



Planning and Zoning Department
500 Quartermaster court
Jeffersonville, In 47130

Caring for Mature Trees

Urban foresters use the concept of PEGSMOR to understand the needs of a tree over its lifespan. PEGSMOR stands for: Planting, Establishment, Growth, Structure, Maturity, Over-maturity, and Replacement. The Planting and Establishment stages are covered in our Tree Care guide for young trees, so this guide begins at the Growth Stage.

- **Growth (appx. 3-10 years after planting):**
 - Description: The tree is growing but has not reached the desired height of the primary branches.
 - Care: Prune every three years. Replenish mulch/keep grass away from trunk. Protect young trunk from damage by lawn mowing equipment. Water during dry periods.
- **Structure (appx. 10-30 years after planting)**
 - Description: The tree is tall enough to select the primary and secondary branches that will be the main structure throughout the tree's life.
 - Care: Prune every five years for most trees
- **Maturity (appx. 20-60 years after planting – depends greatly by species)**
 - Description: The tree develops its full crown and width. Growth dramatically slows during the upper end of this stage, and will remain slower in this stage until it declines
 - Care: Prune every seven to ten years depending on species and/or environmental events/stress (storms, extended drought, etc.).
- **Over Maturity (depends greatly by species)**
 - Description: The tree is declining faster than it is growing. Primary and secondary branches begin to rot and die back becoming defective. Root flare may also become defective.
 - Care: Prune every three years or as necessary to remove deadwood and defective branches. Plan for
- **Over Maturity (depends greatly by species)**
 - Description: The tree is declining faster than it is growing. Primary and secondary branches begin to rot and die back becoming defective. Root flare may also become defective.
 - Care: Prune every three years or as necessary to remove deadwood and defective branches.
 - Plan: Plan for replacement. At this time you may consider “underplanting” – planting a new tree in the shade of the existing tree. Planting a new tree 10-15’ from the existing

Primary Sources: Denver Forestry Division & Denver Digs Trees.

tree before its cut down will give the new tree a chance to get established in the shade of the older tree so that its ready to “leap” into action when the old tree is removed.

- **Replacement**

- Description: Tree has declined to the point of being totally unsound, or primary branches have been pruned to the point where the tree does not have a viable structure. This stage is needed to finish and subsequently continue the cycle.
- Care: Remove tree, grind stump, replace soil, and plant new tree.

A note about insects and disease.

At any stage in the growth of the tree (particularly later stages), insect and disease problems may arise. Contact a certified arborist or other tree care professional to address these problems as soon as they are noted.