

# 3-Year Tree Grove Maintenance Plan

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## Keep Route 66 Beautiful

*This guide will help you plant and care for your trees, so they grow strong and healthy for many years to come.*

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful will provide access to the following:

- ⇒ Healthy Trees
- ⇒ Natural mulch like wood chips, pine straw, or bark—no dyed materials.
- ⇒ Stakes (If Needed) that are untreated wood or metal

## Planting Instructions:

- ⇒ **Dig a Big Enough Hole** - Make the hole as deep as the root ball, but 2–3 times wider than the root ball's top.
- ⇒ **Trim Carefully** - Only cut roots or branches that are broken. Don't cut off healthy parts. Leave the swollen base where branches meet the trunk (called the branch collar).
- ⇒ **No Fertilizer at Planting** - Use the soil you dug out to fill the hole. Wait to fertilize until the tree is established (after the first growing season).
- ⇒ **Set Tree at the Right Height** - Lift by the root ball, not the trunk. Look for the dark line on the trunk (called the root collar) and plant the tree so this line is at ground level. In heavy clay soil, plant slightly above ground and slope soil up to it.
- ⇒ **Fill in Carefully**
  - For burlapped trees: Remove all strings and burlap on top, at least half from the sides.
  - For potted trees: Remove the pot or bag completely.
  - Fill in the soil gently and water to settle the soil.
  - Don't stomp on it—this can hurt the roots.
  - Make a ring of soil around the hole to help hold water.
- ⇒ **Stake Only If Needed**
  - Only stake in windy areas or if the tree is large or an evergreen.
  - Use soft material that won't rub the bark.
  - Stakes should be removed after one year.
- ⇒ **Mulch the Base** - Add 3–4 inches of mulch in a circle at least 6 feet wide. Keep the mulch away from the trunk so air can get in.

- ⇒ **Water** - Water right after planting to soak the root ball. Keep watering regularly—see watering plan below.

## Watering Plan:

- ⇒ Always check the soil under the mulch before watering. If it feels damp 4 inches down, skip watering that time.
- ⇒ Water slowly so it soaks into the ground.
- ⇒ Keep watering into winter.

Year	Water Every	Amount per Tree	Extra Tips
1	7–10 days	10–15 gallons	Water more during July–Sept. or during dry spells. Split into two waterings if needed.
2	10–14 days	~20 gallons	Still water through summer and fall.
3	14–18 days	~25 gallons	Continue watering during warm or dry weather.

## Ongoing Maintenance:

### Mulch

- ⇒ Keep a 3–4-inch mulch circle around the tree, at least 6 feet wide.
- ⇒ Natural mulch like wood chips, pine straw, or bark—no dyed materials.
- ⇒ Don't let mulch touch the trunk.
- ⇒ Pull weeds and grass from the mulch.
- ⇒ Refill mulch as needed.

### Pruning

- ⇒ Trim only dead, damaged, or rubbing branches.
- ⇒ Remove double leaders (two trunks trying to grow).
- ⇒ Always cut just outside the swollen branch collar.
- ⇒ Never top trees (cutting off the tops).

### Fertilizing

- ⇒ Don't use fertilizer with weed killer or strong herbicides near trees.

### Protection

- ⇒ Keep mowers and trimmers away from tree trunks to avoid damage.
- ⇒ Watch for vandalism or animals chewing bark.

### Pest Check

- ⇒ Check trees once a week for bugs or disease.
- ⇒ Ask a tree care expert for help if needed.

### Success Goal

- ⇒ Keep at least 80% of the trees alive and healthy through July 30, 2028.
- ⇒ A healthy tree should have 90% of its top (crown) filled with full, green leaves that are the right shape and size for its species.

### Signatures

Please gather signatures from 1-7 volunteers who commit to nurturing these trees while they establish themselves.

Volunteer Name (Printed)	Volunteer Signature
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	