

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 – 31
CONFIRMING AND ADOPTING THE RECOMMENDED
AND NOT RECOMMENDED LISTS OF TREES FOR PLANTING WITHIN THE CITY

WHEREAS, the City of Cullman has established a Tree Commission pursuant to its Urban Forestry Ordinance (Ordinance No. 1998, as amended or codified) to advise the Mayor and City Council on matters related to the care, preservation, expansion, and management of the City's urban forest; and

WHEREAS, the Tree Commission, in collaboration with the City Arborist, is tasked with recommending tree planting programs, appropriate tree species, and placement for public spaces, rights-of-way, and other municipal properties to promote tree health, diversity, safety, aesthetics, environmental benefits, and long-term sustainability; and

WHEREAS, on or about October 30, 2025, Barry Slatton, Chairman of the Cullman Tree Commission, presented to the City Council lists of trees recommended for planting within the City based on factors including shade provision, appearance, fall/winter color, hardiness in Cullman's climate (USDA Hardiness Zone 7b/8a), disease/invasive resistance, root characteristics, maintenance needs, and compatibility with urban conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Tree Commission also presented a list of trees not recommended for planting due to issues such as invasiveness, structural weaknesses, high maintenance, pest/disease susceptibility, poor adaptation to local soils/climate, excessive litter, aggressive roots, or other detriments to public infrastructure, safety, or the urban forest; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that formal adoption of these lists will guide public tree plantings, private developments requiring landscaping approvals, community tree sales/events, permitting processes, and general best practices to enhance Cullman's designation as a Tree City USA community and support overall urban forestry goals; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the recommendations and determines that confirming these lists is in the best interest of public health, safety, welfare, aesthetics, and environmental stewardship;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CULLMAN, ALABAMA, as follows:

Section 1. Adoption of Lists. The lists of recommended trees and not recommended trees, as presented by the Cullman Tree Commission and attached hereto as **Exhibit A** (Recommended Trees for Planting in the City of Cullman) and **Exhibit B** (Not Recommended Trees for Planting in the City of Cullman), are hereby confirmed, adopted, and incorporated into this Ordinance by reference as if fully set forth herein. These lists shall serve as the official guidance for tree species selection in public plantings, rights-of-way, parks, and other City-managed areas, and are strongly encouraged for private properties, developments, and community initiatives.

Section 2. Purpose and Application. The adopted lists aim to: (a) Promote diverse, resilient, and aesthetically pleasing urban tree canopy; (b) Minimize risks from invasive species, weak-wooded trees, or those prone to failure; (c) Ensure compatibility with Cullman's soil types, climate, water availability, and urban constraints (e.g., utility lines, sidewalks, pavement); and (d) Support maintenance efficiency and long-term forest health. The Tree Commission shall use these lists in reviewing planting proposals, public projects, and providing advice. Deviations may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Tree Commission upon written justification demonstrating equivalent or superior benefits.

Section 3. Updates and Amendments. The Tree Commission may periodically review and recommend updates to the lists based on new research, performance observations, emerging threats (e.g., pests like emerald ash borer), or climate considerations. Any proposed amendments shall be presented to the City Council for consideration and adoption by ordinance.

Section 4. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

Section 5. Repealer. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 6. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and approval, or as otherwise provided by law.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL this the 23rd day of February, 2026.

President of the City Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR this the 23rd day of February, 2026.

