of around 6,534, but recent estimates show significant growth, with figures around 8,869 in 2024 and projections suggesting over 9,000 for 2026, showing a nearly 35% increase since 2020. The 2020 census shows the City population at 6,534 or a budget requirement of $13,068. There is no requirement that the City continue to use the 2020 census data. Real world figures would suggest an estimated population of 9,000 with a set aside of $18,000 accordingly.