# CITY OF CHARLES TOWN

## CHARLES TOWN TREE BOARD

## AGENDA • AUGUST 6, 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**

: **2026-1756:** Charles Town Tree Board Meeting Minutes - June 4, 2026
Tree Board Meeting Minutes - June 2026.pdf

**3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

: **2026-1757:** Tree Canopy/Inventory Update- Review of goals, software data, etc. Plan to update and undertake new inventory.

: **2026-1758:** Pollinator Garden. Need for volunteers to weed and trim this Fall. Additional seeding?

: **2026-1759:** Consideration of Heritage Trees to enable certain protections. See item description for more information. https://americanheritagetrees.org/
Heritage tree Binder MD example.pdf
CharlesTown HeritageTree Program.pdf

: **2026-1760:** 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.

: **2026-1761**: 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.

: **2026-1762:** 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. Consider recommending to City that we focus on adding better soil and plants to tree planted areas instead of stand-alone planters (take up space and require additional water) as well as hanging baskets which take additional water and resources. Engagement with business owners to water plants in front of the spaces? Plan to aerate and add mulch, plants and flowers to tree boxes.
Tree image.jpeg
Tree image #2.jpeg
Tree image #3.jpeg

: **2026-1763:** Two non-voting members including youth 17 years old or over. Recruitment,

community outreach and identification of prospective participants.

: **2026-1764:** 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.

: **2026-1765:** Consideration of cooperative effort to use Washington HS greenhouse for growing out seeds into saplings. Would need to coordinate with teacher, school, and Cacapon, WV Ag Extension, and others to provide expertise and support. Related experts who could assist.

: **2026-1766:** Bee City USA Application process. Update for resolution to City Council. Discussion about make-up of Bee Committee.
Bee City USA Application Steps.pdf

: **2026-1767:** 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

: **2026-1768:** Consideration of development fees for Tree Board as part of subdivision ordinance. Ordinance consideration with planning to prescribe native trees, shrubs and plants as opposed to non-native species. Creation of water-garden for drainage ponds.

: **2026-1769:** 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

## 4. NEW BUSINESS

: **2026-1770:** Cooperative agreement with Dr. Campany for future projects or student engagement on CT projects.

: **2026-1771:** Tree Board participation in local events. Consideration of exposure, time, and benefit to board and community.

: **2026-1772:** How to better recruit and engage volunteers for Tree Board events.

: **2026-1773:** Consideration of engagement with non-for profits in the City for cooperative efforts for projects to expand scope and area of tree plantings. Library proposal to plant trees and shrubs on back park of property where storm water poos through the Cacapon Institute with the Tree Board as liaison. Other options include churches (Wainwright Baptist, House of Prayer, Zion Baptist, St. Phillips, Asbury Methodist, and others) to assess and assist in tree planting projects through Cacapon.

: **2026-1774:** Need better lines of communication with City Council and other city boards to work cooperatively on projects that impact the Tree Board. Often times the Tree Board is not consulted for projects that directly impact trees, tree care and/or maintenance.

: **2026-1775:** Consideration of advancing a push to hire an urban forester.

: **2026-1776:** Breakdown from post-grant denial meeting and next steps.

: **2026-1777:** Request for Removal of Trees - policy, procedure, form to make request

: **2026-1778:** Request for Water Abatement for Tree Nursery at 206 W. Liberty Street, Charles Town, WV

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

**6. NOTICE: The Public May View the Meeting Live by Clicking on the Event Link at:**

**https://www.charlestownwv.us/government/agendas_minutes.php**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1756: Charles Town Tree Board Meeting Minutes - June 4, 2026

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Tree Board Meeting Minutes - June 2026.pdf

# CITY OF CHARLES TOWN
# Tree Board
# June 4, 2026

| Regular Meeting | Council Chambers | 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 |
| Corey Lewis | Present |

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

2026-1553: Tree Canopy/Inventory Update- Review of goals, software data, etc. Plan to update and undertake new inventory

- This is stalled because of grant funding.
- If we don't get the first grant, we will put it into the second one.

2026-1554: Pollinator Garden. Need for volunteers to weed and trim this Fall. Additional seeding?

- We will set this for the fall.
- We only had 2 volunteers at the last event.
- We need a better volunteer list and need to work better with the city and get a core group.
- Maybe we will get more volunteer interest with the upcoming board seat vacancy.
    - This will be Katie's last meeting.

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- For the Tree City USA site anyone can login and Katie changed all the contact info to Aaron.
- We need to do every for tree city USA in December.

2026-1555: Consideration of Heritage Trees to enable certain protections. See item description for more information. https://americanheritagetrees.org/

- We have an example from Westminster, MD with a brochure and application process.
- We can model after it; Aaron made a sample Charles Town brochure.
- Liz suggested that we should get rid of the subcommittee part and simplify it, take out irrelevant parts.
    - We could have categories with plaques and estimate the cost to bring to council.
    - Consideration of QR codes, a website, map, etc.
    - Applications could be processed 2x/year (spring and fall) or just over winter when it's slow.

2026- 1556: 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.

- Already discussed, see 1554.

2026-1557: 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.

- Aaron needs to contact th farmer who does the cutting.
- Aaron will also contact Alyssa.
- Liz brought it up at the parks and rec meeting when they renewed the mowing contract,
- Aaron will check with Gavin.
- Liz suggested that maybe next year it will go out for bid for landscaping.
    - Current landscapers have cut bark on trees, we might need bark protectors.

2026-1558: 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. Consider recommending to City that we focus on adding better soil and plants to tree planted areas instead of stand-alone planters (take up space and require additional water) as well as hanging baskets which take additional water and

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resources. Engagement with business owners to water plants in front of the spaces? Plan to aerate and add mulch, plants and flowers to tree boxes.

- Aaron has had discussions with Brent.
- Some have been removed and mulched.
- Most places put plants in with the trees, but the city doesn't want the burden of watering.
- We will suggest having business take ownership of watering fall or spring next year.

2026-1559: Two non-voting members including youth 17 years old or over. Recruitment, community outreach and identification of prospective participants.

- Maybe have a social media outreach.
- Katie is leaving but not sure where she is in her term.
    - Liz made inquiries to find out.
- We can also advertise for non-voting and youth seat.