Mayor

EXHIBIT A – TREES THAT ARE RECOMMENDED

Common Name Botanical Name	Native	Height (Feet)	Spread (Feet)	Sun/Shade	Water Requirements	Bloom Time	Color	Drought Resistant	Other Information
Allegheny Serviceberry <i>Allegheya Laevis</i>	YES	15-25	15-25	Partial Sun 4-6 Hours a Day	Moist/Well Drained	Spring	Orange/Red	Average	
American Hornbeam <i>Carpinus Caroliniana</i>	N/A	20-30	20-30	Full/Partial	Moist/Well Drained Soil	Spring	Green	Average	Used for Privacy Hedge
American Pillar <i>Arborvitae Thuja</i>	N/A	30	5	Full	Moderate		Green	Average	
Carolina Silverbell <i>Halesia Carolina Tetraptera</i>	YES	30-40	20-35	Full/Partial	Medium	Spring	White	Average	
Chinese Pistache <i>Pistachia Chinensis</i>	N/A	20-30	20-30	Full	Moderate	Fall	Red/Orange	Above Average	
Dogwood "Cloud 9" <i>Cornus florida</i>	N/A	15-30	15-30	Full/Partial	Moderate	Spring/Fall	White, Red, Purple Blossoms	Average	
Kousa Dogwood <i>Cornus Kousa</i>	N/A	25-30	15-30	Full/Partial	Moderate/Not Waterlogged	Spring	White/Pink	Average	
Flowering Quince <i>Chaenomeles Speciosa</i>	N/A	6-12	6-10	Full/Partial	Moist Soil	Late Winter/Spring	Scarlet/Red	Average	
Forsythia <i>Forsythia SPP</i>	N/A	8-10	5-10	Full	Moist/Well Drained Soil	April/May	Red/Burgandy/ Gold	Average	Requires Regular Prunning Shrub
Ginko (Male only) <i>Ginko Biloba</i>		40-70	30-40	Full/Partial	Moderate	Fall	Bright Yellow	Above Average	
Hop Hornbeam <i>Ostrya Virginiana</i>	YES	20-35	15-30	Partial/Deep Shade	Moist Soil	Spring	Brown/Copper to Gold/Yellow	Above Average	
Japanese Maple <i>Emperoa One</i>	N/A	13-15	13-15	Full/Partial	Well Drained Soil	Fall	Crimson Red	Average	
Northern Red Oak <i>Quercus Rubra</i>	YES	60-75	50-75	Full	Moist/Well Drained Soil	Summer/Fall	Yellow		
Pawpaw <i>Asimina Triloba</i>	N/A	15-30	25	Full/Partial	Medium	Fall	Yellow/Green/ White/Pink	Above Average	Produces a lot of fruit for 2
Pin Oak <i>Quercus Palustris</i>	N/A	60-70	40-50	Full/Partial	Moist/Wet Soil	Fall	Dark Green	Average	
Pond Cypress <i>Taxodium Ascendens</i>	YES	30-70	15-20	Full	Heavy				Best grown around lakes and pond. Prominent Roots
Common Name Botanical Name	Native	Height (Feet)	Spread (Feet)	Sun/Shade	Water Requirements	Bloom Time	Color	Drought Resistant	Other Information
Quaking Aspen <i>Populus Tremuloides</i>	N/A	40-50	20-30	Full/Partial	Moist	Fall	Green/Light Yellow	Average	
Red Maple (American) <i>Acer Rubrum</i>	N/A	40-60	25-45	Full/Partial	Low	Spring	Red	Average	
River Birch <i>Betula nigra</i>	N/A	40-70	40-60	Full/Partial	Medium/Wet Soil	April/May	Brown	Average	Very Heat Tolerant
Santa Cherry <i>Prunus Avium Santina</i>	N/A	15-20	12-15	Full	Medium	April/Summer	Pink	Above Average	Has berry like fruit
Scarlet Fire Dogwood <i>Cornus Kousa</i>	N/A	25	20	Full/Partial	Well Drained Soil	May/June	Pink	Average	
Southern Magnolia <i>Magnolia Grandiflora</i>	YES	60-80	20-40	Full/Partial	Moderate	Summer	White	Average	Large Fragrant Flowers
Sugar Maple <i>Acer Saccharum</i>	N/A	80-100	30	Full/Partial	Drought Sensitive	Fall	Red/Orange	Average	
Summer Red Maple <i>Acer Rubrum</i>	N/A	35-40	20-25	N/A	Medium	Fall	Red (Year Round)	Average	
Yoshino Cherry <i>Prunus X Yedoensis</i>	N/A	30-40	30-40	Full/Partial	Medium	March/April	White/Pink	Average	Fragrant, high maintenance flowers
Japanese Lilac <i>Syringa Reticulata</i>	N/A	20-30	15-20	Full	Medium	June	Creamy White	Average	Fragrant flowers
Korean Fir <i>Abies Koreana</i>	N/A	15-30	6-12	Full	Well Drained		Blue/Purple Cones	Average	
Hardy Pecan <i>Carya Illinoensis</i>	N/A	75-100	40-70	Full	Medium	April/May	Green/Yellow	Average	Edible Nuts
Italian Jasmine <i>Jasminum Humile</i>	N/A	5-20	5-10	Full	Moist	Spring	Gold/Pink/ White		Fragrant flowers

