



POLICY

TREE REPLACEMENT

The Board of County Road Commissioners of the County of Kalamazoo ("Board") recognizes that trees contribute significantly to the beauty, character, environmental health, and property value of the community. While roadway improvement projects may necessitate the removal of trees to enhance safety, drainage, traffic operations, and infrastructure, the Board is committed to supporting the restoration of the roadside landscape whenever feasible.

It is the policy of the Board to participate in the replacement of trees removed as part of preservation and/or structural improvement projects. Subject to available budget, the Board shall contribute up to fifty percent (50%) of the cost of eligible replacement trees, with the remaining cost borne by the participating property owner.

Replacement trees shall be planted within maintained roadside areas and generally in the vicinity of the removed tree(s), in locations that provide adequate space for healthy growth and are not overcrowded by existing vegetation. All replacement trees must be planted outside of the public right-of-way (ROW). Tree spacing shall be determined based on species, expected mature size, and site conditions; however, as a general guideline, roadside trees should be spaced approximately fifty (50) feet apart or in a manner consistent with existing spacing patterns and the anticipated mature crown spread of large tree species.

For roadway widening, reconstruction, or other improvement projects utilizing specialized funding sources—including but not limited to State Transportation Economic Development Funds or Federal Highway Funds—the Board may authorize the planting of up to two (2) replacement trees for each tree removed, provided site conditions allow, and all spacing and safety requirements are met. These replacement trees shall be subject to the same cost-sharing provisions outlined in this policy.

The Road Commission shall annually publish a list of approved tree species and sizes eligible for this program, including associated cost-sharing amounts for both the Board and participating property owners. Only species included on the approved list shall be eligible, with preference given to species native to Michigan, as well as cultivars and varieties derived from native species.

All trees provided under this program shall be nursery-grown, #1 grade stock, and properly branched in accordance with industry standards. The cost of each tree shall include installation by a qualified nursery selected by the Board. The Board assumes no responsibility for the ongoing health, maintenance, or survival of any tree planted under this program.

This policy is intended to promote responsible tree replacement while maintaining safe and functional clear zones and roadside environments. The Board seeks to balance the need for safe and reliable transportation infrastructure with the preservation and restoration of Kalamazoo County's roadside character. Whenever tree removal is necessary, the Board remains committed to providing opportunities for replanting and to maintaining the natural character of its roadways and surrounding communities for future generations.

Adopted: 8/11/2026