2026-1560: 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

- We provided the info.
- Liz said it's being handled in a sub-comittee.
- Huntfield is an example with the tree roots of developer planted trees causing issue with the roots affecting CTUB lines.
    - Around 18 trees causing issues that shouldn't have ever been planted.
    - Ask CTUB input for trees to avoid future issues.
    - Sewer lines so deep CTUB can't reach them and have to have special contractors.
- Next tree board meeting maybe we can get together a proposal for CTUB and HOA with location of sewer line map.
- Get together a tree board recommendation of what should be planted, age of tree, etc.

2026-1561: Consideration of cooperative effort to use Washington HS greenhouse for growing out seeds into saplings. Would need to coordinate with teacher, school, and Cacapon, WV Ag Extension, and others to provide expertise and support. Related experts who could assist.

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2026-1562: Bee City USA Application process. Update for resolution to City Council. Discussion about make-up of Bee Committee. Bee City USA Application Steps.pdf

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2026-1563: 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

- We will discuss next meeting.

2026-1564: Consideration of development fees for Tree Board as part of subdivision ordinance. Ordinance consideration with planning to prescribe native trees, shrubs and plants as opposed to non-native species. Creation of water-garden for drainage ponds.

- Already discussed.

2026-1565: 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

- How to convert grass spaces to native species.
- There are grants with Potomac Audobon Society.
- Maybe we can have it sponsored at the next Blooms and Blossoms.

## 3. NEW BUSINESS

2026-1566: Cooperative agreement with Dr. Campany for future projects or student engagement on CT projects.

- Aaron will get with Dr. Company, he will work with us regardless of grant.

2026-1567: Tree Board participation in local events. Consideration of exposure, time, and benefit to board and community.

- We've done booths and festivals, 3 events.
- The Blooms and Blossoms wasn't well attended.
- We're going to look at pairing down, maybe just the fall.
- We will keep with 3 planting events.
- Maybe we can sell trees eventually.
    - We need to get on the agenda to send to council to make sure we do everything right.
- Aaron can request more trees from PE.
- We also will have the BMP tree sale in the fall and spring.
    - Need volunteers for sorting and pick up.

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2026-1568: How to better recruit and engage volunteers for Tree Board events.

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2026-1569: Consideration of engagement with non-for profits in the City for cooperative efforts for projects to expand scope and area of tree plantings. Library proposal to plant trees and shrubs on back park of property where storm water poos through the Cacapon Institute with the Tree Board as liaison. Other options include churches (Wainwright Baptist, House of Prayer, Zion Baptist, St. Phillips, Asbury Methodist, and others) to assess and assist in tree planting projects through Cacapon.

- Aaron brough up partnering with the library, churches, etc. for tree related projects.
- These non-profits would qualify for a Cacapon planting.
- The tree board could make some suggestions.
- Trees could go on the back of CT library and maybe the presbyterian church (to provide shade and help with runoff), there's not a lot of tree infrastructure.
- We could help them get the trees and get volunteers to plant if they agree to take care of them.
- It would open up more spaces to plant besides just parks.
    - Liz mentioned that parks wants to start master planning so they might not want trees in spaces until that's finalized.
- We can focus on vacant/parking lots and non-profit areas.
- The owner of the private lot at Liberty and Samuel wants to get rid of the black top and plant trees.
    - Trees could help that block.
- We can reach out to property owners and assist them if they want trees.
- Non-profits can get free trees.

2026-1570: Need better lines of communication with City Council and other city boards to work cooperatively on projects that impact the Tree Board. Often times the Tree Board is not consulted for projects that directly impact trees, tree care and/or maintenance.

- The mayor charged Brent with better communication with the boards (which includes the tree board).

2026-1571: Consideration of advancing a push to hire an urban forester.

- We don't have an arborist or urban forester and we need more expertise.

**ADJOURNMENT :**
**MOTION:** to adjourn at 7:54PM
**MOVER:** Jane King
**SECOND:** Scott Updike
**AYES:** All

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1757: Tree Canopy/Inventory Update- Review of goals, software data, etc. Plan to update and undertake new inventory.

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**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1759: Consideration of Heritage Trees to enable certain protections. See item description for more information. https://americanheritagetrees.org/**

## Landmark/Heritage Tree Program

### Qualifications

The Charles Town Tree Board sponsors the Charles Town Heritage/Landmark Trees Program. The City of Charles Town provided for the establishment of a Landmark Tree Program in its Codified Ordinance. The program is designed to encourage residents and property owners to identify and protect individual trees or groups of trees that meet one or more of the following qualifications.

- **Specimen:** A tree of exceptional size, form or rarity, or horticultural value
- **Historic:** A tree of exceptional age, and/or associated with or contribution to an historic structure or with a noted person or historic event
- **Landmark:** A tree that is a prominent identifying feature of a community
- **Collection:** A group of trees in a notable grove, avenue or other planting

### Nominating Trees

Anyone may nominate a tree or trees, but the person who owns the land on which the tree stands must consent to the nomination. Trees located in County right-of-way are not eligible. There are no regulatory restrictions associated with the designation.

See example forms from City of Westminster MD

**ATTACHMENTS:**
- Heritage tree Binder MD example.pdf
- CharlesTown HeritageTree Program.pdf

# Heritage Trees

## WESTMINSTER TREE COMMISSION

The City of Westminster Tree Commission established the Heritage Tree Program in 2011 to encourage residents and property owners to identify and protect individual trees or groups of trees that meet one or more of the following qualifications:

- Specimen: A tree of exceptional size, form or rarity, or horticultural value.
- Historic: A tree of exceptional age; a tree associated with, or contributing to, an historic structure, noted person, or historic event.
- Landmark: A tree that is a prominent identifying feature of a community.
- Collection: A group of trees in a notable grove, avenue or other planting.

The first tree to be nominated for the program is a very large Sycamore tree belonging to Robin Crouse at 538 Old Westminster Pike, pictured below.



Anyone may nominate a tree or trees, but the person who owns the land on which the tree stands must consent to the nomination. Trees located in County right-of-way are not eligible. There are no regulatory restrictions associated with the designation. Nominated trees will be inspected by a certified arborist to ensure criteria are met.