EXHIBIT B – TREES THAT ARE NOT RECOMMENDED

1. **Lombardy Poplar (Populus Nigra)** – Life span 15 years average, subject to disease
2. **Silver Maple (Acer Saccharinum)** – Weak wooded, multiple trunks, messy, shallow rooted, seeds itself everywhere
3. **Weeping Willow (Salix Babylonica)** – Roots everywhere, disturbs septic systems
4. **Mulberry (Morus Sap)** – Messy fruit, stains everything, leaves dropping on automobiles, likes to seed itself
5. **Cottonwood (Populusdeltoids)** – Problematic roots around foundations, messy, not a good yard tree, ok for rural areas away from structures
6. **Black Locust (Robinia Psuedoacacia)** – Brittle, sharp thorns, seedy, invasive
7. **Leyland Cypress (Cupressus X Landii)** – Quick grower, evergreen, usually gets too large for most home landscapes, prone to wind damage, disease and drought
8. **Callery Pear (Pyrus Calleryana)** – Weak branch structure
9. **Siberian Elm (Ulmus Pumila)** – Messy, weak wooded
10. **Ginko Biloba (Ginko)** – Female variety only, messy fruit, foul smelling
11. **Ash (Fraxinus)** – Subject to emerald ash borer, must be treated every two years
12. **Cotton Wood (Populusdectoids)** – Problematic roots, messy
13. **Norway Maple (Acer Platanoides)** – Self seeds everywhere, shallow roots, pasty
14. **Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus Altissima)** – Dirty, messy, invasive

COUNCIL AGENDA REQUEST

Date: 02/18/2026

Department: Administration Name: Pam Leslie

Phone: 256-775-7104 Email: pleslie@cullmanal.gov

Type of request (select all that apply):

- Alcohol License
- Budget Amendment
- Contract Approval
- Public Comment
- Special Event
- Other ordinance
- Annexation
- Change Order
- Petition
- Resolution
- Tax Abatement
- Bid Award
- Codification Change
- Proclamations
- Rezoning
- Variance

Reason for Request:

Establishing recommended and not recommended trees.

Supporting Documentation:

Attach supporting documentation.

Signature:  Signed by: Pam Leslie
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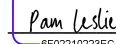
Approval Sequence:

1. Administration – City Clerk’s Office

Verifies form is completed and proper documentation is attached.

Approved to Move Forward Rejected Return to Requestor

Comments:

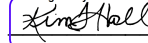
Signature:  Signed by: Pam Leslie
8F02210223EC457... Date: February 18, 2026 | 4:28 PM CST

2. Council Committee Chairperson - Kim Hall

Ensures necessity of the request.

Approved to Move Forward Rejected Return to Admin

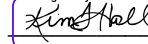
Comments:

Signature:  Signed by: Kim Hall
373F5C72C0C944B... Date: February 18, 2026 | 7:19 PM CST

3. Council President

Approved for Council Agenda Rejected Return to Committee

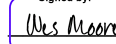
Comments:

Signature:  Signed by: Kim Hall
373F5C72C0C944B... Date: February 18, 2026 | 7:19 PM CST

4. Administration – City Clerk’s Office

Added to Council Agenda Date of Meeting: 02/23/2026

Comments:

Signature:  Signed by: Wes Moore
8F02210223EC457... Date: 02/18/2026