

# Hailey Urban Forestry Plan, 2023 – 2026

## What is So Special About Trees in Hailey?

Before settlement, the site of the city of Hailey was primarily sagebrush, grasses and cottonwoods growing along the Wood River corridor. Pioneers started to plant trees for food as well as to help shade homes. Today the Hailey community forest is extensive and creates a verdant Hailey with tree lined streets, schools, parks and yards. ***Trees do make Hailey a very special place!***



## Who are we? A Timeline of the Hailey Tree Committee (HTC)

Several Hailey citizens and certified arborists gathered in the mid-1990s to draft the first Hailey Tree Ordinance. This initial ordinance, when presented in 1998 to the Hailey City Council and Mayor, was not approved. Without a tree ordinance, Hailey could not become a Tree City USA\*. Much of the original language of the initial ordinance was used for the first Hailey Tree Ordinance adopted in 2008. The Hailey Tree Committee bylaws were also adopted in 2008 establishing the first Hailey Tree Committee.



The Hailey Tree Committee serves as a recommending body to the city of Hailey on issues related to public trees. Arbor Day celebrations started in 2008 and are held annually. The

creation of ArborFest extended the Arbor Day theme to a special day in early summer to celebrate with the public. Hailey was first recognized as a Tree City USA in 2009 and earned a Tree City Growth Award in 2010 and 2022. In 2018 the Hailey Tree Ordinance was updated to incorporate language including professional ANSI standards of tree care and in 2021, Street Tree specifications were added to Title 18 of the Hailey Municipal Code.

## What is the Urban Forestry Plan?

One of the obligations of the Hailey Tree Committee (HTC) is to prepare an Urban Forestry Plan (UFP) to be presented to the Mayor and City Council every 3 years. The last UFP was prepared in 2020 and was in place through 2022. The Hailey Urban Forestry Plan (UFP) helps guide the HTC and the city of Hailey to prioritize tree care activities, budgeting, and community outreach.

## Our Vision for the Future of Hailey's Trees

The vision of the **Hailey Tree Committee (HTC)** is to create a sustainable urban forest by emphasizing quality tree care, encouraging diversity of tree species, and creating an engaged citizenry that appreciates the value of trees.

The City of Hailey, the Hailey Tree Committee, and the citizens will recognize and appreciate the values and functions of the community forest including:

- Creation of walkable/bikeable streets and neighborhoods by providing critical shade
  - Economic benefits to business and increased property values to homeowners
  - Winter and summer energy conservation which supports reduced energy costs
    - Physical and mental health enhancement
    - Air pollution and sound mitigation and carbon capture
- Benefits to wildlife and pollinators including food source, cover, and nesting habitat
  - Watershed protection and reduced water runoff



## What are some of the achievements and successes of the HTC?

- **HTC is a very active committee** with 5 to 7 appointed volunteer members. The make-up of the committee includes certified arborists, foresters, landscape designers and tree passionate community members. HTC continues to find volunteers anxious to serve!
- **HTC provides thoughtful, timely recommendations** in response to city staff requests for input on specific projects involving tree planting and care. The Mayor, City Council, Planning and Zoning Commissioners continue to express their appreciation for HTC's recommendations.
- **The HTC presents to City Council information on emerging issues.** For example, HTC members presented information about Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) an insect recently discovered in western Oregon. Already EAB has devastated native and planted ash trees across the eastern US, Midwestern states and Colorado and EAB continues to move westward. The HTC received approval from the City Council to remove ash trees (in Genus *Fraxinus*) as acceptable species on the Hailey Street Tree List.
- The **Hailey Heritage Tree Program** recognizes trees that are historic, unique and have special significance. Some of these Heritage trees will be signed in 2023.
- **ArborFest** is the annual public celebration of Arbor Day and Tree City USA certification. HTC members and city staff hand out hundreds of diverse species of free seedlings. The Mayor reads the Arbor Day Proclamation and HTC members provide tree care advice.
- The **HTC coordinates** with the **Hailey Public Library** and the **Wood River Land Trust** to present pruning classes and hands-on demonstrations. We also coordinate with the Hailey Parks and Recreation Board.
- The HTC takes an active role in **providing maintenance and oversight** of the **Hailey Native Plant Arboretum**. They help plan volunteer events, including a special event recognizing its 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. Members also helped write grants and install new signage.



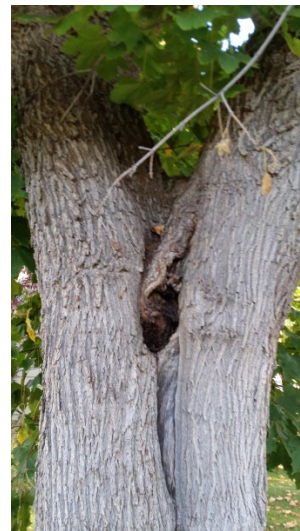
- In 2022, **HTC members volunteered over 300 hours for the City of Hailey.** In lieu of the vacancy of the City Arborist position, members went beyond their duties as Tree Committee members to fill in the gap.



## Top Priorities of HTC

1. **Recommend a city budget for tree care and planting** that is cost effective and benefits the priorities stated in this UFP. HTC will present proposed budget to city no later than June. HTC will continue to encourage the city choose companies with certified arborists for any public tree care.
2. **Continue to review P & Z proposals** and give timely input to city staff requests.
3. **Inventory trees in City Right-of-Way (ROW) and parks.** Conduct extensive evaluation of trees with insect/disease issues and higher potential risk rating.
4. **Recommend treatments for buckling sidewalks** that will minimize harm to mature trees.
5. **Encourage retention of healthy, desirable, mature trees.** Prune for safety and health. Trees that are removed will be replaced when appropriate.
6. **Look for funding sources** and **investigate creating a non-profit.**
7. **Encourage the city to write a MOU with the Blaine County School District** so the HTC can offer tree planting activities and education for kids.
8. **Prepare communications for the public** to encourage proper watering, tree care, tree choices using city newsletter, website, and classes.
9. **Encourage volunteer opportunities** to engage citizens: i.e. tree planting, tree pruning, removal of sod around trees and plant care in the Hailey Native Plant Arboretum.
10. **Increased ownership and interest by the public** of the Hailey community forest, both on public and private property.
11. **Educate landscapers and tree workers** to use proper planting and pruning methods and use pest and disease treatments that do not threaten pollinators and wildlife

### How we will measure success of HTC priorities?



1. **Decreased tree removals in business and residential development.** Track tree retentions and removals. Work with city to appraise value of trees removed so they can bill businesses.

2 . **Increased diversity of trees planted and better overall tree care.**

3. **Increased tree health and life span** – especially in city core and on Main Street.