For more information:
Call our Information Desk at 410-848-9000; Email HeritageTree@westgov.com; Or, visit **http://westminstermd.gov/citygov/heritagetrees.htm**

*City Of Westminster Tree Commission*
*Heritage Tree Nomination Form*

**I. Nominator Information**

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____

Email Address _____

**Property Owner Info.** *If known

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____

Email Address _____

**Property/Tree Owner Information**
**Designated Neighborhood:** _____

**Location** (Street Address):_____

**Species of Tree** (Common or Botanical Name): _____

**Single/Collection of trees** (If Collection, How Many Trees): _____

**Size***:* Height (approx.)_____ feet
**Crown** (approx.) measure distance of total spread from one side to other: _____ feet
**Circumference** (distance around trunk at 4.5 feet from ground): _____inches
**Age of Tree** (If Known/Estimate): _____

**II. To Be Completed by City Arborist:**

**Condition check all that apply and explain any issues on back of page:**

____ Healthy ____ Diseased ____ Pruning/Structural Problems ___ Other _____

**III. What is the most noteworthy about the tree/trees, check all that apply:**

____Size ____Visibility ____ Rare Horticultural Value ____Aesthetic Qualities ____ Historical

Other Comments: _____

_____

**Submit Nomination Form to**:
City of Westminster, Attn: Tree Commission
45 West Main Street,
Westminster, MD 21157
(410) 848-9000
www.westminstermd.gov

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

56 West Main Street
Westminster, MD 21157
Phone 410-848-9000
Fax 410-857-7476

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 26, 2012

Contact: Information Desk
Phone: 410-848-9000

# NEW HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM

## City of Westminster begins new program promoting Heritage Trees

*Westminster, MD* – The City of Westminster's Heritage Tree Program has been adopted for the purpose of identifying designated Heritage Trees located within the City. This Program acknowledges that Heritage Trees whether located on public or private property are distinct and unique living resources of the Westminster community.

Mayor Kevin Utz supports the new Heritage Tree Program, stating "this simple act of recognizing the significant trees of Westminster will help bring us together as a community to make a point: trees do matter and play an important role in our history and environment."

Nominations for Heritage Tree designation, can be trees located either on public property, such as street trees, park trees, median trees or on private property and may be made by any resident, property owner or business owner of Westminster.

A heritage tree may be associated with important local or regional history, people, structures, or landscapes. Anyone may nominate a tree for heritage tree designation. As described on the City Website, candidates for designation as heritage trees will be reviewed and approved by the Westminster Tree Commission.

The City shall notify the property owner of the nomination, and then, upon the owner's consent, the application to nominate will be processed. A City Arborist will inspect the nominated tree and produce a picture and description to be displayed on the City website and an identification marker placed near the tree.

Anyone seeking assistance in nominating a heritage tree may contact the Westminster Tree Commission at info@westgov.com or at 410-848-9000.

# # #

*The City of Westminster Administration Department is located at 56 West Main Street. This department oversees all of the departments in the General Government and is the central location for the City. For more information, call 410-848-9000 or visit www.westminstermd.gov.*

*City Of Westminster Tree Commission*
*Property Owner Agreement Form*

**Heritage Tree Program**

In exchange for the City's designation of the subject tree as a Heritage Tree, the Property Owner agrees that:

A. The Heritage Tree or collection of trees is retained by the property owner and does not become the property or responsibility of the City, unless the tree(s) are city owned.

B. The property owner is responsible for all maintenance and liability issues pertaining to the tree or trees.

C. Prior to removal of a Heritage Tree, a property owner should notify the Tree Commission, so it can be removed from the recognized list of trees. The City strongly encourages all Heritage Tree property owners to retain these significant tree(s).

D. If a property owner removes a Heritage tree or collection of tree(s), the plaque or identification marker should be returned to the Tree Commission.

Property owner as owner of the _____(species) tree now being considered for this distinction, hereby consents to its being a Heritage Tree by the City of Westminster Tree Commission and gives permission for a photograph(s) of the tree to be placed on the City website, as well permission for a City Tree Commission representative to enter the property to verify the tree(s) location, etc.

**Tree Location (address and location on property):**

_____

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**Signed: _____ (Property Owner)**
**Date: _____**

Received by Tree Commission:_____
Approved by Tree Commission:_____
Added to City Website_____

**Submit Owner's Consent to**:
City of Westminster, Attn: Tree Commission,
56 West Main Street, Westminster, MD 21157
(410) 848-9000
www.westminstermd.gov

# HERITAGE TREE
# RECOGNITION PROGRAM

*Honoring Our Living Monuments*

Witness Trees • Historic Trees • Champion Trees • Native Trees • Special Trees

**City of Charles Town, West Virginia • Program Guidelines, Eligibility Criteria & Application Process**

## Introduction & Program Mission

Trees are among the longest-lived organisms on Earth — silent witnesses to wars, treaties, migrations, and the passage of countless human generations. A venerable oak that shaded a Revolutionary War encampment, a massive sycamore rooted beside a Civil War bridge, a cedar shaped into a trail-marker by an Indigenous nation centuries ago, or simply the largest known specimen of a native species in a region — each of these trees carries a story that deserves to be told, documented, and protected.

The Charles Town Heritage Tree Recognition Program exists to identify, honor, and help safeguard trees of exceptional size, age, historical significance, cultural meaning, ecological importance, or botanical rarity within the City of Charles Town, West Virginia. Charles Town carries extraordinary living history — founded in 1786 by Charles Washington, brother of George Washington, and the site of John Brown's trial and execution in 1859, the city's old trees are witnesses to events that shaped the nation. Drawing on best practices from programs across the United States, this program establishes a community-driven framework for recognizing Charles Town's living monuments. The program is entirely volunteer-run, governed by a Charles Town community board, and open only to city residents and property owners.

Unlike building or landscape preservation programs, Heritage Tree recognition focuses on individual organisms that grow and change over time. Trees cannot be frozen in amber; they require ongoing care, stewardship, and champions willing to advocate for them. This program invites Charles Town citizens, naturalists, historians, Indigenous communities, and landowners to become those champions for the remarkable trees within our city limits.

### Why Heritage Trees Matter

- Living links to the past — trees can outlive buildings, documents, and memory
- Ecological anchors — large old trees support disproportionate biodiversity
- Climate records — tree rings provide centuries of precipitation and temperature data
- Cultural identity — community trees anchor neighborhood and regional sense of place
- Scientific resources — champion specimens reveal species maximum potential
- Mental health benefits — old trees in urban settings measurably reduce stress

## Tree Categories & Definitions

The Heritage Tree Recognition Program recognizes six primary categories. A tree may qualify under one or more categories. Each category has its own primary criteria, though the program evaluates the whole tree — its story, its condition, its community meaning — not just the category it fits.

### Category 1 — Witness Trees

A Witness Tree is a tree that was physically present at the site of a significant historical or cultural event and whose age can be reasonably verified to confirm it predates or was alive during that event. The category takes its name from Robert Frost's 1942 poem and from the National Park Service's Witness Tree Protection Program, established in 2006.

Witness trees are found on battlefields, historic homesteads, treaty sites, along former trails and boundaries, and at sites of community memory. They may carry literal scars of history — embedded bullets, axe blazes, lightning scars — or may simply be provably old enough to have stood witness. The Burnside Sycamore at Antietam, the Sickles Oak at Gettysburg, and the 1910 Yoshino Cherry Trees near Hains Point are canonical examples.

Primary eligibility criteria for Witness Trees:

- Age verification: tree must be demonstrably old enough to have been present during the claimed event (via ring count, species growth rates, historical photographs, maps, paintings, or written accounts)
- Site documentation: the event or period must be historically documented
- Geographic plausibility: the tree's current location must be consistent with its claimed historical presence
- Condition: the tree must be alive and structurally stable enough to be safely visited

A sub-category of Witness Trees is the Survey Witness Tree (also called a Corner Tree or Bearing Tree) — trees blazed or marked by land surveyors to establish property or township boundaries in the 18th and 19th centuries. These trees appear in original land survey records and often carry physical markings.

## Category 2 — Historic Trees

A Historic Tree has a documented association with a significant person, institution, event, or era, regardless of whether the tree was actually present during the event or merely planted to commemorate it. The distinction from a Witness Tree is that association — not physical presence — is the primary basis for significance.

Historic Trees include trees planted by notable figures, trees commemorating historic events or milestones, memorial avenues, trees associated with religious or civic institutions, trees connected to Indigenous cultural practice (including culturally modified trees bearing bark-stripping marks, test holes, blazes, or shaping), and trees mentioned in historical documents, paintings, or photographs.

Primary eligibility criteria for Historic Trees:

- Documented association: historical association must be substantiated by written records, photographs, oral history with corroborating evidence, or physical modification of the tree
- Significance: the person, event, or institution must be of local, regional, or national significance
- Integrity: the tree must be the original tree, not a replacement or descendant
- For culturally modified trees: documentation of the modification type and consultation with relevant Indigenous communities is required

## Category 3 — Champion Trees (Largest Known Specimens)

A Champion Tree is the largest known individual of its species within the program's geographic area, determined by a standardized point-scoring system. This category follows the methodology established by American Forests' National Register of Champion Trees and replicated by state Big Tree programs across the country.

The scoring formula, used nationally since the mid-20th century, is:

```
Total Points  =  Trunk Circumference (inches)  +
    Height (feet)  +  ¼ Crown Spread (feet)
```

Measurements are taken at 4.5 feet above ground (DBH height) for circumference. Height is measured to the topmost live twig using a clinometer or laser rangefinder. Crown spread is averaged across multiple measurements from the dripline. A candidate tree becomes a

Champion if it exceeds the current champion of its species, or becomes a Co-Champion if within 3 points (under 100 total) or within 3% (over 100 total).

The program recognizes champions at two scales:

- Charles Town Champion: largest known specimen of its species within the Charles Town city limits
- Jefferson County Champion: largest known specimen in Jefferson County (coordinated with the WV Division of Forestry where applicable)

## Category 4 — Native Trees of Notable Character

This category recognizes trees that are native to the region and exhibit exceptional characteristics short of the champion size threshold, including remarkable age, unusual form, ecological importance as habitat, prominence in the landscape, or relic status as a remnant of a once-widespread ecosystem.

Relic or remnant trees — species that once covered large areas but now survive as isolated individuals — are of particular ecological and scientific interest. An old-growth survivor in a second-growth landscape, a prairie bur oak that predates European settlement, or a longleaf pine that escaped logging all qualify. The program also recognizes grove nominations under this category when a group of trees together creates a significant ecological or landscape feature.

## Category 5 — Culturally & Community Significant Trees

Some trees achieve significance not through size or historical event but through their deep embeddedness in community life. A tree under which generations of children have played, a landmark that defines a neighborhood's identity, a tree planted to mark a birth, death, or civic milestone, a tree that survived a disaster and became a symbol of resilience — all may qualify.

The Survivor Tree at the Oklahoma City National Memorial is a canonical example: a common American elm that survived the 1995 bombing and became a nationally recognized symbol of hope. The Lahaina Banyan in Maui, the Treaty Oak in Austin, and thousands of local "town trees" similarly qualify.

Nominations under this category require documented community support and a written narrative of significance.

## Category 6 — Exceptional Introduced & Naturalized Trees

Not all trees of significance are native. Long-established introduced trees — those planted generations ago that have become fixtures of the cultural landscape — may also be nominated. Eligibility is limited to trees with documented planting histories predating 1920, trees of

exceptional size or form within their species, or trees with clear historical or horticultural significance. Invasive species are not eligible regardless of size.

## General Eligibility Requirements

All nominations, regardless of category, must meet the following baseline requirements:

| Requirement | Details |
|---|---|
| Location Within City Limits | The tree must be located within the incorporated limits of the City of Charles Town, West Virginia. Trees on unincorporated land in Jefferson County are not eligible for this program (though the board may refer exceptional candidates to the WV state program). |
| Nominator Residency | The nominator must be a current Charles Town resident, a property owner within the city limits, or a member of an organization headquartered in Charles Town. Out-of-city nominators may co-nominate with a qualifying Charles Town resident. |
| Living Tree | The tree must be alive at time of nomination. Standing dead trees are not eligible, though a tree in decline that meets all other criteria may be recognized with a notation. |
| Structural Safety | The tree must not present an immediate safety hazard. Trees requiring urgent removal are not eligible, though stewardship support may be available. |
| Visible from Public Vantage | The tree must be reasonably visible from a public way, trail, or area, or the landowner must agree to reasonable public acknowledgment of its location. |
| Owner Consent (Private) | Trees on private property require written consent of all property owners. On private land, designation is recorded as an acknowledgment, not a legal restriction, unless the owner opts into enhanced protection. |
| Species Identification | The species must be positively identified before designation. Nominators may use field guides, university extension resources, or consult a volunteer board member with tree knowledge. The board may request additional verification for unusual or disputed identifications. |
| Adequate Growing Space | The tree must have sufficient space for its root system and canopy, indicating it is likely to persist for a meaningful period. |
| Ineligible Species | Invasive or noxious species as designated by the WV Division of Natural Resources are not eligible. |

# Evaluation Criteria & Scoring

To provide consistent, transparent evaluation, the program uses a multi-criteria scoring matrix. Trees are evaluated across five dimensions, with points allocated by the volunteer Review Board based on the nominator's documentation and the board's field visit. A minimum score of 50 points is required for designation.

## Evaluation Matrix

| Measurement | Method | Points |
|---|---|---|
| **Size / Physical Stature** | Circumference + Height + ¼ Crown Spread formula; comparison to known champions of same species | Up to 25 pts |
| **Age / Longevity** | Verified or estimated age relative to species lifespan; old-growth or pre-settlement trees score highest | Up to 20 pts |
| **Historical / Cultural Significance** | Strength of documented association with event, person, or community; quality of evidence | Up to 25 pts |
| **Ecological Value** | Habitat provision, species rarity, relic/remnant status, biodiversity significance | Up to 15 pts |
| **Condition & Longevity Outlook** | Board member field assessment of visible health, structural soundness, and likely continued survival based on observable indicators | Up to 15 pts |

Score interpretation:

- 50 – 64: Heritage Tree — Recognized
- 65 – 79: Notable Heritage Tree — Recognized with enhanced listing
- 80 – 94: Landmark Heritage Tree — Recognized with marker plaque eligibility
- 95 – 100: Exceptional Heritage Tree — Highest recognition tier; eligible for nomination to state or national registers

## Special Designations Within Categories

Regardless of overall score, the following designations may be conferred:

- Champion Designation: Tree holds the highest point total for its species within the Charles Town city limits
- Witness Designation: Tree is verified to have been present during a specific documented historical event
- Culturally Modified Tree Designation: Tree bears verifiable marks of Indigenous cultural practice

- Old-Growth Designation: Tree is estimated to be 200+ years old in a region where such trees are rare
- Survivor Tree Designation: Tree survived a major disaster, conflict, or cultural disruption and carries community significance as a symbol of resilience

## Age Verification Methods

Determining a tree's age is central to several category designations. The program accepts the following verification methods, listed in order of precision:

| Method | Notes |
|---|---|
| Increment Core Sample | Extraction of a small core allows ring-counting. This method requires a specialized borer tool and some practice. The board encourages nominators to seek assistance from a university extension forester, state forestry volunteer, or knowledgeable community member. Core sampling is optional — documentary and estimation methods are fully accepted. |
| Historical Photographs & Maps | Presence of the tree in dated photographs, survey maps, paintings, or written descriptions establishes minimum age. Cross-referenced with species growth rates. |
| Species Growth Rate Calculation | Diameter × species-specific growth factor = estimated age. An approximate method acceptable for initial screening. |
| Land Survey Records | Original township survey records (GLO plats) may record trees by species and diameter, establishing age to a specific survey date. |
| Dendrochronology (Ring Matching) | For exceptional trees, laboratory cross-dating of ring patterns against established regional chronologies provides precise age. |
| Oral History & Community Memory | Accepted as corroborating evidence when combined with at least one physical or documentary method; not accepted as sole evidence. |

Invasive methods (full core extraction from the heartwood, root excavation) require justification and are discouraged. For privately owned trees, the landowner may decline coring, in which case growth-rate estimation with documentary corroboration is acceptable.

## Benefits of Heritage Tree Designation

Heritage Tree designation confers recognition, not automatic legal restriction. Specific protections depend on the property type and the owner's consent. The following benefits apply to all designated trees:

- Official listing in the Heritage Tree Register, a public database with species, location (general), category, score, and narrative
- Eligibility for a weatherproof Heritage Tree interpretive marker (plaques available for Landmark and Exceptional tiers)
- Inclusion in public heritage tree maps, tours, and educational materials
- Priority consideration for tree care grants through the program's stewardship fund
- Nomination pathway to the WV state champion tree registry and American Forests' National Register of Champion Trees
- Documentation archived with the Jefferson County Historical Society and Charles Town Public Library
- Annual stewardship check-in by a volunteer board member

For trees on publicly owned land, designation triggers a board review of any proposed management actions that could affect the tree. For trees on private land, landowners who opt into the Enhanced Protection tier receive:

- Annual volunteer check-in visit and written condition report
- Priority access to emergency tree care funding and board advocacy
- Property recognition in the program's public communications
- Board notification requirement before any adjacent development that could affect the critical root zone

## Nomination Process Overview

The Heritage Tree Program follows an annual nomination cycle, though nominations may be submitted at any time. The program strongly recommends that nominators submit their single strongest candidate rather than multiple trees, to allow thorough preparation. All steps in the cycle are carried out by volunteer board members and community reviewers — no paid staff are involved. The full cycle, from submission to designation decision, takes approximately 6 to 8 months.

### Who May Nominate

Nominations are open to Charles Town residents and city property owners only. Eligible nominators include:

- City of Charles Town residents (any ward or neighborhood)
- Owners of property within the Charles Town city limits (including non-resident property owners)
- Civic and community organizations headquartered or primarily operating within Charles Town (e.g., neighborhood associations, churches, historical groups, school PTOs)
- Charles Town city departments and public institutions

Out-of-city residents may co-nominate a tree alongside a qualifying Charles Town resident or property owner, but the Charles Town resident must serve as the primary nominator of record. A nominator need not own the tree's property, but owner consent is required before designation can be finalized for trees on private property.

## The Nomination Cycle

| Step | Timing | Action |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Year-round | Nominations accepted at any time via online portal or paper form. Nominators are encouraged to contact a board member with questions before submitting — we want to help every strong candidate succeed. |
| 2 | January 31 | Annual nomination cutoff. Trees submitted after this date enter the following year's review cycle. The board may accept late nominations at its discretion if capacity allows. |
| 3 | February – March | Board intake review. Two board members independently review each submission for completeness and basic eligibility. Incomplete nominations are returned with written guidance for revision. |
| 4 | April – May | Volunteer field visit. A pair of board members (or trained community volunteers) visits the tree to confirm species, observe overall condition, take or verify measurements, note any concerns, and photograph the tree from all cardinal directions. No professional certification is required — board members use the program's field guide and measurement protocols. |
| 5 | June – July | Full board scoring session. All board members score each eligible nomination independently using the evaluation matrix, then discuss and agree on a final score. Nominators are welcome to attend and answer questions. |
| 6 | August | Notification and public comment. Nominators and property owners are notified of preliminary decisions. Owners of privately sited trees receive consent paperwork. A 21-day public comment period opens for community input on all nominations. |
| 7 | September | Final board vote incorporating public comments and owner responses. Simple majority required; tied votes default to inclusion. |
| 8 | October | Designations announced at the annual Charles Town Heritage Tree Celebration. Landowners receive framed certificates. Listings added to the Heritage Tree Register. Champion nominees forwarded to the WV Division of Forestry state program. |
| 9 | Ongoing | Annual volunteer check-ins for all designated trees. 10-year re-measurement encouraged for champion designations. Trees may be re-nominated for higher-tier recognition as they grow. |

### The Volunteer Board

The Charles Town Heritage Tree Program is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that oversees all program activities, from intake through designation. All board members must be current Charles Town residents or property owners within the city limits. The board is community-driven and deliberately diverse — no professional credentials are required to serve, though relevant knowledge in trees, history, ecology, or community affairs is welcomed.

Board composition (7 members):

- Board Chair — coordinates meetings, sets agenda, serves as program spokesperson
- Records Secretary — maintains the Heritage Tree Register, archives nominations, sends correspondence
- Two At-Large Members with interest in natural history, horticulture, or forestry
- One Member with interest in local history, historic preservation, or cultural heritage
- One Member representing or nominated by a local Indigenous community
- One Member-at-Large from the Charles Town general public, selected annually from the pool of active nominators

Board members serve staggered two-year terms. Any Charles Town resident or city property owner in good standing may apply. The board votes to admit new members; ties are broken by the Chair. Members with a personal interest in a nomination recuse themselves from that vote.

The board meets at least four times per year: in February (intake), June (scoring), September (final votes), and October (annual Heritage Tree Celebration). All meetings are held within the City of Charles Town and are open to the public. Nominations are always welcome items on the agenda.

#### Volunteer Field Visitors

Board members conduct all field visits in pairs. Any Charles Town resident may train as a Field Visitor by:

1. Attending a 2-hour orientation covering the measurement protocol and field guide
2. Completing one supervised field visit alongside a board member
3. Demonstrating basic species identification skills using program resources

Trained Field Visitors are listed on the program's volunteer roster and may be assigned nominations in their neighborhood.

## Stewardship & Ongoing Care

A tree does not stop needing care upon designation — in many ways, it needs more. The Heritage Tree Program is committed to the long-term health of designated trees through active stewardship.

### Stewardship Responsibilities

| Party | Responsibilities |
|---|---|
| Property Owner | Day-to-day care; notifying the board of significant changes in tree health; contacting the board before major pruning or root-zone work; providing access for the annual volunteer check-in visit. |
| Volunteer Board | Annual check-in visits for all designated trees; maintaining and publishing the Heritage Tree Register; coordinating community response when a designated tree is threatened; forwarding champion nominees to the WV state forestry program; encouraging 10-year re-measurement of champion trees. |
| Community | Reporting observed threats (disease, vandalism, development encroachment, storm damage) to any board member; participating in volunteer care and planting days; advocating for tree-protective local policies; serving as Field Visitors. |

### Loss or Decline of Designated Trees

If a Heritage Tree dies, falls, or is severely damaged:

- The program will document the tree's loss with photography and, if possible, core sampling for the historical record
- If the tree must be felled, program staff will work with the landowner to salvage wood for educational or commemorative purposes
- Propagation of the tree from seeds or cuttings (when feasible) may be undertaken to preserve the genetic lineage
- A memorial listing will be maintained in the register indefinitely
- The program may offer planting of a related species as a successor tree in appropriate cases

## Finding Trees to Nominate: A Field Guide for Charles Town Nominators

Charles Town is a rich hunting ground for heritage trees. Founded in 1786, the city retains streets, courthouse grounds, church yards, and residential properties with trees old enough to have witnessed John Brown's raid and trial, the Civil War occupation, and two and a half centuries of community life. The following approaches have proven most productive.

### For Witness & Historic Trees

- Check the Jefferson County Courthouse records and deed histories — Charles Town lots dating to the late 1700s often carry descriptions of landmark trees

- Study historical photographs of Washington Street, George Street, the courthouse square, and Charles Town's churches; match trees visible in old images to today's landscape
- Consult the Jefferson County Historical Society and its archives of Civil War-era maps and photographs
- Search the Charles Town Public Library local history collection for newspaper references to notable trees
- Talk to long-time Charles Town residents — oral traditions often preserve tree lore across generations
- Walk the courthouse grounds, churchyards (especially Zion Episcopal, St. Peter's, and Charles Town United Methodist), and the historic residential blocks of Washington, George, and Lawrence Streets
- Look for trees with unusual features: embedded metal, filled cavities, shaped trunks, or markings that suggest historical significance

## For Champion & Native Trees

- Walk Charles Town's alleys, fence lines, and rear lot lines — these areas were often spared from clearing and may hide the city's oldest trees
- Look for trees significantly larger than their neighbors of the same species
- Check the WV Division of Forestry's current state champion list — many species lack current champions and a large Charles Town tree could qualify statewide
- Visit older sections of Elmwood Cemetery, the parks along Mildred Street, and established residential blocks where canopy trees have had decades to grow
- Compare circumference of candidate trees with state champion measurements as a first-pass screen

## Measuring Your Candidate Tree

Before submitting a nomination, take preliminary measurements:

1. Circumference: Use a flexible tape measure at 4.5 feet above the ground (at mid-slope). If the tree forks below 4.5 feet, measure at the narrowest point below the fork. Record in inches.
2. Height: Use a smartphone clinometer app, a hand-held clinometer, or a laser rangefinder. Stand at a known distance (e.g., 100 feet) from the base, measure the angle to the top, and calculate height. Record in feet.
3. Crown Spread: Stand beneath the edge of the canopy (the dripline) on four sides (N, S, E, W) and measure to the center of the trunk. Average the four measurements and multiply by 2. Record in feet.
4. Calculate preliminary points: Circumference (in) + Height (ft) + Crown Spread (ft) ÷ 4 = Total Points
5. Photograph: Six photographs are required — whole tree from base to tip (with a person for scale), and four cardinal direction shots (N, S, E, W), plus a close-up of the trunk and any notable features.

# Program Administration & Governance

The Charles Town Heritage Tree Recognition Program is a volunteer-run community program governed by its elected Board of Directors. All board members must reside within or own property in the City of Charles Town. The board operates independently with no paid staff. Administrative tasks — maintaining the register, corresponding with nominators, scheduling field visits, coordinating the annual celebration — are distributed among board members according to their roles and availability.

The board may partner with Charles Town and Jefferson County organizations (the Charles Town City Council, Jefferson County Historical Society, Charles Town Public Library, Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, and local civic groups) for hosting, archiving, outreach, and grant support, but program decisions remain exclusively with the volunteer board.

## Board Officers & Duties

| Officer | Primary Duties |
|---|---|
| Board Chair | Presides over meetings; signs designation certificates; represents the program publicly; breaks tied votes; oversees annual planning. |
| Records Secretary | Maintains the Heritage Tree Register; manages the nominations inbox; sends acknowledgment and decision letters; archives all documentation. |
| Stewardship Coordinator | Schedules and tracks annual check-in visits; follows up on trees in decline; coordinates volunteer Field Visitor training. |
| Outreach Coordinator | Manages the program's public presence (website, social media, press); organizes the annual Heritage Tree Celebration; recruits new nominators and board members. |

## Funding & Sustainability

Because the program is entirely volunteer-run, operating costs are minimal. Funding sources include:

- Small grants from conservation foundations, community foundations, and urban forestry programs
- Tax-deductible donations from individuals and local businesses
- Modest plaque fees for Landmark and Exceptional tier trees (waived upon request)
- In-kind support from partnering organizations (printing, meeting space, archiving, web hosting)
- Occasional municipal or parks department mini-grants for specific projects

The board publishes a simple annual financial summary at the Heritage Tree Celebration each October.

### Privacy & Location Disclosure

Consistent with the practice of American Forests' National Register of Champion Trees, the program does not disclose precise GPS coordinates of Heritage Trees without landowner consent, in order to protect tree health and private property rights. General location information (county, neighborhood, or public address) is disclosed in the public register. Private property owners may additionally request that the full street address be withheld.

### Appeals Process

Nominators or landowners who disagree with a designation decision may submit a written appeal to the Board Chair within 30 days of notification. The appeal is heard at the next scheduled board meeting by all members not involved in the original field visit. The board may request additional documentation or schedule a second field visit. Appeal decisions are made by majority vote and are final within the program year.

## Program Sources & Acknowledgments

This program framework was developed by surveying existing heritage tree programs across the United States, including:

- American Forests, National Register of Champion Trees (americanforests.org)
- National Champion Tree Program (nationalchampiontree.org)
- National Park Service, Witness Tree Protection Program (Historic American Landscapes Survey)
- City of Portland, Heritage Tree Program (portland.gov)
- Massachusetts DCR, Legacy Tree Program (mass.gov)
- New York State DEC, Big Tree Register (dec.ny.gov)
- North Carolina Forest Service, Champion Trees Program
- Tennessee Champion Tree Program, University of Tennessee
- University of Idaho Extension, Idaho Big Tree Program
- Oregon Champion Tree Registry (championtreeregistry.com)
- Minnesota DNR, Native Big Tree Registry
- Research: "Establishing Consensus Criteria for Determining Heritage Tree Status" (Ritchie et al., Vancouver)
- American Battlefield Trust, Witness Trees documentation
- Historic American Landscapes Survey / Library of Congress, Witness Tree archives

The scoring matrix, measurement protocols, and nomination process were adapted and synthesized from these programs to create a framework tailored to Charles Town, West Virginia. The program acknowledges the role of Indigenous peoples — including the Shawnee, Lenape, and other nations who stewarded this land — as original caretakers of Charles Town's

landscape and the trees upon it, and commits to ongoing consultation with relevant tribal representatives regarding culturally significant trees.

# CHARLES TOWN HERITAGE TREE NOMINATION FORM

City of Charles Town, WV • Open to Charles Town residents & city property owners • Annual cutoff: January 31

## PART 1 — NOMINATOR INFORMATION & ELIGIBILITY

Nominations are open to Charles Town residents and city property owners only. Please confirm your eligibility:

□ I am a current City of Charles Town resident □ I own property within the Charles Town city limits □ I represent an organization based in Charles Town (name: _____)

**Nominator Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

**Organization (if applicable):** _____ **Phone:** _____

**Mailing Address:** _____

**City / State / Zip:** _____ **Email:** _____

Relationship to tree:

□ Property owner □ Neighbor □ Community member □ Professional (arborist/forester) □ Historian / researcher □ Other

## PART 2 — TREE LOCATION & ACCESS

Trees must be located within the incorporated limits of the City of Charles Town, WV to be eligible.

□ □ I confirm this tree is within the Charles Town city limits

**Street Address or nearest intersection in Charles Town:** _____

**Neighborhood / Ward (if known):** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

**GPS Coordinates (Lat/Long):** _____ **Land Ownership:** _____

Land ownership:

□ Private residential □ Private agricultural/rural □ Municipal/county □ State □ Federal □ Non-profit / institutional □ Unknown

**Property Owner Name (if different from nominator):** _____

**Property Owner Contact (phone or email):** _____

Is the property owner aware of and supportive of this nomination?

□ Yes, owner is supportive □ Owner has been contacted but has not yet responded □ Owner has not yet been contacted □ Nominator is the owner

**Access instructions (how to reach the tree):** _____

## PART 3 — TREE IDENTIFICATION

**Common Name:** _____ **Scientific Name (if known):** _____

How was the species identified?

□ Field guide (attach reference) □ Online ID tool / iNaturalist □ University extension resource □ Long-time personal knowledge □ Community naturalist / master gardener □ Unknown — board assistance requested

**Describe the tree's general appearance, form, and any notable features:**

_____

*(Describe trunk form, major branches, any scars, embedded objects, bark modifications, unusual growth patterns, etc.)*

## PART 4 — MEASUREMENTS (Nominator Self-Reported — Board Field Visit Will Confirm)

Please take preliminary measurements using the instructions in Section 7 of the Program Guidelines. A volunteer board member will visit the tree to confirm measurements as part of the review process — your preliminary numbers are a starting point, not a final determination.

| Measurement | Value | Method Used |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Trunk Circumference at 4.5 ft (inches)** | _____ | _____ |
| **Tree Height (feet)** | _____ | _____ |
| **Average Crown Spread (feet)** | _____ | _____ |
| **Estimated Total Points** | _____ | *(auto-calculated)* |

** If the tree forks below 4.5 feet, measure circumference at the narrowest point below the fork.*

Current state champion for this species (if known):

**Species champion points:** _____ **Source / year:** _____

## PART 5 — NOMINATION CATEGORY (Select all that apply)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ | **Category 1 Witness Tree** | Tree was physically present during a documented historical event |
| ☐ | **Category 2 Historic Tree** | Tree has documented association with a significant person, institution, or era |
| ☐ | **Category 3 Champion Tree** | Tree is the largest known specimen of its species in the program area |
| ☐ | **Category 4 Notable Native Tree** | Native tree of exceptional age, form, ecological significance, or relic status |
| ☐ | **Category 5 Community Significant Tree** | Tree is deeply embedded in community memory or identity |
| ☐ | **Category 6 Notable Introduced Tree** | Non-native tree of exceptional character and historical planting |

Special designation (check if applicable):

☐ Champion Designation ☐ Witness Designation ☐ Culturally Modified Tree ☐ Old-Growth Designation ☐ Survivor Tree Designation

## PART 6 — SIGNIFICANCE NARRATIVE (Required)

This is the most important section of your nomination. Please tell the tree's story. Include: what makes this tree significant; the historical event, person, or community connection; how long the tree has been known; any lore, legend, or documented history; and why you believe it deserves recognition. Additional pages may be attached.

**Significance narrative:** _

## PART 7 — EVIDENCE OF AGE & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Please indicate what evidence supports the tree's claimed age or historical association:

□ Core sample / ring count □ Historical photograph □ Survey / plat map □ Painting or illustration

□ Written historical record □ Newspaper archive □ Deed or property record □ Oral history

□ Growth rate calculation □ GLO survey record □ Species expert assessment □ Other

**Describe the evidence and its source:** _____

**Estimated age of tree (years):** _____

**Earliest documented date of the tree's presence:** _____

## PART 8 — TREE HEALTH & CONDITION (Nominator Assessment)

Based on your observation, how would you rate the tree's overall condition?

□ Excellent — vigorous, full canopy, no visible problems □ Good — healthy with minor issues
□ Fair — some decline or damage but stable and not hazardous □ Declining — significant issues visible; board visit will assess

Please note any visible concerns:

□ Cavities or decay □ Broken or dead branches □ Root damage □ Disease symptoms □ Pest damage □ Construction or soil compaction nearby

**Additional health observations:** _____

## PART 9 — PHOTOGRAPHS & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Please attach the following with your nomination form. Check each item included:

□ □ Full-tree photograph (with person for scale) □ □ North-facing photograph
□ □ South-facing photograph □ □ East-facing photograph
□ □ West-facing photograph □ □ Close-up of trunk / notable features
□ □ Historical photographs (copies) □ □ Maps or survey records (copies)
□ □ Written historical documentation □ □ Property owner consent letter
□ □ Community letters of support □ □ Species identification reference

## PART 10 — PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT (Required for Private Land)

I, the undersigned, am the owner (or authorized representative of the owner) of the property where the nominated tree is located. I consent to the following:

- The tree being considered for Heritage Tree designation
- A site visit by a certified program arborist for inspection and measurement
- The tree's general location and designation being listed in the public Heritage Tree Register

I understand that Heritage Tree designation is an honor, not a legal encumbrance, unless I separately opt into the Enhanced Protection tier.

**Property Owner Name (print):** _____ **Date:** _____

**Signature:** _____ **Phone:** _____

**Property Address:** _____

Enhanced Protection (optional — owner's choice):

□ I wish to opt into the Enhanced Protection tier, which includes annual arborist inspections, grant eligibility, and notification requirements for nearby development. I understand this is voluntary and may be revoked with 90 days' notice.

## PART 11 — NOMINATOR CERTIFICATION

By signing below, I certify that the information provided in this nomination is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge, that I have not omitted information material to the nomination, and that I have read and understood the Heritage Tree Program guidelines.

**Nominator Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

## Submission Instructions & Board Contact

Online: [Charles Town Heritage Tree program website]

Mail: Charles Town Heritage Tree Program Board, Charles Town, WV 25414

Email: [board email address] (PDF form with attached photos)

Questions? Any board member is happy to help — contact info at program website

Nominations are always free. Board members are fellow Charles Town residents available to help at any stage.

*Thank you for honoring the living monuments in our community.*
*Every great tree begins as a seed. Every Heritage Tree begins with a nominator willing to tell its story.*

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1760: 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: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1761: 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: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1762: 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. Consider recommending to City that we focus on adding better soil and plants to tree planted areas instead of stand-alone planters (take up space and require additional water) as well as hanging baskets which take additional water and resources. Engagement with business owners to water plants in front of the spaces? Plan to aerate and add mulch, plants and flowers to tree boxes.**

**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: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1763: Two non-voting members including youth 17 years old or over. Recruitment, community outreach and identification of prospective participants.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1764: 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: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1765: Consideration of cooperative effort to use Washington HS greenhouse for growing out seeds into saplings. Would need to coordinate with teacher, school, and Cacapon, WV Ag Extension, and others to provide expertise and support. Related experts who could assist.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1766: 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

**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)

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1767: 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: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1768: Consideration of development fees for Tree Board as part of subdivision ordinance. Ordinance consideration with planning to prescribe native trees, shrubs and plants as opposed to non-native species. Creation of water-garden for drainage ponds.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1769: 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: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1770: Cooperative agreement with Dr. Campany for future projects or student engagement on CT projects.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1771: Tree Board participation in local events. Consideration of exposure, time, and benefit to board and community.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1772: How to better recruit and engage volunteers for Tree Board events.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1773: Consideration of engagement with non-for profits in the City for cooperative efforts for projects to expand scope and area of tree plantings. Library proposal to plant trees and shrubs on back park of property where storm water poos through the Cacapon Institute with the Tree Board as liaison. Other options include churches (Wainwright Baptist, House of Prayer, Zion Baptist, St. Phillips, Asbury Methodist, and others) to assess and assist in tree planting projects through Cacapon.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

**2026-1774: Need better lines of communication with City Council and other city boards to work cooperatively on projects that impact the Tree Board. Often times the Tree Board is not consulted for projects that directly impact trees, tree care and/or maintenance.**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1775: Consideration of advancing a push to hire an urban forester.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1776: Breakdown from post-grant denial meeting and next steps.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Category: Report
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1777: Request for Removal of Trees - policy, procedure, form to make request

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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

Meeting: 08/06/26
Department: Charles Town Tree Board
Initiator:

**SCHEDULED**

**AGENDA ITEM (ID # )**

## 2026-1778: Request for Water Abatement for Tree Nursery at 206 W. Liberty Street, Charles Town, WV

**ATTACHMENTS:**